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ARTICLES

Chryselephantine Couches, Feasting, and Imperial Violence in Hellenistic Macedonia*

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Abstract

Macedonian chryselephantine couches – exquisitely carved and gleaming with gold, glass, and ivory – offer a particularly illuminating case study of the material ramifications of Alexander the Great's conquests for Hellenistic art. Well-documented in archaeological remains and written texts, the couches also offer a concrete lens through which to analyze the transfer of cultural knowledge about feasting: an ephemeral activity as significant for Hellenistic kings as for their Persian predecessors. This article examines the couches' archaeological contexts, the aristocratic tombs in which they were found and the elaborate palaces and elite houses in which they were likely first used. It then analyzes the couches themselves as delicate luxury objects that nonetheless, in their iconography, style, and even their material, highlighted the violence of Macedonian imperialism. And finally, it considers the ephemeral practices through which the couches were activated for their patrons, that is, the feasts and funerals at which the Macedonian aristocracy both emulated and reacted against Persian precedents. This re-evaluation of Macedonian chryselephantine couches illuminates global interconnections during the formative period of Hellenistic art.

Key Words

Ivory; Macedonia; Feasting; Alexander the Great; Hellenistic

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I. *Introduction*

In the spring of 334 BCE, Alexander III of Macedon crossed the Hellespont – the thin strip of water separating the continents of Europe and Asia – and claimed what lay before him as *doryktetos khora*, spear-won land.[1] In doing so, he staked an audacious claim to the Achaemenid Persian Empire, the largest the ancient world had ever known.[2] With a brutally effective army and astute co-optation of local leaders, he managed to make that claim a reality. By the time he died as Alexander «the Great» in Babylon a little over a decade later, he ruled a kingdom that stretched from Europe to South Asia, and encompassed what are now the nation-states of Greece, Albania, Turkey, Armenia, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, Iran, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Pakistan, and Egypt.

The inhabitants of Macedonia followed Alexander's progress at a distance. They heard the encomiastic dispatches of his official historian, Kallisthenes, and saw the grandiose monuments the king commissioned from prominent Greek sculptors.[3] As ships arrived from the east in Macedonian harbors, they touched, smelled, and tasted the exotic precious materials extracted from the empire: lapis lazuli from Afghanistan, myrrh and frankincense from Arabia, spices and ivory from South Asia.[4] The Macedonians also learned of their king's conquests from the veterans Alexander sent home, who numbered in the tens of thousands and whose discharge payments made them the fourth century equivalent of millionaires.[5] The veterans of Alexander's army brought back far more than money. Fighting their way through the Achaemenid Empire, they acquired loot, scars, and a taste

1 *Doryktetos khora:* Diodorus Siculus 17.17.2.

2 Pierre Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, Eisenbrauns, Winona Lake, Ind. 2002, p. 62.

3 For Kallisthenes' dispatches, see Gordon Shrimpton, « The Callisthenes Engima », in Timothy Howe, Erin Garvin, Graham Wrightson (eds.), *Greece, Macedon, and Persia*, Oxbow Books, Oxford 2015, p. 114–117; for Alexander's commissions, Jerome J. Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1986, p. 1946.

4 On lapis lazuli and its use in the Hellenistic era, see Dimitris Plantzos, *Hellenistic Engraved Gems*, New York, Clarendon Press 1997, p. 36; for the myrrh and frankincense trade from Arabia, Shimshon Ben-Yehoshua, Carole Borowitz, Lumír Ondřej, « Frankincense, Myrrh, and Balm of Gilead: Ancient Spices of Southern Arabia and Judea », *Horticultural Reviews*, 102 (2011), p. 1015; for spices, Richard Stoneman, *The Greek Experience of India: From Alexander to the Indo-Greeks*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ 2019, p. 117–119, and for the trade in ivory, Sanjyot Mehendale, « Begram: Along Ancient Central Asian and Indian Trade Routes », *Cahiers d'Asie Centrale*, 1/2 (1996), p. 47–64.

5 Arrian, *Anabasis* 7.12.1; Plutarch, *Alexander* 71; Frank Lee Holt, *The Treasures of Alexander the Great: How One Man's Wealth Shaped the World*, Oxford University Press, New York 2016, p. 120–121; Phillip Harding, *Athens Transformed, 404–262 BC: From Popular Sovereignty to the Dominion of the Elite*, Routledge, New York 2015, p. 90–91.

for extravagant, Persian-influenced practices. Back home in Macedonia, they continued these practices, hosting luxurious feasts, for example, and staging elaborate funerals. They also commissioned costly monuments inspired by their conquests, ranging from enormous marble-topped burial mounds to intricately carved gems.[6] For men who had grown up in a small, peripheral, and vulnerable kingdom, the wealth and power they enjoyed in the aftermath of Alexander's conquests must have seemed an astonishing reversal of fortune.

The Macedonian veterans' wealth and power came at a high price. They returned home after a decade or more of military service, having fought four major set-piece battles of bloody hand-to-hand combat. In each, they were outnumbered, and they faced not only familiar forces such as infantry and cavalry, but also new and initially terrifying ones like scythed chariots and elephants. Even worse were the ambushes and city-sieges they encountered repeatedly throughout their campaigns, where attacks came unexpectedly and no place was safe.[7]

To all these threats, the Macedonian veterans responded with practiced violence. Along with the horrors of battle itself, the age of Alexander saw an intensification of what one ancient military historian has labeled genocide: the killing of the entire adult male population of resistant cities and the enslavement of their women and children.[8] Though literary accounts may exaggerate, the Macedonians' brutal practices are also suggested by the archaeological record, for instance in one well-studied region in Uzbekistan, where fully ninety percent of Persian era sites were deserted after Alexander.[9]

With the excavation of the Royal Tombs of Vergina from 1977 onwards, archaeologists have begun to uncover the concrete material manifestations of Alexander's conquest. At the moment of their discovery, the unlooted Vergina tombs – with their rich array of precious metal drinking vessels, bronze and iron weapons, gold wreaths, and chryselephantine couches – appeared singular in their extravagance, fit only for kings (fig. 1).[10] As more tombs have been excavated elsewhere in Macedonia, however, we can see how closely Alexander's veterans resembled kings in their burial practices. At sites such as Korinos, Lefkadia,

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6 For the most spectacular of the veterans' burial mounds, see Katerina Peristeri, « Excavation of the Kastas Tumulus of Amphipolis 2014 », *To Archaiologiko Ergo stē Makedonia kai Thrakē*, 29 (2015), p. 442; on gems in the aftermath of Alexander's conquests, Plantzos, *Hellenistic Engraved Gems.*

7 For the military service of Alexander's veterans, see Andrew R. Burn, « The Generalship of Alexander », *Greece & Rome*, 12/2 (1965), p. 140–154.

8 Hans van Wees, « Genocide in Archaic and Classical Greece », in Victor Caston, Silke-Maria Weineck, *Our Ancient Wars: Rethinking War through the Classics,* University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor 2016, p. 19–34.

9 Jakub Havlík, « *Terra mulitplex et varia natura.* On the Settlement Patterns of Bactria in the Hellenistic Period », *Studia Hercynia*, 25/2 (2021), p. 19–26.

10 Manolēs Andronikos, *Vergina: The Royal Tombs and the Ancient City,* Ekdotike Athenon, Athens 1984.

Phoinikas, and Agios Athanasios, the veterans were commemorated with a consistent array of grave goods very like those of Vergina.[11] And stylistic and iconographic comparisons with touchstones of Hellenistic art such as the Alexander Mosaic show how closely their commissions were aligned with the programmatic monuments of the new imperial state.[12] Almost fifty years after the Vergina excavations, we have a corpus of material extensive enough to analyze in depth the powerful ties, long unexamined, between Hellenistic art and the patrons, practices, and visual forms of Macedonian imperialism.

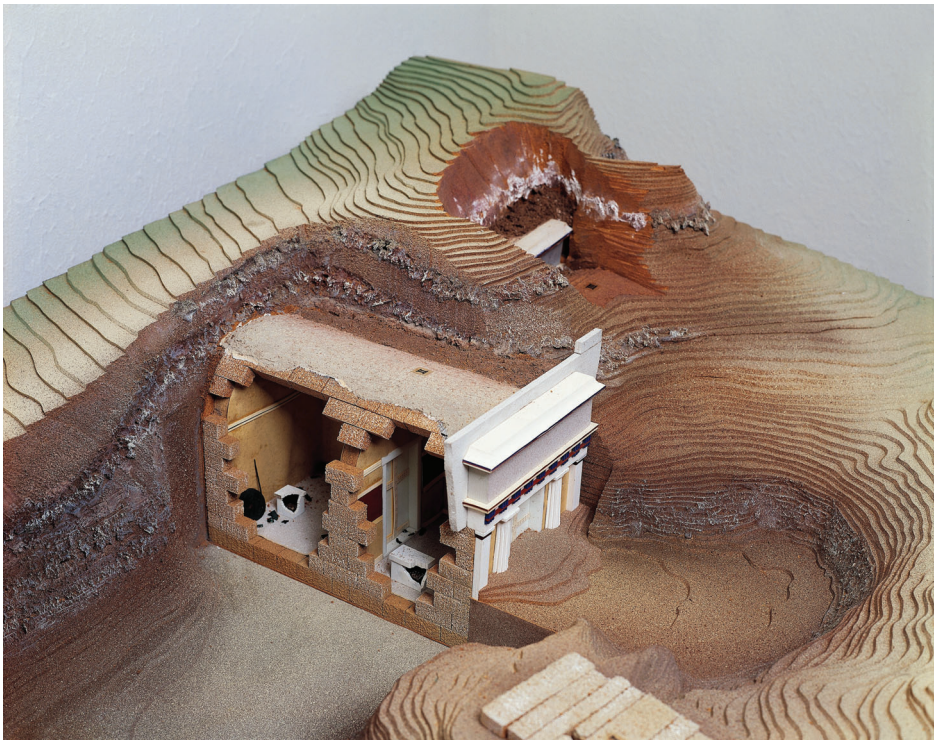


Fig. 1: Reconstruction of Tomb II, Vergina, late fourth century BCE, showing findspots of major objects. Fragments of couches were found scattered in the central chamber, the antechamber, and above the tomb vault with material from the funerary pyre. Photo courtesy G. Dagli Orti /© NPL – DeA Picture Library/Bridgeman Images.

11 On Korinos, see Matthias Besios, « Anaskaphikes ereunes ste Boreia Pieria », *To Archaiologiko Ergo stē Makedonia kai Thrakē*, 5 (1994), p. 171–178; on Lefkadia, Katerina Rhomiopoulou, *Das Palmettengrab in Lefkadia*, Zabern, Mainz 2010; and for Agios Athanasios and Phoinikas, Maria Tsimbidou-Avloniti, *Makedonikoi taphoi ston Phoinika kai ston Agio Athanasio Thessalonikes. Symbole ste melete tes eikongraphias ton taphikon mnemetes Makedonias,* Tameio Archaiologikon Poron kai Apallotrioseon Diethunse Demosiematon, Athens 2005.

12 For these comparisons, see below, fig. 2, 23, 24.

The chryselephantine couches preserved in Macedonian tombs offer a particularly illuminating case study of the material ramifications of Alexander's conquests for Hellenistic art (fig. 2). At present, 42 such couches from 38 tombs have been clearly documented in publications, and more are appearing very regularly from planned and salvage excavations.[13] When datable finds are preserved, the couches cluster in the late fourth to early third centuries BCE, the zenith of Macedonian wealth and imperial hegemony. They are often associated with grave goods, such as bronze and iron armor and weapons, that suggest their ties to Alexander's veterans.[14] So does their iconography, with images of Dionysiac revelry, battle, and the hunt. Finally, their use of precious materials, above all, ivory, connects them to the king's eastern conquests and his extraction of exotic resources. While a few of the couches have received detailed publication as part of tomb assemblages,[15] this article is the first to analyze them as an aesthetic ensemble and to articulate their connections to Hellenistic imperial art.



Fig. 2. Reconstruction of gold, glass, and ivory couch from the antechamber of Tomb II, Vergina, c. 336-317 BCE. Museum of the Royal Tombs of Vergina. Photo courtesy Wikimedia Commons. https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/88/%2B_1977_wurden_die_K%C3%B6 nigsgr%C3%A4ber_in_Vergina_entdeckt._18.jpg.

[13] See Appendix, below.

[14] E.g. Maria Tsimbidou-Avloniti, « Agios Athanasios, Makedonikos taphos III. O Oplismos tou eugenous nekrou », in *Namata: Timetikos Tomos gia ton kathegete Demetrio Pantermales*, University Studio Press, Thessalonike 2011, p. 35–363.

[15] E.g. Tsimbidou-Avloniti, *Makedonikoi taphoi ston Phoinika kai ston Agio Athanasio Thessalonikes*, p. 104–105 ; Rhomiopoulou, *Das Palmettengrab in Lefkadia*, p. 89–90.

The first of three broad sections examines the couches' archaeological contexts: the aristocratic tombs in which they were found, and the elaborate palaces and elite houses in which they were likely first used. The second section uses the insights gained from the first to analyze the couches themselves as delicate luxury objects that nonetheless, in their iconography, style, and even their material, highlighted the violence of Macedonian imperialism. The third section opens out to a wider consideration of the ephemeral practices through which the couches were activated for their patrons, that is, the feasts and funerals at which the Macedonian aristocracy both emulated and reacted against Persian precedents.

In combination, the sections outlined above bring into focus the significance of Macedonian chryselephantine couches for an understanding of the art and culture of the Early Hellenistic era. Scholars of the period have paid most attention to monumental architecture, painting, and sculpture: the familiar, high-profile media of later centuries.[16] This analysis of chryselephantine couches highlights the significance of the so-called 'minor arts' for an enhanced appreciation of the intersections of empire and material culture at the dawn of the Hellenistic era. At the same time, precisely because these couches were functional objects connected to the Macedonians' Persian-influenced feasting and funerals, they preserve the material traces of knowledge transfer *from* the conquered *to* the conquerors. They thus offer new insights into the art and culture of Macedonia's warrior aristocracy at a time of radical change.

II. *The Tomb and the* Andron*:* *The Archaeological Contexts of Macedonian Chryselephantine Couches*

The primary archaeological contexts of the chryselephantine couches – visually imposing and richly furnished burials that transformed the landscape of what is now northern Greece – are well documented in publications of planned and rescue excavations.[17] In their painted decoration and grave goods, these burials display a complex mix of festive celebration and martial violence characteristic of the self-representation of Alexander's veterans, and they constitute part of a distinctively Macedonian funerary culture inspired by, and fueled by the proceeds of, the king's conquests. The recently excavated Tomb III at Agios Athanasios, with its well-preserved paintings and revealing finds, furnishes a particularly good example of

[16] E.g., Andrew Stewart, *Faces of Power: Alexander's Image and Hellenistic Politics*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1994; Ada Cohen, *Art in the Era of Alexander the Great: Paradigms of Masculinity,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2010.

[17] See Appendix.

the ways in which Early Hellenistic Macedonian funerary art is permeated by imperial violence.[18]

The burial at Agios Athanasios was uncovered in 1994. Beneath a large tumulus, it had an elaborately decorated, temple-like facade, and on its interior a barrel-vaulted chamber in which the deceased was laid to rest (fig. 3).



Fig. 3. Façade of Tomb III, Agios Athanasios, c. 325–300 BCE. Photo courtesy Ephoria Archaiotheton Periphereias Thessalonikes.

Within the chamber, a stone podium originally held a wooden couch covered with gold, glass, and ivory decoration; best preserved were several ivory heads, likely of youthful male warriors, as well as ivory griffins and eighteen glass plaques with silver figures depicting followers of Dionysos (figs. 4, 5).[19]

[18] On the tomb, see Appendix # 3, as well as Tsimbidou-Avloniti, « Oi Taphikoi tymboi tes periokhes Ag. Athanasiou Thessalonikes (1992–1997): Ereuma kai prooptikes »; Maria Tsimbidou-Avloniti, « The Macedonian Tomb at Agios Athanasios, Thessaloniki », in Dimitrios Pandermalis (ed.), *Alexander the Great: Treasures from an Epic Era of Hellenism*, Onassis Foundation, New York 2004, p. 149–150; Tsimbidou-Avloniti, « Agios Athanasios ».

[19] Maria Tsimbidou-Avloniti, « La tombe macédonienne d'Hagios Athanasios près de Thessalonique », in Anne-Marie Guimier-Sorbets, Miltiades Hatzopoulos, Yvette Morizot (eds.), *Rois, cités, nécropoles: institutions, rites et monuments en Macédoine: Actes des colloques de Nanterre,*



Fig. 4: Ivory male head from a gold and ivory couch in Tomb III, Agios Athanasios, c. 325–300 BCE. Photo courtesy Ephoria Archaiotheton Periphereias Thessalonikes.

Fig. 5: Two ivory griffin heads from a gold and ivory couch in Tomb III, Agios Athanasios, c. 325–300 BCE. Photo courtesy Ephoria Archaiotheton Periphereias Thessalonikes.

décembre 2002 et d'Athènes, janvier 2004, Centre de recherches de l'antiquité grecque et romaine, Athens 2006, esp. fig. 2, 3.

The tomb had been looted, but held as well fragmentary armor and weapons including a breastplate, gorget, helmet, greaves, knife, and spearheads (figs. 6, 7).[20] Comparison with unlooted tombs suggests that it would originally have contained further grave goods such as gold or gilded bronze wreaths for the deceased and an extensive collection of clay or metal drinking vessels.[21] A posthumous gold coin of Philip II dates the tomb to the last quarter of the fourth century BCE, while the armor and weapons indicate that the deceased was a high-ranking military officer, likely one of Alexander's veterans (fig. 8).[22]





Fig. 6. Breastplate from Tomb III, Agios Athanasios, c. 325–300 BCE. Photo courtesy Ephoria Archaiotheton Periphereias Thessalonikes.

Fig. 7. Greaves from Tomb III, Agios Athanasios, c. 325–300 BCE. Photo courtesy Ephoria Archaiotheton Periphereias Thessalonikes.

20 Tsimbidou-Avloniti, « Agios Athanasios ».
21 Examples of unlooted tombs include Appendix # 10, 30, 32, 33.
22 Tsimbidou-Avloniti, « Agios Athanasios ».



Fig. 8. Posthumous coin of Philip II from Tomb III, Agios Athanasios, c. 325–300 BCE. Photo courtesy Ephoria Archaiotheton Periphereias Thessalonikes.

Most striking are the tomb's paintings on the exterior facade. These include golden-winged griffins in the pediment and two large-scale figures of young men, wrapped in purple cloaks and holding the enormous iron-tipped cornel-wood spears, known as *sarissas* and measuring up to 18 feet in length, that constituted the most distinctive and effective weapons of Alexander's army (fig. 9).[23]



Fig. 9. Man holding a *sarissa*, detail of fresco from the façade of Tomb III, Agios Athanasios, c. 325–300 BCE. Photo courtesy Ephoria Archaiotheton Periphereias Thessalonikes.

[23] On the *sarissa*, see Minor M. Markle, « The Macedonian Sarissa, Spear, and Related Armor », *American Journal of Archaeology*, 81/3 (1977), p. 323–339.

Above them, a frieze includes, at its center, young men feasting and drinking in a richly furnished setting along with female musical entertainers, and on the flanks, wreathed men heading to the feast on foot and on horseback, and soldiers with long spears, shorter javelins, shields, and helmets (fig. 10). The paintings feature exotic details, for instance, the purple cloaks worn by some of the individuals – recalling the Persian purple cloaks given by Alexander to his top officers – and the horn-shaped drinking vessel of Near Eastern inspiration held by one of the reclining feasters.[24] At the same time, the ornate furniture, gorgeous textiles (some richly colored, others diaphanous), and extensive display of precious metal vessels in the cupboard to the left of the diners highlight imperially derived wealth. And the painted armor and weapons so prevalent among the scene's protagonists, like the real ones inside the tomb, make clear the connection of that wealth to military force.



Fig. 10. Banqueters from the exterior of Tomb III at Agios Athanasios, late fourth century BCE. Photo courtesy Ephoria Archaiotheton Periphereias Thessalonikes.

[24] Purple cloaks: Diodorus Siculus XVII.77.4; Justin XII.3.9; Diodorus Siculus XVII.78.1; horn-shaped drinking vessel: Susanne Ebbinghaus, « Feasting Like the Persian King », in Susanne Ebbinghaus (ed.), *Animal-Shaped Vessels in the Ancient World: Drinking with Gods, Heroes, and Kings*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA 2018, p. 136–184.

Imperial wealth and military *accoutrements* characterize other tombs holding chryselephantine couches as well. The late fourth century BCE Grave A beneath the Stenomakri tumulus at Vergina, for example, held besides its couch two spearheads, a butt, a sword with a silver handle, and an iron knife, as well as two iron strigils (instruments used for scraping off oil and sweat following athletic exercise) and a gilded bronze wreath. The preserved bones of the deceased showed signs of wear indicating a long career of horse-riding, so the tomb's occupant was likely a cavalry officer.[25] Similarly, Tomb A at Derveni of c. 330–310 BCE held a large group of bronze and clay drinking vessels, a wreath with gilded bronze leaves, a lamp, spearheads, butts, and greaves, as well as wood, glass, and ivory remains from a couch.[26] Grave goods from other tombs fit the same pattern, and reach their apogee in the unlooted Royal Tomb II at Vergina – the most lavish of all preserved Macedonian tombs – which contained among its finds nineteen silver drinking vessels, four complete sets of armor, a gilded quiver full of arrows, a sarissa, twelve other spears and javelins, and two shields, one bronze and one chryselephantine.[27] While Tomb II has been identified by its excavators as that of Alexander's father Philip (d. 336 BCE) and one of his wives, close examination of its silver drinking vessels and clay salt cellars have suggested instead a later date and an identification with Alexander's successor Philip III Arrhidaios and his wife, Adea Eurydice (d. 317 BCE).[28] As discussed further below, the chryselephantine couches found in the tomb likewise support a later chronology and an association with Alexander's conquests.

Examined as an ensemble, the objects found within the tombs suggest that the burials occurred largely within a tight chronological window, essentially from the last quarter of the fourth century BCE just going into the beginning of the third.[29] Coins from burials in Abdera, Agios Athanasios, Alykes-Kitros, Nikisiani, Phoinikas, and Sedes all date c. 325–300 BCE, while datable pots at Agia Paraskevi, Korinos, Lefkadia, Pella, and Toumba Paionia also bear out this pattern.[30] Similarities among grave goods, tomb paintings, and the architectural ensembles of the burials

25 See Appendix # 38.

26 See Appendix # 10.

27 See Appendix # 32.

28 Connection to Philip II argued by, e.g., Andronikos, *Vergina: The Royal Tombs and the Ancient City*; Angeliki Kottaridi, *Macedonian Treasures: A Tour through the Museum of the Royal Tombs of Aigai*, trans. Alexandra Doumas, Kapon Editions, Athens 2011; for silver and saltcellars, see David W. J. Gill, « Inscribed Silver Plate from Tomb II at Vergina: Chronological Implications », *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens,* 77/2 (2008), p. 335–358; Susan I. Rotroff, « Spool Saltcellars in the Athenian Agora », *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*, 53/3 (1984), p. 343–354.

29 Olga Palagia, « Alexander's Battles against Persians in the Art of the Successors », in Timothy Howe, Sabine Müller, Richard Stoneman (eds.), *Ancient Historiography on War and Empire*, Oxbow Books, Oxford 2016, p. 186.

30 See Appendix # 1, 3, 16, 23, 28, 30 for datable coins, and for datable pots, # 2, 19, 21, 26, 27, 31.

likewise indicate that they form a cohesive chronological group. It is true that a complex of largely unlooted tombs from Aineia, with simpler couches and fewer, more modest grave goods, may be earlier, c. 350–325 BCE, as may Grave 1 from Katerini, while Tomb IV at Dion has been dated later, to the end of the third century, based on numismatic evidence.[31] But the overall picture is of a sudden efflorescence of chryselephantine couches and grandiose tombs in Early Hellenistic Macedonia, followed by a no less sudden decline.

The patrons of these couches and tombs belonged to a close-knit social group: probably, as archaeologists have suggested, the officers of Alexander the Great and their families.[32] Such individuals were the most likely owners of the high-quality bronze and iron armor and weapons found in the tombs.[33] They also seem the most plausible commissioners of elaborate tomb paintings like those at Agios Athanasios, along with Tomb II at Phoinikas and the Tomb of the Palmettes at Lefkadia, which revolve around war and feasting, aristocratic activities closely connected to the court (fig. 3, 11).[34]



Fig. 11. Pediment from the Tomb of the Palmettes, Lefkadia, late fourth century BCE. Photo courtesy Wikimedia Commons. https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/bf/Anthemion_Makedonian_Tomb_4.jpg.

31 See Appendix # 5–8 (Aineia), 13 (Katerini), 11 (Dion).

32 Iannis Touratsoglou, « Dated Gold: The Evidence from Hellenistic Macedonia », in Dyfri Williams (ed.), *The Art of the Greek Goldsmith*, British Museum, London 1998, p. 36–38.

33 Tsimbidou-Avloniti, *Makedonikoi taphoi ston Phoinika kai ston Agio Athanasio Thessalonikes*, p. 205, 207; Tsimbidou-Avloniti, « The Macedonian Tomb at Agios Athanasios, Thessaloniki ».

34 Agios Athanasios: Tsimbidou-Avloniti, « The Macedonian Tomb at Agios Athanasios, Thessaloniki » (warriors and feasting); Phoinikas: Tsimbidou-Avloniti, « Anaskaphikes ereunes ston Phoinika N. Thessalonikes, 1987–2006 – Mia eikosaetia anatropon » (warriors); Tomb of the Palmettes at Lefkadia: Rhomiopoulou, *Das Palmettengrab in Lefkadia* (feasting).

While many of the tomb owners have been identified by archaeologists as male, elite women, too, were sometimes buried with chryselephantine couches. In such cases – for instance at a pit grave at Abdera, Tomb II at Agios Athanasios, Grave 71 at Alykes-Kitros, Grave 2 at Methone Palaiokatakhas, and Tomb C at Sedes – they were often found closely associated with militaristic male graves, and thus likely the wives or daughters of Alexander's officers.[35] These women were buried with a different selection of grave goods than their menfolk, including jewelry, perfume bottles, and ivory or precious metal chests along with their chryselephantine couches. Still, female patrons too had couches with Dionysiac imagery and ornament; as discussed further below, such iconography connects their burials with the material traces of Macedonian imperialism. And the woman buried in the antechamber of Royal Tomb II at Vergina was surrounded by weapons and martial images, such as the gilded quiver and a couch decorated with a cavalry battle (fig. 2).[36] If she was indeed Adea Eurydice, such grave goods were fitting, since literary sources describe this queen as being trained in military maneuvers and leading armies.[37]

For both men and women, the chryselephantine couches with which they were buried were prized possessions that despite their fragility, were likely used during life. Fragmentary remains of ivory, glass, and amber from the palace at Vergina have in fact been identified as coming from a couch, though they have not yet been published in detail.[38] So, too, literary sources of the period document the production of ivory furniture for domestic use – for instance, by the family of the Greek orator Demosthenes – as do finds from later Hellenistic and Roman elite homes.[39] And it is important to note the sheer scale and complexity of the couches, which were decorated not only with ivory but also with finely worked gilded wood and sandwich glass: thin gold leaf sandwiched between slender sheets of translucent glass, a spectacular, rare, and valuable medium in the Early Hellenistic era.[40] As archaeologists have argued, assembling and working these materials would take skilled artisans considerable time and effort; the couches were not

35 See Appendix # 1, 4, 18, 22, 30.

36 Kottaridi, *Macedonian Treasures*, p. 50–52.

37 Polyaenus, *Strategms* XVIII.60.

38 For the ivory, gold, and amber remains from the palace at Vergina, see Kottaridi, *Macedonian Treasures*, p. 81, and for the argument that these couches were used in life, Kottaridi, *Macedonian Treasures*, p. 82; Palagia, « Alexander's Battles against Persians », p. 183.

39 Demosthenes 27.10; for later Hellenistic domestic contexts with ivory couches, see Andrianou, *The Furniture and Furnishings of Ancient Greek Houses and Tombs*, p. 34–35, and for Roman ones, Chiara Bianchi, « I letti con rivestimento in osso e in avorio: analisi dei rinvenimenti dai contesti di abitato e funerari », *LANX* 7/1 (2010), p. 50–51.

40 On sandwich glass, see Giulia Cesarin, « Gold-Glasses: From their Origin to Late Antiquity in the Mediterranean », in Daniela Rosenow et al. (eds.), *Things that Travelled: Mediterranean Glass in the First Millennium AD*, UCL Press, London 2018, p. 22–45.

objects that could quickly be produced when someone died. More plausibly, the couches found in tombs preserve the traces of what was once a broader production of ivory furniture for Macedonian elite homes and palaces, most of which fell victim to Roman looting in the second century BCE when the tables were turned and the Macedonians found themselves the victims, rather than the perpetrators, of imperial conquest.[41]

If the chryselephantine couches were indeed created for use during the lives of their patrons, then their initial contexts were the elite houses and royal palaces of Early Hellenistic Macedonia. These lavish residences, concentrated in the traditional royal capital of Vergina and the new one, Pella, are familiar as some of the best-preserved examples of Hellenistic domestic architecture, and as important models for later patrons**,** for instance, the owners of Republican Roman villas.[42] But like the tombs described above, they also exemplify a distinctly Macedonian style of imperial domination. The houses share with the burials a grandiose architecture with particular attention to facades, as well as decoration that combines exotic details with complex and sophisticated images of violence.

The houses' decoration was concentrated in the rooms given over to feasting and drinking. These rooms, known in Greek as *andrones* (« men's rooms »), are identifiable by their *trottoirs***,** made to accommodate couches for reclining diners, and often by their sturdy and well-preserved mosaic floors.[43] In the Early Hellenistic House of Dionysos at Pella, for example, two andrones off the southern peristyle featured impressively naturalistic and detailed scenes made of pebble mosaics – an early technique where real colored pebbles rather than tesserae were used – that depicted, respectively, a lion hunt and Dionysos riding a panther; a griffin attacking a deer appeared at one room's entrance, while the antechambers had simpler geometric patterns (figs. 12, 13).[44]

41 Cesare Letta, *Due letti funerari in osso dal centro italico-romano della Valle d'Amplero (Abruzzo)*, Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei, Roma 1984, p. 92–94.

42 Frederick E. Winter, « Residential Architecture », in *Studies in Hellenistic Architecture,* University of Toronto Press, Toronto 2006, p. 157–182.

43 Katherine Dunbabin, « *Ut graeco more biberetur*: Greeks and Romans on the Cining Vouch», in Inge Nielsen, Hanne Nielsen (eds.), *Meals in a Social Context*, Aarhus University Press, Aarhus – Oxford 1998, p. 82–83.

44 Cohen, *Art in the Era of Alexander the Great*, p. 64–68.





Fig. 12. Lion hunt, mosaic from andron in the House of Dionysos, Pella, c. 325–300 BCE. Universal History Archive/UIG/Bridgeman.

Fig. 13. Dionysos on a panther, mosaic from andron in the House of Dionysos, Pella, c. 325–300 BCE. Archaeological Museum of Pella, Greece© Archivio J. Lange / © NPL – DeA Picture Library/Bridgeman Images.

In the hunt scene, the men's poses and idealized nude bodies aligned them with earlier depictions of heroes in Greek art, while the lion they face is unusual in Hellenic hunt imagery and recalls the lion hunts of Near Eastern kings as well as those of Alexander the Great in Persia.[45] The mosaic of Dionysos riding a panther, too, calls to mind Alexander and the east, since the wine-god's eastern triumph was invoked by the Macedonian king as a precedent for his own campaigns.[46] In both mosaics, the artist struggled with the exotic details; neither feline is especially convincing, most likely because the artist had little personal experience with big cats. But the mosaics nonetheless testify to the importance of such imagery (in each scene, the animal is at the literal center of the image), while also emphasizing how the eastern feline is dominated by more familiar, Hellenic-style men.

As the construction of the androns at the House of Dionysos suggests, these rooms once held couches, arranged in an interlocking U-shape with the mosaic at the center. If the couches resembled the chryselephantine ones examined in this article, then the floors and furniture of the androns would have echoed one another in terms of both style and iconography; so, too, the nude pale bodies and vividly colored, expressive faces on the mosaics give us some sense of how the fragmentary ivories might originally have appeared. And the owner of the androns likely came came from the same elite and militaristic social milieu as the deceased in the Macedonian burials described above. Judging from the enormous scale of the house (3,400 square meters), its date in the last quarter of the fourth century BCE, and its programmatic imperial imagery, archaeologists have suggested it belonged to one of Alexander's officers.[47]

Other elite Macedonian residences bear out and extend this pattern. In the House of the Abduction of Helen at Pella, for example, the androns were decorated with the killing of a stag, with strong iconographic similarities to the lion hunt described above but a more chaotic and dramatic style, along with an image of sexual violence: the rape of Helen by the Athenian hero Theseus (fig. 14).[48]

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45 The men's poses especially evoke the Early Classical Tyrannicides, on which see Vincent Azoulay, *The Tyrant-slayers of Ancient Athens: A Tale of Two Statues*, trans. Janet Lloyd, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2017; for the lion hunt, see Olga Palagia, « Hephaestion's Pyre and the Royal Hunt of Alexander », in Elizabeth Baynham, Brian Bosworth (eds.), *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2010, p. 167–204.

46 Strabo, *Geography* XV.9; Arrian, *Anabasis* V.1–2.

47 On the scale of the house, see Winter, « Residential Architecture », p. 263; for the association with one of Alexander's officers, Palagia, « Hephaestion's Pyre and the Royal Hunt of Alexander ».

48 On the mosaics from the House of the Abduction of Helen, see Cohen, *Art in the Era of Alexander the Great,* p. 20–63.



Fig. 14: Stag Hunt from the House of the Abduction of Helen, Pella, c. 325–300 BCE. Universal History Archive/UIG/Bridgeman Images.

While less eastern-focused than the scenes from the House of Dionysos, these mosaics likewise highlighted force and domination, and they too find echoes in the imagery from tombs, for instance, the «Tomb of Eurydice» at Vergina, with a painted scene of the Rape of Persephone adorning its impressive marble throne.[49] They may also have had a similar patron, since the House of the Abduction of Helen, too, has been dated to the late fourth century and associated with one of Alexander's veterans.[50]

As with the Royal Tombs of Vergina, the palace there testifies both to the closeness of king and officers in terms of their artistic tastes, and to the outsize scale and ambition characteristic of Macedonian royalty. While elite houses

[49] For the throne from the « Tomb of Eurydice», see Palagia, « Alexander the Great, the Royal Throne and the Funerary Thrones of Macedonia », p. 27–29.

[50] Cohen, *Art in the Era of Alexander the Great*, p. 66.

measured about 3,000 square meters and contained one or two androns, the Vergina palace had a floorplan of 9,450 square meters – three times the size of the Parthenon – and could contain around 224 couches, while the open-air peristyle in the palace's center could seat as many as 3,000 individuals.[51] Still, Vergina's androns, though larger than those of those of the Pella houses, had pebble mosaics with notable similarities, for instance one with curving vegetal ornament that strongly resembled the vines around the Stag Hunt mosaic, and another that archaeologists suggest showed the Rape of Europa (fig. 15).[52]



Fig. 15. Mosaic with vegetal ornament from an andron at the palace of Vergina, second half of fourth century BCE. © Archivio J. Lange / © NPL – DeA Picture Library/Bridgeman Images.

[51] Stella G. Miller, « Hellenistic Royal Palaces », in Margaret Miles (ed.), *A Companion to Greek Architecture*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc, Hoboken, NJ 2016, p. 288–299.

[52] Miller, « Hellenistic Royal Palaces ».

The Vergina palace has most recently been dated by its excavators to the reign of Philip II, due to analogies in its architectural details with mid-fourth century BCE monuments such as the Mausoleum of Halikarnassos (c. 353–350 BCE).[53] But limited finds made it difficult to date the building foundations precisely, and it clearly continued to be inhabited and enlarged over time.[54] It thus seems possible that the chryselephantine couch whose remains were found in the palace dated to the age of Alexander and his successors, and adorned a room aligned, functionally and stylistically, with the other androns under consideration here.

Taken as an ensemble, the elite tombs and houses in which the chryselephantine couches were used are highly revealing; they suggest how Alexander's veterans chose to surround themselves with exotic opulence and violent imagery in life and death. Even after returning from their campaigns, these officers ate and drank in rooms dominated by mosaics depicting the killing of animals and the rape of women: themes closely associated, as art historian Ada Cohen has demonstrated, with war and conquest.[55] They also celebrated Dionysos, god of eastern triumph, on their floor mosaics as well as their precious metal drinking vessels (most often found in tombs, but likely, as with the couches, used in life as well).[56] And after death, these veterans were buried in chambers bristling with weapons and permeated with militaristic imagery. While the veterans had returned to Macedonia, their houses and tombs suggest that they never really left Alexander's campaigns behind.

III. *Battle and Hunt, Gold and Ivory: The Aesthetics of the Chryselephantine Couches*

The chryselephantine couches that once decorated Early Hellenistic Macedonian tombs and houses are fragmentarily preserved, and it is often difficult to envision the lavish mixed-media ensembles they once were. But the couches of Royal Tomb II at Vergina, with around 4,000 ivory pieces discovered by excavators, suggest their basic visual format and iconography; so, too, do carved and painted marble couches from tombs such as those at Potidaia and Dion that seem intended to emulate the ivory ones.[57] And paintings like those of Agios Athanasios give precious glimpses of both ephemeral additions – for instance, cushions and

53 Angeliki Kottaridi, « The Palace of Aegae », in Robin Lane Fox (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Ancient Macedon: Studies in the Archaeology and History of Macedon, 650 BC–300 AD*, Brill, Leiden 2011, p. 302.

54 Kottaridi, « The Palace of Aegae », p. 301–306.

55 Cohen, *Art in the Era of Alexander the Great*.

56 E.g., the Derveni Krater, for whose lifetime use see Beryl Barr-Sharrar, *The Derveni Krater: Masterpiece of Classical Greek Metalwork*, American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Princeton 2008, p. 180–181.

57 For the 4,000 fragments from Royal Tomb II at Vergina, see Kottaridi, *Macedonian Treasures*, p. 80; for the marble couches, see Sismanidis, *Klines kai klinoeides kataskeues ton makedonikon taphon.*

textiles – and the festive activities the couches were meant to serve. Pulling together these strands of evidence allows for a clearer picture of the chryselephantine couches' original aesthetic impact and their rightful place in Hellenistic imperial art.

The Macedonian couches' overall visual format was clear, consistent, and traditional. They boasted a large wooden frame of about two meters in length, one in width, one in height, covered with ivory, gold, and glass.[58] At both ends of the couch were flat rectangular legs topped by double ivory volutes curving around transparent glass eyes, and ornamented as well by groups of small rectangular plaques of sandwich glass; elegant, attenuated ivory palmettes; and at their bases slender, tapering, ivory-covered feet (fig. 2). In their ornamental decoration, the Macedonian couches resemble a group of Archaic ones found in the Kerameikos cemetery in Athens, decorated with amber, gold, and ivory and likely used for the burials of high-ranking Lydian ambassadors.[59] Vase paintings from Archaic and Early Classical Greece also show couches with similar patterns, suggesting a well-established consensus about what a luxury couch should look like in the Hellenic world (fig. 16).[60]



Fig. 16. Hegisiboulos Painter, Athenian red-figure kylix with drinking scene, c. 500 BCE, showing reclining symposiasts on couches. Metropolitan Museum of Art 07.286.47. Photo courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art.

58 Andrianou, *The Furniture and Furnishings of Ancient Greek Houses and Tombs*, p. 39–43.

59 Eleni S. Banou, Leonidas K. Bournias, *Kerameikos*, John S. Latsis Public Benefit Foundation, Athens 2014, p. 119; Elizabeth Baughan, *Couched in Death: Klinai and Identity in Anatolia and Beyond,* University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, WI 2013, p. 61–63.

60 Helmut Kyrieleis, *Throne und Klinen; Studien zur Formgeschichte altorientalischer und griechischer Sitz- und Liegemöbel vorhellenistischer Zeit*, De Gruyter, Berlin 1969, p. 151–155.

Where the Early Hellenistic Macedonian couches differ from their predecessors is in their extensive figural decoration. While earlier couches had their fronts decorated with simple ornamental friezes (for instance, in the Kerameikos couches, rosettes), the Macedonian ones concentrated their most labor-intensive and technically sophisticated carving there. Indeed, in the reconstructed couch from Royal Tomb II at Vergina, two friezes were juxtaposed: a smaller low-relief band with sedate Dionysiac imagery above, and a much larger, high-relief one below with dramatic scenes of a battle (fig. 2). And the marble couches from sites like Dion and Potidaia employed similar decorative strategies, their fronts adorned with beautifully detailed paintings of the followers of Dionysos or dramatic battle scenes.[61] There are certainly Greek precedents for figurally decorated furniture, for example, Pheidias's chryselephantine Olympian Zeus, whose throne was decorated with Nikai and scenes from Greek mythology (fig. 17).[62]

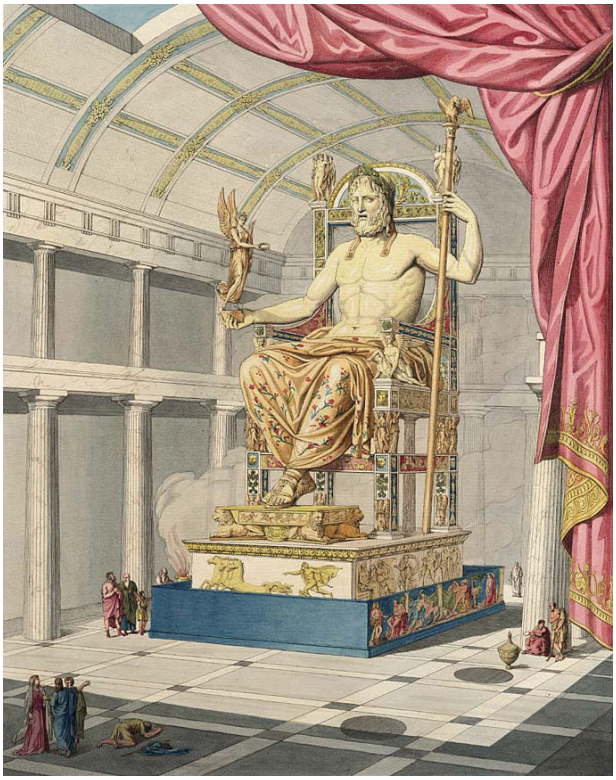


Fig. 17. Reconstruction of the chryselephantine Zeus by Pheidias, Olympia, c. 430–400 BCE. Photo courtesy Wikimedia Commons,

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/66/Le_Jupiter_Olympien_ou_l%27art_de_la_sculpture_antique.jpg.

61 Sismanidis, *Klines kai klinoeides kataskeues ton makedonikon taphon,* p. 21–74 (Potidaia), 91–95 (Dion).
62 Pausanias 5.11.2.

But it is also worth noting the visual parallels with Near Eastern couches, for instance, the Banquet Relief of Ashurbanipal, with a frieze of rampant lions on the stretcher at the base of the couch, as well as the longstanding and extensive Near Eastern tradition of furniture decorated with figural ivory carving (figs. 18, 19).[63]





Fig. 18: Ivory furniture plaque with lion-headed figure, Assyrian palace at Nimrud, c. 900–700 BCE; Metropolitan Museum of Art 61.197.12. Photo courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Fig. 19. Gypsum relief showing banquet of Assyrian ruler Ashurbanipal, Assyrian palace at Ninevah, c. 645–665 BCE. British Museum. Wikimedia Commons https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/f1/Assyrian_Relief_of_the_Banquet_of_Ashurbanipal_From_Nineveh_Gypsum_N_Palace_British_Museum_01.jpg/2560pxAssyrian_Relief_of_the_Banquet_of_Ashurbanipal_From_Nineveh_Gypsum_N_Palace_British_Museum_01.jpg.

63 Kyrieleis, *Throne und Klinen; Studien zur Formgeschichte altorientalischer und griechischer Sitz- und Liegemöbel vorhellenistischer Zeit,* p. 6–23 (Assyrian parallels), 60–62 (ivory decoration on furniture).

The ivory couches' possible Near Eastern precedents were both enhanced and complicated by their iconography. Significant in this regard are the images of Persians – defeated Persians – on some couches' battle scenes.[64] So, too, the Dionysiac scenes on some couches, like those of the mosaic from the House of Dionysos at Pella, perhaps alluded to Alexander's eastern triumphs (fig 13, 20).[65] And the griffins on some couches may also have appeared to the officers as connected to their conquests, since these mythological creatures were described in Alexander's day as residing at the ends of the earth, and in particular, in South Asia (fig. 5).[66]



Fig. 20: Ivory image of Dionysos, Ariadne, and a satyr from the chryselephantine couch in Tomb III, Vergina, late fourth century BCE. Museum of the Royal Tombs at Vergina. Wikimedia Commons. https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/1/17/%2B_1977_wurden_die_K%C3%B6nigsgr%C3%A4ber_in_Vergina_entdeckt._19.jpg/2560px-%2B_1977_wurden_die_K%C3%B6nigsgr%C3%A4ber_in_Vergina_entdeck t._19.jpg.

64 See Appendix # 19, 32 (?); Hariclia Brecoulaki et al., « A Microcosm of Colour and Shine. The Polychromy of Chryselephantine Couches from Ancient Macedonia », *Techne (Paris, France)*, 40 (2014), p. 8–22.

65 See Appendix # 3, 20, 22, 25, 32, 33.

66 See Appendix # 3**,** 5, 24, 25, 28, 29, 32, 33, 37; Brecoulaki et al., « A Microcosm of Colour and Shine » fig. 12. On griffins in Early Hellenistic art, see Hallie Franks, *The World Underfoot: Mosaics and Metaphor in the Greek Symposium*, Oxford University Press, New York – Oxford 2018, p. 52–55; for their association with South Asia, Ktesias, *Indika* F 45h 26 (cited in Aelian, *De Natura Animalium* IV.27).

While some scenes on Macedonian couches referenced the east, their iconography and style also connected them to the most up-to-date Greek art. The low-relief Dionysiac friezes included smooth nude youths, chubby erotes, and women with fluttering drapery in the best Late Classical manner, along with satyrs, herms, and images of the god Dionysos himself with more mature and strongly marked features that prefigure the Hellenistic baroque style seen at Pergamon (fig. 20).[67] The figures from hunt and battle scenes are even more vivid and innovative. The well-preserved heads from Vergina, Lefkadia, Korinos, Phoinikas, and Agios Athanasios all have descriptive, individualized features animated by highly emotive expressions: deeply furrowed brows, uplifted eyes, lips half open as though about to speak (figs. 4, 21, 22).[68] Their bodies, when preserved enough to judge, reinforce this sense of drama and dynamism. The couches from Vergina, for instance, are full of men on rearing horses, infantry soldiers poised to strike, and even one unfortunate individual sinking before a lion's attack (fig. 2).[69] And when we can glimpse something of their original coloristic effects through the preservation of paint and gilded wood, the images possess yet more evocative verisimilitude.[70] They are all the more impressive given that the images are on a minute scale; the ivory heads, for example, are around two inches high.



Fig. 21. Cleanshaven ivory head from a chryselephantine couch in the central chamber of Tomb II, Vergina, c. 336–317 BCE. Museum of the Royal Tombs of Vergina. Universal History Archive/UIG/Bridgeman Images.

[67] For Late Classical comparanda, see Andrew Stewart, *Greek Sculpture: An Exploration,* Yale University Press, New Haven 1990, pl. 421–22, 36–37, 509–10, 607; for the Hellenistic baroque see Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age*, p. 111–226.

[68] See Appendix # 3, 20, 28, 32, 33; Brecoulaki et al. «A Microcosm of Colour and Shine », fig. 9.

[69] Brecoulaki et al., «A Microcosm of colour and Shine », fig. 1.

[70] Brecoulaki et al., «A Microcosm of colour and Shine ».



Fig. 22. Bearded ivory head from a chryselephantine couch in the central chamber of Tomb II, Vergina, c. 336–317 BCE. Credit: G. Dagli Orti /© NPL – DeA Picture Library/Bridgeman Images.

Two of the ivory heads from Royal Tomb II at Vergina were identified when first excavated as portraits of Philip II and Alexander the Great, and used to label the tomb as that of Philip (figs. 21, 22).[71] At the time of their excavation, the heads appeared unique, distinctive, and certifiably portrait-like: unprecedented objects within the visual culture of late fourth century Macedonia. But as more chryselephantine couches have come to light, the Vergina heads seem more familiar, deploying characteristic visual formulae within set compositions concerning war and hunting.

But if the Vergina heads now appear less original than was initially claimed, they are in no way less meaningful. Rather, the remarkably cohesive visual language to which they belonged was enhanced, indeed, made comprehensible, precisely through repetition. Good comparisons for the couches are the late fourth century BCE Alexander Sarcophagus from Sidon, the hunt painting from Royal Tomb II at Vergina, the domestic mosaics of Pella described above, and the Alexander Mosaic, a Republican Roman work based on a Hellenistic painting.[72] All these monuments share a dramatic yet descriptive style, with a focus on intense action and emotion combined with meticulously observed details of dress and individualized faces. They also feature repeated visual tropes, for instance, a

71 Andronikos, *Vergina: the Royal Tombs and the Ancient City*, p. 129–131.

72 Alexander Sarcophagus: Karl Schefold, Max Seidel, *Der Alexander-Sarkophag,* Propyläen Verlag, Berlin 1968; hunt painting: Hallie Franks, *Hunters, Heroes, Kings: The Frieze of Tomb II at Vergina,* The American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Athens 2012; Pella: Pollitt, *Art in the Hellenistic Age*, p. 40–42; Alexander Mosaic: Ada Cohen, *The Alexander Mosaic: Stories of Victory and Defeat*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1997.

kingly rider on a rearing horse (figs. 2, 23, 24). The visual language is so consistent that it likely goes back to major public monuments. Plausible precedents are the famous paintings and sculpted groups that, according to literary sources, were commissioned by Alexander and his officers. Created by well-known artists such as Lysippos and Apelles, these works were celebrated in their own time and influential for centuries; though later works like the Alexander Mosaic may recall them, all the originals are now lost.[73]



Fig. 23: Detail, Alexander Mosaic, Pompeii, House of the Faun, late second century BCE. Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples, Campania, Italy/Bridgeman Images

[73] Works by Lysippos and Apelles: Plutarch, *Alexander* 4.1–2; Arrian I.16.4; dedication by Alexander's companion Krateros at Delphi: Plutarch, *Alexander* 40.4; Pliny, *Natural History* XXXIV.64.



Fig. 24: Detail, Alexander Sarcophagus, Sidon, late fourth century BCE. Istanbul, Archaeological Museum. © NPL – DeA Picture Library/Bridgeman Images.

The loss of these famous works makes monuments like the chryselephantine couches and Pella mosaics all the more important, because they show firsthand what the art of Alexander's age was like. What comparison with other artworks demonstrates is that the couches are by no means anomalous – rather, they are closely integrated into the new visual language of imperial power at the moment of its emergence in late fourth century Macedonia. Their connection to imperial power, so marked in their iconography and style, is also suggested by their materials, above all, ivory.

For Alexander's officers, ivory was an attractive and highly significant medium. In part, the officers appreciated ivory for its cost and rarity; they used it to signal their affluence, in a society that valorized wealth and viewed it as the sign, and the appropriate reward, for heroism.[74]

[74] Elizabeth Donnelly Carney, *King and Court in Ancient Macedonia: Rivalry, Treason and Conspiracy*, Classical Press of Wales, Swansea 2015, p. 233–236.

The officers may also have enjoyed ivory's stunning aesthetic qualities. Ivory is soft to carve and yet preserves detail beautifully; it has a creamy appearance, and can be polished to a high sheen. It also holds pigment well, far better for instance than marble, and the Macedonian couches fully exploited the medium for its coloristic effect. Particularly when juxtaposed with the metallic sheen of gold and the glimmer of glass, ivory showed to advantage in the couches of Alexander's officers. With its luminosity and preciousness, it contributed to the ambiance of royal opulence that was the goal of every Hellenistic feast.

Along with its materialistic and aesthetic attractions, ivory connected Alexander's officers with literary and artistic works of the revered past. It was a material celebrated by Homer, for instance in the reins of Mydon, the couch of Penelope, and Odysseus and Penelope's famous bed.[75] For the Macedonians, these Homeric references served as a model for their lived experience, with the visual evocation of Homer's world enhancing their sense of themselves the true heirs of Ajax, Achilles, etc. And in the Classical era, ivory was associated with the most prestigious sculpted commissions, for instance, Pheidias's Olympian Zeus of the later fifth century BCE (fig. 17).[76]

But while the officers' use of ivory connected them to the past, they could also see in it more contemporary resonances. During their campaigns, the officers had likely observed Near Eastern ivory furniture like that found in the Assyrian palace at Nimrud or the Persian royal capital of Susa; they could thus associate their own luxury objects with the loot they beheld as conquerors (figs. 18, 19).

As these Near Eastern locations suggest, the origin of the material was also significant. Taken from the tusks of African or Asian elephants, or more unusually from the teeth of the Egyptian hippopotamus, ivory originated far away from Macedonia, in regions to which Alexander's conquests gave new access.[77] And indeed, the officers had firsthand experience with Asian elephants, because they fought against a massive force of war elephants assembled by a king they called Poros at the Jhelum River in what is now Pakistan (fig. 25).[78] They won, but literary descriptions make clear that it was a brutal and terrifying battle for the Macedonians, with the elephants spearing men with their tusks as well as seizing them with their trunks and trampling them underfoot.[79] With the officers' experience of this battle in mind, their couches' iconography takes on new

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75 Homer, *Iliad* V.583; *Odyssey* XIX.55–58, XXIII.199; Kenneth Lapatin, *Chryselephantine Statuary in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2001, p. 15.

76 Lapatin, *Chryselephantine Statuary in the Ancient Mediterranean world*, p. 79–85.

77 Antonia Boström, « Bone/Ivory Carving: Materials and Techniques », in Hugh Brigstocke (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Western Art,* Oxford University Press, Oxford 2001.

78 Strabo, *Geography* XV.9; Arrian, *Indica* 1, *Anabasis* V.1–2; Justin, *Epitome* XII.7.6–8; Curtius VIII.10; Stoneman, *The Greek Experience of India: From Alexander to the Indo-Greeks*, p. 189–192.

79 Arrian V.15.5–7; Curtius VIII.14.9–13; Diodorus Siculus XVII.87.3–5; Andrew M. Devine, « The Battle of Hydaspes: A Tactical and Source-Critical Study », *Ancient World*, 16/3 (1987), p. 91–112.

significance; their knowledge of the material's origins could only have enhanced the resonances of the violent scenes depicted with it.



Fig. 25: Silver medallion of Alexander the Great showing his battle against King Poros on a war-elephant, c. 326–323. ANS 1959.254.86. Image courtesy of the American Numismatic Society.

Likewise inherent to ivory as a medium was eastern conquest. Alexander's victory over Poros did not just open up trade routes; it gave him direct access to elephants because he captured in battle most of his opponent's war elephants.[80] The king incorporated the elephants into his army and brought them back to Babylon with him, even having them serve as bodyguards around his tent.[81] After his death, the officers continued to encounter elephants, because every self-respecting Hellenistic monarch had elephants in his army.[82] The elephants were appreciated particularly for their fighting prowess, but after their deaths, their tusks were also valuable. Indeed, one might suggest that the dramatically lower price for ivory by the first quarter of the third century – it drops by about two thirds[83] – is due in part to the large number of elephants that entered the Hellenistic kingdoms for war.

The medium of ivory is not always associated with elephants, violence, or eastern conquest. In the massive chryselephantine statues of the Classical era, such as Pheidias's Zeus, one might argue that the source of ivory is irrelevant, that the tremendously sophisticated technical processes of unscrolling, softening, and molding required to create works on such a monumental scale function very effectively to occlude and overcome the material's origins.[84] So, too, the patrons and viewers of Classical chryselephantine statues rarely had personal experience of elephants, or of the regions of Africa or South Asia from which they came. Those who beheld the Early Hellenistic Macedonian couches, by contrast, had vivid, often

80 Diodorus Siculus XVII.98.2; Arrian, *Anabasis* VII.18.2; Howard Hayes Scullard, *The Elephant in the Greek and Roman World,* Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY 1974, p. 74.

81 Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* XII 539f.

82 Graham Wrightson, « Macedonian Armies, Elephants, and the Perfection of Combined Arms», in Timothy Howe, Erin Garvin, Graham Wrightson (eds.), *Greece, Macedon, and Persia*, Oxbow Books, Oxford 2015, p. 59–68.

83 Lapatin, *Chryselephantine Statuary in the Ancient Mediterranean World*, p. 14 n. 97.

84 On the technical processes necessary to make these statues, see Kenneth Lapatin, « Pheidias elephantourgos », *American Journal of Archaeology*, 101/4 (1997), p. 663–682.

traumatic memories of elephants, or were likely related to those who did. And they surrounded themselves with images that directly depicted their eastern conquests, such as battles with Persians, or metaphorically referenced them (hunts, griffins, Dionysos, mythological rapes). For such patrons and viewers, the chryselephantine couches' materials enhanced their association with Alexander's conquests; in this way, the ivories are paradigmatic works of Hellenistic imperial art.

IV. *Feasts and Funerals in Early Hellenistic Macedonia*

The Macedonian officers' particular world of violent eastern conquest and its aftermath gave rise to ephemeral practices that both recalled and reworked Near Eastern precedents. Two especially stand out: the aristocratic funeral and the courtly feast. To begin with the funeral, as Archaic and Classical cemeteries at Vergina and Sindos attest, Macedonian elites had long buried their dead with rich grave goods, for instance, gold textile ornaments and iron helmets.[85] But in the era of Alexander's veterans, aristocrats celebrated more elaborate funerals, erected larger, more imposing monuments, and in some cases returned to the grave to perform repeated rituals. For all these practices, they gave a central role to the chryselephantine couches, in ways that expanded and transformed the resonances of these objects for the mourners who viewed them.

In Early Hellenistic Macedonia, the wealthy and powerful began their funerals with the deceased laid on a bier, often one of the chryselephantine couches.[86] Mourners watched as the dead were transported by cart to the gravesite – in some cases, the wheel ruts of the cart are still visible in excavations – and then, if they chose cremation, to a pyre near the tomb.[87] There they surrounded the dead with offerings, kindled the flames, and saw the corpse consumed by fire. At length the bereaved doused the flames, washed the bones of the dead in wine (also attested archaeologically), wrapped them in purple cloth, and put them into a vase or chest of precious metal.[88] They then entered the tomb itself and placed the remains on a second couch, chryselephantine or sometimes stone, and filled the chamber with

85 Dorota Gorzelany, *Macedonia – Alexandria: Monumental Funerary Complexes of the Late Classical and Hellenistic Age*. Archaeopress, Oxford 2019, p. 25–29.

86 E.g., Athanasia Kyriakou, « The History of a Fourth Century BC Tumulus at Aigai/Vergina. Definitions in space and time », in Olivier Henry, Ute Kelp (eds.), *Tumulus as sema: Space, Politics, Culture and Religion in the First Millennium BC*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2016, p. 145.

87 Gorzelany, *Macedonia – Alexandria*, p. 36 n. 56, 74–76.

88 Gorzelany, *Macedonia – Alexandria*, p. 74 n. 205.

grave goods (fig. 1).[89] For inhumation, the ritual was simpler, but similar; the deceased was brought to the tomb in the same way, placed on a couch, and given gifts. After the funeral, many tombs were covered with huge burial mounds – the non-royal Stenomakri Tumulus at Vergina, for example, was 44 m long, 25 m wide, and 5 m high – but a passageway was preserved so that mourners could return to bring offerings, or other family members could be buried in the same tomb or nearby.[90] All this was done in a spectacular and highly public manner, outside the city walls but close by, and often along a major thoroughfare.[91] Macedonian elites thus celebrated their dead in a very prominent way and for what was likely a broad audience; the effort and expense they lavished on their funerals demonstrated their wealth and increased their prestige in what was, by the Early Hellenistic age, an extremely competitive aristocracy.

Early Hellenistic Macedonian aristocrats were able to commemorate their dead with such lavish funerals due to the wealth that flowed from their imperial conquests. Only those with extraordinary fortunes could contemplate putting into tombs so much precious metal – contemporary Athenian graves have just a few clay vessels[92] – or covering them with such enormous, labor-intensive earthworks. In burying the dead, Macedonian elites used their wealth partly to emulate Homeric heroes, with their pyres evoking, for instance, the famous funeral of Patroklos in the *Iliad*.[93] But they also likely took inspiration from the places they had conquered. Their tumuli, for example, resemble those of Lydia in southwestern Turkey, their barrel-vaulted chamber tombs evoke Egyptian architecture, and their graves' elaborate facades, with columns and doors, recall rock-cut tombs in both western Turkey and the Persian heartland.[94] So, too, their burial with couches, unusual for Macedonians before the Early Hellenistic era,

89 For the choice of chryselephantine or stone couches, see Dimitra Andrianou, « Chairs, Beds, and Tables: Evidence for Furnished Interiors in Hellenistic Greece», *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*, 75/2 (2006), p. 241.

90 For the dimensions of the Stenomakri Tumulus, see Kyriakou, « The History of a Fourth Century BC Tumulus at Aigai/Vergina », p. 144; for mourners returning to the tomb, Gorzelany, *Macedonia – Alexandria*, p. 68.

91 Gorzelany, *Macedonia - Alexandria*, p. 47.

92 Sanne Houby-Nielsen, « Revival of Archaic Funerary Practices in the Hellenistic and Roman Kerameikos », *Proceedings of the Danish Institute of Archaeology*, 2 (1998), p. 130.

93 Homer, *Iliad* XXIII.1–897.

94 Tumuli: Richard Liebhart, Lucas Stephens, « Tumulus MM: Fit for a King », in C. Brian Rose, Gareth Darbyshire (eds.), *The Golden Age of King Midas*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia 2016, p. 28–39; barrel-vaults: Von Mangoldt, *Makedonische Grabarchitektur: Die Makedonischen Kammergräber und ihre Vorläufer*, p. 21; rock-cut tombs: Janos Fedak, *Monumental Tombs of the Hellenistic Age: A Study of Selected Tombs from the Pre-Classical to the Early Imperial Era*, University of Toronto Press, Toronto, CA 1990, p. 96–101 (western Turkey); Erich Friedrich Schmidt, *Persepolis*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1953, vol. III (Persepolis).

finds close parallels in Achaemenid Turkey, where tombs with stone couches arranged as for a banquet are remarkably similar to the later Macedonian ones.[95]

A final source of inspiration for Alexander's officers was the burial practice of their king himself. Given his many battles, Alexander performed frequent funerals for the war dead; he also conducted lavish public ceremonies for several of his officers who grew ill and died.[96] Most prominent was that of the king's closest companion and lover Hephaistion, whose funeral pyre in Babylon was described by literary sources as gargantuan, enormously expensive, and decorated with a mix of traditional Hellenic and Near Eastern imagery.[97] The king's officers are even said to have brought portraits in gold and ivory to the pyre, a detail that suggests how appropriate such materials could be to honor the dead.[98] For their own funerals, Macedonian aristocrats did not emulate Alexander precisely – the iconography of their paintings and sculptures, for instance, remained far more resolutely Hellenic – so, too, they borrowed eclectically from a range of Near Eastern and Homeric burial practices. And they made all these borrowed elements serve highly Macedonian ends, enhancing their reputation in an era of high-stakes competition for imperial power.

In their feasts as in their funerals, Macedonian aristocrats drew on a range of traditional precedents to serve the goals of their particular historical moment. They looked, to begin with, to the well-established institution of the Greek symposium. As in southern Greece, Macedonian elite men attended feasts and respectable women were likely excluded, although there might be some courtesans or flute-players (fig. 10).[99] The Macedonians also emulated Greek models in their drinking vessels: large open ones for mixing wine and water, ladles for pouring, sieves for the lees, and wide shallow bowls or smaller deeper cups for individual consumption.[100] In these ways, Macedonian feasts closely resembled Greek symposia as regards material culture – albeit on a grander, more costly scale – but how people behaved at the feasts was rather different. The Greek drinking party had a strongly egalitarian ethos, at least among aristocratic male participants; guests shared the same wine, took turns speaking, and felt themselves strongly bound to other members of the group.[101] Due to their larger

95 Baughan, *Couched in Death*, p. 272.

96 E.g., Diodorus Siculus XVII.87 (war dead); Arrian VI.2 (funeral of high-ranking general Koinos).

97 Arrian VII.14.8–9; Diodorus Siculus XVII.115.1–6; Plutarch 72.3–4; Wilhelm Völcker-Janssen, *Kunst und Gesellschaft an den Höfen Alexanders d. Gr. und seiner Nachfolger,* Tuduv, München 1993, p. 100–116; Palagia, «Hephaestion's Pyre and the Royal Hunt of Alexander».

98 Arrian VII.14.9; Diodorus Siculus XVII.115.1.

99 On women at the Macedonian symposium, see Carney, *King and court in Ancient Macedonia*, p. 233.

100 Gill, « Inscribed Silver Plate from Tomb II at Vergina »; Kottaridi, *Macedonian treasures*, p. 98–105.

101 Kathleen Lynch, «The Hellenistic Symposium as Feast», in Floris van den Eijnde, Josine H. Blok, Rolf Strootman (eds.), *Feasting and polis Institutions,* Brill, Leiden 2018, p. 234–238; Marek Wecowski,

scale and courtly nature, Macedonian feasts had a less democratic character, though they still served to connect the king and his followers, especially since freedom of speech was encouraged at them.[102]

Another difference from Greece particularly concerns couches. In Macedonia, reclining on couches was a closely guarded privilege. According to the Greek historian Hegesander, guests could not adopt it until they had killed a boar without a net, a dangerous and difficult endeavor.[103] Those who had not managed this feat – women, who were excluded from hunts, as well as adolescents and a few unlucky adult males – sat upright (fig. 26). Everyone noticed; Kassander, a prominent aristocrat in the court of Alexander and a subsequent ruler of Greece and Macedonia, famously had to sit upright and uncomfortable into his mid-thirties.



Fig. 26. Terracotta banquet scene of a wedding, showing a seated bride and reclining husband along with two figures of Eros, third to second century BCE. Metropolitan Museum of Art 2016.253. Photo courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art.

« When Did the Symposion Die? On the Decline of the Greek Aristocratic Banquet », in VAN DEN EIJNDE, BLOK, STROOTMAN (eds.), *Feasting and polis Institutions*, p. 257–262.

102 EUGENE BORZA, « The Symposium at Alexander's Court », *Ancient Macedonia*, 3 (1993), p. 54–55; CARNEY, *King and Court in Ancient Macedonia*, p. 242–243.

103 ATHENAEUS, *Deipnosophistae* I.18a.

In their extravagance and rather hierarchical nature, Macedonian feasts were less like Greek symposia, and more like the royal banquets of the Persians. At Persian feasts, the Great King asserted his power through the seating chart and even the furniture. According to Xenophon, the Persian king gave the seats closest to him to those he wished to reward most, and altered seating arrangements as courtiers rose or fell in his favor.[104] And he made his precedence clear at drinking parties, when even the most powerful nobles sat on the ground, while he reclined on a couch with feet of gold.[105] The Great King's food, too, signaled court hierarchy and regal power. The best was consumed by the king himself, as Greek visitors to the court enviously noted; he even had water brought from the Choaspes River near Susa, far-famed for its exceptional purity.[106] The Persian king also offered his top guests exotic meats – for instance, Arabian ostrich – and rare spices such as cumin and saffron.[107] In doing so, his banquets displayed the extent of his empire and his command of resources; foods from outside the realm were rigorously excluded because, in the words of historian Pierre Briant, «the king does not buy, he takes».[108]

A final noteworthy characteristic of Persian feasts was the extraordinary number of guests. Cuneiform tablets recording what was «consumed before the king» include massive amounts of provisions, for instance, 1,224 head of sheep or goats, 126,100 quarts of flour, and 12,350 quarts of wine.[109] Though not all food was consumed onsite – guests were expected to take home considerable quantities for their dependents – these must have been feasts on an astonishing scale.

Alexander's officers had likely experienced both Greek symposia and Persian royal banquets, but the feasts they were most familiar with were those of the king himself. Alexander was famous for the scale and quality of his banquets, with hundreds or even thousands of guests, exotic foods, free-flowing wine, and entertainment from philosophers, poets, musicians, and actors.[110] In their

104 Xenophon, *Cyropaedea* VIII..4.3, 5.

105 Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* IV.145c.

106 Herodotus I.188.

107 Ostrich: Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* IV.145e; cumin and saffron: Polyaenus, *Strategms* IV.3.32.

108 Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, p. 200.

109 Sheep or goats: Persepolis Fortification Tablet 0696; flour: Persepolis Fortification Tablet 0701; wine: Persepolis Fortification Tablet 0728; on the figures see Wouter F.M. Henkelman, « 'Consumed before the King'. The Table of Darius, that of Irdabama and Irtaštuna, and that of his Satrap, Karkiš » in Bruno Jacobs, Robert Rollinger (eds.), *Der Achämenidenhof. Akten des 2. internationalen Kolloquiums zum Thema 'Vorderasien im Spannungsfeld klassischer und altorientalischer Überlieferungen,' Landgut Castelen bei Basel, 23.–25. Mai 2007*, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2010, p. 679.

110 Carney, *King and Court in Ancient Macedonia*, p. 225–264; Borza, « The Symposium at Alexander's Court »; Antony Spawforth, «The Court of Alexander the Great between Europe and Asia», in Antony Spawforth (ed.) *The Court and Court Society in Ancient Monarchies*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2007, p. 97–101.

elaboration, their rituals, and even their seating arrangements, the king's dinners recall Persian precedents.[111] They also align very closely with anthropologist Michael Dietler's concept of the «empowering feast», that is, an occasion where food, drink, furniture, etc., are used to acquire social capital. As Dietler stresses, such feasts often occur in societies where political roles are fluid, and where hosting is a way for powerful individuals to acquire the authority necessary to lead.[112] The literary sources suggest that Alexander sought to use feasts in just this way; the enormous numbers of guests, huge quantities of food, and opulent settings of his banquets are best understood as instrumental to his efforts.

Alexander's example proved attractive for the king's successors in their own struggles for power, for instance, in a feast given by the king's former bodyguard Peukestas at Persepolis in 317 BCE. At the feast, Peukestas provided meat and drink for the entire army, arranged in circles and with the top officers reclining on couches in the center next to altars for the gods as well as for Alexander and Philip.[113] In its scale and hierarchical arrangement, Peukestas's feast recalled both those of the Great King and Alexander's own efforts; it was intended as a bid for supreme command of the army, though in the end it did not succeed.

While Peukestas's feast took place in Persepolis – making its evocation of Achaemenid practices particularly appropriate – there is also some evidence for Alexander's Persian-style banqueting customs being deployed in Macedonia. Particularly striking in this regard is the literary description of a wedding feast given by the Macedonian aristocrat Karanos, perhaps a descendent of Alexander's officer of the same name, in the early third century BCE. According to the description, Karanos fed his guests course after course of meat, fish, and wild game; gave each of them costly gifts, such as silver cups, gold bowls, and ivory baskets, as well as huge amounts of food to take home; and provided flute-players, singers, harpists, dancers, and naked acrobats for entertainment.[114] In all this,

[111] Aelian, *Varia Historia* VIII.7; Arrian VII.4; Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* XII.538b–539a; Diodorus Siculus XVII.107; Plutarch, *Alexander* 70.2, *Moralia* 329e; Brian Bosworth, « Alexander and the Iranians », *The Journal of Hellenic Studies,* 100 (1980), p. 10–14; Branko van Oppen de Rutter, « The Susa Marriages – a Historiographical Note », *Ancient Society*, 44 (2014), p. 25–41; Corinna Hoff, «The Mass Marriage at Susa in 324 BC and Achaemenid Tradition », in Simo Parpola, Robert M. Whiting (eds.), *Sex and Gender in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the 47th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Helsinki, July 2–6, 2001*Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, Helsinki 2002, p. 239–244.

[112] Michael Dietler, « Theorizing the Feast: Rituals of Consumption, Commensal Politics, and Power in African Contexts », in Michael Dietler, Brian Hayden (eds.), *Feasts: Archaeological and Ethnographic Perspectives on Food, Politics, and Power*, University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa 2010, p. 76–82.

[113] Diodorus XIX.22.1–3; Matthew Canepa, *The Iranian Expanse: Transforming Royal Identity Through Architecture, Landscape, and the Built Environment, 550 BCE–642 CE*, University of California Press, Berkeley 2018, p. 60.

[114] Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* IV.128a–130e; Andrew Dalby, « The Wedding Feast of Caranus the Macedonian », *Petits propos culinaires*, 29 (1988), p. 37–45.

Karanos's feast recalled those of Alexander and the Persian king, and it was famous in its day and for centuries afterwards. At the same time, it differed in its scale, with a mere twenty guests, and in its egalitarian treatment of those invited. As such, it suggests what Macedonian aristocrats found attractive in Alexander's feasts, for instance their abundance, entertainment, and gift-giving, and also what they rejected: hierarchy, the isolation of guests from the host.

V. *Conclusions*

As this article has demonstrated, in the Early Hellenistic era, Macedonian aristocrats took inspiration from the Near East – mediated by Alexander – to celebrate «empowering feasts» and also what might be termed «empowering funerals», since these occasions, too, were used to acquire social capital. In doing so, they show the complexities of knowledge transfer in an age of conquest.

To judge from their ephemeral practices, Macedonian elites learned from and appreciated some aspects of the feasts and funerals of those they conquered. And they emulated them back home in Macedonia, so that even those who had not themselves participated in Alexander's campaigns (for instance, the younger Karanos), retained the knowledge gained from the wars. At the same time, the Early Hellenistic aristocrats' emulation of Near Eastern practices was highly selective, and meant to serve decidedly Macedonian goals. In this way, they exhibited a freedom and creativity in their knowledge transfer that reflected their position as conquerors.

Appendix

Catalogue of Macedonian Ivory Couches

Because bone and ivory can appear very similar, and in some cases the same object has been identified differently by various scholars, I am including here all couches that appear to use ivory, with the acknowledgement that some may in fact be created with the less expensive and more accessible medium of bone. The published couches so far include:

1) Abdera, fragmentary ivory decoration of ivy and ornamental reliefs from a pit grave in the area of Xyrovisti, dated to the last quarter of the fourth century BCE. Dimitra Andrianou, *The Furniture and Furnishings of Ancient Greek Houses and Tombs*, Cambridge University Press, New York 2009, p. 44; Dina Kallintzi, « Abdera: sostikes anaskaphes sto plasisio tou anadasmou agroktmeatos Belones », *To Archaiologiko Ergo stē Makedonia kai Thrakē*, 9 (1998), p. 450.

2) Agia Paraskevi near Thessaloniki, small plaques of ivory and glass beads from a Macedonian double chamber tomb dated to the end of the fourth century. Julia Vokotopoulou, *Guide to the Archaeological Museum of Thessalonike*, Kapon Editions, Athens 1996, p. 98; Kostas Sismanidis, *Klines kai klinoeideis kataskeues ton makedonikon taphon,* Tameio Archaiologikon Poron kai Apaollotrioseon, Athens 1997, p. 169–171; Hans von Mangoldt, *Makedonische Grabarchitektur: Die Makedonischen Kammergräber und ihre Vorläufer*, Ernst Wasmuth Verlag, Tübingen 2012, p. 63–66.

3) Tomb III at Agios Athanasios, fragments of two ivory beds with griffin heads and those of young men along with 18 glass plaques from a Macedonian chamber tomb dated to the fourth quarter of the fourth century BCE. Maria Tsimbidou-Avloniti, « Oi Taphikoi tymboi tes periokhes Ag. Athanasiou Thessalonikes (1992–1997): Ereuma kai prooptikes », *To Archaiologiko Ergo stē Makedonia kai Thrakē*, 10a (1997), p. 432; Tsimbidou-Avloniti, *Makedonikoi taphoi,* p. 104–105, 161–165, fig. 21; Hariclia Brecoulaki, « 'Precious colours' in Ancient Greek Polychromy and Painting: Material Aspects and Symbolic Values», *Revue Archéologique*, 1 (2014).

4) Tomb II at Agios Athanasios, glass and ivory fragments from a single chamber grave in the same tumulus as Tomb III, dated to the end of the fourth century BCE; von Mangoldt, *Makedonische Grabarchitektur*, p. 47–48; Maria Tsimbidou-Avloniti, «'Larnakes eis agureein' », in Dimitrios Pandermalis (ed.), *Myrtos: Mneme Ioulaias Bokotopoulou*, Hellenic Ministry of Culture/Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Thessaloniki 2000, p. 563–566; Andrianou, *The Furniture and Furnishings of Ancient Greek Houses and Tombs*, p. 44.

5) Grave 1 from Tumulus A at Aineia, ivory, glass and stucco decoration including the head of a griffin and ornamental reliefs, dated to the end of the third quarter of the fourth century BCE. Andrianou, *The Furniture and Furnishings of Ancient Greek Houses and Tombs*, p. 46; Dorota Gorzelany, *Macedonia – Alexandria: Monumental Funerary Complexes of the Late Classical and Hellenistic Age*, Archaeopress, Oxford 2019, p. 42, n. 84 (bone); Julia Vokotopoulou, *Hoi taphikoi tymboi tis Aineias*, Tameio Archaiologikon Poron, Athens 1990, p. 16–22, esp. 19–20 (ivory), 131–35, pl. 9a.

6) Grave 2 in Tumulus A at Aineia, fragments of figural, floral, and architectural motifs of ivory from a cist grave dated to the third quarter of the fourth century BCE. Andrianou, *The Furniture and Furnishings of Ancient Greek Houses and Tombs*, p. 46; Vokotopoulou, *Hoi taphikoi tymboi tis Aineias*, p. 22–49, esp. 28–30 (ivory), pl. 17–19.

7) Grave 3 from Tumulus A at Aineia, ivory or bone and glass fragments from a cist grave dated to the beginning of the third quarter of the fourth century BCE Andrianou, *The Furniture and Furnishings of Ancient Greek Houses and Tombs*, p. 46; Vokotopoulou, *Hoi taphikoi tymboi tis Aineias*, p. 49–77 esp. 84, fig. 43 and pl. 52; Gorzelany, *Macedonia – Alexandria*, p. 36, n. 55.

8) Grave 4 from Tumulus B at Aineia, ivory, bone, and glass fragments from a cist grave dated to the late third quarter of the fourth century BCE. Andrianou, *The furniture and furnishings of ancient Greek houses and tomb*, p. 46; Vokotopoulou, *Hoi taphikoi tymboi tis Aineias*, p. 19–20, 78–85, pl. 9:a, y, 10:a; Gorzelany, *Macedonia – Alexandria*, p. 36, n. 56.

9) Tomb TVII at Amphipolis-Kastas, fragments of bone inlay from a cist grave dated to the end of the fourth century BCE. Stauropoula Samartzidou, « Nea euremata apo tis nekropoleis tes archaias Amphipolis », *To Archaiologiko Ergo stē Makedonia kai Thrakē*, 1 (1988), p. 329; Gorzelany, *Macedonia – Alexandria*, p. 45, n. 102.

10) Tomb A from Derveni, with fragments of wood, glass, bone, and ivory from a cist grave dated to the end of the fourth century BCE. Gorzelany, *Macedonia – Alexandria*, p. 37, n. 70; Vokotopoulou, *Guide to the Archaeological Museum of Thessalonike*, p. 215; Petros Themelis and Iannis Touratsoglou, *I taphoi tou Derveniou,* Tameio Archaiologikon Poron kai Apallotriozeon Diethnes Demosieumaton, Athens 1997, p. 28–60, 193–94.

11) Tomb 4 at Dion, ivory fragments of an equestrian battle scene and glass inlays from a Macedonian chamber tomb dated to the late third century BCE; Dimitrios Pandermalis, « Ancient Dion: A chronicle of the excavations », in Dimitrios Pandermalis (ed.), *Gods and Mortals at Olympus: Ancient Dion, City of Zeus*,

Onassis Foundation, New York 2016, p. 20; Sismanidis, *Klines kai klinoeideis kataskeues ton makedonikon taphon,* p. 147–149; Hariclia Brecoulaki, *La peinture funéraire de Macédoine: emplois et fonctions de la couleur IVe–IIe s. av. J.-C*, Centre de recherches de l'antiquité grecque et romaine, Athens 2006, p. 249–151; von Mangoldt, *Makedonische Grabarchitektur*, p. 128–129.

12) Macedonian chamber tomb at Giannitsa/Mesiano, ivory fragments and glass plaques and palmettes, dated to the end of the fourth to early third century BCE. Pavlos Chrysostomou, « Ho Makedonikos taphos Giannitson », *To Archaiologiko Ergo stē Makedonia kai Thrakē*, 7 (1997), p. 127; von Mangoldt, *Makedonische Grabarchitektur*, p. 198–200.

13) Grave 1, Katerini, gold, silver, and ivory fragments from a two-room chamber tomb dated to the second quarter or second half of the fourth century BCE. Aikaterini Despini, « Ho Taphos tes Katerines », *Athens Annals of Archaeology*, 13 (1980), p. 198–209; von Mangoldt, *Makedonische Grabarchitektur*, p. 53–55.

14) Grave 8 at Alykes-Kitros, ivory fragments from a cist grave dated to the second half of the fourth century BCE. Matthias Besios, *Pieridōn Stephanos: Pydna, Methōnē kai hoi archaiotētes tēs voreias Pierias*, Katerini, A.Ph.E 2010, p. 238.

15) Grave 13 at Alykes-Kitros, ivory fragments including heads and limbs as well as glass decoration from a cist grave dated to the second half of the fourth century BCE. Matthias Besios, « Anaskaphes sten Pydna (1988) », *To Archaiologiko Ergo stē Makedonia kai Thrakē*, 2 (1988), p. 189–190.

16) Grave 29 at Alykes-Kitros, ivory fragments from a cist grave dated to the second half of the fourth century BCE. Besios, *Pieridōn Stephanos: Pydna, Methōnē kai hoi archaiotētes tēs voreias Pierias*, p. 238–239; Matthias Besios, « Anaskaphes ste Boreia Pieria (1992) », *To Archaiologiko Ergo stē Makedonia kai Thrakē* 6 (1992), p. 247.

17) Grave 38 at Alykes-Kitros, ivory fragments from a theke grave dated to the second half of the fourth century BCE. Besios, *Pieridōn Stephanos*, p. 238.

18) Grave 71 at Alykes-Kitros, ivory fragments from a cist grave of the last quarter of the fourth century BCE. Besios, *Pieridōn Stephanos*, p. 236–237.

19) Macedonian tomb of Tumulus B at Korinos, with ivory fragments of a battle between Macedonians and Persians from a chamber tomb dated to the end of the fourth century BCE. Matthias Besios, « Anaskaphes ste Boreia Pieria (1992) », p.177; Brecoulaki, « 'Precious colours' in Ancient Greek Polychromy and Painting: », p. 14–15; von Mangoldt, *Makedonische Grabarchitektur*, p. 159–160.

20) Tomb of the Palmettes at Lefkadia, ivory fragments of a battle scene in high relief as well as lower relief vegetal ornament, palmettes, erotes, maenads, a satyr, and a herm of Dionysos from a chamber tomb dated to the end of the fourth century BCE. Rhomiopoulou, *Das Palmettengrab in Lefkadia*, p. 89–91, pl. 3.1, 18.2, 22.

21) Tomb of the Judgment at Lefkadia, ivory fragments and glass plaques from a couch or throne from a double chamber tomb dated c. 300 BCE. Andrianou, *The Furniture and Furnishings of Ancient Greek Houses and Tombs*, p. 45; Liana Stefani, « He anaskaphes ston prothalamo tou taphou tes kreiseos Lefkadias », *To Archaiologiko Ergo stē Makedonia kai Thrakē*, 12 (2000), p. 419; von Mangoldt, *Makedonische Grabarchitektur*, p. 177–181.

22) Grave 2 at Methone Palaiokatakhas, ivory fragment of a seated maenad from a cist grave dated to the second half of the fourth century BCE. Besios, *Pieridōn Stephanos*, p. 309.

23) Grave 3 at Nikisiani, bone and glass remains from a cist grave dated to the late fourth to early third century BCE. Demetre Lazaride, Katerina Rhomoiopoulou, and Ioannis Touratsoglou, *Ho Tymbos tes Nikesianis*, Athenais Archaiologike Hetaireia, Athens 1992, p. 26–31 (grave goods), 57–61 (coins); fig. 9–10, pl. 13–15.

24) Grave 1 at the East Nekropolis of Pella, bone fragments including a griffin battle with a stag as well as glass from a cist grave dated to the end of the fourth century BCE. Maria Lilimbaki-Akamatis, «Anatoliko nekrotapheio Pellas. Anaskaphe 1989», *Arkhaiologikon Deltion: Meletes*, 44–46, A (1989–1991), p. 78–79.

25) Grave 10 at the East Nekropolis of Pella, bone and glass appliqués with a Dionysiac scene as well as a griffin battle with a stag in a cist grave dated to the end of the fourth to beginning of the third century BCE. Gorzelany, *Macedonia – Alexandria*, p. 31, n. 37; Lilimbaki-Akamatis, « Anatoliko nekrotapheio Pellas. Anaskaphe 1989 », p. 98 (couch), p. 94–98 (grave goods and drawing of grave); Maria Lilimbaki-Akamatis, « Apo te diakosme ton nekrikon klinon », *Athens Annals of Archaeology*, 22, no. 1989 (1995).

26) Grave 2 from Pella-Ampelia, bone fragments of heads and limbs as well as glass decoration from a cist grave dated to the end of the fourth century BCE. Pavlos Chrysostomou, « Anaskaphikes ereunes tous tymbous tes Pellas kata to 1995 », *To Archaiologiko Ergo stē Makedonia kai Thrakē*, 9 (1995), p. 143–145, fig. 2, pl. 1.2–6.

27) Grave 6 near the Macedonian tombs of Pella, glass and bone decoration from a cist grave dated to the end of the fourth century BCE. Pavlos Chrysostomou,

« Anaskaphikes ereunes tous tymbous tes Pellas kata to 1994 », *To Archaiologiko Ergo stē Makedonia kai Thrakē*, 8 (1994), p. 65–67, fig. 5, pl. 26.

28) Tomb VI at Phoinikas, three couches preserved in fragments of glass and ivory including multi-figured scenes and griffins as well as glass rosettes and plaques from a Macedonian tomb dated to the beginning of the last quarter of the fourth century BCE. Maria Tsimbidou-Avloniti, « Anaskaphikes ereunes ston Phoinika N. Thessalonikes, 1987–2006 – Mia eikosaetia anatropon », *To Archaiolgiko Ergo ste Makedonia kai ste Thrake* (2009); Maria Tsimbidou-Avloniti, *Makedonikoi taphoi ston Phoinika kai ston Agio Athanasio Thessalonikes. Symbole ste melete tes eikongraphias ton tapikon mnemetes Makedonias*, Tameio Archaiologikon Poron kai Apallotrioseon Diethunse Demosiematon, Athens 2005, p. 39–44, 70–71, 75–79, pl. 19–21; von Mangoldt, *Makedonische Grabarchitektur*, p. 262–265.

29) Grave 4 at Phoinikas, ivory fragments of griffins attacking another animal from a cist grave dated to the second half of the fourth century BCE. Maria Tsimbidou-Avloniti, « Thessalonike 2005: Kleinontas (?) palious logariasmous », *To Archaiologiko Ergo stē Makedonia kai Thrakē*, 19 (2007), p. 203–205.

30) Tomb C at Sedes, an ivory or bone multi-figure frieze with divinities including Demeter or Hekate as well as gold glass plaques, from a tomb dated to the last quarter of the fourth century BCE. Gorzelany, *Macedonia – Alexandria*, p. 29, n. 26; Vokotopoulou, *Guide to the Archaeological Museum of Thessalonike*, p. 186–188; Despina Ignatiadou and Bettina Tsigarida, *The Gold of Macedon*, Archaeological Receipts Fund, Athens 2000, p. 59.

31) Macedonian chamber tomb at Toumba Paionia, with bone heads and plaques as well as glass remains from a chamber tomb dated to the end of the fourth century BCE. Thome Savvopoglou, « Ho B' taphikos tymbos tes Toumbas Paionias », *To Archaiologiko Ergo stē Makedonia kai Thrakē*, 6 (1995), p. 427, fig. 3; Gorzelany, *Macedonia – Alexandria*, p. 32, n. 41–42.

32) Royal Tomb II at Vergina, four gold, glass, and ivory couches**,** including one in the main chamber with a lion hunt scene in high relief and Dionysiac scenes in low relief; one in the antechamber with a battle scene as well as griffins attacking prey, erotes, maenads, satyrs, and a Nike driving a chariot, and two more fragmentary couches used for the cremation from a chamber tomb of controversial date, but likely in the last quarter of the fourth century BCE. Angeliki Kottaridi, *Macedonian Treasures: A Tour through the Museum of the Royal Tombs of Aigai*, trans. Alexandra Doumas, Kapon Editions, Athens 2011, p. 38–105 (couches p. 80–89); von Mangoldt, *Makedonische Grabarchitektur*, p. 275–280.

33) Royal Tomb III at Vergina, gold, glass, and ivory fragments showing Dionysiac scenes as well as griffins from a chamber tomb dated to the last quarter of the fourth century BCE. Gorzelany, *Macedonia – Alexandria*, p. 73; Kottaridi, *Macedonian Treasures*, p. 106–125.

34) Royal Tomb IV at Vergina, ivory fragments of a multi-figured scene from a Macedonian double chamber tomb dating c. 300 BCE. Kottaridi, *Macedonian Treasures*, p. 22–23; von Mangoldt, *Makedonische Grabarchitektur,* p. 284–285.

35) Heuzey Tomb A at Vergina, ivory and glass inlay from a piece of furniture, likely a couch, from a cist grave dated to the late third quarter of the fourth century BCE. Gorzelany, *Macedonia – Alexandria,* p. 29, n. 23; Stella Drogou, « Vergina – Hoi taphoi Heuzey », *Egnatia*, 5 (1995), p. 232–238; von Mangoldt, *Makedonische Grabarchitektur*, p. 61–62.

36) 'Tomb of Eurydice' at Vergina, gold and ivory remains from a Macedonian chamber tomb of disputed date, either c. 340 BCE or early third century. Olga Palagia, « Alexander the Great, the royal throne and the funerary thrones of Macedonia », *Karanos*, 1 (2018), p. 28; Angeliki Kottaridi, « L'épiphanie des dieux des Enfers dans la nécropole royale d'Aigai », in Sophie Deschampes-Lequime (ed.), *Peinture et couleur dans le monde grec antique*, 5 Continents, Milan 2007; von Mangoldt, *Makedonische Grabarchitektur*, p. 291–294.

37) Grave G from the Stenomakri Toumba at Vergina, fragments of ivory ornament as well as gilded clay beads and relief terracottas with griffins attacking prey from a cist grave dated to the mid-fourth century BCE. Athanasia Kyriakou, « The History of a Fourth Century BC Tumulus at Aigai/Vergina. Definitions in Space and Time », in Olivier Henry, Ute Kelp (eds.), *Tumulus as sema: Space, Politics, Culture and Religion in the First Millennium BC*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2016, p. 145.

38) Grave A from the Stenomakri Toumba at Vergina, ivory and stucco fragments from a pit grave dated to the later fourth century BCE. Kyriakou, « The History of a Fourth Century BC Tumulus at Aigai/Vergina », p.146.

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From 737 Conclusions by Jean Cabrol to Giovanni Pico's *900 Conclusions*

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Abstract

The heart of Pico's legend, still beating today on the internet, is his prodigious, omnicompetent, self-sufficient genius – original, parahuman mastery of everything knowable at an unbelievably early age. This durable tale has floated free of evidence, but Pico's *900 Conclusions* has given weight to part of it. Yet the ballast crumbles under the load of textual facts. The young prince did not know everything. He got by with a more than a little help from his friends: Marsilio Ficino, Elia del Medigo, Flavius Mithridates and especially Jean Cabrol.

Key Words

Jean Cabrol (Capreolus); *Conclusions*; Elia del Medigo; Marsilio Ficino; Flavius Mithridates; Giovanni Pico della Mirandola

I. *Conclusions Divided*

On December 7 of 1486, Eucharius Silber published a strange little book in Rome, where the author was an unfamiliar figure. Giovanni Pico della Mirandola was a younger son of lesser nobility from lands near the Po, far from the Tiber. The only contents of his first printed work, more like a pamphlet than a book, were 900 statements averaging 18 words each. Many were listed under names of renowned philosophers and theologians:

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1 Albert
2 Aquinas
3 Meyronnes
4 Scotus
5 Henry
6 Egidio

7 Ibn Rushd
8 Ibn Sina
9 Al-Farabi
10 Albalag
11 Ibn Marwan
12 Maimonides
13 Tolletinus
14 Ibn Bajja

15 Theophrastus
16 Ammonius
17 Simplicius
18 Alexander
19 Themistius

20 Plotinus
21 Adeland
22 Porphyry
23 Iamblichus
24 Proclus

25 Pythagoreans
26 Chaldeans
27 Egyptians

28 Kabbalist Jews

Pico called his theses « conclusions » and divided them into 2 large parts, which I have labeled *P1* and *P2*. *P1* had 402 theses; *P2* had 498 theses. I have labeled them *T1* through *T402* in *P1*, then *T403* through *T900* in *P2*. *P1* also had 28 smaller parts *(P1.1* through *1.28)* described by headnotes. But in *P2* there were only 11 smaller parts, *P2.1–2.11*, also with headnotes. The first 325 theses of *P1* were also arranged in 4 groups of intermediate size: *P1.1–6, 7–14, 15–19* and *20–24*. The 28 parts and several intermediate groups of *P1* – including *P1.25–27* and *28,* which were not described by headnotes – were those shown above. The 11 parts of *P2* were those below; there were no intermediate groupings in *P2*, but each part had a headnote:

1 Concord
2 Dissent
3 Novelty
4 Deviance

5 Platonism
6 Causes
7 Numbers

8 Chaldeans
9 Magic
10 Orphica

11 Christian Kabbalah

In all likelihood, Pico himself (not his publisher) was responsible for the signposting of his theses or propositions or « conclusions », as he called them. I have chosen the following examples without regard to their content:

T7 Sound as really existing is carried up to the beginning of the auditory nerve.
Sonus fertur secundum esse reale usque ad principium nervi auditivi

T21 Anything contingent that God has known would come to be, he has known necessarily that it would come to be.
Quodcunque contingens Deus scivit esse futurum, necessario scivit illud esse futurum.

T42 Marked matter is the principle of individuation.
Materia signata est principium individuationis.

T70 Love is not a disposition distinct from the disposition of grace by whose mediation the Holy Spirit dwells in a soul.
Charitas non est distinctus habitus ab habitu gratiae quo mediante Spiritus Sanctus animam inhabitat.

T105 The power of begetting in the divine is neither exactly and only the divine essence taken separately, nor a relation nor a feature, nor something constituted from both, nor either of them with the other included: instead it is the essence along with a related mode.
Potentia generandi in divinis nec est essentia divina praecise et absolute sumpta, nec relatio vel proprietas, nec constitutum ex ambobus, nec alterum istorum cum inclusione alterius: sed est essentia cum modo relativo.

T147 The metaphysical *one* indicates a privation of divisibility not in act but in fitness.
Unum methaphysicum dicit privationem divisibilitatis non actu sed aptitudine.

T189 Knowledge of metaphysics is not a single field of knowledge.
Scientia metaphysicae non est una scientia.

T238 It's incorrect to say that Mind looks on or gazes at ideas.
Improprie dicitur quod Intellectus ideas inspiciat vel intueatur.

T294 For the trinity of leaders Jupiter is the maker of substance, Neptune of life and Pluto turns it around.
Ducalis trinitatis Jupiter est substantificativus, Neptunnus vivificativus, Pluto conversivus.

T357 Nine are the hierarchies of angels, whose names are Cherubim, Seraphim, Hasmalim, Haiot, Aralim, Tarsisim, Ophanim, Tephsarim and Isim.
Novem sunt angelorum hierarchiae quarum nomina Cherubim, Seraphim, Hasmalim, Haiot, Aralim, Tarsisim, Ophanim, Tephsarim, Isim.[1]

[1] Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae*, Silber, Rome 1486, p. 1–4, 6, 9, 11, 15, 19, 25; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae: Le Novecento tesi dell'anno 1486*, ed. and trans. Albano Biondi, Olschki, Florence 1995, p. 8 (7, 5), 12 (26), 14 (1), 18 (1), 24 (32), 28 (2), 36 (12), 46 (24), 56 (2); Stephen

A book-buyer who flipped through the pages of Silber's new publication would have found almost no context for these statements. In *P1*, for example, the only information preceding and describing the thesis on sound (*T7*) was in these two headings (here labeled *H*):

> *H1* Conclusions after the teaching [*secundum doctrinam*] of Latin philosophers and theologians: Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Henry of Ghent, John Scotus, Egidio Romano and François de Meyronnes.
>
> *H2* Conclusions after Albert, 16 in number.

H2 assigned *T7* (see above) to a named authority, Albert the Great, and *H1* grouped Albert with other « Latin philosophers and theologians »; see Fig. 1.[2] Some headings in *P2* were more abstract and mentioned no individuals or groups of any kind:

Farmer, *Syncretism in the West: Pico's 900 Theses (1486), the Evolution of Traditional Religious and Philosophical Sysems, with Text, Translation and Commentary*, MRTS, Tempe 1998, p. 214 (1.7), 220 (2.5), 226 (2.26), 236 (4.1), 246 (6.1), 260 (7.32), 276 (12.2), 300 (20.12), 322 (24.24), 346 (28.2): Numbers for this *T* series of examples follow the full count of theses from 1 to 900 in the 1486 edition; my selection, not random strictly speaking, starts with Pico's 7th thesis and adds an increment of 7 each time. Other series of examples (*A, C, D, H, M*) are numbered in the order of my presentation. Lacking a critical edition of the original Latin for Pico's *Conclusions*, I cite the rare and unpaginated *princeps* by my own page numbers, counting both sides from p. 1 as the side with *[D]e adscriptis* at the top (Fig. 1). Several versions of the *Conclusions* have been published since Biondi's 1995 edition, including the text and English translation in Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*; for the convenience of readers – not as textual authorities – I cite both Biondi and Farmer along with the first edition. I've confined my notes as much as possible to primary texts by Pico and relevant authorities. Abbreviations follow Oxford dictionaries for Greco-Roman material and standard conventions for biblical, rabbinical, Kabbalist and later philosophical texts. Franco Bacchelli, « Giovanni Pico, conte della Mirandola e Concordia », in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 83, Istituto italiano per l'Enciclopedia, Rome 2015 [online at treccani.it] provides a brief biography of Pico; Brian Copenhaver, « Giovanni Pico della Mirandola », in Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Summer 2020 Edition [online at plato.stanford.edu] summarizes my views on the prince. Otherwise, for his life and works as discussed here, I rely on documentation in Brian Copenhaver, *Magic and the Dignity of Man: Pico della Mirandola and His Oration in Modern Memory*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA 2019; Id., *Pico della Mirandola on Trial: Heresy, Freedom and Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2022; and Id., « Pico's *Conclusions*: Setting, Structure, Text, Sources and Aims », *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 86 (2023), p. 57–107; also Gianfrancesco Pico & Giovanni Pico, *Life of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola; Oration*, ed. and trans. Brian Copenhaver with Michael Allen, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA 2022.

[2] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 1; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 6; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 212; see Copenhaver, « Pico's *Conclusions* », p. 74–75, for *secundum* as 'regarding' or 'after' rather than 'according to' or 'following'.

> *H3* Philosophical conclusions according to my own opinion [*secundum propriam opinionem*] 80 in number which, although they dissent from the usual philosophy [*communi philosophia*], are still not much averse to the usual way of philosophizing [*a communi tamen philosophandi modo non multum abhorrent*].

Longer headings like *H1* and *H3* divided the book into halves and smaller parts: the 2 halves were the 402 statements in *P1,* then the other 498 in *P2*: hence the famous title, *900 Conclusions*. The heading for *P2* announced:

> *H4* Conclusions five hundred in number according to my own opinion [...] divided [...] into natural, theological, Platonic, mathematical, contrarian-doctrinal [*paradoxas dogmatizantes*], contrarian-reconciling [*paradoxas conciliantes*], Chaldean, Orphic, magical and Kabbalist.[3]

P1 had many more parts than these – 28 of them, most under shorter headings like *H2.* Intermediate headings also named individuals:

> *H5* Conclusions after the teachings of Arabs who generally declare themselves Peripatetics: Ibn Rushd, Ibn Sina, Al-Farabi, Ibn Bajja, Isaac, Abumaron, Moses and Mahumet.
>
> *H6* Conclusions after Greeks who pledge the Peripatetic doctrine: Theophrastus, Ammonius, Simplicius, Alexander and Themistius.
>
> *H7* Conclusions after the teaching of philosophers called Platonists: Plotinus an Egyptian, Porphyry a Tyrian, Iamblichus from Chalcis, Proclus a Lycian and Adeland an Arab.

But a few *P1* headings mentioned groups rather than individual persons or else described both groups and persons:

> *H8* Kabbalist conclusions, 47 in number, after the secret teaching of Jewish Kabbalist sages, blessed be their memory.[4]

The whole book had 39 parts, and most were headed by statements like *H2* that named individuals. Linguistic, ethnic and academic descriptions – including « Arab », « Chaldean », « Egyptian », « Greek », « Hebrew », « Indian », « Latin »,

[3] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones* dcccc *publice disputandae* [1486], p. 28, 30; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 62, 64; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 364, 372; although the heading of *P2* indicates 10 parts, the actual count is 11.

[4] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones* dcccc *publice disputandae* [1486], p. 7, 12, 14, 24–25; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 20, 30, 36; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 250, 282, 296; Copenhaver, « Pico's *Conclusions* », p. 83, Table 1.

« Peripatetic », « Persian » and « Platonic » – also applied in *P1* and *P2*.[5] Headings that came after the Platonic division (*H7*) of *P1* referred to messages as well as messengers: the « mathematics » of Pythagoras, the « belief » of Chaldean theologians, « the ancient teaching of Hermes Trismegistus » and « secret teachings » of Kabbalist Jews. But there was no collective description like *H1, H5, H6* or *H7* for these exotics that Pico honored by locating them at the end of *P1*.[6]

Elsewhere in his works – though not in the *Conclusions* – a reverent label for Chaldean, Egyptian, Orphic and Pythagorean wisdom was *prisca theologia* (ἀρχαία θεολογία).[7] This « ancient theology » was a category unstated in *P1* – an oversight, perhaps – after the Platonists of *H7*. If so, major divisions of *P1* as planned, though not as presented, may have been these 6:

divisions	heading	theses
1 Christian Aristotelians	*H1*	115
2 Muslim Aristotelians	*H5*	82
3 Greek Aristotelians	*H6*	29
4 Platonists	*H7*	99
5 Ancient theologians	none	30
6 Kabbalists	*H8*	47

But if *all* parts with headings were counted, the total in *P1* was 28 parts for 402 theses, whereas in *P2* there were 498 theses but only 11 parts necessarily larger than those in *P1*. Pico needed more parts for *P1* because he referred its content to many other authorities, not just to himself. There was less need to subdivide *P2* because he took personal credit for all of it. Resulting divisions of *P2*, reflecting those of *P1*, were these 4:

[5] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones* DCCCC *publice disputandae* [1486], p. 1, 7, 11, 12, 14–15, 20, 23–26, 28, 31–32, 38–39, 36, 40, 44, 46, 49, 54, 56–57, 60–61, 63–64, 68; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 6 (1), 20 (3), 28, 30, 36, 38 (5, 8), 46 (30, 31), 52–53 (1, 3–5), 56, 58 (26), 62, 66 (13), 70 (36), 76 (77, 80), 82 (40), 84 (55), 94 (3), 96 (19), 104 (60), 114, 116 (11), 120 (22), 126 (5, 7), 130 (24), 138 (63), 140 (71); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 210, 212 (1.1), 250, 252 (7.3), 276, 280, 282, 296, 302, 304 (21.5, 8), 324 (24.30), 326 (24.31), 338 (26.1, 3–5), 340, 344, 356 (28.26), 364, 376 (2.13), 382 (36), 394 (2.77), 396 (2.80), 410 (3.40), 414 (3.55), 438 (5.3), 442 (5.19), 456 (5.60), 486, 490 (8.11), 500 (9.22), 516, 522 (11.5, 7), 530 (11.24), 546 (11.63), 550 (11.71).

[6] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones* DCCCC *publice disputandae* [1486], p. 22–25; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 50–56; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 334, 338, 340, 344.

[7] Pico & Pico, *Life of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola; Oration*, p. 100, 120, 122, 136 (27, 52, 55, 69); Procl. *TP* 6.33.17, *In Tim*. 3.174.8.

7 Aristotelian	196
8 Platonist	158
9 Ancient theology	72
10 Kabbalist	72

Division 7 in *P2* corresponded to divisions 1, 2 and 3 in *P1*. In Pico's nomenclature, these were all 'Peripatetic' – or 'scholastic' as we might say.[8] For the book as a whole, counts of conclusions by broad category were:

1 Scholastic	422
2 Platonist	257
3 Kabbalist	119
4 Ancient theology	102

The book did not make these groupings obvious, nor did the author's project require him to be clear about them. What Silber printed late in 1486 was the barest of bare bones: a script, an advertisement and a handout. Pico planned to debate his propositions in Rome early in 1487, and printed sheets (or some of them) would have displayed his talking points. Pages could have been distributed to the audience of cardinals and curial officials that he expected. His expectations were princely – more grandiose than great. An advertisement at the end of the book promised that:

> the conclusions will not be disputed until after Epiphany. Meanwhile they will be posted in all the schools of Italy. And should any philosopher or theologian from the farthest parts of Italy want to come to Rome and debate, this Lord himself – the one who will dispute – promises to pay travel expenses from his own funds.[9]

The regal feast of Epiphany came a month after Silber released the book: the prince reckoned that a few weeks were enough to advertise and draw a crowd. Instead the book drew down God's wrath through his Vicar on earth, Pope Innocent VIII.

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[8] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 1, 7, 12; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 6 (1), 20, 30; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 212 (1.1), 250, 282: Dorothea Frede, « Alexander of Aphrodisias », in Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Fall 2023 Edition [online at plato.stanford.edu], writing about an ancient Greek commentator on Aristotle, explained that « the 'scholastic' treatment of authoritative texts that was to become characteristic of the Middle Ages had already started in the first century BCE »; see Copenhaver, « Pico's *Conclusions* », p. 74–76, on how Pico took credit for the *P2* theses; also Amos Edelheit, *A Philosopher at the Crossroads: Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Scholastic Philosophy*, Brill, Leiden 2022, p. 186–357, for careful dissections of Pico's scholastic authorities.

[9] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 70; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 552.

Planning for a disputational spectacle stopped. Years of disgrace and danger began for Giovanni Pico and his *900 Conclusions*.

II. *Why Conclusions?*

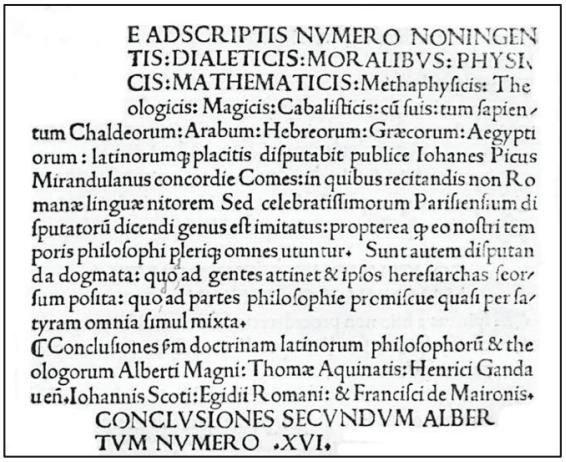
Why did the prince call his theses *conclusiones*? The format that he chose was scholastic disputation – « the kind of speech used by disputants most in demand at Paris », as he put it – and this was a genre rich in specialist terminology. So why not 900 *articuli*, 900 *consequentia*, 900 *dicta*, *dictiones*, *dubiae*, *praemissae*, *propositiones*, *quaestiones* or *sententiae*? Why *conclusiones*, another familiar word from the scholastic lexicon? One reason for this choice might have been *formal*. If a statement like *T42*, « materia signata est principium individuationis », was a *conclusio* in the strict sense, something else would have led to it – other propositions or premisses about matter or individuation. And then there would have been more to the 5 words of *T42* than met the eye – something else that had logical standing and philosophical substance. Such a *conclusio*, shown by itself, was an inference from an *unstated* sequence of reasons, which might not be so for a bare *dictum* or *sententia*. But a looser use of the word *conclusio*, as an abbreviation of a longer statement, had evolved in the later medieval centuries.[10]

Did Pico care about these nuances of terminology? Was he this thoughtful about titling a hurriedly printed book that had no title page? Its first words, after a space left for a decorative capital (Fig. 1), simply advertised an event, announcing that « Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Count of Concordia, will dispute in public about opinions (*placitis*) listed here, nine hundred in number ». The word *placita* never occurred again in the remaining 35 leaves, where *conclusiones* labeled every set of theses.[11] A few months later, however, when Pico defended his first book in a printed *Apology*, its untitled preface introduced *quaestiones*, *res propositae* and *theoremata* – but not *conclusiones* – even though this word occurred often in the body of this second book, where *quaestio* was the heading for each of 13 parts. In

[10] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 3; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 12 (26); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 226 (2.26); Copenhaver, « Pico's *Conclusions* », p. 64–69; and for philosophical uses of *conclusio*, see Gillian Evans, « The *Conclusiones* of Robert Grosseteste's Commentary on the *Posterior Analytics* », *Studi Medievali*, 24 (1983), p. 729–734; David Bloch, « Robert Grosseteste's *Conclusiones* and the Commentary on the *Posterior Analytics* », *Vivarium*, 47 (2009), p. 1–23; Olga Weijers, « Nouvelles réflexions sur un mot rebelle », in Iñigo Atucha et al. (eds.), *Mots médiévaux offerts à Ruedi Imbach*, Gabinete de Filosofia Medieval, Faculdade de Letras, Porto 2011, p. 175–183; and Pietro B. Rossi, « *Intentio Aristotelis in hoc libro*: Struttura e articolazione degli *Analytica Posteriora* secondo Roberto Grossatesta », *Revista Española de Filosofia Medieval*, 30 (2023), p. 53–80.

[11] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 1; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 6; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 210; Copenhaver, « Pico's *Conclusions* », p. 62–64.

1496 Pico's nephew, Gianfrancesco, mentioned his uncle's *libellus nongentarum conclusionum* in a *Life* of the prince that became authoritative.[12]



E ADSCRIPTIS NVMERO NONINGEN
TIS:DIALETICIS:MORALIBVS:PHYSI
CIS:MATHEMATICIS:Methaphyſicis: The
ologicis: Magicis:Cabaliſticis:cū ſuis:tum ſapien
tum Chaldeorum:Arabum:Hebreorum:Græcorum:Aegypti
orum: latinorumq placitis diſputabit publice Iohanes Picus
Mirandulanus concordie Comes:in quibus recitandis non Ro
manæ linguæ nitorem Sed celebratiſſimorum Pariſienſium di
ſputatorū dicendi genus eſt imitatus:propterea q eo noſtri tem
poris philoſophi plericq omnes utuntur. Sunt autem diſputan
da dogmata: quo ad gentes attinet & ipſos hereſiarchas ſeor
ſum poſita: quo ad partes philoſophie promiſcue quaſi per ſa
tyram omnia ſimul mixta.
¶ Concluſiones ſm doctrinam latinorum philoſophorū & the
ologorum Alberti Magni: Thomæ Aquinatis: Henrici Ganda
uen. Iohannis Scoti: Egidii Romani: & Franciſci de Maironis.
CONCLVSIONES SECVNDVM ALBER
TVM NVMERO .XVI.

Fig. 1: Pico, *Conclusiones* (1486), p. 1.

On this evidence, it is hard to say what Pico himself meant to call his self-destructive booklet. Its genre was disputational and scholastic in a venerable tradition with roots in a twelfth-century masterpiece: the theological *Sentences* of Peter Lombard. Commentaries on this ponderous textbook had been piling up for a long time when Pico found an even bulkier addition to the same tradition. The author, Jean Cabrol (Capreolus, d. 1443), was a Dominican champion of the great sage of his Order, Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274).

Cabrol was probably born around 1380 not far from Toulouse, where pilgrims came to pray at Thomas's tomb: Rouergue (Aveyron), northwest of Montpellier, was Cabrol's *pays* and Rodez, its chief town, was the site of his Dominican convent, founded in 1283 and one of dozens in the Midi. By 1409 he was in Paris lecturing on the *Sentences* and starting his own commentary: he finished it in 1433 after returning to Rodez. His project – completed more than a century after Thomas was

[12] Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Apologia conclusionum suorum*, Francesco del Tuppo, Naples 1487, p. 1, 3–6, 10–11, 33, 37, 41, 47, 60, 75, 99, 103, 105–106, 108–109; Id., *Apologia: L'Autodifesa di Pico di fronte al tribunale dell'Inquisizione*, ed. and trans. Paolo Edoardo Fornaciari, SISMEL–Edizioni del Galluzzo, Florence 2010, p. 4, 6, 12, 18, 20, 32, 34, 106, 120, 134, 154, 194, 244, 322, 336, 344, 348, 354, 358; Pico & Pico, *Life of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola; Oration*, p. 20 (17). Pico's most lasting choice about presenting the *Oration* – never published in his lifetime – was not to make it public himself. The Bodleian (Auct. 2Q inf. 2.14(1)) and Vatican (Stamp. Barb. BBB III.11) copies of the first edition of the *Conclusions* have the same beginning shown in Fig. 1; see Margaret Smith, *The Title-Page, Its Early Development, 1460–1510*, British Library, London 2000 on title pages of incunables.

canonized – surveyed debates that blew up into battles and raged after Thomas died. The theological uproar of 1277 in Paris threatened Thomas's reputation, but his authority was a sacred heritage for Dominicans like Cabrol. The commentator's *Super libros sententiarum* amplified the saint's teachings and refuted his critics – though not yet in the name of a militant *via thomistica*.[13]

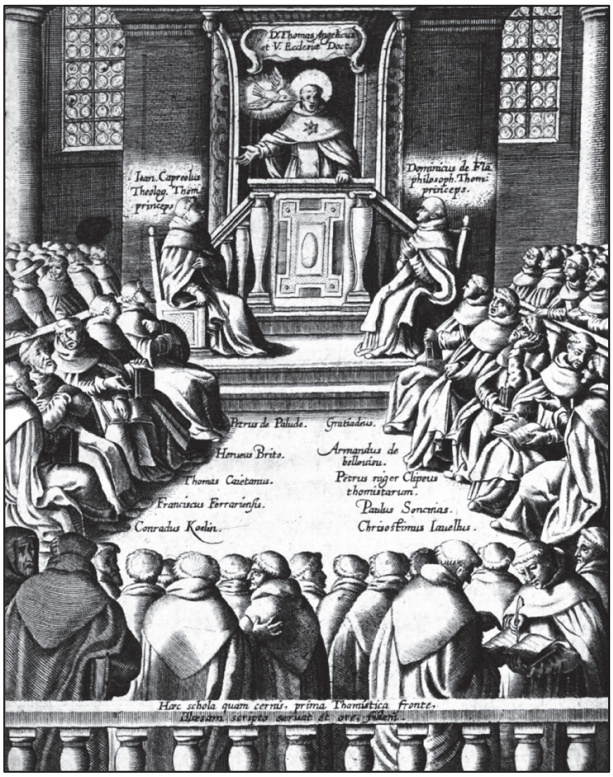


Fig. 2: Cabrol, Prince of Thomist Theology, Sits at the Saint's Right Hand Ahead of Other Eminent Courtiers; Dominic of Flanders (1621), tp.

[13] Edward Mahoney, « The Accomplishment of Jean Capreolus, O.P. », *The Thomist*, 68 (2004), p. 601–632 summarizes Guy Bedouelle, Romanus Cessario, Kevin White (eds.), *Jean Capreolus en son temps 1380–1444: Colloque de Rodez*, Editions du Cerf, Paris 1997, where chapters by Delmas, Imbach, Lançon, Lemaître and Montagnes describe Cabrol's career and environments; Andrea Aldo Robiglio, « Tradition thomiste et réforme dominicaine: Une remarque sur la circulation de l'oeuvre de Jean Capreolus », in Dragos Calma, Zénon Kaluza (eds.), *Regards sur les traditions philosophiques (XIIe–XVIe siècles)*, Leuven University Press, Leuven 2017, p. 299–307 explains how Saint-Germain adapted Cabrol's work to changed circumstances in the 1480s; Denis R. Janz, *Luther and Late Medieval Thomism: A Study in Theological Anthropology*, Wilfred Laurier University Press, Waterloo 1983, p. 59–91, stresses the later importance of Cabrol's commentary for Luther's theology.

But the *Wegestreit* escalated before an incunable of Cabrol's first 3 volumes came out in 1483, followed by a fourth in 1484 – in time for Pico to use them all while jeering at the author as « Jean Cabrol, defender of Thomas ».[14] Cabrol's new identity as arch-Thomist (Fig. 2) emerged after his Dominican editor, Thomas de Saint-Germain, addressed self-aware Thomists who feared that their patron's teachings, despite his saintly status, needed defending against a mob of critics. The editor gave his predecessor's commentary a new combative title, *Defensiones theologiae Thomae de Aquino in quattuor libris sententiarum*. He introduced it with a letter to Cardinal Oliviero Carafa, a soldierly prelate, and explained that Cabrol had

> commented on the four volumes by the Master of Sentences, relating the four of the holy Teacher to them and treating each topic as a question [*quaestio*], especially those that experts [*doctoribus*] had discussed most extensively because they had differing opinions about them. He sets up his *Defenses* in this order. The headings in the four volumes that I call 'questions' he divides into three parts that I call 'articles' [*articulos*]. First he sets forth our Teacher's positions [*sententias*] – which theologians call 'conclusions' [*conclusiones*] – on the topic in question, and he supports them with remarks from the Teacher's various books. Then come specious arguments and objections from those who contradict him. And finally he also puts solutions together from the Teacher's writings. In between he makes use of work by Pierre de la Palud, Hervé, Durand, Giovanni di Napoli or Bernard and provides replies suited to the issues at hand.[15]

Saint-Germain also filled the first 10 leaves of his first volume with a table of contents and followed suit in the 3 other volumes. This apparatus was a godsend for someone as young and inexperienced as Pico – a well-marked trail through thickets of theological controversy. In the year when the *Defensiones* first appeared in Venice – not far from Padua where the prince studied – he celebrated his twentieth birthday.

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[14] Pico della Mirandola, *Apologia conclusionum suorum*, p. 37, 39; Id., *Apologia: L'Autodifesa di Pico di fronte al tribunale dell'Inquisizione*, p. 122, 126: « Ille Joannes Capreoli defensor Thomae ipse etiam fatetur id dictum Thomae non posse defendi, nec habet aliam viam salvandi Thomam nisi quod dicit quod ipsemet Thomas videtur deinde aliter sensisse in Summa ». Jean Cabrol, *Quaestiones in IV libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi, seu libri IV defensionum theologiae Thomae Aquinatis*, ed. Thomas de Saint-Germain, Ottaviano Scoto, Venice 1483–1484 is unpaginated; I follow the numbering of the copy provided online by the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek at https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/en/view. Jean Cabrol, *Johannis Capreoli Tholosani, Ordinis Prædicatorum, thomistarum principis, defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, ed. Ceslaus Paban, Thomas Pègues, Cattier, Tours 1900–1908, the modern edition in 7 volumes, has a very detailed index. The inventories in Pearl Kibre, *The Library of Pico della Mirandola*, Columbia University Press, New York 1966, p. 68, 82, 195 (567), 204 (629), 269 (1156, 1158), 280 (1346), 288 (1504), indicate that Pico owned the *Defenses* in print.

[15] Cabrol, *Quaestiones in IV libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi*, 1.5–14, 17; 2.5–10; 3.2–5; 4.2–4; Robiglio, « Tradition thomiste et réforme dominicaine », p. 301–302.

Saint-Germain tagged the entries in his table of contents with names of *impugnatores* – assailants who had clashed with the Angelic Doctor on issues described by the entries. Only one of these aggressors – there were roughly 2 dozen – was Thomas's contemporary in the strict sense: both he and Bonaventura died in 1274. Others kept the onslaught going after Thomas was canonized; Durand de Saint-Pourçain lived until 1334, Ockham until 1347, Adam Wodeham until 1358. Saint-Germain listed them and others in his

> table [*tabula*] of questions, conclusions [*conclusionum*] and their assailants in this first book by Master Jean Cabrol of Toulouse, OP, of *Defenses of the Theology of the Divine Teacher, Thomas of Aquino*, dealing with the first book of *Sentences*. And even though each question [*quaestio*] in this book is divided into one or more articles [*articulos*], nonetheless, for the sake of brevity, I have preferred to indicate here only articles in which conclusions [*conclusiones*] are designated.[16]

From the start, readers of the *Defensiones* were told to focus more on *conclusiones* than on other components of Cabrol's commentary: its 4 books, 175 distinctions and many more questions and articles. Cabrol himself confirmed this emphasis on conclusions – these hinges of his reasoning – throughout his 4 volumes. This is what he wrote, for example, at question 1 of distinction 27 of book 1, where he asked

> whether begetting and fatherhood [*generare et paternitas*] are really the same in divine persons. [...] There will be two articles for this question, and conclusions will be proposed [*ponentur conclusiones*] in the first article. [...] The second conclusion [*secunda conclusio*] [...] in the first article is that begetting and being begotten [*generare et generari*] are in the mode of relations rather than of things that act or are acted upon [*actionum et passionum*].

In support of this second conclusion, Cabrol quoted a passage from Thomas's *Summa theologiae*:

> *D1* Just in itself, acting [*actio*] – in that an origin of motion is involved – implies being acted upon [*passio*], though not in such a way as to put the acting in divine persons. Hence, states of being acted upon [*passiones*] are not located there, except only for a grammatical account as to mode of signifying, as we attribute begetting [*generare*] to a father and being begotten [*generari*] to a son.

[16] Cabrol, *Quaestiones in IV libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi*, 1.4.

Those were Thomas's words, and they supported Cabrol's *conclusio*:

> *D2 Generare et generari potius habent modum relationum quam actionum et passionum.*[17]

D2 summarized *D1*; *D2* was compatible with *D1*; and *D2* confirmed *D1*. But Cabrol's statement, *D2*, was not *D1*, which was Thomas's statement. This pattern held through all 4 volumes of *Defensiones* and their 737 *conclusiones*: it was Cabrol, not Thomas, who made these hundreds of statements that Thomas could not have made as Cabrol made them – as headlines for defenses against assaults on Aquinas by *impugnatores* like Durand, Ockham and Adam Wodeham who attacked after their target had died.

Two centuries after the scandal of 1277, when the teenage Pico left home for Bologna and a brief try at legal studies, the old commotion threatened no one directly. New disturbances had displaced the tumults of yesteryear: the French king's fatwa of 1474 against nominalist professors in Paris was a shocker. The *nominales* whose books he banned were heirs of *impugnatores* opposed by Cabrol: not only Ockham and Wodeham, but also Peter Auriol (d. 1322), Giovanni da Ripatransone (d. c. 1357), Gregory of Rimini (d. 1358) and other *moderni*. The uproar about nominalism was still loud when Pico left the law to study philosophy at Ferrara, Padua and Paris.[18]

In this agitated situation, the *Defenses* – fully accessible in print by 1484 – was a boon for aspiring philosophers who wanted to know whose account of what doctrine (like *T42*) might offend which claque of their elders. Saint-Germain's polemical edition of Cabrol's commentary combined passionate ideology and clear presentation with comprehensive scope and large size: the modern edition, completed in 1908, filled more than 3,500 pages in 7 volumes. Size mattered to Pico: quantity was a sore point in the *Oration* that he wrote to introduce his 900 theses. Responding to critics who found so many propositions « excessive and ambitious », he called 900 a « necessary » number while goading his opponents to « think about how philosophy works » and insisting « that the necessity is plain

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[17] Cabrol, *Quaestiones in IV libros Sententiarum Petri Lombardi*, 1.482; Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 2.236; Aquinas, *ST* 1.41.1 ad 3.

[18] Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 1.xxiii–xxv, is a list with descriptions of « authors whose names are found rather often in the works of Jean Cabrol »; my subsequent citations refer to this modern edition of the *Defenses*; see also Franz Ehrle, *Der Sentenzenkommentar Peters von Candia, des Pisaner Papstes Alexanders V: Ein Beitrag zur Scheidung in der Scholastik des vierzehnten Jahrhunderts und zur Geschichte des Wegestreites*, Aschendorffschen Verlagsbuchhandlung, Münster 1925 (Franzikanischer Studien, 9), p. 305–322; Christopher Schabel, « The Quarrel with Aureol: Peter Aureol's Role in the Late-Medieval Debate Over Divine Foreknowledge and Future Contingents », Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Iowa 1994; and Calvin Normore, « Nominalism », in Henrik Lagerlund, Benjamin Hill (eds.), *Routledge Companion to Sixteenth Century Philosophy*, Routledge, New York 2017, p. 121–136.

enough ». The 737 conclusions of the *Defenses* – newly presented just as Pico's public career was about to collapse before it started – gave a case-by-case account of « how philosophy works », and 900 was not much more excessive than 737.[19]

The most successful product of early printing with *conclusiones* in its title had already addressed a different topic: sermons as lessons in practical morality were the subject of *Conclusions on Various Moral Matters* by Jean Gerson (d. 1429), whose celebrity sparked demand for 17 incunable editions after 1467. Johann Kölner's *Textual Summary and Conclusions on the Clementines and Decretals* was less popular – only 4 incunables starting in 1484. Kölner (d. 1490) was a jurist, not a theologian, but like Cabrol he aimed to summarize older material of great complexity. Henry of Gorkum (d. 1431) was in Paris with Cabrol's generation, teaching theology though not as a mendicant. By 1489 his *Conclusions on Peter Lombard's Four Books of Sentences* had also appeared 4 times on its own and more often as an add-on to the Lombard's textbook. Henry's aims were modest and pedagogical: he paraphrased the original *Sentences* without tracking the lengthy debates that Cabrol analyzed in his *conclusiones*.[20]

Again: why did the prince use this word for his 900 theses? No one knows: he was nothing if not enigmatic. Two motives come to mind, however: *formal* reasons of logical structure inherent in philosophical conclusions; and *exemplary* reasons, 737 of them, in the Thomist proclamation published as Cabrol's *Defenses*. Evidence for Pico's reliance on the *Defenses* is abundant in the *Conclusions* – in patterns which are similar for very different texts made accessible to him by Elia del Medigo, Flavius Mithridates and Marsilio Ficino.

III. *Elia and Ficino*

From Pico's perspective, more than 400 of his conclusions were « Peripatetic », which for us is 'scholastic,' more or less: typical propositions of this kind (already shown in English and Latin) were *T7*, *T21*, *T42, T70, T105, T147* and *T189*. Many of them, like *T189*, were too short to communicate the complexities involved, which for even minimal exposition required longer statements like *T105* and *T147*.

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19 Pico & Pico, *Life of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola; Oration*, p. 38 (110), 44 (114), 45 (116).

20 Jean Gerson, *Conclusiones de diversis materiis moralibus sive de regulis mandatorum*, Ulrich Ziel, Cologne c. 1467; Henry of Gorkum, *Conclusiones super quattuor libros sententiarum Petri Lombardi*, Johannes de Bell, Cologne c. 1482; Johann Kölner, *Summarium textuale et conclusiones super Clementinas et Decretales extravagantes Johannis XXII*, Johann Koelhoff, Köln 1484; Janz, *Luther and Late Medieval Thomism*, p. 91–96; Henk Schoot, « Language and Christology: The Case of Henry of Gorkum », *Recherches de théologie et philosophie médiévales*, 68 (2001), p. 148–162; Christophe Grellard, « Le sermon comme exercice de casuistique chez Jean Gerson », *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, 98 (2014), p. 457–477.

T105 Potentia generandi in divinis nec est essentia divina praecise et absolute sumpta, nec relatio vel proprietas, nec constitutum ex ambobus, nec alterum istorum cum inclusione alterius: sed est essentia cum modo relativo.

T147 Unum methaphysicum dicit privationem divisibilitatis non actu sed aptitudine.

T189 Scientia metaphysicae non est una scientia.

Pico imputed *T189* to Maimonides, but its 6 words oversimplified the *Guide*'s position. Narrowly construed, the prince's statement, following from previous propositions, was correct: if natural philosophy was the *scientia* of body, and if body also belonged to the *scientia* of metaphysical philosophy, then *scientia* about metaphysics was not unified in its subject. But *T189* implied something different: that Maimonides looked down on metaphysics. After all, he advised the perplexed to resist pondering the imponderable and counseled them to shun « the theoretical study of metaphysical matters ». But authentic metaphysics was a closed book only for *most* of the human race, he added. He recognized that a few sages were « full of understanding » about metaphysics based on « achieved knowledge », even though most inquirers were « confined to accepting tradition ». Few Christians in Pico's day knew the *Guide* well enough to see *T189* for what it was: too simple and misleadingly so.[21]

T105 was longer and better suited to its task – restating a point made by Egidio Romano (Colonna, d. 1316) in his trinitarian metaphysics and noted by Cabrol. Egidio taught in Paris and defended Aquinas against Henry of Ghent in the 1277 controversies before heading the Augustinian Order and serving as Archbishop of Bourges. The 32 words of Pico's thesis on essence, mode and other metaphysical items included terminology that educated non-experts would have recognized as typically scholastic without fully understanding it.

Any literate person with experience of a university would have expected to find words like *essentia, modus, potentia, proprietas* and *relatio* used by teachers like Egidio. According to his *Sentences* commentary, « the power to beget [*potentia generandi*] in the divine [...] indicates a what [*dicit quid*] unqualifiedly, yet it has a certain relational mode [*modum relativum*] ». If the *quid* in Egidio's statement was also an *essentia*, adding a *modum relativum* covered the same ground as Pico's *T105*. Anyone who could read the scholastic Latin of his *Conclusions* could get a rough

[21] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 11; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 28 (2); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 276 (12.2); Cf. Maimonides, *Guide*, Intro. 3b–6a, 1.31, 34a–37b, in Moses Maimonides, *Guide of the Perplexed*, ed. and trans. Shlomo Pines, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1963, p. 6–10, 65–72.

sense from *T105* of a plausible message about Egidio's metaphysics, which was not so for Maimonides and *T189*.[22]

T147 on Ibn Rushd was a middling case. Its 9 words, not many more than the 6 of *T189*, also included basic technical terms – *actus, aptitudo, divisibilitas* and *privatio* – that gave non-experts a little to go on, though not much.[23] As of 1486, however, when Silber printed the *Conclusions*, Pico had special access to a deeper message of *T147* from Elia del Medigo, a learned Jew who tutored him at Padua and elsewhere. Elia introduced his student to a Jewish commentary tradition on Ibn Rushd's commentaries on Aristotle that began soon after the Commentator died in 1198. From his tutor Pico learned about material by Ibn Rushd that Jews knew in Hebrew and Arabic before Latin versions (some by Elia) became available. Short works that Elia produced for Pico's instruction had their first print editions in 1488 and 1497; in the next century they circulated in 11 printings. But all the publicity came after the *Conclusions* had been condemned.[24]

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22 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 6; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 18 (1); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 246 (6.1); Egidio Romano, *Commentarium beati Aegidii Columnae romani [...] in primum librum magistri sententiarum*, ed. Antonio de Aguilar, Lazar de Risquez and Antonia Rosello, Cordoba 1699, p. 145; Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 1.279.

23 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 9; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 24 (32); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 26 (7.32).

24 Elia del Medigo, *Annotationes, De primo motore quaestio, De efficientia mundi*, in Jean de Jandun, *Quaestiones in libros physicorum Aristotelis*, Hieronymus de Sanctis and Johannes Lucilius Santritter, Venice 1488; Elia del Medigo, trans. of Ibn Rushd, *In meteorologica Aristotelis*, Torresanus, Venice 1488; Elia del Medigo, trans. of Ibn Rushd, *Quaestio in librum analyticorum priorum*, in Lorenzo Maiolo, *Epiphyllides in dialecticis*, Aldo Manuzio, Venice 1497; Elia del Medigo, *Quaestiones [...] de primo motore, de mundi efficientia, de esse et essentia et uno, [...] in dictis Averrois super eosdem libros annotationibus,* in Jean de Jandun, *Super octo libros Aristotelis de physico auditu subtilissimae quaestiones,* Giunta, Venice 1551: Elia's logical writings are cited in the 1497 edition, others in the 1551 edition; for new work on Elia, see Michael Engel, *Elijah del Medigo and Paduan Aristotelianism: Investigating the Human Intellect*, Bloomsbury, London 2017: Id., « Elijah del Medigo », in Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Summer 2023 Edition [online at plato.stanford.edu]; Edelheit, *A Philosopher at the Crossroads*, p. 41–53; Simone Fellina, « Giovanni Pico della Mirandola e l'insegnamento averroistico di Elia del Medigo: Note su alcune fonti delle *Conclusiones nongentae* (1486) », *Schifanoia*, 52–53 (2017), p. 117–144; Giovanni Licata, *La Via della ragione: Elia del Medigo e l'averroismo di Spinoza*, EUM, Macerata 2013; Id., « Elia del Medigo sul problema della causalità divina. Un'edizione critica della *Quaestio de efficientia mundi*, (1480) », *Mediaeval Sophia: Studi e ricerche sui saperi medievali*, 14 (2013), p. 59–81; Id., « An Unpublished Letter of Elijah del Medigo to Giovanni Pico della Mirandola: *De nervis et sensu tactus* », *Rinascimento*, 54 (2014), p. 175–183; Id., « Il *De substantia orbis* nell'averroismo ebraico (Isaac Albalag, Moshé N Elia de Medigo », in Omero Proietti, Giovanni Licata (eds.), *Tradizione e illuminismo in Uriel da Costa*, EUM, Macerata 2016, p. 75–103; Id., « *Magno in secta peripatetica*: Una nuova edizione commentata della lettera di Elia del Medigo a Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (Paris, BnF, ms. lat. 6508) », *Schede Medievali*, 6 (2017), p. 103–143; and Id., *Secundum Averroem, Pico della Mirandola, Elia del Medigo e la 'seconda rivelazione' di Averroè*, Officina Studi Medievali, Palermo 2022, p. 24–29.

A question by Elia *On Being, Essence and the One* along with *Notes on Statements by Averroes* gave Pico private information about the issues in *T147,* which Ibn Rushd had discussed in the framework of physics or natural philosophy. In that context, he treated one (*unum*) and being (*ens*) as nearly the same and much like those items in metaphysics – except that « the one [*unum*] which the metaphysician deals with indicates being with a privation of divisibility [*ens cum privatione divisibilitatis*] [...] which being [*ens*] does not indicate ». Elia applied these distinctions to keeping time and counting. Comparing an *instans* to an *unum*, he asked how such a thing might be indivisible. Perhaps mentally, he suggested:

> maybe [...] an indivisible instant is not outside the mind in act but by fitness [*non est extra animam in actu sed aptitudinaliter*], so that in time there is something naturally fit [*aptum natum*] to be understood in this way. In itself this is not actually indivisible, however, so that a continuance [*continuatio*] of one time with another is understood *as if* it were something actually indivisible in itself, like a point on a line.

Unlike the metaphysical *unum*, the mental *instans* had no actual privation that would preclude divisibility, so the mind could indeed split an atom of time as long as it was purely notional.[25]

Such private lessons from Elia showed Pico how to unpack the Commentator's intricate thoughts, and then he packed them up again in *T147* and many other theses of his *Conclusions*. He did this 900 times for more than 2 dozen authorities like Egidio, Ibn Rushd and Maimonides and for scores of problems about philosophy and theology. Some of these statements infuriated Pope Innocent and his janissaries, though other observers have been dazzled by them and still are, more than five centuries after Pico died. Part of this brilliant boy's legend has been the scope of his omnicompetence – his mastery at the age of 23 of everything knowable (*omnis scibilis*).[26]

How could a single young genius have learned so much so quickly? What mind on its own could have assembled 900 puzzles as complex as the underpinnings of *T105*, *T147* and *T189*? If there ever was such a mind, it was not Pico's in his early twenties. At this stage of his short life, 4 experts – actually or effectively his contemporaries – provided form and content for his propositions about ancient theology, Kabbalah, Platonism and scholasticism. These thinkers, scholars and one swindler were Flavius Mithridates for Kabbalah; Elia del Medigo for Muslim, Jewish and pagan scholasticism; Jean Cabrol for Christian scholasticism; and Marsilio Ficino for ancient theology and Platonism.

Ficino translated 14 discourses of the Greek Hermetica into Latin and developed a theory of sacred history, his Christianized *prisca theologia*, which

[25] Elia del Medigo, *Quaestiones*, fol. 142v, 149.
[26] Copenhaver, *Magic and the Dignity of Man*, p. 199, 455–457.

esteemed these pagan devotionals as records of revelation that corroborated sacred scripture.[27] Pico grouped this Hermetic piety with Chaldean and Pythagorean lore in *P1* of the *Conclusions*, where he took 10 theses more or less verbatim from Ficino's Latin Hermetica.[28]

> *M1*^{P} *Ubicunque vita, ibi anima; ubicunque anima, ibi mens.*
> Wherever life is, there is soul; wherever soul is, there is mind.
>
> *M1*^{F} *Nam ubicunque anima ibi quoque mens, quemadmodum ubicunque vita ibi etiam anima in viventibus.*
> ὅπου γὰρ ψυχή, ἐκεῖ καὶ νοῦς ἐστιν, ὥσπερ ὅπου καὶ ζωή, ἐκεῖ καὶ ψυχή.

Pico's thesis was *M1*^{P}; Ficino's earlier translation of a line from a Hermetic dialogue was *M1*^{F}; the Greek is from the modern edition. Every one of Pico's 8 words came from Ficino's 14, and borrowing continued at this level throughout the conclusions on Mercurius Trismegistus.[29] The pattern was the same elsewhere in *P1*, where dozens of theses were exact or nearly exact repetitions of material that Pico found in writings by Elia del Medigo, Flavius Mithridates and Jean Cabrol.

Ficino's Latin discourses were easy for Pico to locate and copy: 3 editions had been printed since 1471.[30] But Ficino did not publish his translations of works by Iamblichus, Plotinus, Porphyry, Proclus and other Neoplatonists (see *H7*) until more than 10 years after Pico released the *Conclusions* in 1486. He and Ficino talked and corresponded, however – about Ficino's Plotinus project, for example. Long before his readings of the *Enneads* were printed in 1492, they stimulated Pico's composition of 15 conclusions on Plotinus. Moreover, Ficino's groundbreaking studies of Proclus – inspiration for a *Platonic Theology* of his own – gave him the means to advise his young friend on the Successor's tangled texts.[31] Pico devoted

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[27] Brian Copenhaver, *Magic in Western Culture from Antiquity to the Enlightenment*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2015, p. 170–185.

[28] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 22–24; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 50–54; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 334–342.

[29] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 24; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 54 (1); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 340 (27.1); Marsilio Ficino, *Corpus Hermeticum i–xiv, versione latina di Marsilio Ficino, Pimander,* ed. Sebastiano Gentile, Studio per Edizioni Scelte, Florence 1989, fol. 42v; *Corp. herm.* 12.2 (ed. Nock and Festugière 174; ed. Copenhaver 43, 173)

[30] [Hermes Trismegistus], *De potestate et sapientia Dei*, tr. Marsilio Ficino, Gerardus de Lisa, Treviso 1471, reprinted in 1472 (Ferrara) and 1481 (Venice).

[31] Plotinus, *Opera*, trans. and comm. Marsilio Ficino, Antonio di Bartolommeo Miscomini, Florence 1492; Iamblichus et al., *De mysteriis aegyptiorum, chaldaeorum, assyriorum*, with Proclus, *In platonicum Alcibiadem, De sacrificio et magia* and other texts, trans. Marsilio Ficino, Aldo Manuzio, Venice 1497; Brian Copenhaver, « Giovanni Pico della Mirandola on Virtue, Happiness and Magic », in Stephen Gersh (ed.), *Plotinus' Legacy: The Transformation of Platonism from the Renaissance to the Modern Era,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2019, p. 44–70.

more of his *P1* theses, 55 of them, to Proclus than to any other individual, focusing on the *Platonic Theology* and the *Timaeus* commentary.[32]

Ficino's presence – implicit in Pico's *P1* propositions on Proclus and Plotinus – was an explicit textual fact about his Hermetic theses and was effective elsewhere in the *Conclusions* as well, especially the 62 Platonic propositions in *P2*.[33] Textual facts of the same type were even more numerous in other parts of this book that relied heavily on writings by Jean Cabrol, Elia del Medigo and Flavius Mithridates.

IV. *Flavius Mithridates*

Elia was Pico's tutor in Jewish Averroism, and Elia despised Kabbalah. Flavius – a Christian and a Vatican employee – was also born a Jew: no one knows what he actually thought about Kabbalah, despite his vast knowledge of it. He was a clever con-man, sharp enough to fool Pico. Even his name was a pretentious fake: Mithridates of Pontus knew 22 languages, so people said, and Pico's translator was a new Mithridates. Flavius – aka Guglielmo Raimondo Moncada, aka Shmuel bin Nissim Abulfaraj – turned thousands of pages of Kabbalah into Latin for the prince. He also buried snippets of Christian doctrine for Pico to exhume from Latin versions of Hebrew and Aramaic texts. This eager buyer of counterfeit wares learned some Hebrew and maybe a little Aramaic while being flim-flammed, and Arabic also came up in Elia's tutorials. These experiences added another fantasy to Pico's legend: his command of 2 dozen languages.[34]

Pico reserved his first 47 theses on Kabbalah for the finale of *P1*, parallel with *P2*'s culmination in 72 additional Kabbalist conclusions. These 119 propositions stymied scholars who were undaunted by Latin technicalities in theses like *T105* or

[32] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 17–22; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 42–50; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 314–332.

[33] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 44–50; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 94–104; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 436–458.

[34] Chaim Wirszubski, *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA 1989, p. 4–6, 59–76, 114–118; Saverio Campanini, « Guglielmo Raimondo Moncada (alias Flavio Mitridate), tradutorre di opere cabbalistiche », in Mauro Perani, Luciana Pepi (ed.s), *Guglielmo Raimondo Moncada alias Flavio Mitridate: Un ebreo converso siciliano*, Officina di Studi Medievali, Palermo 2008, p. 49–88; Saverio Campanini, « El'azar da Worms nelle traduzioni di Flavio Mitridate per Pico della Mirandola » in Mauro Perani, Giacomo Corazzol (eds.), *Flavio Mitridate mediatore fra culture nel contesto dell'ebraismo siciliano del xv secolo*, Officina di Studi Medievali, Palermo 2012, p. 47–79; Perani, Pepi (eds.), *Guglielmo Raimondo Moncada alias Flavio Mitridate*; Perani, Corazzol (eds.), *Flavio Mitridate mediatore fra culture*; Copenhaver, *Magic and the Dignity of Man*, p. 211–216, 222, 342–343, 351–356, 441–448.

by Greek mysteries like *T294* on Proclus.[35] Even for the most erudite Christians, Pico's first Kabbalist thesis was worse than baffling:

> *M2* Just as a human being and lower priest sacrifices souls of unreasoning animals [*animalium irrationalium*] to God, so Michael, a higher priest, sacrifices souls of animals that reason [*animalium rationalium*].

The blasphemy was frightful: Pico seemed to accuse Saint Michael, the blessed archangel who vanquished Satan, of sacrificing « souls of animals that reason ». An *animal rationale* was a human being. Was Michael holy or homicidal? Only a few Jews and none of Pico's Christian contemporaries understood that the sacrifices in question were *blessings* for the sacrificed, that the deaths need not be bodily and that any physical loss might be temporary.[36]

None of this was known to Christians when Pico had *M2* printed. Most of his next thesis was even more obscure and just as bewildering:

> *M3 Novem sunt angelorum hierarchiae quarum nomina Cherubim, Seraphim, Hasmalim, Haiot, Aralim, Tarsisim, Ophanim, Tephsarim, Isim.*
> Nine are the hierarchies of angels whose names are Cherubim, Seraphim, Hasmalim, Haiot, Aralim, Tarsisim, Ophanim, Tephsarim and Isim.

Michael, Gabriel and Raphael were archangels. Was there no such rank in *M3*'s hierarchies? Christians had sacred names of their own for these spirits, counting from the top: Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Dominions, Virtues, Powers, Principalities, Archangels and Angels. *Hasmalim*, *Haiot*, *Aralim* and the other Latinized Hebrew names were gibberish to gentiles.[37] But Pico had textual grounds for reconciling the 9 orders of Christian angelology with the 10 that were customary for Jews. His evidence was a document that Flavius translated: the *Crown of the Good Name* by Abraham Axelrad, an Ashkenazi Kabbalist of the thirteenth century. Axelrad's list of angel names could be read as a hierarchy of 9, and Pico exploited the coincidence. « Our sages say that the ten utterances *(decem verba)* are ten levels of honor », Axelrad explained.

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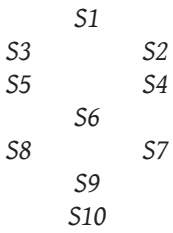
[35] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 24–28, 60–69; Id., *Apologia conclusionum suorum*, p. 55; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 56–62, 126–140; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 344–362, 516–552; Pico della Mirandola, *Apologia: L'Autodifesa di Pico*, p. 176.

[36] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 25; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 56 (1); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 346 (28.1); Wirszubski, *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, p. 21–22, 158–159.

[37] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 25; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 56 (2); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 346 (28.2); Wirszubski, *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, p. 22–23.

> One level is higher than another, and such levels are called a heavenly hierarchy [*hierarchia celestis*]. Their names are these: *hisim*, meaning 'humans'; *malachim* or *tafsarim*, meaning 'angels' or 'principalities'; *hirin* or *tarsisim*; *aralim*; *xeraphim*; *ofannim*; *cherubim*; *aioth*; *chisse* or *asmallim*. And the tenth [*decimus*] is sacred and the foundation of the tenfold [*fundamentum denarii*].

Axelrad gave distinct names to only 9 classes of angels before mentioning a tenth without naming it. Was this nameless order angelic or something entirely different? It was « the foundation of the tenfold », and this *denarius* was the full array of *sefirot*, 10 attributes or emanations or features of the Godhead that theosophical Kabbalists arranged in configurations like this:



Each *sefirah* – literally a 'numbering' – had many names: the first (*S1*) was often the Crown, the second (*S2*) was Wisdom, the third (*S3*) was Intelligence and so on. Axelrad analogized these *sefirot* with orders of angels; with 10 utterances (*verba*) of a 10-letter phrase, « and God said (ויאמר אלהים) », in the first chapter of Genesis; and also with the 10 commandments. Christians who read *M3* knew none of this theological arithmetic, but Pico had seen the Latinization of Axelrad's exegesis by Flavius – a textual basis for the obscure language of his conclusion.[38]

Flavius also translated an anonymous *Book of Combining* (ספר הצרוף) about a practice that Hebrew script made possible: its 22 letters were also numerals – א for 1, ב for 2, ג for 3 and so on. Kabbalists combined these signs for hermeneutic and ritual purposes: they interpreted the Torah by treating the letters in its words as a numerical code; and they prayed for redemptive ecstasy by putting letters together in shifting patterns and chanting them over and over. Letters in the names of *sefirot* like Judgment (*S5*) and Clemency (*S6*) were ciphers for divine powers, and in this hermeneutic context the 10 numberings of divinity were its « measures » (מדות), which Flavius translated as *proprietates*.

A passage from the *Book of Combining* in the translator's Latin (Fig. 3) explained « that although [*quamvis*] the four-lettered name of God [*nomen dei tetragrammaton*]

[38] Abraham Axelrad, *Corona nominis boni,* trans. Flavius Mithridates, BAV, MS Vat. ebr. 190, fol. 177r; Gen. 1:3–29; Wirszubski, *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, p. 286; Copenhaver, *Magic and the Dignity of Man*, p. 345–346.

is called the feature of Clemency [*proprietas clementie*] according to our sages, it nonetheless contains the feature of Judgment [*continet tamen proprietatem iudicii*] ». Pico's restatement of this passage in a *P1* conclusion on Kabbalah was *M4*, here with corresponding words underlined:

> *M4 Quamvis Nomen ineffabile sit proprietas Clementiae, negandum tamen non est quin contineat proprietatem Iudicii.*
> Although the unsayable Name is the feature of Clemency, one must still not deny that it contains the feature of Judgment.

In the left margin of the manuscript that Flavius prepared for him, Pico made the same vertical stroke with 2 dots that he used elsewhere to mark passages of special interest. We can be sure that he read this part of the *Book of Combining* in this particular manuscript (Fig. 3).[39]

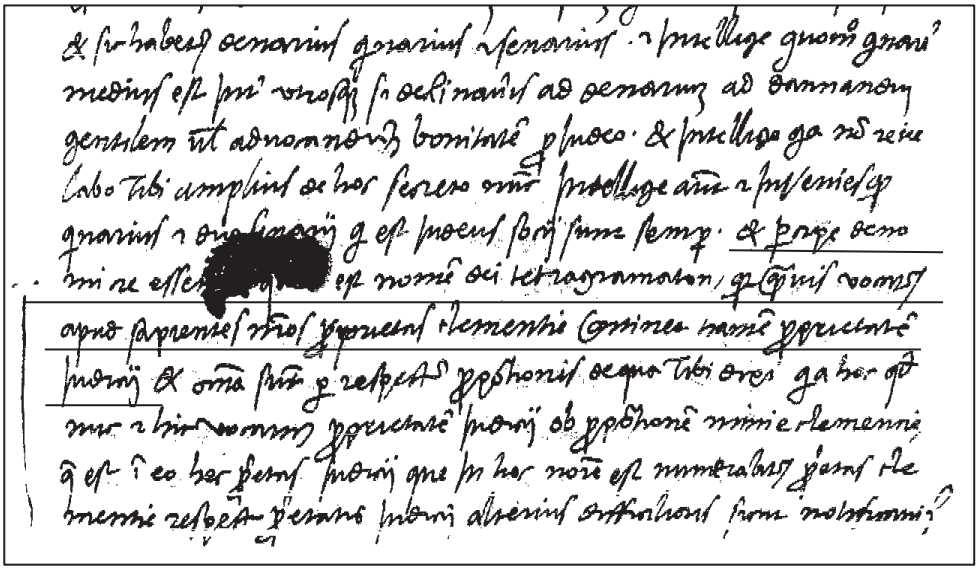


Fig. 3: Anonymous, *Liber Combinationum*, fol. 41r, with my underlining.

[39] Anonymous, *Liber combinationum*, trans. Flavius Mithridates, BAV, MS Vat. ebr. 190, fol. 41r: « Et percipe de nomine essencie quod est nomen Dei tetragrammaton, quod quamvis vocatur apud sapientes nostros proprietas clementie continet tamen proprietatem judicii », as in Wirszubski, *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, p. 23, 31–40, 141–142, 287; Copenhaver, *Magic and the Dignity of Man*, p. 340–341.

We can also conclude that he found pieces of *M5* in an anonymous commentary on the *Sefer Yetzirah* that Flavius translated:

> *M5 Eaedem sunt literae nominis cacodaemonis qui est Princeps Mundi Huius et nominis Dei triagrammaton, et qui sciverit ordinare transpositionem deduceret unum ex alio.*
> The letters of a name of the wicked spirit who is the Prince of This World and of a three-lettered name of God are the same, and one who knows how to put their transposition in order may derive the one from the other.

The third underlined phrase was crucial for Pico's Kabbalist account of the name of Jesus but was *not* in the original Hebrew. Flavius inserted these words into his translation (Fig. 4) and tricked the prince with a falsely Christianized analysis of divine and diabolical names. The numerology in the *Conclusions* that reflected this forgery was intricate – along the lines of the *Book of Combining* – but the textual evidence for Pico's bamboozlement is plain enough.[40]

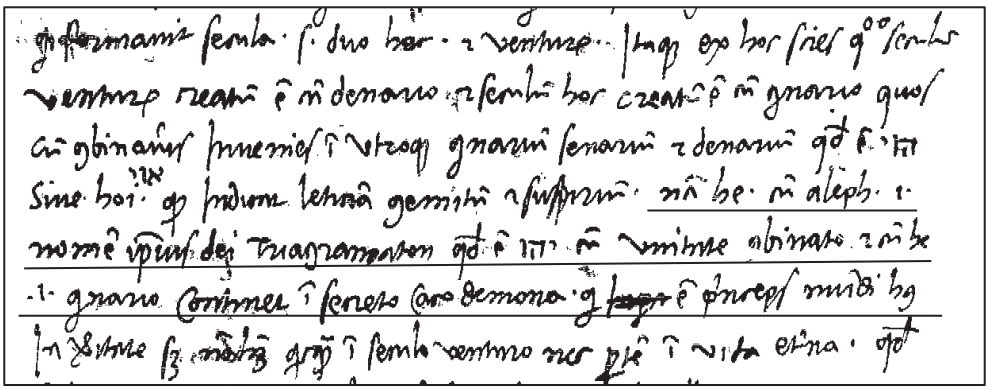


Fig. 4: Anon. (c. 1485), fol. 23r, with my underlining.

Kabbalist calculations in support of *M6* were even more elaborate:

> *M6 Qui noverit in Cabala mysterium Portarum Intelligentiae cognoscet mysterium Magni Iobelei.*

[40] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 26; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 58 (19); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 352 (28.19); Anonymous, *Commentary on the Sefer Yetzirah*, tr. Flavius Mithridates, BAV, MS Vat. ebr. 191, fol. 23r: « nam he cum aleph id est nomen ipsius dei tetragrammaton quod est יהו cum unitate combinato et cum he id est quinario continent in secreto cacodemona qui est princeps mundi huius », as in Wirszubski, *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, p. 36–37, 291.

> One who knows the mystery of the Gates of Understanding in Kabbalah will recognize the mystery of the Great Jubilee.

Pico's thesis relied on the *Gates of Light* by Joseph Gikatilla (d. c. 1305), a renowned Spanish Kabbalist. He paraphrased Gikatilla's exegesis of a word (תכתני, 'under me') in 2 Samuel where a single letter, *nun* (נ), was out of place. Since the same letter was also the numeral 50, and since nothing in the Bible could have been wrong or not purposeful, interpreters looked for other 50s that might explain the anomaly. Talmudists had claimed, for example, that Moses passed through 49 Gates – but *not* a 50th – in his spiritual journey, and Kabbalists located 7 of the Gates with each of the 7 *sefirot* who guarded a path of salvation up from *S10* toward Understanding at *S3*. The *Zohar* also taught that the Creator kept a Gate hidden at *S3*, above a palace with 49 other entrances.[41] This was Gikatilla's comment:

> *M7 Et qui novit secreta harum indictionum intelliget [...] quia nun numero est quinquaginta portarum intelligentiae. [...] Si vero intellexeris secretum Iobelei et secretum quinquaginta portarum intelligentiae intelliges hoc misterium intellectu perfecto.*
> Whoever knows the secrets of these declarations will understand [...] that the number *nun* is the fiftieth of the Gates of Understanding. [...] But if you understand the secret of the Jubilee and the secret of the Fifty Gates of Understanding, you will understand this mystery with complete understanding.

Gikatilla taught that the Jubilee's connection with *nun* would uncover a *misterium* concealed in Leviticus where the Jubilee laws were proclaimed. After 7 cycles of 7 weeks (sabbaths) of years, the holy Jubilee year was the fiftieth. A translation by Flavius was the textual basis of the *mysterium* in *M6*.[42]

We have no such manuscript evidence for the longest work of Kabbalah that Flavius translated, a commentary on the Torah by Menahem Recanati (fl. c. 1300) that digested large parts of the *Zohar*, the immense masterwork of Kabbalah from the late thirteenth century. Pico's reliance on Recanati for Zoharic Kabbalah is well established, however, as in *M8*:

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41 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 25; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 57 (13); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 350 (28.13); 2Sam. 22:37; *Roš haš.* 21b; *Zohar* I, 3b; Wirszubski, *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, p. 32.

42 Joseph Gikatilla, *Portae iustitiae seu de divinis nominibus*, tr. Flavius Mithridates, BAV, MS Chigi A.VI.190, fol. 128v–129r; Lev. 25:11; Wirszubski, *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, p. 32, 291.

> *M8* *Cum arbore scientiae boni et mali, in qua peccavit primus homo, creavit Deus saeculum.*
> God created the world with the tree of knowledge of good and evil, in which the first human sinned.[43]

On this point about creation, trees and sin in Eden, Recanati followed the *Zohar*. The forbidden tree's counterpart among the *sefirot* was the Shekinah (*S10*) – divinity in its lowest hypercosmic Dwelling and the Creator's link between the higher sefirotic world and lower creation. Pico's word for 'world', *saeculum*, with its temporal core, was a better match than *mundum* for Hebrew עולם or Aramaic עלמא. And his thesis implied that the occasion of sin for Adam and Eve – though not sin itself – was built into the world. Evidence that Recanati transmitted these Zoharic secrets to Pico were the words « cum arbore [...] creavit Deus saeculum » in *M8*, an exact Latin rendering of a non-Biblical Aramaic phrase that Recanati had quoted from the *Zohar*: באילנא דא ברא קב"ה עלמא.[44]

Pico was aware of the *Zohar* but lacked direct access and relied instead on Recanati's Torah commentary. When he wrote the *Conclusions*, both Flavius and Elia were personal informants about recondite Jewish material, but Elia discouraged his interest in Kabbalah. Flavius, a prolific and unscrupulous translator, was his channel through Recanati to the *Zohar*: 5 words in *M8*, translating 5 in Aramaic, are textual evidence of such links.[45]

The textual setting of propositions *M3*–*M6* and *M8* was the same for Pico's 42 other Kabbalist conclusions in *P1*: all his information and much of his wording came from Latin versions by Flavius of books on Kabbalah mainly by Recanati but also by Axelrad, Gikatilla and anonymous Kabbalists like the compilers of the *Bahir*. The prince who commissioned this huge project of translation had exclusive and timely access to its results.[46] In two similar cases, his access was just as timely though not exclusive. Others read the incunable editions published in Pico's

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43 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 25; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 56 (5); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 346 (28.5); Wirszubski, *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, p. 19–22, 53–65; Moshe Idel, *La Cabbalà in Italia (1280–1510)*, ed. Fabrizio Lelli, Giuntina, Florence 2007, p. 138–142.

44 Manahem Recanati, ביאור על התורה, Marco Antonio Giustiniani, Venice 1545, fol. 23v, with Gen. 2:8–9, 3:1–6; *Zohar* I, 36a; Wirszubski, *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, p. 25.

45 For Pico's only mention of the *Zohar* in the *Conclusions*, see Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 63–64; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 130 (11.24); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 530 (11.24); and for discouraging words about Kabbalah, see Kalman Bland, « Elijah del Medigo's Averroist Response to the Kabbalahs of Fifteenth-Century Jewry and Pico Della Mirandola » *Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy*, 1 (1991), p. 30–32; Licata, « Il *De substantia orbis* nell'averroismo ebraico », p. 99–100; and Elia to Pico, c. 1485, in Licata, « *Magno in secta peripatetica* », p. 121–122; also Idel, *La Cabbalà in Italia*, p. 276–278, on access to the *Zohar* in Italy.

46 Wirszubski, *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, p. 53–59.

lifetime of Jean Cabrol's 737 Thomist conclusions and of questions by Elia del Medigo on Ibn Rushd's commentaries on Aristotle. But Pico's reliance on Elia, like his connection with Flavius, differed from his dependence on Cabrol: its setting was personal and its expression was more oral than written – hence less stable and not as easily traced as statements printed in the *Defenses*.

V. *Elia Again*

None of the Latin books of Kabbalah translated by Flavius and used by Pico was published until 2004. Even now most can be read only in manuscripts, and passages from them became accessible only in the last century.[47] But comments by Cabrol on Thomism and by Elia on Averroist Aristotelianism were printed during Pico's lifetime. Nothing by Elia was published until 1488, however – after Pico released the *Conclusions* in 1486. By then Elia had been talking with the prince for five years or so, and the teacher had put some of his lessons in writing.[48]

Sometimes they talked about logic. Elia recalled translating rules of Aristotelian reasoning « from Hebrew into Latin for Lord Giovanni Pico, the most distinguished Count of Mirandola [...] on the most difficult questions of their kind ». Another topic was metaphysics, and Elia remembered conversing « with the most learned Count, [...] a very brilliant philosopher, in Perugia, where we discussed many things about existence, essence and the one ». But their longest discussions that made it into print examined Aristotle's *Physics*. Elia reported that Pico's curiosity about these books of natural philosophy was « my reason for writing something about them [...] and putting it together ».[49]

In 1485 Elia finished a Latin *expositio* of a Hebrew version of Ibn Rushd's treatise *On the Substance of the Sphere*. Themes from this short study – form and prime matter; matter as dimensional, undelimited or potential; differences between heavenly and earthly bodies; final and efficient causality in heavenly motion; heavenly forces ending or unending in time – appeared throughout Pico's theses on Ibn Rushd. This essay on metaphysical cosmology and other writings by the Commentator had responded to « Peripatetics besides Aristotle » – including

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47 Anonymous, *The Great Parchment: Flavius Mithridates' Latin Translation, the Hebrew Text and an English Translation,* ed. Giulio Busi, Simonetta M. Bondoni, Saverio Campanini, Aragno, Torino 2004 was the first text published in the 'Kabbalistic Library of Giovanni Pico' by Giulio Busi and his colleagues, after many excerpts from Pico's books of Kabbalah had become available in Wirszubski, *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, which Moshe Idel prepared for publication: cf. Wirszubski, *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Jewish Mysticism*, p. vi.

48 Elia del Medigo, *Annotationes*; Id., trans. of Ibn Rushd, *In meteorologica Aristotelis*; Id., trans. of Ibn Rushd, *Quaestio in librum analyticorum priorum*; cf. also *supra*, n. 25.

49 Elia del Medigo, trans. of Ibn Rushd, *Quaestio in librum analyticorum priorum*, sig. Dvii^{v}; (1651), fol. 142r, 143v.

Alexander of Aphrodisias, Philoponus, Themistius and Theophrastus – on points of disagreement with the Philosopher. Elia's writings informed Pico about these ancient Greek interpreters, just as the teacher's support for Ibn Rushd's attacks on Farabi, Ibn Sina and other Muslim sages shaped his student's outlook.[50]

In these various ways, Elia's presence in Pico's theses on Muslim, Jewish and Greek Peripatetics (see *H5* and *H6*) was pervasive: evidence is plain and extensive throughout dozens of conclusions, even though Elia's lessons were oral before they were written – hence less stable textually in 1486 than Cabrol's *Defensiones*, which by then had already been printed.

> *M9 Ad dispositionem termini necessarii, requiritur ut sit terminus per se unus.*
> For a term to be posited as necessary, a requirement is that the term be one in itself.

In *M9* Pico discussed the modality of propositions like « necessarily every human [*homo*] is mortal [*mortalis*] »; his thesis claimed that the subject term (*homo*) had to have intrinsic unity in order for the proposition to be true necessarily rather than just contingently or possibly. Pico's *M9* was very close to Elia's translation of a statement by Ibn Rushd in a question on Aristotle's *Prior Analytics*: « dispositio seu intentio terminorum necessariorum est quod sit terminus per se unus ».[51]

> *M10 Propositio necessaria, quae ab Aristotele in libro Priorum contra possibilem et inventam distinguitur, est illa quae est ex terminis necessariis.*
> A necessary proposition, distinguished by Aristotle in the book of *Prior Analytics* from the possible and the discovered, is the one made of necessary terms.

Conclusion *M10* was also about modality, but Pico's terminology departed from the Latin mainstream. In order to regulate the switching of subject and predicate terms in a proposition while preserving its truth, Aristotle had distinguished other categorical statements from *modals* that were *necessary* or *possible*: « something belongs [ὑπάρχειν] or belongs necessarily [ἐξ ἀνάκης] or belongs possibly [τοῦ ἐνδέχεσθαι] ». Drawing on the same exegesis used for *M9*, Elia wrote that

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[50] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 2–9; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 20–24; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 250–262; Elia del Medigo, *Quaestiones*, fol. 131r, 139v, 154r, 155r, 158v; also fol. 131r, 134r, 136r, 138v–141r, 145r, 146r, 147r, 158, 160–161 for Elia's frequent citations of *De substantia orbis*; harsh responses to Ibn Sina were even more frequent in the same works; Ibn Rushd, *De substantia orbis: Critical Edition of the Hebrew Text with English Translation and Commentary*, ed. and trans. Arthur Hyman, Medieval Academy of America, Cambridge, MA 1986, p. 28, 44–45, 120; Bland, « Elijah del Medigo's Averroist Response », p. 23, n. 3; Licata, « Il *De substantia orbis* nell'averroismo ebraico », p. 83–84, 87–90.

[51] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dccccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 8; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 22 (27); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 258 (7.27); Elia del Medigo, trans. of Ibn Rushd, *Quaestio in librum analyticorum priorum*, sig. Biiʳ; Fellina, « Giovanni Pico della Mirandola e l'insegnamento averroistico », p. 139; Licata, *Secundum Averroem*, p. 171.

« discovered propositions [*propositiones inventae*] are those made of possible discovered terms [*terminis inventis possibilibus*], but the necessary [*necessaria*] are made of necessary terms [*terminis necessariis*] ». A later translator of Ibn Rushd, Abraham De Balmes, returned to the usual Latin terminology with *propositiones de inesse* rather than *inventae*, though both he and Elia innovated by applying modalities to terms rather than propositions. Elia also discussed these issues with Pico in a letter written before the *Conclusions* was published at the end of 1486.[52]

> *M11 Deus primum mobile non solum ut finis sed ut verum efficiens et proprius motor movet.*
> God moves the first movable not only as its aim but as a real efficient cause and its own mover.

Background for *M11* was Elia's question *On the First Mover*, one of 4 published in 1488 as an appendix to a commentary on Aristotle's *Physics* by Jean de Jandun, who was Elia's main target among Christian interpreters of Ibn Rushd. Asking whether « God moves the first heaven [*movet primum coelum*] as an efficient and a final cause [*secundum efficiens et finem*] », he concluded – *ad mentem Philosophi et Commentatoris* – that « he moves the first heaven directly as efficient cause [*effective*] ». Accordingly, Elia condemned Jean de Jandun and others for « denying to the first beginning what especially belongs to it [*proprium sibi*], which is to move [*movere*], and this leaves them with no beginning except regarding form and end [*secundum formam et secundum finem*] ». Then, in order to correct Ghazali, Elia also insisted that « the world's mover is the efficient cause of the world [*motor mundi est efficiens mundi*], [...] and God is the one who has the special property of being the world's efficient cause [*cui appropriator esse efficiens mundi*] ».[53]

> *M12 Quodlibet abstractum dependet a primo abstracto in triplici genere causae – formalis, finalis et efficientis.*
> By three kinds of causing – formal, final and efficient – anything separated depends on the first separated.

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52 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 8; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 22 (26); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 258 (7.26); Arist. *PrAn.* 25a 1–6; Ibn Rushd, *Quaesita varia in logica iuxta ordinem librorum logicae*, tr. Abraham de Balmes, in *Aristotelis opera cum Averrois commentariis*, Giunta, Venice 1562, fol. 83; Elia del Medigo, trans. of Ibn Rushd, *Quaestio in librum analyticorum priorum*, sig. Biiʳ; Fellina, « Giovanni Pico della Mirandola e l'insegnamento averroistico », p. 139; Licata, « *Magno in secta peripatetica* », p. 112–114; Id., *Secundum Averroem*, p. 171.

53 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 7; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 20 (7); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 254 (7.7); Elia del Medigo, *Quaestiones*, fol. 130r, 132r, 133v–134r; Fellina, « Giovanni Pico della Mirandola e l'insegnamento averroistico », p. 127; Licata, *Secundum Averroem*, p. 24–25, 150–151.

When causality came up again in *M12*, Pico had help from another of Elia's questions – his *De mundi efficientia*. Elia's task (like Ibn Rushd's) was to adapt Aristotle's pagan naturalism to the supernaturalist creationism of Islam and Judaism. Part of the problem was Aristotle's doctrine of first movers above the visible heavens – beyond planets and stars and their observed motions. Things seen moving below the moon were composites of matter and form, but higher causes of motion had to be immaterial, hence invisible yet still effective on bodies, and Elia distinguished such causes as separated (*abstractus*) rather than composite. « The cause of other separated items is the first of them [*primum abstractorum*] » he explained, and « the first beginning [*primum principium*] of them all is a maker and a form and an end [*efficiens et formam et finem*] ».[54]

> *M13 Dimensiones interminatae sunt coeternae materiae, praecedentes in ea quamlibet formam substantialem.*
> Undelimited dimensions are coeternal with matter, preceding in it any substantial form.

M13 addressed a puzzle related to causality and matter: how immaterial movers might or might not be located somewhere and have spatial dimensions. Elia commented on *De substantia orbis*, where the Commentator dealt with such problems, which Elia also examined in *Notes On Statements by Averroes about Aristotle's Physics.*

The notion of a form of bodiness (*forma corporeitatis*), complicated by disagreements about prime matter, had been controversial in scholastic philosophy since Ibn Sina, who described such forms as brute matter's built-in inclination to have dimensions. « Undelimited dimensions [מרחקים מוגבלים, *merhaqim mugbalim*] » themselves were a preliminary stage of embodiment – according to Elia's reading of Ibn Rushd – until a substantial form made them delimited. Ibn Sina's position, as stated by Elia while opposing it, was that « three dimensions result from a simple form found in prime matter [*tres dimensiones consequuntur simplicem formam inventam in materia prima*] ». But Ibn Rushd – again in Elia's telling – replied that « a heavenly body and all its inclinations [*dispositions*] are because of the mover, and this mover has come before the dimensions [*praecedit dimensiones*] ».[55]

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[54] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 7; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 20 (5); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 252 (7.5); Elia del Medigo, *Quaestiones*, fol. 140r, 141r; Fellina, « Giovanni Pico della Mirandola e l'insegnamento averroistico », p. 131; Licata, *Secundum Averroem*, p. 146–147.

[55] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 8; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 22 (16); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 256 (7.16); Ibn Rushd, *De substantia orbis*, p. 41–42, 53–54; Elia del Medigo, *Quaestiones*, fol. 157v, 160v; Fellina, « Giovanni Pico della Mirandola e l'insegnamento averroistico » p. 128–129; Licata, *Secundum Averroem*, p. 160–162.

Read in context, these 5 propositions – *M9* through *M13* – show how Elia gave Pico a textual treasury, both oral and written, for his 111 theses on Muslim, Jewish and Greek Peripatetics (see *H5* and *H6)*. As of 1486, Elia's lessons were still personal and private, unlike the textual setting of Pico's 115 theses on Christian Peripatetics *(see H1)*, Cabrol's *Defenses,* which appeared in print 3 years before Pico published. After that moment in 1486, however, there was still no *public* information that might have alerted the prince's contemporaries to his reliance on Elia or Flavius. But if Ficino ever read all of Pico's conclusions, he surely would have noticed his young friend's (unacknowledged) borrowings from his own Hermetica.

The prince was not Cabrol's only beneficiary as of 1486. By then all 4 volumes had been circulating in manuscript for half a century without attracting much attention. But once this well-organized work of reference was printed, Pico's contemporaries, including his Thomist opponents, could have learned about his reliance on Cabrol more easily. No remarks or complaints from the time have been noted, however – this despite Pico's howls in the *Oration* about incessant attacks from adversaries who « have damned my project and keep damning it ».[56]

But one enemy soon informed himself. Pope Innocent VIII appointed Bishop Pedro Garsias (d. 1505) to the commission that tried Pico in 1487, and two years later Garsias served the pope again with a thorough rebuttal of the prince's recalcitrant *Apology*, including its 3 chapters on eucharistic theology.[57] While attacking Pico's conclusions about the sacrament, the bishop's *Instructional Decisions* defended Aquinas on a small but endlessly controverted point: the referent of the demonstrative *hoc* in the words of consecration, *hoc est enim corpus meum*. Although no priest meant to change bread into his own mortal body, the words of the liturgy – *hoc* and *corpus meum* – left matters unsettled, and Cabrol had tried to clear things up with a *conclusio*. First he affirmed that the sacramental proposition was true. Then he quoted Thomas as saying that its words were correct « as signifying [*significative*] and not just materially [*materialiter*] ».[58]

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[56] Pico & Pico, *Life of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola; Oration*, p. 110–111 (38); Robiglio, « Tradition thomiste et réforme dominicaine », p. 302–303. None of the 5 surviving manuscripts of Cabrol's commentary is complete. But almost 200 libraries now own the first printing of the *Defenses*, indicating that Cabrol's work circulated widely in Pico's lifetime: see ISTC, ic00129000.

[57] Pico della Mirandola, *Apologia conclusionum suorum*, p. 60–75, 103–106; Id., *Apologia: L'Autodifesa di Pico di fronte al tribunale dell'Inquisizione*, p. 194–242, 336–346; Pedro Garsias, *Determinationes magistrales contra conclusiones Joannis Pici Mirandulae*, Silber. Rome 1489, sigli lascio. fiiii^{v}–gviii^{r}; Henri Crouzel, *Une Controverse sur Origène à la Renaissance: Jean Pic de la Mirandole et Pierre Garcia*, Vrin, Paris 1977; Luca Bianchi, « Pierre Garsias, adversaire de Jean Pic de la Mirandole, entre nominalisme et via communis », *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge*, 74 (2007), p. 75–108; Copenhaver, *Pico della Mirandola on Trial*, p. 8, 25–27, 38, 167–168, 211–216.

[58] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 41–42; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 88, 90 (1–2, 10); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 422, 426 (4.1–2, 10); Garsias, *Determinationes magistrales*, sig. gv^{r}–viii^{r}; Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 6.147–148, with Aquinas, *ST* 3.78.5; Copenhaver, *Pico della Mirandola on Trial*, p. 16–17, 186–194.

Thomas's point was technical. He took his terminology (*significative, materialiter*) from a branch of logic that was young when he was young: the semantics of supposition (*suppositio*) that regulated how *words* in a proposition, like *hoc*, stood for *things* outside the proposition, like bodies, without making the statement false. Applying the new semantics without mentioning its name – *suppositio* – Aquinas used the theory to parse the formula of consecration. More than 150 years later, after the theory had ripened and gone to seed, Cabrol's semantic equipment was plentiful. Testing the truth-value of a sacramental statement on terrain traced and retraced by experts, he presented the claim in *M14*[1] about 3 types of *suppositio*: 'simple,' 'delimited' and 'merely confused.'

> *M14*[1] *Sed ly hoc habet ibi suppositionem non simplicem nec determinatam sed suppositionem confusam tantum.*
> But here the *this* has neither simple nor delimited but merely confused supposition.
> *M14*[2] *Ex quo patet quod ly hoc in praedicta propositione habet suppositionem non simplicem nec determinatam sed confusam tantum.*

Cabrol's primary task was to show how Scotus and Peter Auriol had failed to refute Thomas on the eucharist because they misunderstood temporal senses of sacramental language. The commentator's 7 explicit references within the space of 2 pages to the semantic *suppositio* were normal at the time. Later, when Garsias attacked Pico on the same technical topic, he found more than a dozen uses, including *M14*[2], for *suppositio*, *supponere*, *suppositum* and their cousins – again within 2 pages, and they relied on Cabrol's exposition.[59]

Cabrol's printed *Defenses* was a Thomist manifesto whose growing influence the Thomist bishop exploited in his *Determinationes magistrales*: his tactic was to shoot the prince with the prince's bullets. He cited texts accessible to himself, to Pico and to many others that the prince had used to defend himself in the *Apology* while he, Garsias, attacked that very same book. The bishop's maneuver was clever, exploiting his advantage as a close reader of the *Defenses* that his victim had also read closely. Circumstances show how Garsias would have become aware of Pico's reliance on Cabrol, which was and is well attested by textual evidence.

[59] Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 6.158–159; Garsias, *Determinationes magistrales*, fol. gvii[r]; Copenhaver, *Pico della Mirandola on Trial*, p. 16–18, 56–59. My colleague Milo Crimi has found that Garsias used the *Defenses*; gauging the extent of the bishop's reliance on Cabrol awaits further study of his *Determinationes magistrales.*

VI. *Jean Cabrol*

Theses that copied Cabrol's *conclusiones* exactly or almost exactly are proof of the prince's dependence on the *Defenses* in his own *Conclusions.* A few months later, his *Apology* corroborated this evidence in print: roughly half of a lengthy section on eucharistic metaphysics came from the *Defenses*, which Pico owned. Despite Cabrol's large presence in the *Apology,* the book mentioned him only in passing. Nonetheless, he was Pico's silent informant about eucharistic and other disputes involving Aquinas, Berengar of Tours, Durand, the *Glossa ordinaria*, Jean Quidort, John of Damascus, Pierre de la Palud and Scotus.[60]

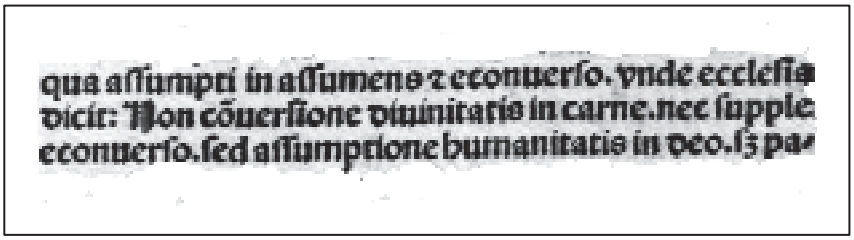

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dicit: Non cõuerſione diuinitatis in carne. nec ſupple
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Fig. 5: Cabrol, *Defensiones* (1483–1484), 4.148.

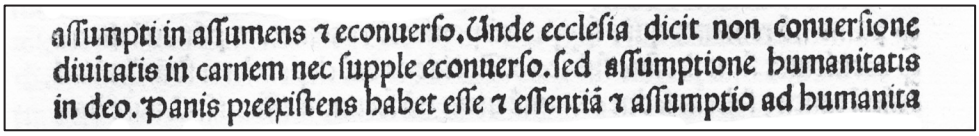

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Fig. 6: Pico, *Apologia* (1487), p. 70.

The prince was often in a hurry, but he should have stopped to fix a phrase in a statement from the *Apology*: « Unde ecclesia dicit non conversione divinitatis in carnem nec supple econverso sed assumptione humanitatis in deo ». A proofreading instruction, *supple econverso*, had merged with the text of the printed

[60] Pico della Mirandola, *Apologia conclusionum suorum*, p. 26; Id., *Apologia: L'Autodifesa di Pico di fronte al tribunale dell'Inquisizione*, p. 82; Copenhaver, *Pico della Mirandola on Trial*, p. 11–13. In Question 1 of the *Apology* on the Harrowing of Hell, Pico mocked his judges for implying that their own authorities, « Cabrol *(Capreolum)*, Durandellus and many other teachers, [...] were ignorant about the faith ». Elsewhere in the *Apology* he used the *Defenses* extensively but mentioned Cabrol again only in Question 3 on adoring the cross; see note 15 in this article for a passage from this Question. On Pico's uses of Cabrol, see also Stefano Caroti, « Note sulle fonti medievali di Pico della Mirandola », *Giornale Critico della Filosofia Italiana*, 84 (2005), p. 60–92, esp. p. 71, 80–82; Copenhaver, *Pico della Mirandola on Trial*, p. 12–13, 31–34, 41–43, 105, 122, 167–177, 193–194; Edelheit, *A Philosopher at the Crossroads*, p. 21–22, 169–173, 455, 509.

Defensiones, and the *Apology* repeated it: (Fig. 5 and 6).[61] Just on the evidence of this typo, it's certain that the *Apology* relied on Cabrol's printed volumes, as many theses like *C1–C10* also confirm for the *Conclusions.*

In a number of propositions on Aquinas like *C1–C5,* Pico copied Cabrol exactly or almost exactly.

> *C1 Ex divina bonitate potest sumi ratio praedestinationis aliquorum et reprobationis aliorum, et sola divina voluntas est ratio quod istos reprobet et illos eligat in gloriam.* (Pico)
> The reason why some are predestined and others rejected can be taken from divine goodness, and the divine will alone is the reason for condemning the latter and electing the others for glory.
> *Ex divina bonitate potest sumi ratio praedestinationis aliquorum et reprobationis aliorum, et sola divina voluntas est ratio quod istos reprobet et illos eligat in gloriam.* (Cabrol)

God's providential will was completely good, according to Thomas, guiding but not compelling sinners to be saved – thereby allowing some to be damned by their own wickedness. Pico's thesis copied Cabrol's account of this hard teaching: the Dominican had classified the very same proposition as one of his 737 *conclusiones* on Thomist doctrine.[62]

> *C2 Licet Dei voluntas consequens semper impleatur, non tamen necessitatem rebus volitis generaliter imponit.* (Pico)
> Although God's consequent will is always fulfilled, this still imposes no necessity in general on things willed.
> *Licet Dei voluntas consequens semper impleatur, non tamen necessitate rebus volitis generaliter imponit.* (Cabrol)

Sinners broke God's commandments, yet Thomas insisted that the divine will, which caused everything, was never thwarted. To untie this knot, he applied an antecedent/consequent distinction not to God's will itself, where « there is no before or after, but on the side of what was willed [*ex parte volitorum*] ». God was like « a just judge who antecedently wants [*vult*] every person to live but consequently wants a murderer to be hung ». Thomas also maintained that God « imposes necessity [*imponit necessitatem*] » only on some of what he wills and that consequents « get necessity from their priors as befits the priors » – not by a

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61 Pico della Mirandola, *Apologia conclusionum suorum*, p. 70; Id., *Apologia: L'Autodifesa di Pico di fronte al tribunale dell'Inquisizione*, p. 224; Cabrol, *Quaestiones*, 4.148; Id., *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 6.223; Copenhaver, *Pico della Mirandola on Trial*, p. 11–12.

62 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 2; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 8 (6); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 220 (2.6); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 2.500–501, with Aquinas, *ST* 1.23.5 ad 3.

general rule of necessity. Pico's thesis was another exact repetition of a *conclusio* by Cabrol that summarized Thomas's position.[63]

> *C3 Christus in ultimo iudicio iudicabit non solum in natura humana sed etiam secundum naturam humanam.* (Pico)
> At the Last Judgment Christ will judge not only *in* a human nature but also *according to* human nature.
> *Christus in ultimo iudicio judicabit non solum in natura humana sed etiam secundum naturam humanum.* (Cabrol)

Thomas gave reasons of clarity, compassion and fairness for Christ's « power to judge » not only « in his human nature » but also « according to human nature». *C3* was precisely Cabrol's wording in a *conclusio* about the Last Judgment.[64]

> *C4 Processus Spiritus Sancti temporalis attenditur secundum dona gratiae gratum facientia.* (Pico)
> The Holy Spirit's proceeding in time is extended by gifts of grace that produce acceptability.
> *Processio temporalis Spiritus Sancti, de qua loquimur, tantum attenditur secundum dona gratiae gratum facientis.* (Cabrol)

Aquinas taught that grace was a gift from God which enabled sinners to be saved during their times of trial on earth. The Spirit's special gifts made them receptive to grace, including the most powerful kind – sanctifying grace (*gratia gratum faciens*). The Spirit's giving, like his proceeding, was both temporal and timeless. Every word in Pico's *C4* matched a word in Cabrol's statement.[65]

> *C5 Verum corpus Christi est in coelo localiter, in altari sacramentaliter.* (Pico)
> Christ's true body is in heaven as to place, on the altar as the sacrament.
> *Verum corpus Christi, per hoc quod incipit esse realiter in sacramento in terris, non desinit realiter in coelis; immo simul est in coelo localiter, et in terra vel altari sacramentaliter, et in diversis locis et altaribus in terra simul.* (Cabrol)

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63 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 2; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 10 (7); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 220 (2.7); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 2.577–579, with Aquinas, *ST* 1.19.6, 8; SS 1.47.1.1.

64 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 3; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 10 (16); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 224 (2.16); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 7.122–123b, with Aquinas, *ST* 3.59.2; *SS* 4.46–48.1.1.

65 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 2; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 8 (2); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 220 (2.2); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 2.60, with Aquinas, *ST* 1.43.3; *SS* 1.14.2.2.

The location (*locus*) of Christ's body – *(a)* after crucifixion; *(b)* while in the tomb; *(c)* meanwhile (hypothetically) on an altar after Christ had established the sacrament but before he rose from the grave; *(d)* for later celebrations of the sacrament; and *(e)* simultaneously in heaven – was a point of contention in propositions by Pico that the Pope condemned. Thomas's formulations had been appropriately cautious, and Pico's wording matched phrases from one of Cabrol's conclusions exactly.[66]

Some theses on Aquinas used Cabrol's conclusions on the pattern of *C1–C5* but without staying as close to the commentator's language; others took Cabrol's words and phrases from expositions and defenses of his *conclusiones* but not from the conclusions themselves.

> *C6 Impassibilitas corporum post resurrectionem erit ex pleno dominio animae super corpus.*
> Unaffectability of bodies will come after resurrection from the soul's complete mastery of the body.

Pico put *C6* together from two of Cabrol's conclusions on bodies of the saved that were transformed in heaven, claiming that *post resurrectionem [...] impassibilitas proveniet ex pleno dominio animae supra corpus.*[67]

> *C7 Aevum est subiective in angelo beatiori.*
> Perpetuity is as subject in the more blessed angel.

Like many of Pico's theses, *C7* was too short to communicate effectively. What was an *aevum*, how might it exist *subiective*, and which of myriad angels was or were *beatior*? Although these spirits were untransformable (*intransmutabilis*) in their being (*esse*), according to Thomas, they changed in other ways – location, for example – and such changes were « measured by perpetuity [*aevum*] » rather than by time or eternity. Thomas distinguished time (*tempus*), as having a before and after, from perpetuity, which lacked these extensions but could be related to them, and also from eternity (*aeternitas*), which had no such relations.

Pico took every word of *C7* from a longer *conclusio* not stated by Aquinas but derived by Cabrol in part from the great *Summa* and a *Quodlibet* – though mainly from a work by Thomas of Sutton (fl. c. 1310) that he (Cabrol) tacitly attributed to Aquinas. The first creature to which perpetuity – second best only to the Creator's eternity – could have belonged was the first, and momentarily the best, created

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66 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 3; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 10 (14); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 222 (2.14); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 6.164–165, with Aquinas, *ST* 3.75.1 ad 3, 76.5 ad 1; *SS* 4.10.1.1.

67 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 3; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 10 (15); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 222 (2.15); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 7.62–63, with [Aquinas], *ST* 3 *Suppl.* 82.1; *SS* 4.44.2.1.1.

person: Lucifer before he fell. Cabrol stated that « just as the time of all temporal bodies is the same numerically, so is the perpetuity of all perpetuals [*aeviternorum*] the same numerically, and this is as subject in the more blessed angel [*subiective in beatiori angelo*] ». Here and elsewhere Pico used *subiective* to mean, more or less, 'independently of being cognized,' as opposed to *obiective* for a way of existing that involved being cognized: from a post-Kantian point of view, his medieval usage reversed the subject/object polarity.[68]

> *C8 Opus ab anima charitate formata elicitum meretur aeternam gloriam de condigno.*
> Effort brought forth from a soul formed by love merits eternal glory as wholly deserving.

A person's effort *(opus)* – whether motivated by free will or fueled by the Holy Spirit's grace – could earn *(mereri)* eternal life, and the primary virtue at work in both cases was love *(charitas)*, which Thomas called « the name of the Holy Spirit ». He classified merit from willed effort as merely 'fitting' *(congruus)*, however, unlike the 'wholly deserving' *(condignus)* merit that resulted from the Spirit's gift of love. Cabrol's conclusion was that « one who stands out in grace [*exsistens in gratia*] can merit glory as wholly deserving [*mereri gloriam de condigno*] ». The last 3 words of *C8* exactly matched the last 3 of Cabrol's conclusion about merit, *gloriam de condigno*, whereas Thomas had repeated *ex condigno* – his normal usage – several times in his *Scriptum*.[69]

> *C9 Si Spiritus a Filio non procederet, a Filio non distingueretur.*
> If the Spirit were not to proceed from the Son, he would not be distinct from the Son.

God's essence was absolutely unitary in the Trinity, but « one person is distinguished from another by proceeding ». Every word in *C9* was a match or near match for Cabrol's application of this principle: « Si autem Spiritus Sanctus non procedit a Filio, [...] non distingueretur Spiritus Sanctus a Filio ». Before summarizing and refuting objections by Scotus on the exact manner of

[68] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 3; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 10 (18); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 224 (2.18); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 3.153–157, with Aquinas, *ST* 1.10.3, 5, 6; 53.1–3; *SS* 2.2.1.2; *Qdl.* 5.4, 10.2; Thomas of Sutton, *De instant.* 5.

[69] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 2; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 10 (9); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 220 (2.9); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 4.273, 281–282, with Aquinas, *ST* 1.37.1; 1–2.114.3–4; *SS* 2.27.1–3, 3.18.1.2.

such distinguishing, Cabrol made this claim in his exposition of a conclusion « that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Son » but not in the conclusion itself.[70]

> *C10 Non potest esse peccatum in voluntate nisi sit defectus in ratione.*
> There can be no sin in the will unless there's a failure of reason.

Thomas treated will and reason as partners in crime, and Cabrol's summary, while defending a conclusion against Peter Auriol, was very close to *C10*: « impossibile est peccatum esse in voluntate nisi praecedat defectus aliquis in ratione ».[71]

In the foregoing *C* examples, matches and near matches between Pico's conclusions and Cabrol's *conclusiones*, expositions and rebuttals are textual proof of the prince's reliance on Cabrol's *Defenses* when he wrote his theses on Aquinas. Other correspondences were more conceptual than textual, but in light of textual facts that frame them, they are no less revealing: the sum of textual and conceptual evidence confirms that Cabrol guided Pico through his 45 propositions on Aquinas. For reasons of the same kind, Cabrol's presence is also evident in other settings – both in *P1* and in *P2* of the *Conclusions* – where similar findings hold for many other theses about philosophy and theology in various scholastic traditions. The Thomism that animated the printed *Defenses* had roots that reached back to the attacks on Thomas in 1277. Of the figures identified by Pico's *H1* as « Latin philosophers and theologians », only Thomas's teacher, Albert the Great, came from an earlier generation – out of range for Cabrol, who seldom mentioned him. Henry of Ghent, the oldest of these other 5 theologians except for Thomas, died in 1293; the youngest, François de Meyronnes, lived until 1327. Without naming François, a doctrinaire Scotist, Cabrol addressed issues that Pico connected with him and with Scotus: Cabrol may have lumped François in with other *Scotistae* that he respected too little to mention by name. But he objected explicitly to criticisms of Thomas by Egidio Romano. Cabrol's responses to Egidio, Henry, Scotus and disciples of Scotus like François were formative for Pico's theses.[72]

> *C11 Habere aliquiditativam et diffinibilem realitatem commune est figmentis et non figmentis.*
> Having a what of some sort and a definable reality is shared by things made up and not made up.

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70 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 2; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 8 (1); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 218 (2.1); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 2.18, 22–23, with Aquinas, *ST* 1.36.3–4; *SS* 1.10.1.1, 5; *De pot*. 10. 2, 5.

71 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 3; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 10 (19); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 224 (2.19); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 3.350, with Aquinas, *ST* 1–2.74.5 ad 2, 7 ad 2; *De Malo*, 3.6 ad 2, 16.2 ad 4, 7.

72 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 2–7; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 6–20; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 210–248.

Within the capacious reality envisioned by Henry of Ghent, a builder could cognize a house in more than one way: by looking at a finished building, for example, but also by having devised a plan for building it. For the first way of cognizing (*cognitio*), whatever was incompatible with beingness (*entitas*) was also incompatible with *cognoscibilitas*. Not so for the second way, however: the builder could cognize an unbuilt building that lacked the *esse* of a finished building.

Henry explained that « there is a kind of being that is quidditative and belongs to essence [*quoddam esse quidditativum et essentiae*], and there is a different being of actual existence [*aliud esse actualis existentiae*] which – in the way of a figment [*figmentum*] and chimaera or goatstag and so on – is incompatible with beingness in the primary mode ». Only *esse* of the latter kind was « completely incompatible with the intellect's ability to cognize [*cognoscibilitatis intellectus*] ». A builder's mental plan, unlike a chimeric goatstag, was not a figment. But both were « definable » (*diffinibilis*), in terms of *C11*, as sharing a type of *realitas* that was compatible only with *cognoscibilitas* of the second kind. Citing Henry, Bernard de Gannat and Godfrey of Fontaines in this context, Cabrol used the unusual word *aliquiditas* or 'somethingness' – cognate with the ungainly *aliquiditativam* in *C11* – as a minimal alternative to *nihileitas* or 'nothingness': nothing in particular as distinct from nothing at all.[73]

> *C12 De potentia Dei absoluta, possibile est culpam originalem deleri sine infusione gratiae.*
> Regarding God's absolute power, it's possible for original guilt to be removed without an infusion of grace.
> *De potentia absoluta posset Deus dimittere culpam originalem, non conferendo gratiam.* (Scotus)
> *De potentia Dei absoluta, possibile est culpam originalem deleri sine gratiae infusione.* (Cabrol)

Christian theologians agreed that the sacramental grace of baptism eliminated two effects of original sin: not only guilt or blame (*culpa*) but also punishment (*poena*). Abraham, Moses and other biblical saints inherited original sin from Adam and Eve and were never baptized. And yet, until Jesus went down to hell and released them, these holy people were kept in a limbo without suffering the *poena* that tormented unbaptized heathens. What about their *culpa*? Had circumcision delivered the saving grace that Christians got from baptism? Some said that circumcision brought exculpation without grace. But Thomas insisted that « guilt is excused [*culpa remittitur*] only through grace », and Scotus objected, deferring to God's absolute power. Pico's restatement of this objection in *C12* differed from Cabrol's

[73] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 6; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 18 (9); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 244 (5.9); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 3.73, with Henry of Ghent, *Qdl.* 5.2, 3 (1613 fol. 228v–229r, 232v).

version only once, in word order, but the prince's words varied more from the original statement by Scotus.[74]

> *C13 Voluntas potest non frui ostenso obiecto fruibili.*
> It's possible for the will not to enjoy when shown an enjoyable object

Christians believed that their ultimate enjoyment (*fruitio*) would come from seeing God in heaven. Thomas distinguished happiness (*beatitudo, felicitas*) from enjoyment, and he treated *fruitio* as an act of will (cf. *A9)*, whose acts were « not necessary except where its movement is natural ». François de Meyronnes grouped Thomas and Henry of Ghent with *antiqui* who nonetheless maintained that the will « cannnot *not* enjoy [*non potest non frui*] » its ultimate end. Cabrol, juggling distinctions and qualifications, concluded that « the will necessarily enjoys [*necessario fruitur*] the final end once it has been clearly perceived [*clare apprehenso*] ». He cited Scotus in opposition, and Pico's *C13* stated the Scotist view as confirmed by François: that the will was capable of « not enjoying [*non frui*] the final end once the intellect perceived it [*apprehenso [...] per intellectum*] ».[75]

> *C14 Superior angelus illuminat inferiorem non quia ei vel obiectum praesentet luminosum vel quod in se est unitum illi particulariset et dividat sed quia inferioris intellectum confortat et fortificat.*
> A higher angel enlightens a lower one not by presenting something luminous to it or by dividing and particularizing what is united with it in itself but by firming up and strengthening the lower angel's intellect.

C14 agreed with Egidio Romano on 2 points. First, higher angels enlightened lower angels not with new light (*novum lumen*) but by increasing what was already there – a change of degree or intension (as from bright to brighter) rather than of kind or quality (from dark to light). Truth enhanced by enlightening (*illuminatio*) gave the lower angel intellectual comfort and strength (*confortare et fortificare*). But *C14* denied that the comforting divided universals into particulars so that lower angels could understand them better. The denial conflicted with Egidio's striking simile: higher angels enlightened lower angels by dividing concepts into parts like a « nurse chewing food for a child to eat ». Aquinas confirmed that higher angels

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74 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 5; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 16 (13); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 238 (4.13); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 6.56, with Aquinas, *ST* 3.69.2 ad 2, 70.4; Scotus, *Ord*. 4.1.6.6 (Vives 209).

75 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 4; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 14 (3); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 232 (3.3); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 1.105, 109–110, with Aquinas, *ST* 1–2.10.1–2, 4; 11.1; Scotus, *Ord*. 1.1.4 (Vives 352–378); François de Meyronnes, *Sent*. 1.1.7, in Id., *Scripta [...] in quatuor libros sententiarum, ac quolibeta eiusdem, cum tractatibus formalitatum, et de primo principio, insuper explanation divinorum terminorum et tractatu de univocatione entis*, Heirs of Ottaviano Scoto, Venice 1520, fol. 14v.

broke universals up into particulars so that lower angels could take them in, but Cabrol reported that Durand de Saint-Pourçain dissented about the « particularizing and dividing [*particulando et dividendo*] ».[76]

VII. *Contentious Corrections*

In *P1* of the *Conclusions* – as shown by these *C* examples – Pico used Cabrol's *Defenses* to state scholastic puzzles throughout 115 theses on « Latin philosophers and theologians », as in *H1*.[77] Cabrol's presence, along with Elia's, continued through the first 196 theses of *P2*, which mirrored *P1* on the same scholastic material – pagan, Christian, Jewish and Muslim – from a different point of view. Some *P2* theses extended or corrected statements made in *P1*, where (as already described) Pico had collected propositions under the names of Aquinas, Ibn Rushd, Proclus, Chaldean theologians, Kabbalist sages and 2 dozen other authorities. But in *P2* he claimed all the propositions as his own and made statements that challenged authorities cited in *P1* – Aquinas most conspicuously. On the whole, the large scholastic component (40%) of *P2* was anti-Thomist and Averroist in content and tone. Elia del Medigo supplied Averroist weapons, and Cabrol gave the prince Thomist targets to shoot at.[78]

Pico's tactics in *P2* were odd: belligerence subverted the ideology of *concordia* that he proclaimed in its first 17 theses, which urged philosophers to look for deeper harmonies beneath superficial conflicts between Plato and Aristotle, Ibn Sina and Ibn Rushd, Aquinas and Scotus.[79] Maybe the prince meant to prove by philosophical combat that the best philosophy was not combative. What else could explain the manifest inconsistency between the first section of *P2* and the next three? There had been no explicit call for *concordia* in *P1*, where statements sometimes agreed with cited authorities but sometimes disagreed, and some dissent amounted to contradiction. On the other hand, some irenic theses in *P1* were more or less direct quotations – of Aquinas, for example – while others drifted from their sources by condensing what an authority had said at greater

[76] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 6; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 18 (7); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 246 (6.7); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 3.497–498, 500, 503, with Aquinas, *ST* 1.106.1; Egidio, *Sent*. 2.9.1.5 (1581 2.1.421–423).

[77] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 2–7; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 6–20; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 210–248.

[78] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 28–44; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 62–92; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 364–434.

[79] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 28–30; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 62–64; Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 364–370.

length. And some of the stated information was unavailable to the designated authorities. Sources of such theses were not 'sources' in the usual sense.[80]

Nor was what Silber published for Pico on December 7, 1486, a book in the usual sense: it was a script for an oral performance that never happened. Expecting a crowd of dignitaries, this is what the prince planned to say to them just before debate began: « you await the fight [*pugnam*], [...] now let us give battle [*conseramus manum]*, for [...] the trumpet calls [*citante classico*] ». The music was martial, not a hymn to peace. Notices at the beginning and end of the *Conclusions* announced an argumentative plan: to « dispute in public » – and to win, of course.[81] Victory required theses well suited for disputation. As long as they displayed Pico's learning and exhibited his oratorical skill, other considerations were secondary – including how accurately his propositions represented the views of one authority or another. If the prince worried about getting his material right by any normal standard, he would not have foreclosed assessments of accuracy by stating so many theses in so few words – like these 6 in a *P1* thesis on Ibn Rushd.

> *A1 Quicquid est in genere est corruptibile.*
> Whatever is in a genus is destructible.

At stake was an elementary principle of metaphysical taxonomy: a genus like ANIMAL, restricted by a difference like LAUGHING or WHINNYING, defined a species like HUMAN or HORSE, whose individual members were matter/form composites. « Composition takes place between a genus and a difference [*inter genus et differentiam*] », according to Elia, and a composite could be « both produced and destroyed [*generabile et corruptibile*] » when a batch of matter gained or lost a form.[82] At this intersection of logic, metaphysics and taxonomy, there was plainly more to say than *A1*, and Pico disclosed some of it in a pair of *P2* theses that had help from Cabrol:

> *A2 Si unitas generis non est solum ex parte concipientis, sed etiam ex parte concepti, necesse est quaecunque sunt in eodem genere logico esse in eodem genere physico.*
> If the unity of a genus is not just on the part of the one who conceives of it, but also on the part of the concept, then necessarily any things in the same logical genus are in the same physical genus.

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80 COPENHAVER, « Pico's *Conclusions* », p. 74–76, on complexities of authorial voice in the *Conclusions*, including first-person statements by Pico and claims made « according to my own opinion ».

81 PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA, *Conclusiones DCCCC publice disputandae* [1486], p. 1, 70; ID., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 6; FARMER, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 210, 552; PICO & PICO, *Life of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola; Oration*, p. 138–139 (72).

82 PICO DELLA MIRANDOLA, *Conclusiones DCCCC publice disputandae* [1486], p. 8; ID., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 22 (19); FARMER, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 256 (7.19); ELIA DEL MEDIGO, *Quaestiones*, fol. 136r, 138v; LICATA, *Secundum Averroem*, p. 164.

A3 Si intelligentias esse in genere secundum Aristotelem dixerit Thommas, non minus sibi quam Aristoteli repugnabit.
If Thomas were to say that intelligences are in a genus according to Aristotle, he would contradict himself no less than Aristotle.

If celestial intelligences were indestructible, then *A1*, stating that « whatever is in a genus is destructible », was supported by *A3*'s implicit denial that « intelligences are in a genus ». But Thomas, commenting on the *Book of Causes*, had cited Aristotle to show that although the heavens shared only a few features with lower transient things, the two belonged together in the genus of substance – though only « in a logical sense ». Logical genera, however, were blended with physical genera by Pico's *A2*. In this way, his *A2* and *A3* propositions in *P2* unpacked the *A1* thesis that had been stated summarily in *P1*. Such attempts to resolve *P1* problems in *P2* were a pattern in the *Conclusions* – one of many patterns that Pico called « hidden linkages ».[83]

Some *P2* theses also needed unpacking, like *A4*, whose 3 words were the minimum for an ordinary subject/copula/predicate proposition:

A4 Logica est practica.
Logic is practical.

Peter Auriol had maintained that logic was practical because it was useful; the *Defenses* countered on behalf of Thomists that not all uses were practical; but Pico sided with Auriol in *A4*. Authorities might give different reasons for or against this proposition, but the options were straightforward: logic was either practical or not practical.[84] *A5* was also short yet not at all straightforward:

A5 Tractatus suppositionum ad logicum non pertinent.
Tractates on suppositions don't belong to logic.

Contrary to appearances, Pico could not have written these 6 words simply to deny that *suppositio* was a regular part of *logica* or *dialectica*. Beginners everywhere in Europe learned this subject from Peter of Spain's *Summaries* in

[83] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 33; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 72 (44–45); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 384 (2.44–45); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, with Arist. *Cael.* 269b18–270a23; Aquinas, *Super de causis* 1.7; also Pico della Mirandola, *Apologia conclusionum suorum*, p. 110: « In omnibus meis conclusionibus semper occulta quaedam est concatenatio »; Id., *Apologia: L'Autodifesa di Pico di fronte al tribunale dell'Inquisizione*, p. 358.

[84] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 32; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 68 (29); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 378 (2.29); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 1.25, 29.

12 tractates. Six of them dealt with propositions like *'H* is *A'* and with arguments made of such propositions. When the propositions were well formed and correctly combined with other propositions, they produced valid arguments or syllogisms, like

H is *A*
A is *M*
∴ *H* is *M.*

Formal rules governed propositions whose terms could be purely abstract, like *A*, *H* and *M*. In a textbook written for teenagers, however, Peter preferred ordinary words like 'animal,' 'human' and 'mortal.' His rules were formal nonetheless, and terms governed by them might refer to nothing in the world. Such terms, under rules presented in another 6 of Peter's 12 tractates, might not – in principle – stand for anything at all. Because the only relations of such terms to real things (*res*) were incidental and contingent, « the knowledge transmitted in books of logic » as Cabrol put it, was « not called real [*non dicitur realis*] ».

Cabrol also taught that a « logical point of view [*logicam considerationem*] » was the outlook of Aristotle's *Categories* or *Predicaments.* Peter covered this elementary material on predication in his first 3 tractates, not in the 6 that came later on *suppositio* or 'standing-for' – as when the subject term of 'a human is an animal' (sometimes) stood for a real person in present time. In such propositions, where words like 'human' were not just tokens of logical types, *suppositio* was not a purely *logical* relation between terms; as a *semantic* relation between terms and things in the world, supposition was not purely abstract.

Accordingly, the point of Pico's *A5* thesis may have been to exclude supposition from logic conceived in this regimented way, which certainly had not been Peter's approach in the *Summulae.* Nor was it Cabrol's approach. As a practical matter, he used rules of supposition when he applied logic to theology, as in *M14*, and so did Pico: he cited these rules in the *Apology* and alluded to them (equivocally) in the *Conclusions.* Another possibility: Pico claimed in *A4* that logic was practical, and maybe he thought that a suppositional logic was too complicated to be practical – hence disqualified as a logic that non-logicians could cope with.[85]

[85] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 31, 34; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 68, 74 (16, 62); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 376, 390 (2.16, 62); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 5.94, 97; for *distributio, materialiter, recitative, significative, suppositum* and related semantic terminology, see Pico della Mirandola, *Apologia conclusionum*

Scholastic philosophers had many uses for the word *suppositio* – logical, semantic and metaphysical – and the taxonomy of genera and species, as in *A1, A2* and *A3,* straddled the line between metaphysical applications and the others. In this loose framework, Aquinas talked about genera « in a logical sense » and provoked the slur in *A3* about contradicting himself on this topic. From Pico's side the incitement was deliberate: he repeated the insult in *A6* when dealing with a different issue.

> *A6 Si Thommas dixerit in intelligentiis secundum Aristotelem esse accidentia, non Aristoteli modo sed sibi ipsi contradicet.*
> If Thomas were to say that according to Aristotle there are incidentals in intelligences, he would contradict not only Aristotle but also himself.[86]

A fifth or more of the 80 theses in the second section of *P2* were anti-Thomist and Averroist or nominalist. Pico learned his Averroism from Elia del Medigo and applied Elia's lessons in these propositions. Jean Cabrol's detailed reporting on critics of Aquinas also supplied material for anti-Thomism, including the nominalist kind. Cabrol's rebuttals of Peter Auriol's rebuttals of Thomas, for example, informed this part of the *Conclusions*.[87] But Pico never mentioned Auriol, and not all the prince's enemies in Rome would have spotted the anti-Thomist polemic in propositions like *A7*.

> *A7 Esse corporeum non habet res ab aliqua forma substantiali vel gradu formae substantialis.*
> A thing does not get *bodily* existence from any substantial form or level of substantial form.

According to Thomas, a *substance* like a horse or a human was a form/matter composite that had only one *substantial* form, which was the form that gave

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suorum, p. 37, 51, 61, 65, 72, 106; Id., *Apologia: L'Autodifesa di Pico di fronte al tribunale dell'Inquisizione*, p. 128, 166, 196, 208, 232, 344–346; also Peter of Spain, *Summaries of Logic: Text, Translation and Notes*, ed and trans. Brian Copenhaver, Calvin Normore, Terence Parsons, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2014, p. 13–17, 42–46, 62–78; Joke Spruyt, « The Logic of Peter of Spain », in Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Fall 2023 Edition [online at plato.stanford.edu]; Copenhaver, *Pico della Mirandola on Trial*, p. 16–18, 56–59, as in note 60 of this article.

86 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 34; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 72 (53); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 388 (2.53); Arist. *Meta.* 1028a 23–25; Thomas, *In Arist. Meta.* 7.1.1253–1254; *Super de caus.* 14; Elia del Medigo, *Quaestiones*, fol. 135r. The usual 'accidents' for *accidentia* is misleading in English, suggesting something 'unexpected,' 'undesired' and 'harmful' – *accidentaccio!*

87 Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 31–32, 35; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 66–68, 76 (15, 29, 67, 70); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 376–378, 392 (2.15, 29, 67, 70); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 1.25, 29; 4.41–58, 84–87; 4.52–54, 101; 4.114–117, 119–120.

existence (*esse*) to the substance. But Scotus and others imagined a plurality of such forms, including a form of bodiness (*corporeitas,* see *M13)*. Thomas's contrary stand was clear: « there is no substantial form [*forma substantialis*] in a human other than the reasoning soul, [...] nor is the body the body by any form of bodiness [*formam corporeitatis*] distinct from the reasoning soul, [...] [which is] the soul that gives bodily existence [*dat esse corporeum*] ». Cabrol reviewed these debates at length and cited Thomas's very words *against* a compromise that he (Cabrol) presented tentatively: namely, the possibility that « the essence of some substantial form had duration in matter before giving existence to the composite or to matter ».[88]

Pico's anti-Thomist *A7*, by contrast, was not at all tentative. He also made personal statements that called Saint Thomas out by name, schooled him in theology and suggested that he contradicted himself, as in *A3* and *A6*. Pico's enemies in Rome were more restrained: they attacked none of these provocative remarks in the condemnations that they recommended to the pope.

> *A8 Dico secundum Thommam dicendum esse in actu reflexo intellectus consistere beatitudinem nostram.*
> I say that following Thomas we should say that our blessedness lies in an act of intellect that *turns back*.

Pico added *A8* to *P2* in order to correct *A9*, a thesis on Thomas from *P1*:

> *A9 Beatitudo est essentialiter in actu intellectus. Correlarium: nec fruitio nec aliquis actus voluntatis est essentialiter beatitudo.*
> Blessedness is essentially in an act of intellect. Corollary: neither enjoyment nor any act of will is blessedness essentially.

Beatitudo (happiness, blessedness) was distinct from *fruitio* (enjoyment, as in *C13)*, topics that required *quaestiones* of their own in the great *Summa*. But the account in the *Contra Gentiles* – reproduced by Cabrol in two of his *conclusiones* – was closer to *A9*: « a person's ultimate happiness or blessedness [*felicitas vel beatitude*] does not consist essentially in any act of will [*essentialiter in aliquo actu voluntatis*] [...] [but] in an act of intellect [*in actu intellectus*] ». *A8* adjusted *A9* by changing *in actu intellectus* to *in actu reflexo intellectus* and by dropping *essentialiter*.

Removing *essentialiter* avoided plural combinations in bodily things of *essentia* with *esse* and *existentia*. In the scholastic debate reported by Cabrol, some critics

[88] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 31; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 66 (12); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 374 (2.12); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 4.114–117, 119–120, with Aquinas, *ST* 1.76.4.

also objected that « blessedness cannot be in an act that turns back [*actu reflexo*] because this does not reach the goal of blessedness directly, only when an act of turning back comes in between [*mediante actu reflexo*] ». But Pico, having read Plotinus and Proclus, may have understood this *actus reflexus* not as a subject/object transaction (see *C7)* but as a *reversio* (ἐπιστροφή) – the subject's total withdrawal within itself, hence away from the embodied manifold.[89]

Pico's rewriting of *A9* in *A8* instructed the Angelic Doctor: the instruction was outspoken, personal *(dico)*, anti-conciliatory and became intransigent in *A10*.

> *A10 Tenendo opinionem de anima intellectiva quam tenet Commentator, videtur mihi rationabiliter tenendum illam animam nullius accidentis esse subiectum, et positionem hanc tanquam veram defendam quamquam utrum hoc ille tenuerit ego non definio.*
> While holding the opinion about the intellective soul that the Commentator holds, holding that the soul is the subject of nothing incidental seems well reasoned to me, and I shall defend this position as true even without my deciding whether he held it.

A10 claimed that the Commentator's metaphysical psychology entailed, but did not assert, the absolute exclusion of incidentals (*accidentes*) from divine intelligence. Such an intelligence, according to Ibn Rushd, was an eternal soul, unlike a transient soul in a mortal human body. As Elia explained, « a separated form treated as a mover is called a *soul*, but treated as itself is called an *intelligence* ». Moreover, this intelligence was only « in some sense a soul [*quodammodo anima*] ». As « separated from *matter* », the intelligence was « the soul of an eternal body », and this soul was « *not* separated from its *body* ». But if this embodied yet immaterial *anima intellectiva* was not « mixed in with matter », how could it be a subject (*subiectum*) for incidental experiences of physical pain and pleasure?

Ibn Rushd's psychology of dematerialized – yet not disembodied – divine intelligences skirted questions that Thomas had to face in his different psychology of human intelligence in matter/form composites. In this hylemorphic setting, incidentals (*accidentes*) were of various types: some were taxonomic species cognized in souls, others were features of individual bodies. In the latter case, the soul could not be « the subject for such incidentals [*talibus accidentibus non potest subjici anima*] », so Thomas claimed, although the soul could be « the subject for incidentals » if they were species. Pico, even without an explicit endorsement by the Commentator, defended a view contrary to

[89] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 3, 35; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 10, 76 (12, 74); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 222, 394 (2.12, 74); Cabrol, *Defensiones theologiæ divi Thomæ Aquinatis*, 7.145–149, with Aquinas, *ST* 1.26.1–2, 1–2.11.1 ad 1; *SCG* 3.26.10–11; *SS* 4.49.1.1.2.

Thomas's on this subtle point and described it as Averroist in an aggressive personal statement that made no effort at all to achieve concordia: « defendam quamquam [...] ego non definio ».[90]

VIII. *Conclusions*

Both Elia and Cabrol provided textual and conceptual material for Pico's theses in the *A* series of disharmonious propositions just examined and elsewhere throughout the *Conclusions*. But Cabrol's contributions – in 4 printed volumes published before Pico finished his little book – were clearer, richer, more numerous, more systematic and more effective for Pico's purposes. The quickest paths to many of his *900 Conclusions* ran through Cabrol's *Defensiones*. Considering the extent of the prince's reliance on Cabrol and other Quattrocento authorities, I conclude that his learning – like his ambition and self-regard – was prodigious though not parahuman or *de omni scibili*. Since 3 of these authorities – Elia, Flavius and Cabrol – were compilers and critics of *medieval* traditions, I also conclude that popular tales about the public Pico as « un umanista e filosofo » have been only half-right.

[90] Pico della Mirandola, *Conclusiones dcccc publice disputandae* [1486], p. 35; Id., *Conclusiones nongentae* [Biondi], p. 76 (73); Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 394 (2.73); Aquinas, *SS* 1.8.5.2 ad 4, also *ST* 1.76.6; Elia del Medigo, *Quaestiones*, fol. 135v, 139r, 140v.

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« Combustion Tables » in Twelfth-Century Latin Europe: A Preliminary Study*

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Abstract

The Latin manuscript sources studied in this article jointly document the existence and erstwhile circulation of a highly atypical set of computational tables for planetary longitudes, coupled with extensive tables for ascensions, which served astrologers in Latin Europe as early as the 1130s. An associated text of *c.*1220 refers to the tables for the five planets as « combustion tables » (*tabule combustionis*), which reflects the way the tables in question use the time and position of the last conjunction between a planet and the Sun – known in medieval terminology as *combustio* – as an anchor for calculating the planet's true ecliptic longitude at a later date within its synodic period. Multiple lines of evidence suggest that the combustion tables as well as the associated solar and ascension tables originally circulated alongside the pseudo-Ptolemaic *Iudicia*, an astrological work of probable Arabic origin (pre-1138). Overall, the surviving manuscript material raises the possibility that the tables and the *Iudicia* were at one point a single work that supported astrological computations and judgments at an early stage of their respective development in Latin Europe.

Key Words

Astronomical tables; Almanacs; Ptolemy; *Iudicia*; Astrology; Arabic-to-Latin translations

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I. *Introduction*

Thanks to the ground-breaking research of David Juste, it is no longer possible to speak of a complete disappearance of astrology from early medieval Latin Europe, as relevant sources and even the ability to cast rudimentary horoscopes are clearly attested during this period and part of the world.[1] It is nevertheless true that the twelfth century experienced a dramatic resurgence in astrological literature and practice, a development that was closely connected with the activities of Arabic-to-Latin translators in contemporary Iberia.[2] As with the early medieval context,

[1] David Juste, « Neither Observation nor Astronomical Tables: An Alternative Way of Computing the Planetary Longitudes in the Early Western Middle Ages », in Charles Burnett, Jan P. Hogendijk, Kim Plofker, Michio Yano (eds.), *Studies in the History of the Exact Sciences in Honour of David Pingree*, Brill, Leiden, 2004 (Islamic Philosophy, Theology, and Science: Texts and Studies, 54), p. 181–222; Id., « Horoscopic Astrology in Early Medieval Europe (500–1100) », in *La conoscenza scientifica nell'Alto Medioevo: Spoleto, 25 aprile – 1 maggio 2019*, vol. I, Fondazione Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, Spoleto 2020 (Settimane di studio della Fondazione Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 67), p. 311–333.

[2] The twelfth-century revival of astrology and the associated Arabic-to-Latin translations have been scrutinized in an increasingly vast secondary literature. A comprehensive bibliography, compiled by David Juste, can be accessed at <https://ptolemaeus.badw.de/astrobibl/start> (Accessed 29 Nov. 2023). For some particularly valuable perspectives on the topic, see Richard Lemay, *Abu Ma'shar and Latin Aristotelianism in the Twelfth Century: The Recovery of Aritotle's Natural Philosophy through Arabic Astrology*, American University of Beirut, Beirut 1962 (American University of Beirut, Publication of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences: Oriental Series, 38); Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny, « Astrologues et théologiens au XII^e^ siècle », in André Duval (ed.), *Mélanges offerts à M.-D. Chenu, maître en théologie*, Vrin, Paris 1967 (Bibliothèque Thomiste, 37), p. 31–50; eadem, « Abélard et l'astrologie », in René Louis, Jean Jolivet, Jean Châtillon (eds.), *Pierre Abelard – Pierre le Venerable: les courants philosophiques littéraires et artistiques en Occident au milieu du XII^e^ siecle; abbaye de Cluny, 2 au 9 juillet 1972*, Éditions du CNRS, Paris 1975 (Actes et mémoires des colloques internationaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 546), p. 611–630; Małgorzata Hanna Malewicz, « Libellus de efficatia artis astrologice: traité astrologique d'Eudes de Champagne, XII^e^ siècle », *Mediaevalia Philosophica Polonorum*, 20 (1974), p. 3–95; Joshua David Lipton, « The Rational Evaluation of Astrology in the Period of Arabo-Latin Translation ca. 1126–1187 AD », Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles 1978; Charles Burnett, « Advertising the New Science of the Stars *circa* 1120–50 », in Françoise Gasparri (ed.), *Le XII^e^ siècle: mutations et renouveau en France dans la première moitié du XII^e^ siècle*, Le Léopard d'Or, Paris 1994 (Cahiers du Léopard d'Or, 3), p. 147–157; Id., « Astrology, Astronomy and Magic as the Motivation for the Scientific Renaissance of the Twelfth Century », in Angela Voss, Jean Hinson Lall (eds.), *The Imaginal Cosmos: Astrology, Divination and the Sacred*, University of Kent, Canterbury 2007, p. 55–61; Charles W. Clark, « A Christian Defense of Astrology in the Twelfth Century: The *Liber cursuum planetarum* of Raymond of Marseilles », *International Social Science Review*, 70 (1995), p. 93–102; John Tolan, « Reading God's Will in the Stars: Petrus Alfonsi and Raymond de Marseille Defend the New Arabic Astrology », *Revista Española de Filosofía Medieval*, 7 (2000), p. 13–30; Jean-Patrice Boudet, *Entre science et* nigromance*: astrologie, divination et magie dans l'Occident médiéval (XII^e^-XV^e^ siècle)*, Publications de la Sorbonne, Paris 2006, p. 35–87; David Juste, « The Impact of Arabic Sources on European Astrology: Some Facts and Numbers », *Micrologus*, 24 (2016), p. 173–194;

such a reinvigoration of astrological practice could not have occurred to its documented extent without the availability of computational tools for predicting the configuration of the heavens as a function of time. It is no accident, therefore, that astronomical tables as well as associated texts on mathematical astronomy were being rendered from Arabic into Latin at the same time as astrological works, and often by the same translators.[3] At their most sophisticated, such tables stemmed from the Islamic tradition of astronomical handbooks known as *zījes*, the first examples of which made their way to the Latin West as early as the 1110s.[4]

The present article is dedicated to another type of computational tables that supported the efforts of Latin astrologers at a relatively early stage, but which does not conform to the standard *zīj* model. Following the terminology in a previously unknown text of the early thirteenth century (discussed in Part V below), I shall refer to this unusual computational tool as « combustion tables » (*tabule combustionis*), as the tables in question use the time and position of the last conjunction between a planet and the Sun – known in medieval terminology as *combustio* – as an anchor for calculating the planet's ecliptic position at a later date. The surviving evidence shows that combustion tables for the five planets must have been available in Latin Europe at least since the mid-1130s, at which point they were already accompanied by additional tables for the ecliptic longitude of the Sun and for calculating the rising of signs according to both right and oblique ascensions. The resulting set contained most of the tools a practicing astrologer needed to establish a basic horoscope insofar as it allowed him not only to find the ecliptic longitudes of six of the seven planets (the Moon was not included), but also to determine the ascendant (via oblique ascensions) and establish the cusps of the remaining houses (via right ascensions).

Charles Burnett, David Juste, « A New Catalogue of Medieval Translations into Latin of Texts on Astronomy and Astrology », in Faith Wallis, Robert Wisnovsky (eds.), *Medieval Textual Cultures: Agents of Transmission, Translation and Transformation*, de Gruyter, Berlin 2016 (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—Tension, Transmission, Transformation, 6), p. 63–76; David Runciman, « Bishop Bartholomew of Exeter (d. 1184) and the Heresy of Astrology », *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 70 (2019), p. 265–282; Julio Samsó, *On Both Sides of the Strait of Gibraltar: Studies in the History of Medieval Astronomy in the Iberian Peninsula and the Maghrib*, Brill, Leiden 2020 (Handbook of Oriental Studies, Section One, 144), p. 180–197.

3 On astronomical tables in Latin, see Raymond Mercier, « Astronomical Tables in the Twelfth Century », in Charles Burnett (ed.), *Adelard of Bath: An English Scientist and Arabist of the Early Twelfth Century*, Warburg Institute, London (Warburg Institute Surveys and Texts, 14), p. 87–118; José Chabás, *Computational Astronomy in the Middle Ages: Sets of Astronomical Tables in Latin*, CSIC, Madrid 2019 (Estudios sobre la ciencia, 72).

4 See Josep Casulleras, « Las *Tablas astronómicas* de Pedro Alfonso », in María Jesús Lacarra (ed.), *Estudios sobre Pedro Alfonso de Huesca*, Instituto de Estudios Altoaragonenses, Huesca 1996 (Estudios Altoaragonenses, 41), p. 349–366; Raymond Mercier, « Astronomical Tables of Abraham Bar Ḥiyya », in Sacha Stern, Charles Burnett (eds.), *Time, Astronomy, and Calendars in the Jewish Tradition*, Brill, Leiden 2014 (Time, Astronomy, and Calendars: Texts and Studies, 3), p. 155–207.

The following is an attempt to gather the available evidence concerning the nature and diffusion of this tabular work. Aside from dealing with the extant complete or partial copies that survive of the tables themselves (see Part III), this will involve examining sources that attest to their one-time circulation and use. One of these sources is Raymond of Marseilles's well-known *Liber cursuum planetarum* (*c.*1141), which contains a rather trenchant and uncharitable critique of our combustion tables and their users (see Part II). Another is a brief passage in Abraham Ibn Ezra's Latin *Liber de rationibus tabularum*, which is likewise critical of this approach to casting tables (see Part IV). Three other sources relevant to the subject have hitherto remained unpublished and entirely neglected. One is a brief canon composed in 1219 on one aspect of the operating with the planetary combustion tables (see Part V). Another is a list of combustions for the years 1139–1141, which appear to have been intended as computational starting points for users of these same tables (see Part VI). The third source is an explanation of the associated solar and ascension tables, which was incorporated into a twelfth-century commentary on the pseudo-Ptolemaic *Iudicia* (see Part VII). As will be shown in what follows, this astrological text of probable Arabic origin played a significant role in the transmission of our combustion and ascension tables. Indeed, the extant evidence hints at a stage at which the tables and the text were one and the same work, which appears to have informed some of the earliest Latin forays into horoscopic astrology.

II. *Raymond of Marseilles and MS Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 7291*

The first and hitherto only modern scholar to have noted the existence of any surviving copy of the combustion tables was Joshua David Lipton, whose 1978 dissertation on « The Rational Evaluation of Astrology in the Period of Arabo-Latin Translation ca. 1126–1187 AD » remains unpublished and, accordingly, little read. Lipton must also be credited with the brilliant intuition of connecting these tables with a passage in Raymond of Marseilles's *Liber cursuum planetarum*, which introduces Raymond's Tables of Marseilles, an adaptation of the Toledan Tables to the meridian of his hometown.[5] Writing in 1141 or perhaps slightly later,[6] Raymond tells us of his recent altercation with two other astrologers, who followed a *liber cursuum* based on very different principles than his own. He

[5] See Lipton, « The Rational Evaluation », p. 169–176. His findings are passed over in silence in the introduction to the critical edition of Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum*, in *Opera omnia*, vol. I, ed. and trans. Marie-Therese d'Alverny, Charles Burnett, Emmanuel Poulle, CNRS Éditions, Paris 2009 (Sources d'histoire médiévale, 40), p. 27–30.

[6] Raymond informs us that he « commenced » (*cepimus*) writing the book in 1141. See Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.10, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 140.

characterizes this alternative work as an *almanach* and warns his readers against its use, claiming it to be completely unreliable and against the verdict of the observable heavens. According to his own – no doubt biased – report, he was eventually able to disabuse his opponents of their misplaced confidence in this so-called almanac, by demonstrating its failure to predict the position of Mars.[7]

As emerges from this account, the tables Raymond criticizes so severely relied on prior knowledge of the time and longitude of the last « combustion » (*combustio*) of the planet in question, which in this context refers to the moment of its true conjunction with the Sun. The days elapsed since this last combustion served as the argument for a dedicated table showing an increment in longitude. By adding this increment to the known longitude at the last combustion, users found the supposed true longitude on the day in question.[8] Raymond further claims that the two astrologers agreed with him that the most recent combustion of Mars had occurred around 5 p.m. on 27 October 1139, when its longitude was at or near 212;21°, as predicted by his own Tables of Marseilles.[9] At the end of the thirteenth month since this combustion, the astrologers' combustion tables allegedly showed Mars as resuming its direct motion after the last retrograde arc, being in the 20th minute of the 6th degree of Aries. Raymond rejected this prediction as grossly false, noting that Mars's actual position at that moment was in the 47th minute of the 11th degree of Cancer, more than three signs further east, and in the middle of its first station.[10]

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7 For the entire passage, see Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.25–36, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 148–154. See ibid. 1.31, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 152, for Raymond's decision to label the book an *almanach*, which appears to be the earliest attested usage of this term in a Latin text.

8 Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.26a, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 148–150: « Consueverunt predicti vero astrologi planetarum combustionum loca tenere. Deinde a die qua quilibet eorum combustus esset, si locum ipsius scire vellent, computabant quot dies pertransissent, sicque lineam ejusdem diei super combustionis lineam addentes, locum planete inveniebant. »

9 Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.26b, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 150: « Fuerat autem precedenti anno Mars combustus circa XVII horam si a media nocte, vel XI, si ab exordio lucis numeres, XXVII diei octubris mensis ipsius anni ab Incarnatione Domini M C XXXVIIII ita quod combustionis ejusdem locus certus esse potuit VII sign. II grad. XXI min. Et in hoc fere in nullo predicti a nobis discordabant viri. » According to the software *Deviations* <https://www.raymondm.co.uk/> (Accessed 29 Nov. 2023), this combustion was accurately calculated for *c.*5 p.m. on 27 October 1139. If the Toledan Tables are adjusted to a meridian 16;30° further east (which is the reference meridian of Raymond's Tables of Marseilles), they show true sidereal longitudes for the Sun and Mars of *c.*212;21° and *c.*212;22°, respectively. Compare Emmanuel Poulle's discussion in Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.27b, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 27–39.

10 Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.27b–c, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 150: « Secundum vero eundem librum, finito XIII^{e} mense cepit Mars in XX^{o} minuto VI^{i} gradus arietis

According to Raymond, the principal flaw of his opponents' tables was their reliance on the false assumption that a planet's daily velocities or patterns of motion were going to be identical for each synodic period, which ignored the variations caused by the eccentricity of the deferent.[11] The only way an « almanac » based on combustions could successfully apply to any and all synodic periods was if one made the effort to draw up, for each planet, 360 different tables representing each of the 360 possible degrees in which a combustion might take place.[12] Raymond, in fact, concedes the utility of such an undertaking by expressing his wish to construct an « almanac » of this very type in order to circumvent the laborious process of computing true longitudes via mean motions and equations.[13] The tables as they existed, however, could not possibly be useful. Those who kept relying on them even ran the risk of being deceived in a twofold manner, if they worked with an incorrectly computed combustion to derive an even worse result. Raymond claims to have witnessed such cases himself, citing the complaints of certain students in this art who had been furnished with « false combustions » by their masters.[14]

Lipton's key contribution in analysing this section of the *Liber cursuum planetarum* consists in his discovery that a tabular work closely matching Raymond's description survives in MS Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 7291 (hereafter referred to as *P*).[15] The manuscript in question is a slim codex of

dirigi, quod falsissimus erat. Nam eadem die Mars fuerat in XLVII^{o} minute XI^{i} gradus non arietis, ut ipsi aiebant, sed cancri, in medio firme stationis sue prime. Fueratque hujusmodi falsitas non unius aut duorum graduum tantum, sed trium signorum et V graduum et XXVII minutorum. »

11 Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.28, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 150: « Unde novimus quod ille qui eas fecit tabulas propter nimiam insipientiam aut dolositatem taliter eas composuit. Proter nimiam insipientiam ideo dicimus quoniam forsitan suspicatus est ab omni combustione in combustionem equaliter debere procedere unumquemque planetam, quod mirabiliter falsum est. Nam, quamvis planeta velociorem cursum circa incoativam combustionem habere videatur, tamen, secundum quod modo augi propior, modo ab ea est longinquior, modo tardior, modo velocior habetur. »

12 Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.31–32, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 152.

13 Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.34, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 152: « Et hujusmodi almanach, si tantum divina clementis nobis vite spacium concesserit, nos in futuro facturos speramus, ideo presertim quoniam ultra modum grave videtur ad cursum certificationem semper in planetarum locis inveniendis recurrere; opinor autem quoniam ille qui premissas fecit tabulas invenit Martem in ultima arietis parte combustum, ut hec tabule minime videntur. »

14 Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.35, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 154: « Vidimus autem preterea quosdam scolares, illius dogmatis sectatores, qui conquererentur et dicerent a magistris suis falsas sibi combusiones planetarum attributas, ut quos simplex error tabularum satis impedire poterat, duplex a veritate prorsus alienos redderet. »

15 Lipton, « The Rational Evaluation », p. 171–176. The manuscript is available at: <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10033758x.r=latin%207291?rk=21459;2> (Accessed 29 Nov. 2023).

the twelfth or early thirteenth century. It comprises 25 folios that are taken up almost entirely by numerical tables, barring only some associated canons as well as two drawings with an equestrian theme: a falconer riding a horse (fol. 6r) and the front half of a horse (fol. 8v). The first seven folios contain tables for computing the ecliptic longitudes of the five planets, here placed in the order Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, and Venus. Each planet is represented by two complementary tables, which I shall designate as Tables A and B in what follows. What comes immediately after these five pairs of tables is a single table for the daily increment in solar longitude (fol. 8r–v), whose layout is similar to that of Tables B for the five planets. It counts the days of the solar year up to day 365, to which is assigned a longitude of 359;46°.

The remainder of the manuscript consists in a long sequence of ascension tables (fol. 9r–25r), which appear as one continuous sequence of 528 columns with next to no written information explaining their purpose. Their labelling is restricted mostly to the headers *G* and *P* for *gradus* (i.e., degrees) and *puncta* (i.e., sexagesimal minutes) as well as the names of the zodiacal signs (placed above the degree columns). A closer look at the numerical content reveals that the first 24 columns belong to a table of right ascensions (fol. 9r–v) and the next 24 columns to a table of *normed* right ascensions, which begin at Capricorn and are increased by 90° relative to the right ascensions of the preceding sequence (fol. 9v–10r). As for the remaining 480 columns, they amount to a continuous series of twenty tables for oblique ascensions, one for each full degree of geographic latitude between 31° and 50° (fol. 10v–25r). With this ensemble of tables in place, manuscript *P* could have provided a practicing astrologer with most of the computational tools required to cast a horoscope in a wide range of European as well as North African locations. Its greatest oddity in this respect is the absence of any tables geared towards the position of the Moon. A twelfth-century user of this collection may have attempted to plug this gap by taking recourse to the *computus* tradition of Latin lunar reckoning, whose sources were far more widely available at the time than astronomical tables.[16] One of the more sophisticated tools in this regard were the conjunction tables composed between 1092 and 1112 by Walcher of Malvern, which came with instructions on how to derive from them zodiacal longitudes for the Sun and Moon.[17]

More so than the absence of the Moon, what makes the material in *P* stand out from among any of the other almanacs and sets of astronomical tables available in twelfth-century Latin Europe is the computational procedure for the five planets, as represented by Tables A and B mentioned above – or what Lipton respectively

[16] See on this point Juste, « Neither Observation nor Astronomical Tables », p. 183–185.

[17] See Walcher of Malvern, *De lunationibus* 4–5, in C. Philipp E. Nothaft, *Walcher of Malvern: 'De lunationibus' and 'De Dracone'; Study, Edition, Translation, and Commentary*, Brepols, Turnhout 2017 (De Diversis Artibus, 101 [N.S. 64]), p. 114–118.

dubbed the « Mensual » and « Daily Tables ».[18] The first step in this procedure is to enter Table B with the number of days since the last combustion to yield a longitudinal increment in degrees and minutes (*puncta*). The value in question will be added to the longitude of the combustion to arrive at a first approximation or intermediary result for the true longitude of the planet. As seen from Tab. 1, the length of each Table B depends on the approximate synodic period of the planet to which it is assigned. The shortest among them is the table for Mercury, which has 349 entries representing the rough equivalent of three consecutive synodic periods (3 x 116d = 348d). The longest is the table for Mars, which has 780 entries in almost exact accordance with the number of days in Mars's synodic period (modern value: 799.94d).

	Saturn	Jupiter	Mars	Venus	Mercury
approx. synodic period of planet	378d	399d	780d	584d	116d
number of entries in table	381	401	780	585	349
last entry in table	14;24°	34;31°	407;24°	576;40°	344;37°

Tab. 1: synopsis for Tables B in *P*, fol. 1r–7v

Tab. 2 below presents the layout and numerical content of Table A for Mars. As with Table A for the other four planets, it is a double-argument table that users were expected to enter with (i) a number of months since the last combustion and (ii) the zodiacal sign or degree in which the said combustion occurred. The entry thus found is the value of a correction in degrees and/or minutes together with an indication as to whether the correction must be subtracted (*minue*) from or added to (*iunge*) the intermediary result obtained via Table B. The precise method of extracting the correction from Table A differs from one planet to the next. Canons that in *P* appear near each Table A (fol. 1r, 2r, 3r, 5r, 6r) spell out most of the relevant procedure, though certain aspects appear to have been glossed over or merely left implicit. For elapsed time intervals that include days beyond a completed number of months, the rule for Jupiter prescribes a simple interpolation procedure: the difference between Table A's corrections for the current and completed month is divided by 30 and the quotient multiplied by the number of remaining days.[19] Curiously, the canon for Mars makes no reference to such a procedure for the current month, despite the fact that this planet's

[18] Lipton, « The Rational Evaluation », p. 171.

[19] *P*, fol. 2r: « Hoc modo prospice numerum primi mensis. In prima die illius mensis de ipso numero addas vel minuas XXX partem, in secunda die duas XXX^{as}, in die tertia tres trigesimas, et sic in XXX^{ma} die iunge vel minue totum. In prima die secundi mensis accipe numerum primi et secundi mensis et considera quantum numerus primi vincgeat [*sic* in *P*] numerum secundi et ab eo quod superat subtrahe XXX^{am} partem et adde vel minue numero presenti. » The calculation for Venus was supposed to work along the same lines. *P*, fol. 6r: « Verumtamen semper addet vel minuat de numero mensium eius, qui sunt XX, sicut diximus in Iove. »

relatively swift motion would have made it particularly sensitive to day-to-day changes. Instead of discussing the time since the last combustion, the rules focus entirely on the longitude of this combustion, as Mars is the only one among the five planets where users are required to consider the precise degree rather than just the sign. To this end, the canon preceding Mars's Table A spells out a different course of action for each one of 71 degree-ranges, which encompass between 4° and 10° consecutive degrees (see Appendix).

	ARI	TAU	GEM	CAN	LEO	VIR	LIB	SCO	SAG	CAP	AQU	PIS
1	+0;20°	0°	−1;33°	−1;58°	−2;8°	−1;27°	−1°	+0;41°	+1;58°	+1;34°	+2;1°	+1;10°
2	+0;20°	0°	−2;29°	−3;15°	−3;15°	−1;24°	−0;27°	+3;2°	+4;57°	+4;47°	+4;22°	+2;20°
3	+0;40°	0°	−3;33°	−4;15°	−3;37°	−0;31°	+1;13°	+6;3°	+8;39°	+8;15°	+6;32°	+3;16°
4	+1°	0°	−4;9°	−4;46°	−4;43°	+1;41°	+4;15°	+9;39°	+12;43°	+11;46°	+8;35°	+4;46°
5	+1;20°	0°	−4;26°	−4;46°	−1;43°	+5;7°	+8;15°	+13;9°	+16;55°	+15;13°	+10;26°	+5;53°
6	+1;40°	0°	−4;30°	−4;9°	+0;54°	+9;51°	+10;18°	+16;7°	+21;5°	+13;36°	+12;3°	+6;7°
7	+2°	0°	−4;6°	−3°	+4;5°	+15;52°	+16;46°	+22;40°	+25;25°	+21;54°	+13;44°	+7;52°
8	+2;40°	0°	−3;59°	−1;6°	+10;25°	+23;19°	+24;40°	+30;34°	+30;10°	+25;29°	+15;36°	+8;33°
9	+3°	0°	−2;14°	+2;25°	+18;15°	+32;30°	+34;18°	+40;12°	+35;22°	+30;3°	+18°	+10;30°
10	+4°	0°	−0;24°	+7;23°	+28;51°	+45;21°	+47;36°	+53;30°	+43;47°	+37;35°	+22;15°	+13;7°
11	+7°	0°	+2;45°	+14;36°	+47;3°	+64;14°	+56;56°	+62;50°	+57;46°	+49;55°	+29;31°	18;15°
12	+12;3°	0°	+3°	+19;36°	+66;49°	+77;37°	+90;46°	+96;40°	+75°	+64;2°	+36;8°	+24;5°
13	+6;56°	0°	+3;18°	+17;37°	+70;57°	+99;48°	+101;50°	+107;44°	+77;24°	+63;34°	+30;7°	+18;30°
14	+5;43°	0°	+5;23°	+16;5°	+60;20°	+85;19°	+84;22°	+88;22°	+60;22°	+46;46°	+19;41°	+12;13°

15	+4;9°	0°	+6;52°	+25;40°	+41;32°	+62;48°	+62;18°	+70;18°	+39;22°	+30;34°	+12;9°	+8;45°
16	+1;13°	0°	+8;16°	+15;37°	+34;1°	+45;54°	+45;21°	+48;18°	+24;22°	+20;11°	+7;13°	+4°
17	−0;9°	0°	+9;13°	+15;42°	+28;17°	+34;44°	+34;8°	+41;30°	+19;22°	+13;47°	+4;13°	+2;10°
18	−1;39°	0°	+8;56°	+13;57°	+22;44°	+26;28°	+25;42°	+37;25°	+16;22°	+7;21°	+1;14°	0°
19	−2;15°	0°	+8;3°	+11;51°	+17;35°	+19;6°	+18;19°	+31;38°	+13;22°	+3;6°	−0;9°	−1;5°
20	−2;23°	0°	+6;37°	+9;9°	+12;37°	+12;15°	+12;8°	+26;13°	+7;10°	0°	−2°	−2°
21	−2;13°	0°	+4;29°	+6;6°	+7;55°	+7;40°	+5;57°	+23;25°	+4;38°	−1;52°	−2;2°	−2;15°
22	−1;34°	0°	+2;46°	+3;10°	+3;18°	+3;23°	+3;1	+21;45°	+4;24°	−2;29°	−1;30°	−1;20°
23	−0;22°	0°	+0;29°	+0;35°	+0;44°	+0;32°	+0;24°	+21;22°	+3;48°	−1;32°	−0;5°	−0;20°
24	+0;58°	0°	−2;9°	−1;32°	−1;18°	−1;14°	−0;54°	+22;35°	+6;23°	+0;33°	+1;55°	+1;7°
25	+2;3°	0°	−2;27°	−3;3°	−3;5°	−1;14°	−0;30°	+24;54°	+7;4°	+3;23°	+4;4°	+3;3°
26	+4;19°	0°	−2;54°	−3;53°	−3;21°	−1;11°	−0;16°	25;43°	+11;47°	+6;47°	+7;27°	+5;23°
27	+3;14°								+12;35°	+8;54°	+6;34°	+4;57°

Tab. 2: Table A for Mars according to *P*, fol. 3v.[20]

While the precise methods by which Tables A and B were constructed raise difficult questions that cannot be pursued further here, the basic principles that guided their creation seem clear enough. Simply put, Table B was intended to chart a planet's daily progress in ecliptic longitude across one synodic period (or three, in the specific case of Mercury), while Table A takes into account the sensitivity of these daily increments to the ecliptic longitude at the initial combustion. This

[20] Where it seemed obvious from the surrounding entries that an entry in *P*'s copy of this table is corrupt, I attempted a silent emendation on the basis of witness *M* to be discussed in Part III below. A more thorough emendation of the numerical content of this table will have to await a complete analysis of its method of construction, which is beyond the scope of the present article.

initial longitude will make a difference to the sizes of the subsequent increments owing to the eccentricity of the planet's deferent, which modifies the equation of anomaly through the equation of centre and the changing apparent diameter of the epicycle.[21] The correction provided by Table A accordingly depends on two arguments or variables, of which one is the time elapsed since the last combustion (tabulated according to complete months) and the other is the initial longitude (tabulated according to zodiacal signs). Whoever created this arrangement was presumably motivated by a desire to avoid working with separate tables for mean motions and equations, as was also expressed by Raymond of Marseilles in the passage mentioned above. Indeed, computing with ordinary equation tables for the five planets required at least four separate entries (for the equation of centre, the equation of anomaly, the epicyclic diameter, and the minutes of proportion) as well as a much greater number of intermediary steps.[22]

As one would expect from combustion tables of the general type just described, each Table B in *P* shows one range of days within a given synodic period during which the longitude increment of the planet does not increase, but is static or negative in accordance with the planet's stations and retrogradations. For example, Saturn's increment is shown as remaining static at 10;59° between days 117 and 124, followed by a decrease to 3;28° between days 125 and 258. The planet remains stationary at 3;28° between days 259 and 263, after which the increment resumes its positive growth (*P*, fol. 1v). Likewise, Jupiter is shown stationary between days 138 and 141 (21;22°), retrograde between days 142 (21;21°) and 255 (11;41°), and stationary again between days 256 and 261 (11;41°) (*P*, fol. 2v). The table for Mars shows a more abrupt change from direct to retrograde motion, as there are no sequences of days during which the increment stays the same. The retrograde period is here from day 312 (170;10°) to day 389 (152;57°) (*P*, fol. 4v). This state of affairs seems to explain one of Raymond of Marseilles's specific objections against the Mars table used by his opponents, namely, its supposed

[21] For some background, see Otto Neugebauer, *A History of Ancient Mathematical Astronomy*, 3 vols., Springer, Berlin 1975 (Studies in the History of Mathematics and Physical Sciences, 1), vol. I, p. 145–206.

[22] José Chabás, Bernard R. Goldstein, *A Survey of European Astronomical Tables in the Late Middle Ages*, Brill, Leiden 2012 (Time, Astronomy, and Calendars: Texts and Studies, 2), p. 73–76. The idea of arranging astronomical tables on the basis of conjunctions between the planets and the Sun reappears in the fourteenth century in the context of Alfonsine astronomy. See ibid., p. 155–156; José Chabás, Bernard R. Goldstein, « John of Murs's Tables of 1321 », *Journal for the History of Astronomy*, 40 (2009), p. 297–320 (299–307). Note, however, that in this example the goal was to convert the mean conjunction into the true longitude at any other time via a single step, involving only one double-argument table. The process resembles that in the combustion tables only on a rather superficial level, especially given the absence of any counterpart to Table B.

failure to reflect the fact that the planet becomes stationary twice during each synodic period.[23]

Even besides this point concerning planetary stations, the case for identifying Mars's Table B in *P* with the relevant part of the combustion tables criticized by Raymond turns out to be extremely strong. According to the *Liber cursuum planetarum*, the incriminated « almanac » showed an increment of 170;10° in the line corresponding to « 12 days of 11 months made up of 30 days » (« XII dierum XI mensium ex diebus XXX constitutorum »).[24] Since Raymond mentioned in an earlier passage that his dispute with the astrologers was resolved ten months after Mars's combustion, it is clear that the line referred to here must be that for day 312 (= 12 + 10 x 30).[25] He tells us that the increment assigned to this day showed Mars as beginning to be retrograde at 212;12° + 170;10° – 360° = 22;31°.[26] The agreement of this information with *P*'s Table A happens to be flawless. Its entry for day 312 not only shows the expected increment of 170;10° but, crucially, it is also the first entry of a retrograde sequence (*P*, fol. 4v).

Raymond does not explain how exactly this result amounted to a refutation of the table championed by his opponents. Instead, he goes on to refer to the situation after thirteen months, for which the same table allegedly predicted that

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23 Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.36a, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 154: « Est preterea aliud in quo satis falsas esse percipi potest. Cum enim unusquisque planetarum duas habeat stationes, primam cum retrogradari incipit, secundum cum desinit, ecce in tabulis ad Martis cursum pertinentibus, nusquam eum stationarium invenire poteris, cum verum sit ipsum multis diebus, id est XXIIII et horis XV aut circa in utraque statione perdurare. » It is unclear how Raymond established his exaggerated value of 24d 15h for the duration of each of Mars's stations. Perhaps he extracted it from his own tables' values for the true anomaly at station and retrogradation. See Table 23 (ibid., p. 340), where the values for the first station and beginning of retrogradation are 157;28° and 169;15°, respectively. Dividing the difference of 169;15° – 157;28° = 11;47° by a mean motion in anomaly of *c.*0;27,42°/d would yield *c.*25d 12h.

24 See below, n. 26.

25 Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.25b, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 148: « Cum autem in cursu Martis, qui gravissimus inter planetarum cursus habetur, eorum tabulas cognovissemus falsissimas, atque ab ipsius Martis combustionis die, decem menses pertransissent, ita plane eos convicimus ut jurarent se nunquam decetero tabulas presignatas sequuturos. » See Lipton, « The Rational Evaluation », p. 175, whose suggested emendation of the passage mentioning eleven incomplete instead of ten complete months (see below, n. 26) is probably unnecessary.

26 Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.27a, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 150: « Addidimus super locum combustionis prenominatum XII dierum XI mensium ex diebus XXX constitutorum illarum tabularum lineam, que fuerat CLXX gradus et X minuta qui faciunt V signa et XX gradus et X minuta; habuimusque sic Martem in XXXII° minuto XXIII^{i} gradus primi signi idest arietis retrogradum incipientem. » Raymond writes that the planet was in the 32nd minute of the 23rd degree of Aries (« in XXXII° minuto XXIII^{i} gradus primi signi »). If this is taken literally as referring to incomplete degrees and minutes, such that the longitude is 22;31°, it explains the systematic discrepancy of 1;1° that unnecessarily puzzled Lipton, « The Rational Evaluation », p. 175–176.

Mars would be resuming its direct motion at a longitude of 5;19°.[27] Entering the table in *P* with 390 days (i.e., 13 x 30 days, making the date in question 20 November 1140), we find 152;58°, which marks the first increase in longitude since the beginning of the aforementioned retrograde arc. Adding 152;58° to 212;21° (i.e., to Raymond's assumed longitude at the last combustion), we obtain 5;19°, precisely as expected.

According to Raymond's polemic, this last result was a drastic 95;27° too low compared to the planet's actual longitude (i.e., that yielded by his own tables), which he gives as 100;46°.[28] While this is correct in arithmetical terms, his criticism ignores the entire second part of the computational procedure laid out in *P*, as represented by Table A. For an initial longitude of 212°–217°, which includes Raymond's longitude of the Mars combustion of 27 October 1139 (212;22°), the canon in *P*, if appropriately emended, requires us to take Table A's entry for Libra and either add or subtract 7/9 of the difference between the entries for Libra and Scorpio.[29] The corrective values shown in Table A in the row for thirteen months are +101;50° for Libra and +107;44° for Scorpio (see Tab. 2).[30] It is not immediately clear from the canon whether the difference between these values must be added or subtracted from Libra's entry in the case at hand. Addition seems more likely considering the consistently higher additive values shown in the column for Scorpio with respect to that for Libra. If this is so, the proper correction for a combustion longitude of *c.*212° will be: 101;50° + 7/9(107;44° – 101;50°) = 106;25[,20]°. This is almost 11° in excess of the discrepancy of 95;27° that Raymond of Marseilles encountered when comparing the combustion tables and his own calculations. It seems worth noting, however, that a much closer fit can be achieved by selecting the corrections from the row for twelve months: 90;46° + 7/9(96;40° – 90;46°) = 95;21[,20°].

Raymond's silence with regard to Mars's Table A may simply mean that the astrologers he criticized had discarded this table and blunderingly chose to operate only with Table B. But it is equally possible that Raymond deliberately misrepresented their combustion tables in order to bolster the authority of his own Tables of Marseilles.[31] In any case, he was not wrong to note that the combustions tables provided no specific means of finding the longitude for a particular hour of the day, since all computations were based on the completed

27 See above, n. 10.

28 See above, n. 10.

29 See *P*, fol. 3r, and the edition of the text in the Appendix below. Note that the two witnesses to the canon for Mars both systematically replace references to the difference between Libra and Scorpio with « Scorpio and Sagittarius ».

30 Lipton, « The Rational Evaluation », p. 176, erroneously used the value for Libra without further adjustment.

31 See on this point Lipton, « The Rational Evaluation », p. 176.

numbers of months and days since the last combustion.[32] Another valid criticism of his was that the tables lacked any utility in the absence of reliable information about the dates and longitudes of recent combustions.[33] In the case of *P*, however, the relevant data are readily provided as part of the canons that accompany each planet's Table A. They specify the dates and positions of eight different combustions ranging from 1 July 1135 to 4 September 1138, as listed chronologically in Tab. 3 below.

A peculiar feature of some of these combustion dates is that they are expressed according to two different eras: the conventional Christian era and the « Years of Adam » (*Anni Adam*).[34] The latter correspond to the Byzantine world era, as seen from the fact that they add 5509 years to the years of Christ. One should note, however, that years of the Byzantine world era ordinarily began on 1 September, being synchronous with the Byzantine indictional cycle. In contrast to this standard practice, *P*'s canon for Saturn informs us that the Years of Adam begin on 1 October,[35] which matches the beginning of the calendrical year that was commonly observed among Syrian Christians.[36] This makes for a rather peculiar as well as irritating feature of our source, as nothing else about *P*'s tables or canons seems to connect them firmly with either Byzantine or Syriac astronomy.

The canon for Saturn locates the present time in year 6644 of the Years of Adam as well as in AD 1135, noting that this number remains valid « usque ad nativitatem tunc venientem » (« until the coming Nativity »).[37] This must presumably be understood as a reference to 25 December 1135, which according to the author's

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[32] Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.36b, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 154: « Sunt vero sic iste tabule facte ut super nullam determinatam horam exeant cursus earum. »

[33] Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.36b, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 154: « Et si contigerit quod astrologus combustiones perdat, necesse ad magistram Egyptum iterum docendus recurrere habeat. »

[34] This is the case in the canons for Saturn, Jupiter, Mercury. See *P*, fol. 1r: « Cuius incensionem, ne quis ignoret, annos Ade atque Christi mente(?) firmiter teneat. Ade anni in presenti sunt VI milia DC.XLIIII et mutantur in kl. Octubris. Anni nativitatis domini sunt mille C.XXXVI usque ad nativitatem tunc venientem. » *P*, fol. 2r: « Quando vis scire ubi sit Iupiter, scias ubi perussit eum Sol. Combustus autem erit Iupiter in hoc anno, id est anno Ade VI milia DC.XLIIII, anno autem incarnationis Christi millesimo centesimo XXXVI, in XII gradu Cancri et XXVIII punctis ad XXVIII dies Iunii. » *P*, fol. 5r: « Cum autem vis scire ubi ipse sit, considera eius primam incensionem, que fuit in XVI die Octubris, ad XXVIII gradus Libre et LI puncta, annis VI^{mi}.DC.XLIIII, in anno incarnationis Christi M^{o}.C^{o}.XXXV^{o}. » See also *P*, fol. 3r, where an addition to the canon for Mars refers to *annus Adam* 6647.

[35] See above, n. 34.

[36] Venance Grumel, *La chronologie*, Presses universitaires de France, Paris 1958 (Traité d'Études Byzantines, 1), p. 174, 209–210; Ludger Bernhard, *Die Chronologie der Syrer*, Böhlau, Vienna 1969 (Sitzungsberichte der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, phil.-hist. Kl., 264.3), p. 64–74, 110–119; Andrew Palmer, trans., *The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles*, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool 1993, p. xxxiv.

[37] *P*, fol. 1r.

style of reckoning (i.e., the Nativity style) was the beginning of AD 1136. Year 6644 of the Byzantine world era would have ordinarily run from 1 September 1135 to 31 August 1136, though in the specific version presupposed in *P*'s canons the time window shifts by one month to 1 October 1135 to 30 September 1136. Taken together, the indications provided at the start of the canon for Saturn seem to narrow the time of writing down to the days between 1 October and 25 December 1135. At the same time, the canons use the past tense whenever they refer to combustions that occurred in 1135 (Venus on 1 July, Mars on 8 August, Mercury on 16 October, and Saturn on 21 December). Since the latest of these combustions fell on 21 December, it could be that the precise time of writing was just before Christmas 1135, though one should probably be wary of drawing too precise a conclusion from this material. In the case of Jupiter, a combustion on 28 June 1136 is noted in what appears to be the future tense (« Combustus autem erit Iupiter in hoc anno »),[38] which lends further support to dating the canons to late 1135. If this is so, the canons in their original form only provided one combustion for each of the five planets. The fact that *P* records a second combustion for Mars on 12 September 1137 as well as two additional Venus combustions on 8 February 1137 and 4 September 1138 is probably due to later additions to the work. Indeed, these additional combusts are presented as events in the past, which would be inconsistent with the wording in the canons for Saturn and Jupiter.

By the time Raymond of Marseilles had his encounter with the astrologers, the most recent Mars combustion had occurred on 27 October 1139. Raymond gave the joint longitude of Mars and the Sun as 212;22°, claiming that the astronomers agreed with this starting point. It must be noted, however, that Raymond's Tables of Marseilles were an adaptation of the Toledan Tables, whose longitudes were based on a sidereal frame of reference. Raymond did not adjust these longitudes for precession, meaning that 212;22° is a sidereal rather than a tropical value.[39] The combustion longitudes provided in *P* are, in contrast, all tropical. Tab. 3 arranges them in chronological order and compares their date and longitude (λ) according to *P* with the tropical longitudes predicted by the Toledan Tables. Specifically, the fourth and fifth columns of Tab. 3 show (i) the approximate time at which the tropical true solar longitude according to the Toledan Tables reaches the longitude given in *P* (time TT) and (ii) the concomitant longitude (to the nearest minute of arc) of the planet whose combustion is at stake (λ TT). The comparison shows that the dates and longitudes in *P* are in good overall agreement with the Toledan true Sun, which in seven out of eight cases attains an identical longitude on the same

[38] *P*, fol. 2r.
[39] See above, n. 9.

date as the recorded combustion.[40] The planetary combustions are likewise confirmed in at least an approximate sense, as the Toledan placement of the planet is mostly within 1° of the solar longitude. The one outlier is the latest combustion on the list, that for Venus on 4 September 1138, where the Toledan Tables indicate 5 September for the date of the solar longitude and a longitude of Venus that is lower by approximately 1;33°.

date	planet	λ *P*	time TT	λ TT
1 Jul. 1135	Venus	104;45°	1 Jul., *c.*17;20h	104;6°
8 Aug. 1135	Mars	141;4°	8 Aug., *c.*13:38h	141;25°
16 Oct. 1135	Mercury	208;51°	16 Oct., *c.*8;49h	209;43°
21 Dec. 1135	Saturn	275;39°	21 Dec., *c.*2;32h	274;50°
28 Jun. 1136	Jupiter	102;28°	28 Jun., *c.*12;6h	102;39°
8 Feb. 1137	Venus	326;32°	8 Feb., *c.*13;33h	325;53°
12 Sep. 1137	Mars	175;37°	12 Sep., *c.*11;14h	176;24°
4 Sep. 1138	Venus	168;27°	5 Sep., *c.*10;14h	166;46°

Tab. 3: combustion dates and ecliptic longitudes (λ) in *P* (fol. 1r, 2r, 3r, 5r, 6r) compared with the Toledan Tables (TT)

III. *Further witnesses*

Other than in *P*, the same unusual assembly of combustion, solar, and ascension tables is also attested in MS Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 18927 (= *M*), which is a collection of astronomical tables and astrological texts formerly at Tegernsee Abbey.[41] The relevant unit of the manuscript (fol. 70r–129r) was written by a single hand in the second half of the twelfth century. It begins with the canon explaining the use of Table A for Mars (fol. 70r–71r), which is the only part of the rules in *P* included here. Next in line are Tables A for all five planets (fol. 71v–76r), which here appear in their standard order (Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Mercury). Rather than following this up immediately with Tables B, the scribe in question used the next verso-page to begin a copy of the *Iudicia*, an astrological text that

[40] This is true, at any rate, if all dates are reckoned from midnight, as was the case with Raymond's adaptation of the Toledan Tables. See Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 2.1d, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 200. The original Toledan Tables instead began the day from the previous noon.

[41] Descriptions: *The Toledan Tables*, ed. Fritz S. Pedersen, 4 vols., Reitzel, København 2002 (Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, Historisk-filosofiske Skrifter, 24.1–4), vol. I, p. 136; David Juste, « MS Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 18927 (update: 24.02.2022) », *Ptolemaeus Arabus et Latinus. Manuscripts*, <http://ptolemaeus.badw.de/ms/87> (Accessed 29 Nov. 2023). The manuscript is available at <https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/en/view/bsb00047479?page=,1> (Accessed 29 Nov. 2023).

combines an introductory treatise with an extensive set of rules for interrogations.[42] Tables B (fol. 78r–92r), the table for the solar longitude (fol. 94r–97r), and the full set of ascension tables known from *P* (fol. 98v–120r) are all embedded at different points in this copy.

Since the tables and the text occasionally share leaves (fol. 92 and 120) or even a single page (fol. 97r), it is clear that this arrangement did not result from a binding accident, but was deliberate. The scribe responsible for this part of *M* effectively presents the combustion tables and the *Iudicia* as one cohesive work. Compared to *P*, the tables for right and oblique ascensions are here presented in a much tidier and more user-friendly format. Rather than being blended into a continuous sequence, each set of ascensions for a given degree of latitude occupies its own two-page spread (i.e., one verso and one recto page). *M*'s scribe copied the right ascensions (fol. 98v–99r) ahead of the oblique ascensions, as is also the case in *P*, but placed the normed right ascensions at the very end (fol. 119v–120r).

The *Iudicia* are extant in two significantly different versions, of which one is usually attributed to Ptolemy, the other to Aristotle. *M* transmits the pseudo-Ptolemaic version of the text, which was also the main source for Raymond of Marseilles's *Liber iudiciorum* (*c.*1141), an astrological companion work to the *Liber cursuum planetarum*. It seems interesting to note in this context that Raymond's *Liber cursuum* contains a passage ridiculing users of « certain apocryphal books falsely issued under Ptolemy's name », who adhere to these unreliable sources with such fervour that « they not only do not care to accept the truth of the heavens, but also reject in every way the possibility that the positions of the planets might be different from what is contained in [those books]. »[43] Raymond's condemnation of these astronomical pseudo-Ptolemaica is followed immediately by the much longer passage warning readers about the combustion tables and boasting about his successful refutation of the two astrologers. The way he segues into this discussion creates a strong implication that the combustion tables were

[42] On the *Iudicia*, see the description and bibliography in David Juste, « Pseudo-Ptolemy, *Iudicia* (update: 10.03.2022) », *Ptolemaeus Arabus et Latinus. Works*, <http://ptolemaeus.badw.de/ms/483> (Accessed 29 Nov. 2023). The version in *M* substitutes the *Iudicia*'s final chapters with the pseudo-Aristotelian text *De luna* (fol. 129r–v), on which see David Juste, « Les textes astrologiques latins attribués à Aristote », *Micrologus*, 21 (2013), p. 145–164 (156–157), and the critical edition with translation in Charles Burnett, « *Nīranj*: A Category of Magic (Almost) Forgotten in the Latin West », in Claudio Leonardi, Francesco Santi (eds.), *Natura, scienze e società medievali: Studi in onore di Agostino Paravicini Bagliani*, SISMEL–Edizioni del Galluzzo, Florence 2008 (Micrologus Library, 28), p. 37–66 (56–65).

[43] Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.24a, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 148: « Sunt enim nonnulli qui quorumdam apocriphorum libros Ptolomei nomine falso pretitulatos habentes, adeo diligenter eos amplectuntur, tantaque religione venerantur et autenticant ut non solum ipsius firmamenti veritati adquiescere non curant sed etiam planetarum cursus aliter esse posse quam in eis contineatur, modis abnuant omnibus. »

themselves an example of the pseudo-Ptolemaic sources he laments in the preceding paragraph.[44]

That our tables were closely linked with the *Iudicia* in a way that went beyond their singular presentation in *M* is further suggested by a twelfth-century commentary on the pseudo-Ptolemaic text, which is transmitted alongside rules for the specific solar and ascension tables found in *M* and *P* (see Part VII). An additional sign of this association may be detected in the rule for Saturn in *P*, which starts off with using *turris* in place of *signum* to mean zodiacal sign.[45] This use of the term, which is explicable as a calque on the Arabic *al-burj* (« tower »), is a hallmark the *Iudicia* and other texts derived from it, but otherwise rather unusual.[46]

It might have been possible to explore this association even further were it not for the loss of MS Chartres, Bibliothèque municipale, 213 (s. XII), which was destroyed during the Second World War.[47] While the manuscript itself is no longer available for examination, the nineteenth-century catalogue description records a text with the same incipit as the *Iudicia* (« Signorum alia sunt masculini generis, alia sunt feminini... ») on fol. 41r. What follows on fol. 63r is an unidentified work starting « Incipit de planetarum coniunctione. Si Saturnus et Iuppiter... » The catalogue characterizes this work as « Tableaux astrologiques » allegedly composed in 1136 and followed by some observations for the years 1139 and 1140. To this, the cataloguers add the surmise that this was « peut-être le traité d'Aben-Eyzor, rabbin du XII^{e} siècle. » [48] The reasoning behind this suggestion is unfortunately opaque, especially as there is no indication of where in the

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[44] Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.25a, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 148: « His dictis, nullatenus silentio preterire dignum credimus, in quo libri quorumdam astrologorum quos nostris temporibus vidimus sint vitiosi, ideo precipue ne in reliquum aliquem simplicem, si in manu ejus devenerint, errare faciant. »

[45] *P*, fol. 1r: « Quicumque veraciter nosse desiderat turrem et gradum et puncta ubi sit Saturnus, diligenter attendet ubi perussit eum Sol. Et sciat omnes dies Saturni, que sunt CCCLXXXI. Ac noscat menses illius ab incensione, qui XIII scribuntur et unicuique de XII turribus aponuntur, sicut ratio subscripta monstrabit. » These are the only two occurrences of *turris* in the text.

[46] An independent attestation of this calque is Adelard of Bath, *De opere astrolapsus*, ed. Bruce George Dickey, « Adelard of Bath: An Examination Based on heretofore Unexamined Manuscripts », Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1982, p. 153, which refers to the zodiac as *circulus turrium*. See also David Juste, *Les* Alchandreana *primitifs: études sur les plus anciens traités astrologiques latins d'origine arabe (X^{e} siècle)*, Brill, Leiden 2007 (Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, 152), p. 94, 652.

[47] See Jean-Patrice Boudet, « Chartres, BM, ms. 213 (ancien 169) – détruit (1944) », <https://www.manuscrits-de-chartres.fr/sites/default/files/fileviewer/documents/notices-detaillees/chartres-bm-ms-213_notice_jp-boudet.pdf> (Accessed 29 Nov. 2023).

[48] H. Omont, A. Molinier, C. Couderc, E. Coyecque, *Catalogue général des manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France: Départements*, vol. XI, *Chartres*, Plon, Paris 1890, p. 109. See also Charles Burnett, « The Contents and Affiliation of the Scientific Manuscripts Written at, or Brought to, Chartres in the Time of John of Salisbury », in Michael Wilks (ed.), *The World of John of Salisbury*, Blackwell, Oxford 1984 (Studies in Church History: Subsidia, 3), p. 127–160 (140).

manuscript the name Aben-Eyzor appeared. It is, at any rate, similar to a garbled Latin form of the name of the ninth-century astrologer Sahl ibn Bishr that Raymond of Marseilles used in his writings (*Abeneisar*).[49] A further important hint as to the content of the « Tableaux astrologiques » was left by Charles Homer Haskins, who had been able to consult the manuscripts some decades prior to its destruction. According to his brief published remarks, fol. 63r–141v were taken up with « a treatise on astrology containing Arabic words which dates from 1135, with notes added from 1137 to 1141 ».[50] As evidence of the date, Haskins cites a sentence on fol. 116r mentioning a combustion of Venus on 1 July 1135: « In hoc anno quando erant anni a nativitate Christi M.C.XXXV. in kal. iulii fuit Venus incensa in Cancro. »[51] This happens to be identical with a sentence included in the combustion tables' canon for Venus, as found in *P* on fol. 6r.

In addition to the full set of tables preserved in *M* and *P*, one finds less complete representations of the same work in the following three manuscripts:

- D = Darmstadt, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, 765, fol. 181r–188v (s. XIII$^{1/2}$).[52] Fol. 181r–188r are a fragment of the second half of the tables for oblique ascensions, starting from Gemini at 40° latitude (fol. 17r–25r in *P*). The bifolium 185r–186v was bound out of sequence and has its proper place ahead of fol. 181r–184v. Fol. 188v has the first half of the table of normed right ascensions, which here appears after the oblique ascensions, as is also the case in *M*. A later hand (s. XIV/XV) noted at the head of fol. 181r that the subsequent tables are of no great value (« Istae tabulae sequentes non sunt magni valoris »).
- O = Oxford, Corpus Christi College, 233, fol. 97r–v, 101r–114v (s. XIII$^{2/2}$).[53] This manuscript preserves the full set of Tables A and B for the planets as

[49] This was pointed out by Lemay, *Abu Ma'shar*, p. 144 (see footnotes); Burnett, « The Contents », p. 135–136. For Raymond's references to *Abenbeisar*, see Raymond of Marseilles, *Liber cursuum planetarum* 1.97, ed. d'Alverny, Burnett, Poulle, p. 194; Id., *Liber iudiciorum* (MS Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 16208, fol. 24va). Boudet, « Chartres », p. 2–3, instead suggests identifying Aben-Eyzor with Ibn al-Bāzyār, to whom Abū Maʿshar's treatise *On the Great Conjunctions* was frequently ascribed. He also raises the possibility that Raymond of Marseilles annotated the manuscript in question.

[50] Charles Homer Haskins, *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (Mass.) 1924, p. 90.

[51] Haskins, *Studies*, p. 90 (n. 45).

[52] Description: *The Toledan Tables*, ed. Pedersen, vol. I, p. 104–105. The manuscript is available at <http://tudigit.ulb.tu-darmstadt.de/show/Hs-765> (Accessed 29 Nov. 2023).

[53] Descriptions: *The Toledan Tables*, ed. Pedersen, vol. I, p. 150–151; David Juste, « MS Oxford, Corpus Christi College, 233 (update: 01.03.2022) », *Ptolemaeus Arabus et Latinus. Manuscripts*, <http://ptolemaeus.badw.de/ms/483> (Accessed 29 Nov. 2023).

well as the solar table, but lacks the ascension tables. The scribe used Hindu-Arabic instead of Roman numerals throughout.

- W = Wolfenbüttel, Herzog-August-Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 51.9 Aug. 4° (3549), fol. 102r–108v (s. XIII).[54] This is a 14-page fragment limited to Tables A/B for Saturn and Jupiter. Table A for Jupiter is incomplete, finishing at day 180. A section on the astrolabe (fol. 91v–101v: Hermann of Reichenau, *De constructione astrolabii*; *De utilitate astrolabii*) separates the tables from a copy of the *Iudicia* (fol. 69r–91r), albeit in the alternative version that in other manuscripts comes with an ascription to Aristotle.

The contents of all the witnesses mentioned thus far – *DMOPW* – are summarized in Tab. 4, which gives the precise folio-numbers for each individual table.

	D	*M*	*O*	*P*	*W*
Saturn A	--	71v–72r	97r	1r	102r–v
Saturn B	--	78r–80r	103r–104r	1v–2r	103r–106r
Jupiter A	--	72v–73r	97v	2r	106v–107r
Jupiter B	--	80r–82r	104r–105v	2v–3r	107r–108v
Mars A	--	73v–74r	98r–v	3v	--
Mars B	--	82v–86v	106r–109r	4r–5r	--
Venus A	--	74v–75r	101r–v	6v	--
Venus B	--	87r–90r	110v–113r	7r–v	--
Mercury A	--	75v–76r	102r–v	5v	--
Mercury B	--	90v–92r	109r–110v	5v–6r	--
Sun	--	94r–97r	113r–114v	8r–v	--
RA	--	98v–99r	--	9r–v	--
NRA	188v	119v–120r	--	9v–10r	--
OA	181r–188r	99v–119r	--	10v–25r	--

Tab. 4: synopsis of the tables present in manuscripts *DMOPW*; RA = right ascensions; NRA = normed right ascensions; OA= oblique ascensions

IV. *Abraham Ibn Ezra on combustion tables*

Raymond of Marseilles's polemic in the *Liber cursuum planetarum* is not the only external testimony on the subject of combustion tables to have survived from the

[54] Description: Otto von Heinemann, *Die Augusteischen Handschriften*, vol. V: *Codex Guelferbytanus 34.1 Aug. 4° bis 117 Augusteus 4°*, Klostermann, Frankfurt am Main 1966 [1903] (Kataloge der Herzog-August-Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel: Die alte Reihe, 8), p. 58–59.

twelfth century. A second relevant source is Abraham Ibn Ezra's Latin *Liber de rationibus tabularum* (1154), which contains the following brief passage:

> Et cum Mars est in alto loco brevis circuli semper ibi soli adunatus, tunc iter eius velocissimum est secundum firmamentum, et ideo quidam inchoant tabulas Martis a combustione eius, et iste tabule vere sunt cum Mars combustum fuerit in 11 gradibus scorpionis vel tauri. Quia hec duo loca per quadratum a loco alto distant. Qui<a> cum combustus est in alto loco, iter eius tardum est ut omnium aliorum planetarum ut sit minus 40 minutis. Cum vero in humili loco combustus citum est iter eius, ut etiam sit plus 45 minutis, et ideo semper false sunt tabule eorum.[55]
>
> And when Mars is at the apogee of the epicycle, at which point it is always in conjunction with the Sun, then its path with respect to the firmament is at its fastest, and for this reason some begin tables for Mars from its combustion. And these tables are accurate provided Mars was combust at 11° of Scorpio or Taurus, because these two positions are one quadrant away from the apogee. For when [Mars] is combust at the apogee, its path is slow, as with the other planets, such that it is less by 0;40°. But when it is combust at the perigee, its path is fast, such that it is greater even by 0;45°. And so it follows that their tables are always false.

Much like Raymond of Marseilles before him, Ibn Ezra seems familiar only with the type of combustion table represented by Tables B. In fact, he claims that the values shown in such tables are « always false » unless the previous combustion occurred with Mars positioned at one of the « quadrants » or mid-points between

[55] Abraham Ibn Ezra, *Liber de rationibus tabularum*, ed. José María Millás Vallicrosa, *El libro de los fundamentos de las Tablas astronómicas de R. Abraham Ibn 'Ezra*, CSIC, Madrid 1947 (Instituto Arias Montano, Ser. D, 2), p. 119, ll. 12–20. I made one emendation to this passage on the basis of MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Digby 40, fol. 70v. On the *Liber de rationibus tabularum* and the question of its authorship, see José María Millás Vallicrosa, « Sobre la autenticidad de una obra astronómica de R. Abraham ibn 'Ezra », *Isis*, 40 (1949), p. 32–33; Aleksander Birkenmajer, « À propos de l'"Abrahismus' », *Archives internationales d'histoire des sciences*, 3 (1950), p. 378–390; Shlomo Sela, « Contactos científicos entre judíos y cristianos en el siglo XII: el caso del *Libro de las tablas astronómicas* de Abraham Ibn Ezra en su versión latina y hebrea », *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección de Hebreo, 45 (1996), p. 185–222; Id., « Algunos puntos de contacto entre el *Libro de las tablas astronómicas* en su versión latina y las obras literarias hebreas de Abraham Ibn Ezra », *Miscelánea de Estudios Árabes y Hebraicos*, Sección de Hebreo, 46 (1997), p. 37–56; Id., *Abraham Ibn Ezra and the Rise of Medieval Hebrew Science*, Brill, Leiden 2003 (Brill's Series in Jewish Studies, 32), p. 23–27; Renate Smithuis, « Science in Normandy and England under the Angevins: The Creation of Abraham Ibn Ezra's Latin Works on Astronomy and Astrology », in Giulio Busi (ed.), *Hebrew to Latin, Latin to Hebrew: The Mirroring of Two Cultures in the Age of Humanism; Colloquium Held at the Warburg Institute, London, October 18–19, 2004*, Aragno, Turin 2006 (Berlin Studies in Judaism, 1), p. 23–59; Julio Samsó, « 'Dixit Abraham Iudeus': algunas observaciones sobre los textos astronómicos latinos de Abraham Ibn 'Ezra », *Iberia Judaica*, 4 (2012), p. 171–200; C. Philipp E. Nothaft, *Graeco-Arabic Astronomy for Twelfth-Century Latin Readers:* Ptolomeus et multi sapientum *(Abraham Ibn Ezra Latinus) — Robert of Chester,* Liber canonum*, pt. ii.*, Brill, Leiden 2023 (Time, Astronomy, and Calendars: Texts and Studies, 12), p. 13–23.

the apogee and perigee of its deferent, which entirely ignores the option of deriving a correction via Table A. He associates these quadrants with ecliptic longitudes of 221° (11° Scorpio) and 41° (11° Taurus), while a later passage in the same treatise puts Mars's apogee at 131° (11° Leo).[56] While the mutual derivation of these values is clear enough (131° + 90° = 221° and 131° – 90° = 41°), Ibn Ezra's specific comment on the quadrants elides the fact that the equation of centre is positive at one of the quadrants (90°), but negative at the other (360° – 90° = 270°). This difference implies divergent patterns of longitude increase for the synodic periods beginning at these two points. Ibn Ezra accordingly seems mistaken in suggesting that Table B for Mars can give accurate sets of values for combustions at either quadrant rather than just one of them.

A – *prima facie* – convenient way of narrowing down the initial position for which a given Table B was constructed would be to consider the signs or degrees for which the corresponding Table A shows no correction. In the case of *P*'s table for Mars, the column for Taurus displays a zero value across all rows. If this is read together with the computational rules in the corresponding canon (see Appendix), the implication seems to be that Mars's Table B was cast for a combustion at or near 0° Taurus = 30°, whereas Ibn Ezra's remarks suggest 11° Taurus.[57] Saturn's correction in Table A is zero for all combustions in Gemini and Cancer. Jupiter has a zero value in the same two signs, but only in the first month after the combustion. Venus's zero-value column is that for Sagittarius, while Mercury lacks a correction in Aries as well as in Gemini. With the possible exception of Mars, there seems to be no meaningful connection between these various signs in Table A and the apogees/quadrants of the corresponding planetary deferents.[58]

Rather than considering these positions, the originator of the combustion tables may have simply computed each Table B for a specific synodic period in the recent past, after which he added Table A to account for alternative initial longiudes. This, however, can be no more than a hypothesis at this stage. Further analysis will be required to unravel more fully the construction principles and parameters that underlie these unusual planetary tables.

[56] Abraham Ibn Ezra, *Liber de rationibus tabularum*, ed. Millás Vallicrosa, p. 120, l. 23.

[57] Raymond of Marseilles confirms this in an approximate sense when he notes that Table B for Mars was computed for a combustion in the « last part » of Aries. See above, n. 13.

[58] According to the Toledan Tables, the planetary apogees would have had the following tropical longitudes at the end of AD 1135: 247;56° (Saturn), 172;21° (Jupiter), 129;41° (Mars), 85;41° (Venus), 205;21° (Mercury).

V. *Martin of Pamplona's supplementary canon*

MS Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, 2385 (s. XIII$^{1/2}$) preserves on fol. 43r a brief canon explaining how to compute the date and longitude of a planet's combustion given knowledge of the date and longitude of the preceding combustion. It runs as follows:

> Cum igitur scire atque extrahere combustionem volueris, accipe combustionem transactam et vide in quo signo sit quilibet planetarum combustus et ab eo signo incipe, id est accipe gradum illius signi in combustione transacta et puncta similiter. Deinde accipe gradum et puncta ultime linee ultimi mensis cuiusvis planete et hos gradus mensis et signi, id est transacte combustionis, iunge.
>
> Postea cum signo in quo transacta fuit combustio intra in tabulam equationis planete eiusdem et curre ad ultimam in directo eiusdem signi et cape gradus et puncta que ibidem invenies. Sed ore sagaci perspice: si ibi invenies « M », minues hos gradus de primis gradibus adiunctis, et si inveneris eodem « I », hos gradus et primos adiunctos coniunges et[59] puncta similiter.
>
> Deinde vide in qua mense fuerit transacta combustio et cape a die transacte combustionis omnes eos dies qui sunt a die combustionis usque ad finem mensis illius. Similiter dies proficui capies et omnes hos et eos dies perfecte iunges, hoc tamen excepto quod de diebus proficui dabis duos Februario ut 30 permaneat diebus. Et hoc omni anno facies, id est dabis duos dies Februrario de proficuo, excepto anno tituli bisextili. Tunc autem dabis Februario de proficuo nisi unum diem, quia eo anno constat ex 29 diebus. Et ei da unum diem de proficuo et erit 30 factus. Sicque diebus proficui, exceptis duobus vel uno datis Februario, et diebus remanentibus a die combustionis transacte usque in finem mensis, scilicet hiis et illis diebus adiunctis, <numera> omnes menses. Unusquisque scilicet eorum ex 30 diebus permanebit. Et incipies numerare menses planete de quo facis combustionem. Sed non numerabis menses ab eo mense in quo fuerit transacta combustio, sed ab alio incipies.
>
> Verbi gratia: anno 1219 imperfecto Saturnus fuit combustus in Scorpione 15 gradu, 5 puncto prima[60] die Novembris. Dimitte ergo Novembrem et cape Decembrem et numera ab eo, id est, cum eo, et numera menses planete perfectos quotquot fuerint, quia quidam planetarum habet 13 perfectos et de 14 partem, ut Iupiter, Mars autem XXVII, et sic de reliquis ut in eisdem tabulis que « combustionis » intitulantur reperies. Et in ultimo mense planete resiste, id est resta, et da ei mensi dies mensis alterius, id est transacte combustionis, et dies proficui adiunctos. Et in eodem mense et eodem die quo numerus defecerit erit altera, id est presens, combustio quam conficere tractas.

[59] et] prima *addidit sed delevit*
[60] prima] a

Et si veritatem super hoc certissime nosse laboras, id est qua die illarum sit combustio, intra[61] in tabulam uniuscuiusque mensis et diei que constituta est in utero almanac vel etiam in almanac sapientissimi Ptolomei, vel etiam in eisdem tabulis combustionis, et vide qua die illarum invenies Solem in eo gradu eiusdem signi in quo est presens, id est a te facta, combustio. Verbi gratia: si combustio fuerit in mense Iunii, ut anno 1219[62] imperfeco fuit Iupiter in Cancro combustus 14 gradu et puncto 30 die Iunii, vide in predicta tabula vel Ptolomei almanac vel earum tabularum combustionis qua die Iunii fuerit Sol <in eodem gradu> et p<uncto> eiusdem signi, id est Cancri. Eodem die erit presens, id est per te facta, combustio certissime.

Et quod dictum est partim specialiter, generale dictum est de planetis quinque a Martino Pampilon<ensi> qui hunc canonem ad honorem cuiusdam domine Dies nomine composuit.

If you wish to know and extract a combustion, take a past combustion and see in which sign any of the planets is combust, and start from that sign, i.e. take the degree of that sign at which the past combustion [occurred] and similarly, the points. Take next the degree and points of the last line of the last month of whatever planet, and add together the degrees of the month and of the sign, i.e. [of the sign] of the past combustion.

Afterwards use the sign in which the past combustion occurred to enter the table of the planet's equation and proceed to the last [entry] belonging to the same sign, and take the degrees and points that you find there. But note the following with keen discernment: if you find « M » there, subtract these degrees from the degrees that you previously added together, and if you find « I » in the same place, join these degrees together with the previous ones, and likewise the points.

Next, see in which month the past combustion occurred and take all the days from the day of the past combustion up to the end of that month. Similarly, you will take the days of the profit [*dies proficui*] and you will perfectly join together these and those ones, with the exception that of the days of the profit you will give two to February so that it lasts 30 days. And you will do this every year, i.e. you will give two days of the profit to February, except in a leap year. In that case, you will give February only one day of the profit, because in that year it consists of 29 days. So, give it one day of the profit and it will become 30 days. In this way, after adding together the days of the profit, except for two or one given to February, and the days that remain from the day of the past combustion until the end of the month, [count] all the months. Each of them will last 30 days. And you will start counting the months of the planet for which you are calculating the combustion. However, you will not count the months from the month in which the last combustion took place, but instead you will begin from the next one.

For example, in the incomplete year 1219, Saturn was combust in Scorpio at 15 degrees and 5 minutes on the first day of November. Therefore, skip November and take December and count from it, i.e. with it, and count the complete months of the

[61] intra] *geminit*
[62] 1219] fuit *addidit sed delevit*

> planet, as many as there may be, because some planets have thirteen complete months and a part of the fourteenth, like Jupiter, while Mars has 27, and so on for the others, as you will find in the same tables titled « of the combustion ». And in the last month of the planet, pause, i.e. rest, and give it the sum of the days of the other month, i.e. the one of the past combustion, and the [remaining] days of the profit. And in the same month and on the same day at which the count runs out, there will be another combustion, i.e. the present one that you are seeking to calculate.
>
> And if you strive to know the truth about this with the utmost certainty, i.e. on which of day of those the combustion occurs, enter a table for each month and day that was placed in the womb of an almanac or also in the almanac of Ptolemy, the most wise, or also [a table] in the very same tables of combustion, and see on which day of those you will find the Sun at the same degree of the same sign in which the present combustion, i.e. the one calculated by you, occurs. For example, if the combustion was in the month of June, as in the incomplete year 1219, when Jupiter was combust at 14 degrees and 30 minutes in Cancer on the 30th day of June, look in the aforementioned table or in Ptolemy's almanac or in [a table contained in] these tables of combustion for the day in June when the Sun was in the same degree and minute of the same sign, i.e. of Cancer. On that same day, the present combustion, i.e. the one calculated by you, will undoubtedly occur.
>
> And what has for the most part been said specifically is said generally about the five planets by Martin of Pamplona, who composed this rule in honour of a lady named Díez.

The computational procedure described in this canon relies on a set of « combustion tables » (*tabulae combustionis*), which are clearly very similar to those in *P*. After a general rule of how to operate with these tables, the author gives an example based on a combustion of Saturn in November 1219. He also briefly explains how to verify the result by computing the concomitant position of the Sun, for which he uses the example of a combustion of Jupiter in June 1219. In both cases the date is expressed in the past tense (*fuit*), which suggests that the canon itself was written in 1220, or perhaps even slightly later. At the very end the author identifies himself as a certain Martin of Pamplona, who composed the foregoing canon in honour *cuiusdam domine dies nomine*, which I am inclined to interpret as « of a certain lady named Díez ». Both names strongly suggest an Iberian origin for this canon.

Martin's canon can be interpreted as a supplement to the canons in *P* insofar as it demonstrates how the Tables A and B might be harnessed to extract future combustions from those already known or recorded in the text. The first step in the procedure is to add the final entry of Table B to the longitude of the known combustion. Martin uses the same division of the sign into *gradus* and *puncta* that is familiar from the sources discussed so far. However, his specific wording, « take the degree and points of the last line of the last month » (« accipe gradum et puncta

ultime linee ultimi mensis ») seems to suggest a table that divides the time since the last conjunction into months as well as days. This is not the case in Tables B as found in the known manuscripts, which only use a continuous count of days.

The second step is to enter Table A, which is here referred to as the « table of the equation » (*tabula equationis*), with the last month on display and the sign of the known combustion. Whatever correction appears in this position will be added or subtracted from the previous sum. The text mentions no interpolation rules for the specific day of the month or degree of the sign (as in the rules or Mars). What follows instead is a rule for converting the total number of days between the last combustion and the present one whose date is being sought into a number of Julian months. While the rule operates on the assumption that each month in the Julian calendar numbers 30 days, it does acknowledge that the number of days used in the calculation needs to be reduced by two days (in a Julian common year) or one day (in a bissextile year) to account for the fact that February is always shorter than 30 days. There is no similar caveat for Julian months that last 31 days, which raises questions about the soundness of the procedure that is being prescribed here. Another striking feature of this part of the text is the repeated use of the word *proficuum* (« profit »), whose meaning in this specific context is left undefined. In all likelihood, it was here intended to refer to the number of days that remain between the end of the month in which the last combustion took place and the date of the present one. This strange terminological choice is somewhat reminiscent of the rules for Mars preserved in *P* and *M*, where the adjective *proficuus* refers to the subtractive difference between the corrections for two adjacent signs in Table A.

Martin illustrates the rule by citing a past combustion of Saturn on 1 November 1219 at 225;5° (assuming that « 15 gradu, 5 puncto » is here to be understood as completed degrees and points). The Toledan Tables would show a tropical true solar longitude of 225;5° at *c.*3;15h of 1 November 1219, with a concomitant Saturn longitude of *c.*226;14°. In summarizing the procedure, Martin indicates that the combustion tables for Jupiter and Mars respectively display 13 and 27 complete months, which indeed matches the known layouts of Tables A for these planets.

The final segment of this canon describes a verification process for the date of the present combustion that is based on the independently computed position of the Sun. Martin here mentions three different types of astronomical tables that might be used for this verification:

(1) « a table for each month and day that was placed in the womb of an almanac » (« tabulam uniuscuiusque mensis et diei que constituta est in utero almana »)
(2) « the almanac of Ptolemy, the most wise » (« almanac sapientissimi Ptolomei »)

(3) « in the very same tables of combustion » (« in eisdem tabulis combustionis »).

The third reference is undoubtedly to something resembling our set of combustion tables, and more specifically to solar tables like those placed after the planetary tables in *MOP*. It is much more difficult to interpret the first reference, especially since the phrase « constituta … in utero almanac » leaves it open whether the table described was simply part of an « almanac » or somehow « made » (« constituta ») with the help of one. In Latin texts of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the term « almanac » was most typically used to refer to ephemerides that showed, at a glance, the true positions of the planets for every day of the year (« for each month and day »).[63] Assuming that this is what Martin intended by « almanac » in the first instance, the « table … placed in the womb of an almanac » is most plausibly interpreted as the column(s) for the Sun within a larger set of ephemerides.

If this is indeed so, the « almanac of Ptolemy » mentioned in second place is likely to be a wholly different type of tabular work. The most obvious candidate for such a work is a perpetual almanac based on « goal-year » periods, as was redacted in the late eleventh century by the Andalusian astronomer Ibn al-Zarqālluh.[64] A rudimentary twelfth-century Latin translation of this almanac survives in MS London, British Library, Royal 7.F.VIII, fol. 180r–191r (s. XIII$^{2/2}$), where the work in question is headed « The tables of the [planetary] positions by the Saracen [named] Amenuz, teacher of the daughter of King Ptolemy, which al-Zarqālluh [*Azarchellus*] converted from Egyptian years to the years of Alexander the Great. » A second heading inserted below it contradicts this attribution, however, as here the tables are labelled « The tables of Ptolemy that he himself taught to Cleopatra, his own daughter. »[65] The reference to *Amenuz* in the first heading derives from Ibn al-Zarqālluh's Arabic version of the same almanac, which

63 C. Philipp E. Nothaft, « Ephemerides in High Medieval Europe: The Textual Evidence », *Journal for the History of Astronomy*, 52 (2021), p. 33–52.

64 An edition and Spanish translation of this almanac and its canons was included in José María Millás Vallicrosa, *Estudios sobre Azarquiel*, CSIC, Madrid 1943–1950, p. 72–237. See also the discussions in John D. North, *Richard of Wallingford: An Edition of His Writings, with Introductions, English Translation and Commentary*, 3 vols., Clarendon Press, Oxford 1976, vols. 3, p. 248–250; Julio Samsó, *Las ciencias de los antiguos en Al-Andalus*, Editorial MAPFRE, Madrid 1992, p. 168–171; Id., *On Both Sides*, p. 880–883.

65 MS London, British Library, Royal 7.F.VIII, fol. 184r: « Tabule locorum Saraceni Amenuz magistrum [*sic*] filie regis Ptholomei quas Azarchellus mutavit de annis Egipciorum ad annos Alexandri magni. Tabule Ptholomei quas ipse docuit Cleopatram filiam propriam. » For a second copy of this translation, see MS Erfurt, Universitätsbibliothek, Dep. Erf. CA 8° 81, fol. 1r–23v (s. XIII$^{2/2}$).

identifies the original author as Awmātiyūs.[66] A new Latin recension of the almanac's Latin version was eventually produced in Paris in 1239 by a certain John of Pavia, whose canons render Awmātiyūs's name as *Humenus* or some other variant such as *Humeniz*. They also repeat the claim that this *Humenus* was the teacher of Ptolemy's daughter, while adding the new one according to which he created the almanac at her request after her father had died.[67]

The contradicting claim in the London manuscript, according to which it was Ptolemy himself who composed this or a similar work, emerges also from a brief text contained in MS Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 5714, fol. 103v (Northern Italy; s. XIII), which purports to give the « doctrine of the tables that Ptolemy composed based on years of the Greeks and that another individual arranged for Latin [years] ».[68] Some of the features mentioned in the text, such as the intervals at which the tables show planetary longitudes, comport with Ibn al-Zarqālluh's almanac. At the same time, however, the tables for the five planets are claimed to share an epoch on 1 January 1226, which is not the case with any of the known almanacs.[69] Of the tables for the Moon it is said that they start in 1152 and that the current year is the 78th « year of the Moon ». This would date the text to

[66] It is unclear if this a reference to the Alexandrian Neoplatonic philosopher Ammonius (d. 517/526). See Otto Neugebauer, *An Astronomical Almanac for the Year 348/9 (P. Heid. inv. no. 34)*, Munksgaard, Copenhagen 1956 (Historisk-filologiske Meddelelser udgivet af Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, Bind 36, no. 4), p. 15; Id., *A History*, p. 1037; Samsó, *On Both Sides*, p. 880.

[67] John of Pavia, *Canones super tabulas Humeniz philosophi summi egipciorum*, in José María Millás Vallicrosa, *Estudios sobre Azarquiel*, CSIC, Madrid 1943–1950, p. 379–380: « Sciendum quod Humeniz philosophus summus egipciorum, magister filie Ptholomei, composuit istas tabulas equacionum planetarum [...]. Composuit autem Humeniz hos canones super annos grecorum post obitum Ptholomei rogatu filie ipsius Ptholomei. » See also MS Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 1410 (s. XIII$^{2/2}$), fol. 1ar: « Traditione antiquorum fuit quidam philosophus Eumenus nomine Ptolomei regis discipulus, qui per impetrationem Cleopatre predicti regis filie composuit hunc libellum de equatione 7 planetarum vocavitque eum cavulum(?). » This text appears on a parchment scrap that was inserted into a thirteenth-century copy of John of Pavia's version.

[68] MS Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 5714, fol. 103v: « Hec est doctrina tabularum quam Ptolomeus composuit super annos Grecorum et quidam alius super Latinos ordinavit. » For a description of the manuscript, see David Juste, « MS Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 5714 (update: 15.11.2022) », *Ptolemaeus Arabus et Latinus. Manuscripts*, <http://ptolemaeus.badw.de/ms/294> (Accessed 29 Nov. 2023). The manuscript is available at < https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.5714> (Accessed 29 Nov. 2023).

[69] MS Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 5714, fol. 103v: « Tabule itaque Iovis, Saturni, Martis, Veneris et Mercurii incipiunt anno incarnationis dominice M°CC°26° prima die Ianuarii et est ille annus incarnationis primus tabularum istarum. »

1229, which harmonizes with the previous statement that the current year is the second year after a bissextile intercalation.[70]

VI. *A list of combustions*

The availability of combustion tables in twelfth-century Latin Europe explains a curious addition to an eleventh-century planetary diagram in MS Dijon, Bibliothèque municipale, 448, fol. 63v (*D*).[71] Below this diagram, a later hand recorded the dates and zodiacal locations of ten combustions for 1139–1141, which are all marked as events in the past (*ustus est* or *combustus est*):

> [1] Anno M^{a}.C.XLI a nativitate ustus est Saturnus in Piscibus, IIII^{or} gra<dibus>, XXXVI punctis, XXIII s<ueni>is, XVII die Februarii.[72]
> [2] Anno M^{a}.C.XL a nativitate ustus est Iupiter in Scorpione, XV gra<dibus>, LII punctis, XXVI s<ueni>is, prima die Novembris.[73]
> [3] Anno M^{a}.XXX^{o}.IX^{o} a nativitate ustus est Mars in Scorpione, VI gra<dibus>, LVI punctis, XXXVI s<ueni>is, XXIIII die Octobris.[74]
> [4] Anno M^{a}.C.XL usta est Venus in Tauro, XXXVII punctis, XVII s<ueniis>, L secundis sueniis, XIIII die Aprilis.[75]

[70] MS Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 5714, fol. 103v: « Sol habet tabulas 4. Prima illarum currit in anno post bissextum et postea alia et sic usque ad 4 annos. Modo itaque currit secunda tabula Solis eo quod sumus in 2^{o} post bisextum. Tabula lune incepit in anno domini M^{o}C^{o}LII. Modo currit annus lune 78. »

[71] On this manuscript, see Colette Jeudy, Yves-François Riou, *Les manuscrits classiques latins des bibliothèques publiques de France*, vol. I: *Agen–Évreux*, Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris 1989, p. 483–500; Arno Borst, *Schriften zur Komputistik im Frankenreich von 721 bis 818*, vol. I, Hahnsche Buchhandlung, Hannover 2006 (Quellen zur Geistesgeschichte des Mittelalters, 21), p. 224–225; Dieter Blume, Mechthild Haffner, Wolfgang Metzger, *Sternbilder des Mittelalters: Der gemalte Himmel zwischen Wissenschaft und Phantasie*, vol. I: *800–1200*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin 2012, p. 227–233. I would like to thank David Juste for bringing it to my attention.

[72] The Toledan Tables would show a tropical true solar longitude of 334;36,23° for 16 February 1141 at *c.*14;46h. Since these tables reckon dates from previous noon, this would qualify as 17 February. The concomitant Saturn longitude is 334;18,18°.

[73] The Toledan Tables would show a tropical true solar longitude of 225;52,26° for 1 November 1140 at *c.*11;16h. The concomitant Jupiter longitude is 225;30,19°.

[74] The combustion date here deviates from that assumed by Raymond of Marseilles in the *Liber cursuum planetarum*, which was 27 October. The Toledan Tables would show a tropical true solar longitude of 216;56,36° for 24 October 1139 at *c.*09;19h, with a concomitant Mars longitude of 217;55,40°.

[75] The Toledan Tables would show a tropical true solar longitude of 30;37,17,50° for 14 April 1140 at *c.*10;16h. The concomitant Venus longitude is 28;15,4°.

[5] Eodem anno ustus est Mercurius in Cancro, XXVI gra<dibus>, XXI punctis, XVII s<ueni>is, XII die Iulii.[76]
[6] Anno M[a].C.XLI a nativitate ustus est Mercurius in Cancro, VII gra<dibus>, XXXIIII punctis, LV s<ueni>is, XXXVIII secundis, XXIII die Iunii, quinta hora diei et in XXVII fract<ionibus> hore.[77]
[7] Anno M[a].C.XLI a nativitate Christi combustus est Mars in Sagittario, XXIIII gradibus, XXVIIII punctis, LI sueniis, XVII die Decembris.[78]
[8] Anno M[a].C.XLI a nativitate combustus est Iupiter in Sagittario, XVI gra<dibus>, LVI punctis, LXI [*sic*] sueniis, II die Decembris.[79]
[9] Anno M[a].C.XLI a nativitate combustus est Venus in Scorpione, XXIX gra<dibus>, XII punctis, XXXV sueniis, XVII secundis, XXV [*sic*] die Novembris.[80]
[10] Anno M[a].C.XLI a nativitate ustus est Mercurius in Cancro, VII gradibus, XXX punctis, XL sueniis, LVI secundis, XXIII die Iunii.[81]

The order in which the combustions are listed seems haphazard. If placed in chronological sequence, they extend from 27 October 1139 to 17 December 1141, which places this batch of combustions after any of those mentioned in *P* (1 July 1135 to 4 September 1138; see Tab. 3). The latter source records two successive Mars combustions on 8 August 1135 and 12 September 1137, which are 766 days apart. In the Dijon manuscript, we find the next two following Mars combustions of 24 October 1139 (772 days later) and 17 December 1141 (785 Days later). The entries in the Dijon list exhibit a certain lack of uniformity suggesting that the combustion dates and longitudes were not all arrived at by the same method. This is especially noticeable in the case of items [6] and [10], which concern the same Mercury combustion of 23 June 1141, but give longitudes that differ by more than 4 minutes of arc (97;30,40,56° vs. 97;34,55,38°). In fact, the first of these entries is

[76] The Toledan Tables would show a tropical true solar longitude of 116;21,17° for 13 [!] July 1140 at *c.*2;8h. The concomitant Mercury longitude is 113;20,44°.

[77] The Toledan Tables would show a tropical true solar longitude of 97;34,55,38° for 23 June 1141 at *c.*16;12h. This is 24 June according to these tables' way of counting days from the previous noon. The concomitant Mercury longitude is 92;1,15°.

[78] A solar longitude of 264;29,51° on 17 December 1141 can only be reconciled with a sidereal reference frame. The Toledan Tables show a true sidereal solar longitude for 17 December at *c.*9;58h with a concomitant Mars longitude of 265;28,14°.

[79] The Toledan Tables would show a tropical true solar longitude of 256;56,41° [my emendation] for 2 December 1141 at *c.*6;7h. The concomitant Jupiter longitude is 257;10,1°.

[80] A solar longitude of 239;12,35,17° on 25 November indicates a sidereal reference frame. The Toledan Tables would show a true sidereal solar longitude of 239;12,35,17° for 22 November 1141 at *c.*15;16h. This is 23 November according to these tables' way of counting days from the previous noon. Perhaps « XXII die Novembris » was mistranscribed as « XXV die Novembris ». The concomitant Venus longitude is 238;36,49°

[81] The Toledan Tables would show a tropical true solar longitude of 97;30,40,56° for 23 June 1141 at *c.*14;25h. This is 24 June according to these tables' way of counting days from the previous noon. The concomitant Mercury longitude is 91;53°.

the only one in this list that specifies a time of day, placing the combustion at 27 « fractions » of the hour (presumably sexagesimal minutes) of the fifth hour of the day. The terminology suggests seasonal as opposed to equinoctial hours.

A further inconsistency concerns the underlying reference frame for plotting ecliptic longitudes. In eight of the ten instances, the combination of solar longitude and calendrical date implies that the combustion was computed according to a tropical reference from (where 0° Aries is the vernal point), whereas one of the Mars combustions [7] and one of the Venus combustions [9] each seem to reflect a sidereal mode of reckoning. [82] Moreover, both of the Venus combustions [4, 9] as well as the two separate records for the Mercury combustion of 1141 [6, 10] are recorded with an elevated degree of precision, as the arc of longitude is here given to the third sexagesimal-fractional place. Little can otherwise be said about the computational methods that led to these various longitudes. A comparison with the Toledan Tables reveals approximate agreement for the combustions of the three superior planets, which these tables generally place within a degree from the Sun on the dates in question. The most serious discrepancy is encountered in the two records for the Mercury combustion of 23 June 1141, where the Toledan values for the Sun and the relevant planet differ by more than 5°.[83]

One area where the ten entries are strikingly consistent is that they all divide the zodiacal sign into *gradus* (degrees), *puncta* – or perhaps *puncti* – (minutes), and *sueniae* (seconds). The four entries whose precision reaches up to sexagesimal thirds additionally have *secunda* [4, 6, 9,10], which in the first instance [4] are given the fuller name *secunda sueniae*. Our combustion and ascension tables mirror this terminology insofar as they, too, divide the degrees into sexagesimal *puncta*. The earliest datable appearance of this use of *puncta* is in Petrus Alfonsi's Latin version of the *Sindhind Zīj* of al-Khwārizmī, which uses an epoch date of 1 October 1116.[84] A more unusual terminological choice on the part of the Dijon annotator is that of *suenia*, *-ae*. We are here probably dealing with a corrupt Latin transliteration of the Arabic *thāniya*, the plural of which is rendered as *elthenie* in Adelard of Bath's

[82] See above, notes 78 and 80.

[83] See above, notes 77 and 81.

[84] See MS Oxford, Corpus Christi College, 283, fol. 114r–141v (s. XII), and Otto Neugebauer, *The Astronomical Tables of Al-Khwārizmī: Translation with Commentaries of the Latin Version ed. by H. Suter, Supplemented by Corpus Christi College MS 283*, Munksgaard, København 1962 (Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, Historisk-filosofiske Skrifter, 4.2), p. 133–205. See also Petrus Alfonsi, *Epistola ad peripateticos*, c. 4, in John Tolan, *Petrus Alfonsi and His Medieval Readers*, University Press of Florida, Gainesville 1993, p. 166. The abbreviations *G*, *P*, and *S*, which stand for *gradus*, *puncta/puncti*, and either *secunda* or *suenie*, are used in a unique copy of canons for a different version of al-Khwārizmī's tables, preserved in MS Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, McClean 165, fol. 76v–77v. These canons contain a reference to AD 1162/63. See Nothaft, *Graeco-Arabic Astronomy*, p. 178–180.

translation of the *Sindhind Zīj*.[85] One of the manuscripts of this translation, now lost (Chartres, Bibliothèque municipale, 214), in one instance attests to the variant *zenie*, which bears a stronger resemblance with the word in the Dijon manuscript.[86]

To my knowledge, the only other source to attest to this specific use of *sueniae* and their further division into 60 *secunda sueniae* is MS London, British Library, Cotton Appendix VI, fol. 22vb (s. XIII/XIV), a manuscript to which I shall refer as *L* in what follows.[87] The text on this manuscript page belongs to a condensed excerpt from the first chapter of Walcher of Malvern's treatise *De Dracone*, which Walcher wrote in *c.*1120 to report the teachings of the aforementioned Petrus Alfonsi (*L*, fol. 22rb–23rb).[88] The excerpt is part of a larger chain of passages that open a commentary on the pseudo-Ptolemaic *Iudicia*, a text whose evident connections with the combustion tables have already been noted.[89] Although the commentary proper only begins on fol. 23vb, its beginning is already signalled in a heading on fol. 20va, which is then followed by a sequence of what could be considered « preliminary material »: a prologue on the science of the stars (fol. 20va–21ra),[90] a brief account of the division of the celestial sphere (fol. 21ra), some definitions of astronomical concepts such as stations and retrogradations (fol. 21r–b), a section headed *Capitulum de instructione anni secundum Ptolomeum* and concerned with the use of ascension tables (fol. 21rb–22rb), and, finally, the section headed *De Drachone* and drawn from Walcher's treatise (fol. 22rb–23ra). What follows is a comparison between the original text and the relevant part of the excerpt in *L*:

[85] Mercier, « Astronomical Tables », p. 118; cf. *Ezich Elkaurezmi*, trans. Adelard of Bath, ed. Heinrich Suter, *Die astronomischen Tafeln des Muḥammed ibn Mūsā al-Khwārizmī in der Bearbeitung des Maslama ibn Aḥmed al-Madjrīṭī und der latein. Übersetzung des Athelhard von Bath*, A. F. Høst & Søn, København 1914 (Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, Skrifter, 7th Ser., Historisk og filosofisk Afd., 3.1).

[86] *Ezich Elkaurezmi*, trans. Adelard of Bath, c. 2, ed. Suter, p. 3.

[87] David Juste, « MS London, British Library, Cotton Appendix VI (update:20.02.2022) », *Ptolemaeus Arabus et Latinus. Manuscripts*, <http://ptolemaeus.badw.de/ms/49> (Accessed 29 Nov. 2023).

[88] The origin and background of this text is discussed in C. Philipp E. Nothaft, *Walcher of Malvern:* De lunationibus *and* De Dracone; *Study, Edition, Translation, and Commentary*, Brepols, Turnhout 2017 (De Diversis Artibus, 101 [N.S. 64]), p. 46–55.

[89] David Juste, « Anonymous, *Commentary on Pseudo-Ptolemy's Iudicia* (update: 05.12.2022) », *Ptolemaeus Arabus et Latinus. Works*, <http://ptolemaeus.badw.de/work/119> (Accessed 29 Nov. 2023).

[90] For a discussion and edition of this prologue, see Charles Burnett, « A New Source for Dominicus Gundissalinus's Account of the Science of the Stars? », *Annals of Science*, 47 (1990), p. 361–374.

Walcher of Malvern, *De Dracone* 1.2:[91]	*L*, fol. 22va–b:
Sed magister noster, minutiarum quibus utuntur Latini usum non habens, tali utebatur divisione: zodiacum totum sicut et nos in XII signa, unumquodque signum in XXX gradus, unumquemque gradum in LX punctos, unumquemque punctum in LX minutias, unamquamque minutiam in LX minutias minutiarum dividebat [...].	Sed doctor noster, non habet usum minutiarum qua Latini utuntur, tamen quibus usus est zodiacum in XII divisit signa, unumquodque autem signum in XXX gradus, unumquemque gradum in LX punctos, unumquemque punctum in LX suenias, unamquamque suaver [*sic*] in LX secunda, unamquamque secundinam [*sic*] in LX minucleras [*sic*] et inde in LX momenta.

Writing in or shortly after 1120, Walcher of Malvern reported that his teacher, Petrus Alfonsi, divided a degree into 60 *puncti* (using a masculine as opposed to the more common neuter form), one *punctus* into 60 *minutiae*, and one *minutia* into 60 *minutiae minutiarum*. The excerptor who placed Walcher's text at the beginning of the *Iudicia* commentary retained the *punctus* as the equivalent of the sexagesimal minute, but replaced *minutiae* and *minutiae minutiarum* with the *sueniae* and *secunda* familiar from the Dijon manuscript. In addition, he continued the subdivisions down to sexagesimal fourth and fifths, labelling the corresponding parts *minuclerae*(?) and *momenta*.

VII. *Solar and ascension tables*

The convergence between the Dijon list of combustions and *L*'s commentary on the *Iudicia* in their terminology of sexagesimal divisions is not the only thread that connects this commentary with our tables. Even clearer evidence of such a connection is furnished by a portion of text that immediately precedes the excerpt from *De Dracone* in *L* (fol. 21rb–22rb). It appears below a rubricated heading, *Capitulum de instructione anni secundum Ptolomeum*, and opens as follows:

> Ptolomeus summus philosophus intendit in hoc opere docere climatum 4^{or} capitula valde necessaria ac perutilia, quorum primum est de instructione anni, in quo et principium anni docemur. Et que borgis cum amico suo, id est cui planeta, habet dominari in toto anno in gradu illius climatis. Secundum est scire certam horam moramque elevationis et declinationis borgium per universos gradus climatum, a Babilone usque in polum boreum. Tercium est scire augmentum et diminutionem

[91] WALCHER OF MALVERN, *De Dracone* 1.2, in C. PHILIPP E. NOTHAFT, *Walcher of Malvern: 'De lunationibus' and 'De Dracone'; Study, Edition, Translation, and Commentary*, Brepols, Turnhout 2017 (De Diversis Artibus, 101 [N.S. 64]), p. 196.

> dierum ac noctium tocius anni per universos gradus <et> p<unctos> climatum. Quartum est scire partitionem borgium per gradus ad questionem. Ad hoc igitur expeditius intelligenda, istarum compositionem tabularum monstramus, scilicet Toletanarum.[92]
>
> In this work concerning the climates, the great philosopher Ptolemy aims to teach four very necessary and highly useful chapters, the first of which is about the « instruction » [*instructio*] of the year, in which we are also taught the beginning of the year – as well as which sign along with its friend, i.e. which planet, has lordship throughout the entire year in the degree of that climate. The second is to know the specific time and duration of the rising and setting of the signs throughout all degrees of the climates, from Babylon up to the North Pole. The third is to know the increase and decrease of the days and nights throughout the whole year across all degrees and points of the climates. The fourth is to know, for the purpose of a question, the division of the signs into degrees. In order for this to be understood more readily, we shall show the composition of these tables, namely, the Toledan ones.

A close connection between this text and the *Iudicia* is evinced right away by its choice of vocabulary, specifically the phrase « borgis cum suo amico » (« the sign along with its friend ») as a way of referring to a zodiacal sign and its ruling planet. This mirrors a sentence near the beginning of the pseudo-Ptolemaic text, where *borgis* is introduced as another name for *signum* and readers are told that the planets are called « the friends of the signs » (*amici borgium*).[93] This is the only such occurrence, however, of *borgis* in the *Iudicia*, which otherwise uses the calqued equivalent *turris* (from *al-burj*, « tower »), as does the canon for Saturn in *P* (see Part III).

As becomes clear from the final sentence of the above passage, the supposedly Ptolemaic « work concerning the climates » (*opus climatum*) that is mentioned at the beginning must have involved certain astronomical tables, which are here characterized as « Toledan ». It may be tempting to see in this a reference to the Toledan Tables that were adapted by Raymond of Marseilles *c.*1141, yet a closer look at the remainder of the *Capitulum de instructione anni secundum Ptolomeum* instead reveals that we are dealing with a commentary on the ascension tables that accompany the combustion tables in *M* and *P*, and are also fragmentarily preserved in *D*. It has already been mentioned, in Part II, that these ascension tables are an unusually extensive set, one which includes two separate tables for right ascensions (one regular, one for normed right ascensions) as well as oblique

92 *L*, fol. 21rb–va.

93 Pseudo-Ptolemy, *Iudicia*, §13, ed. David Juste, « Transcription of Pseudo-Ptolemy, *Iudicia* (update 25.05.2021) », *Ptolemaeus Arabus et Latinus. Texts*, <https://ptolemaeus.badw.de/text/M106> (Accessed 29 Nov. 2023): « Signa autem XII borges appellantur, planetas amicos borgium dicunt, quorum unusquisque proprias suas horas habet. »

ascensions for twenty consecutive degrees of latitude. All ascension tables appear to rely on an obliquity value of 23;35°, as was famously employed by al-Battānī for casting the table of normed right ascension that also commonly appears in the context of the Toledan Tables.[94]

The identity between the ascension tables and « these tables » mentioned in the text in *L* is established beyond reasonable doubt by the following passage, which comes immediately after the introduction quoted above:

> In primis itaque paginis uniuscuiusque signi est positum ostachim per gra<dus> et p<unctos>. Appellamus autem « ostachim » moram elevationis signorum. In primo gradu primi climatis et in primo laterum et ceterarum paginarum semper est per numeros[95] gradus signorum ascriptus, quem per tabulas in quibusdam signis minui, in quibusdam augeri secundum diversitates climatum necesse est. Incipit autem a primo gradu climatis 4^{ti}, qui[96] est ominum climatum XXXI gradus, docere moram elevationis signorum usque in quinquagesimum gradum. Et scias 4^{m} clima VII gradus habere, quintum vero V, sextum 4, septimum tot quot remanent gradus. Inchoatur vero gradus cuiuslibet climatis ab Ariete et in Piscibus terminatur suntque ibi ascripta signa cum tot gradibus et punctis quot gradus ponunt in elevatione vel declinatione.[97]
>
> On the first pages are recorded the ostachim of each sign according to degrees and points. What we call « ostachim », however, is the duration of the rising of the signs. In the first degree of the first climate and in the first of the flanks [*laterum*] and of the other pages is always stated numerically the degree of the signs, which across the tables necessarily decreases in some signs, increases in others, in accordance with the differences between the climates. It begins teaching the rising of the signs from the first degree of the fourth climate, which is the 31st degree of all climates, [and continues] until the 50th degree. And you should know that the fourth climate has 7 degrees, the fifth has 6, the sixth has 4, [and] the seventh has as many degrees as are left. [Each] degree of each climate begins at Aries and ends with Pisces. And the signs are written there with as many degrees and minutes as they take to rise or set.

The strange word *ostachim* appears at the very beginning of the table of right ascensions in both *M* and *P*. Our text merely defines it as the « duration of the rising of the signs » (« mora elevationis signorum »), but fails to specify that its values only apply to *sphaera recta*, i.e., the situation at the equator. It is best explained as a corrupt transliteration of the Arabic *mustaqīm*, as in *al-falak al-mustaqīm* (« the

[94] See AL-BATTĀNĪ, *Opus astronomicum*, ed. CARLO ALFONSO NALLINO, 3 vols., Hoepli, Milan 1899–1907 (Pubblicazioni del Reale Osservatorio di Brera in Milano, 40), vol. II, p. 61–64; BB11 in *The Toledan Tables*, ed. PEDERSEN, vol. III, p. 968–976.

[95] numeros] numerus

[96] qui] quia

[97] *L*, fol. 21va.

right sphere »). Together with the author's decision to identify the ascension tables before him as « Toledan », this terminological quirk would seem to lend strong support to the hypothesis that the whole work originated in al-Andalus.

The description of the tables for oblique ascensions, which are here referred to as tables for the « climates », also conforms closely to what is preserved in manuscripts of the combustion tables. What these manuscripts do not specifically mention is the climate to which each individual degree of geographic latitude is supposed to belong. The first of the twenty tables of oblique ascensions is valid for a latitude of 31°, which according to the commentary in *L* coincides with the beginning of the fourth climate. To judge by the numbers of degrees the text assigns to this and the following three climates, the beginnings of the fifth, sixth, and seventh climate should be at 38°, 44°, and 48°. This progression does not line up particularly well with the boundaries between climates recorded in Greek or Islamic sources, where the fourth climate tends to begin only between 33° and 34°.[98] Be that as it may, the text also reveals that the ascension tables under discussion have a geographic range of 31°–50°, exactly as is the case in *MP*. There is, of course, a degree of tension between this information and a boast made in the preceding introduction, according to which the *opus climatum* enables its user to compute ascensions « throughout all degrees of the climates, from Babylon up to the North Pole ». The tables stop 40° before reaching the pole, although it may be worth observing that 31° is only slightly below the latitudes of Babylon that are commonly recorded in medieval Islamic sources (32°–35°).[99]

What comes next in the commentary is an explanation of how to use solar and ascension tables to compute the sign that is ascending at the vernal equinox. Knowing this sign is one component of what the introduction referred to as *instructio anni* and declared to be the subject of the first of the four « chapters ». The other is identifying the ruling planet of the rising sign, which is assumed to have lordship over the entire year that begins at the vernal equinox in question. However, rather than repeating the term *instructio anni*, the explanation refers to the sought result as *institutio anni* (« commencement of the year »):

[98] Gerald R. Tibbets, « The Beginnings of a Cartographic Tradition », in J. B. Harley, David Woodward (eds.), *The History of Cartography*, vol. I/1: *Cartography in the Traditional Islamic and South Asian Societies*, Chicago University Press, Chicago 1992, p. 90–107 (102). See, in general, Ernst Honigmann, *Die sieben Klimata und die ΠΟΛΕΙΣ ΕΠΙΣΗΜΟΙ: Eine Untersuchung zur Geschichte der Geographie und Astrologie im Altertum und Mittelalter*, Winter, Heidelberg 1929.

[99] E. S. Kennedy, M. H. Kennedy, *Geographical Coordinates of Localities from Islamic Sources*, Institut für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften an der Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frakfurt/Main 1987 (Veröffentlichungen des Institutes für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften, Reihe A: Texte und Studien, 2), p. 53.

Si igitur per has tabulas anni institutionem scire desideras, considera in tabula Solis CCCLXV dies, cui ascripta sunt CCCLVIIII[100] gradus et XLVI puncta, quibus XLVI punctis additis[101] puncta presentis anni, id est puncta que cucurrerunt per illum annum, et quot puncta remanserunt a LX punctis, tot puncta distat Sol ab Ariete in illa die. Verbi gratia: anno M.C.XXXVIII Christi V cucurrerunt puncta, que si <addantur> superioribus[102] XLVI[a] puncta fient scilicet LI puncta. Et ecce, in illa die fuit Sol in Piscibus, XXVIIII[103] gradus et LI puncta, et sic ab Ariete per IX distat puncta. Et quando illa puncta ad XV vel[104] ultra non crescunt, recurrimus ad precedentem diem, que CCCLXIIII est, cui ascripta sunt CCCLVIII gradus et XLVII[105] puncta, quibus omnibus addimus 5 puncta et fiunt LII. Et ecce, Sol in illa die distat ab Ariete uno gradu et 8 puncta, de quibus dabimus sequenti medietati diei XV[106] puncta et remanent LIII, de quibus sequenti nocti dabimus XXX et remanebunt XXIII, quibus trancursis Sol necessario ingredietur Arietem.

Sed quoniam in singulis horis equinoctialibus Sol transit duo puncta et dimidium, illa enim sunt XXIIII pars LX punctorum que Sol currit in illa die, cum in unaquoque equinoctiali hora XV gradus eriguntur, restat quod XV gradus sunt XXIIII pars CCCLX graduum. Necessario enim unumquodque punctum VI occupat gradus, id est, puncto a Sole transcurso VI gradus zodaici sunt erecti, cum per senarium supradictum XXIII puncta multiplicare debes et faciunt <C>XXXVIII. Per hoc enim cognosces quot gradus zodiaci sunt erecti in die illa Sole ingrediente Arietem.

Hoc facto caveas in tabulis VII climatum et sub quo signo inveneris XXIII per senarium multiplicata et CXXXVIII, scias id esse in ortu Sole ingrediente Arietem et dominum illius signi dominum esse illius climatis tocius in illo anno.

Ideo autem diximus superius « si puncta illa ad XV vel ultra non excreverunt », quod(?) si[107] Sol distaret ab Ariete[108] illa die XV punctis, daremus illa XV medietati diei et si[109] in principio noctis Sol intraret Arietem, esset Libra in ortu, que toto anno cum suo planeta, Venere scilicet, dominaretur.

Si autem Sol distat ab Ariete plus quam XV puncta, ita tamen quod supra XXX non distet, scias quod illa nocte Sol intravit Arietem. Tribuas ergo XV medietati diei et reliqua per senarium multiplica fientque gradus quos CLXXX gradibus addas et videas que summa[110] inde excreverit. Et considera tabulas VII climatum et sub quo signo[111] illum inveneris numerum, scias id fuisse in ortu Sole ingrediente Arietem.

100 ccclviiii] ccclxviii
101 additis] ablatis
102 superioribus] XL *addidit*
103 XXVIIII] XXIII
104 XV vel] XVIII
105 XLVII] XLVIII
106 XV] XII
107 si] *sub linea*
108 Ariete] oriente *ante correctionem*
109 si] sic
110 summa] scrima(?)
111 signo] scilicet

Si autem ultra puncta noctis aliqua puncta remanserint, nihil addere debes. Cum enim in principio diei Aries oriatur et cum ab Ariete numerum graduum incipimus, non erectis gradibus quibus addamus aliquid, ita tamen ab Ariete incipimus tamquam nulli gradus sint erecti. In nocte autem, quoniam iam[112] sunt erecti <C>LXXX gradus ab Ariete, debemus gradus qui erigendi sunt in nocte usque dum Sol intret in Arietem[113] addere CLXXX gradibus.[114]

If you wish to know the commencement of the year by means of these tables, look up in the table for the Sun [the entry for] 365 days, to which are assigned 359 degrees and 46 points. By adding these 46 points to the points of the current year, i.e. the points that have passed in that year, and subtracting them from 60 points, [you will find] how many points the Sun is distant from Aries on that day. For example: in AD 1138 5 points have passed. If these are added to the above-mentioned 46 points, they become 51 points. And behold, on that day the Sun was in Pisces at 29 degrees and 51 points, and thus its distance from Aries is 9 points. And when these points do not exceed 15 or more, we go back to the previous day, which is 364, to which are assigned 358 degrees and 47 points. To all of these we add 5 points and they become 52. And behold, on that day the Sun is 1 degree and 8 points from Aries. Of this [sum] we will give 15 points to the next half of the day, leaving 53, of which we will give 30 to the next night, leaving 23. After passing these, the Sun will necessarily enter Aries.

Yet, since the Sun passes through two points and a half per equinoctial hour, which is the 24th part of the 60 points that the Sun traverses on that day, [and] since 15 degrees rise with every equinoctial hour, it follows that 15 degrees are the 24th part of 360 degrees. Indeed, each point necessarily occupies 6 degrees, meaning that for every point the Sun passes 6 degrees of the zodiac are erected, [which is why] you must multiply 23 points by the aforementioned 6, resulting in 138. By this, you will know how many degrees of the zodiac are erected on that day at the moment when the Sun enters Aries.

Having done this, refer to the tables of the seven climates, and the sign under which you find 23 multiplied by 6 and 138, know that it is the one that is rising at the moment when the Sun enters Aries and that the lord of this sign is the lord of that whole climate during the whole year in question.

The reason why we said earlier « when these points do not exceed 15 or more » is that if the Sun were 15 points away from Aries on this day, we would give these 15 to [the second] half of the day, and if the Sun entered Aries at the beginning of the night, Libra would be rising, which would then have lordship over the whole year together with its planet, which is Venus.

But if the Sun is more than 15 points away from Aries, but not more than 30, you should know that the Sun entered Aries that night. Give, then, 15 to the [second] half of the day and multiply the rest by 6, and the degrees thus obtained add to 180 degrees, and see what sum results from it. And look at the tables of the seven

[112] iam] non
[113] Arietem] debemus *addidit*
[114] *L*, fol. 21va–22ra.

> climates and under which sign you find that number, know that it was rising during the moment when the Sun entered Aries.
>
> But if some points of the night remain beyond this, you should not add anything. For since Aries rises at the beginning of the day and since we begin counting the degrees from Aries, such that no degrees have been erected to which we must add anything, we begin from Aries as if no degrees had been erected. During the night, however, since 180 degrees from Aries have already been erected, we must add the degrees that must be erected during the night until the Sun enters Aries to these 180 degrees.

The operation to find the rising sign at the Sun's entry into Aries depends on a solar table, which is recognizably the same table as that found in *M* (fol. 94r–97r), *O* (fol. 113r–114v), and *P* (fol. 8r–v). All three manuscripts confirm the values mentioned in the text, which tells us that the solar longitudes for days 364 and 365 are, respectively, 358;47° and 359;46°. Assuming that the previous entry into Aries coincided exactly with equinoctial sunrise, which is here taken as the beginning of the day, the difference between 359;46° and 360° can be used to predict both the time and the ascendant at the next entry. In practice, it will be necessary to add some correction to account for the time of the day of the previous equinox, as this will rarely coincide exactly with sunrise. According to the worked example provided in the text, the year AD 1138, which is mentioned as a year in the past, contributes a surplus of 0;5°, which the author claims « have passed » (*cucurrerunt*) during this year.

Once these 0;5° are added to the values obtained from the solar table, it follows that the Sun was 1;8° removed from the beginning of Aries at the end of day 364 (360° – 358;47° – 0;5° = 1;8°) and 0;9° at the end of day 365. The rest of the calculation proceeds on the simplifying assumption of a daily solar motion of one degree and an hourly motion of (60° ÷ 24 =) 0;2,30°, which does not fully align with the fact that the solar table shows an increase of 0;59° between day 364 and day 365. For the amount of oblique ascension corresponding to one minute of arc on the ecliptic, the author accordingly finds 360° ÷ 24 ÷ 2;30 = 6°.

One important point that he does not spell out in his instructions is that the longitudes shown in the solar table all apply, or are assumed to apply, to local noon. It follows from this that the Sun's distance from Aries at the end of day 365 can be used only if it exceeds 0;15°, which here is equivalent to the 6 hours between noon and equinoctial sunset. If this were the case, the rising sign could be calculated on the assumption that Libra began to rise at the beginning of the night. In the example it hand, it is necessary to go back to the end of day 364, for which the tables show the Sun at 1;8° from Aries. The author's approach is to subtract 0;45° for the span of time between noon and the following sunrise, leaving him with 0;23°. The amount of oblique ascension corresponding to this distance is 0;23°

x 6 = 138°, which can be used to enter the ascension tables for the appropriate degree of latitude to determine the rising sign.

The second « chapter » is a good deal shorter and more straightforward. It amounts to a brief explanation of how to derive the oblique ascension of each individual sign from the table for the relevant latitude:

> Si autem scire desideras quot gradus unumquodque signum ponat in ortu iuxta singulos gradus climatum, scias unumquemque [*sic*] gradus climatis incipere ab Ariete et durare usque in Arietem. Videas itaque quot gradus et puncta sint subscripta Arieti et scias quia tot gradus et puncta ponit Aries in illo gradu illius climatis. Similiter scias quot gradus et puncta sint subscripta Tauro et subtrahe inde numerum qui subscriptus fuit Arieti. Similiter a numero Geminorum subtrahe numerum Arietis et Tauri et reliquum scias esse moram erectionis Geminorum. Et sic de reliquis facias.[115]
>
> But if you wish to know how many degrees each sign takes to rise for each degree of the climates, you should know that each degree of a given climate starts from Aries and continues to Aries. Look up, then, how many degrees and points are written below Aries and know that Aries takes that many degrees and points at this degree of this climate. Similarly, find out how many degrees and points are written below Taurus and then subtract the number that was written below Aries. Similarly, subtract the number of Gemini from the number of Aries and Taurus and know that what is left is the rising time of Gemini. Continue this process for the remaining [signs].

In order to compute the ascendant for any time of the day at a given geographic latitude, it is useful to know the length of daylight or, what amounts to the same, the length of the seasonal hour.[116] Medieval tables of oblique ascensions accordingly often provide the time-degrees of the seasonal daytime hour (as a function of the solar longitude) in a separate column.[117] This is not so in the ascension tables in *M* and *P*, which is why the third « chapter » in the commentary teaches how to find the length of daylight through computation.

> Si autem scire cupis decrementum et augmentum <dierum>, hoc est incrementum et diminutionem in unoquoque gradu climatum, scias a primo[118] gradu Libre usque in ultimo gradu Piscium dies esse minores noctibus, a primo vero gradu Arietis usque in ultimum gradum Virginis dies esse maiores noctibus. Videas igitur in quo gradu alicuius signi sit Sol notaque ostachim, id est moram elevationis, illius signi in eodem gradu et numerum climatis eiusdem signi in eodem gradu climatis atque

[115] *L*, fol. 22va.
[116] Neugebauer, *A History*, vol. I, p. 40–42.
[117] Chabás, Goldstein, *A Survey*, p. 29.
[118] primo] I

> subtrahe, vel ostachim a climate, vel clima ab ostachim, minorem scilicet numerum a maiori, ac id quod remanserit dupla. Si sis a Libra in Arietem, debes minuere illud duplicatum CLXXX gradibus. Si autem sis ab Ariete in Libram, debes addere illud duplatum CLXXX gradibus. Hoc facto dividas illos per XV et de singulis XV facias horas. Et dies illa tot habebit horas naturales quociens XV in illo numero reperiuntur.[119]
>
> But if you wish to know the decrease and increase of the days, that is, the increment and diminution [of their length] for each degree of the climates, you should know that from the first degree of Libra to the last degree of Pisces the days are shorter than the nights. Conversely, from the first degree of Aries to the last degree of Virgo the days are longer than the nights. You must look up, therefore, in which degree of a particular sign the Sun is and note the ostachim, i.e. the duration of the rising, of this sign at the same degree, as well as the number of the « climate » of the same sign at the same degree of the climate, and then subtract either the ostachim from the « climate » or the « climate » from the ostachim (i.e., the smaller number from the larger) and double the result. If you are between Libra and Aries, you must subtract what you have doubled from 180 degrees. But if you are between Aries and Libra, you must add that doubled value to 180 degrees. Having done this, divide [the obtained value] by 15 and make hours out of each 15. And the day in question will have as many natural hours as 15 are found in this number.

The « natural hours » mentioned in this chapter are equinoctial hours, each of which corresponds to 15° of oblique ascension. Their number for a given daylight period is accordingly found by dividing the whole arc of daylight by 15. The most intuitive way of finding this arc $d(\lambda)$ for a given solar longitude (λ) would be to use the values for the oblique ascension (ρ) at the beginning and end of this arc, as in the formula: $d(\lambda) = \rho(\lambda+180) - \rho(\lambda)$.[120]

Our text goes down a different route, as it instead relies on the ascensional difference, or what was known in Islamic astronomy as the « equation of daylight ».[121] The relevant formula for deriving the length of daylight from the ascensional difference for the given solar longitude (γ) is: $D = 180° \pm 2\gamma$. This is recognizably the same approach as that taken in the above text, which instructs us to calculate the ascensional difference by finding the values for the right and oblique ascension of the ecliptic degree in question and subtracting the smaller from the greater value. A confusing aspect of the instructions in this passage is that the word « clima » is here used not only to refer to the climate to which the relevant degree of latitude belongs, but to the ascensional value shown in the table of oblique ascensions for this latitude.

[119] *L*, fol. 22va–b.
[120] Neugebauer, *A History*, vol. I, p. 40.
[121] Samsó, *On Both Sides*, p. 93–94.

The commentary on the ascension tables in *L* ends at this point without revealing anything more about the declared subject of the fourth « chapter », which in the introduction (p. 409) was announced as dealing with the « the division of the signs into degrees, for the purpose of a question » (« partitio borgium per gradus ad questionem »). It is possible to recognize in this expression a reference to the subject of astrological questions or interrogations, to which the entire second half of the *Iudicia* is principally devoted. Whatever the precise nature of the « the division of the signs » mentioned here, the fact that its explanation is absent from the *Capitulum de instructione anni secundum Ptolomeum*, despite being mentioned at the beginning, may be taken as a sign that *L* does not preserve the whole text.

The same impression arises from a comparison between this manuscript and MS St Petersburg, Biblioteka Akademii Nauk, F. 8 (XXAb/IIII), fol. 171va–172rb, which is a thirteenth-century fragment of the beginning of the « preliminary material » that *L* inserts before the commentary proper. Despite its brevity, the text in the St Petersburg manuscript differs significantly from what can be found in *L*. Most notably, perhaps, it contains a passage mentioning Ptolemy's love for his son (fol. 171vb: « Sciendum est tamen Ptholomeum habuisse quendam filium quem non modice diligebat ») that seems quite germane to a *Iudicia* commentary, but is absent from *L*. In the St Petersburg manuscript, this remark concerning Ptolemy appears ahead of an account of the division of the celestial sphere (fol. 171vb–172rb), of which *L* preserves no more than a handful of highly condensed excerpts (fol. 21ra). The redactor responsible for the text in *L* acknowledges this by noting that he intends to pass over the section on the division of the sphere, since the same topic is alread covered « in the *sphere* and in other places », which was probably intended as a reference to John of Sacrobosco's *Tractatus de sphera* and other similar introductions to astronomy.[122]

He highlights another such omission in a remark that immediately precedes the already discussed *Capitulum de instructione anni secundum Ptolomeum*: « Then follows [a passage] on the reading of tables and on computing the true positions of the planets, as taught by the canon on the motion and equation of the planets ».[123] There is no further trace of this passage in the text as we have it, although the end of the fragment in the St Petersburg manuscript confirms that the section on

[122] For the pertinent background, see Lynn Thorndike, *The* Sphere *of Sacrobosco and Its Commentators*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1949.

[123] *L*, fol. 21rb: « Tunc sequitur de tabulis legendis et planetis equandis sicut docet canon de motu et equatione planetarum ».

the division of the sphere was supposed to be followed by an account of what is here called the « doctrina tabularum ».[124]

Given the clear presence in *L* of an explanation of the solar and ascension tables familiar from *P* and *M*, it may be tempting to assume that the lost section on computing planetary positions that once preceded it dealt with none other than the combustion tables that appear in the same two manuscripts. A reason to resist this temptation is provided by the explicit references in *L* to « computing the true positions » (« planetis equandis ») and « equation of the planets » (« equatione planetarum »), which would rather seem to indicate ordinary sets of planetary tables based on mean motions and equations, as are found in a *zīj*. What is clear, at any rate, is that more material connected with *L*'s *Iudicia* commentary once existed than is currently available, and that even the surviving rendition of the text explaining our solar and ascension tables (*Capitulum de instructione anni secundum Ptolomeum*) is incomplete.

VIII. *Conclusion*

The tables for planetary positions and ascensions that have been the primary object of this study add some new wrinkles to our existing picture of the tools that supported horoscopic astrology in twelfth-century Latin Europe. While their ultimate origins remain shrouded in much obscurity, we are at least able to date one of their known manifestations to 1135 (as per the canons in MS *P*), while the testimony of Raymond of Marseilles's *Liber cursuum planetarum* leaves no doubt that the tables had entered the services of Latin astrologers by 1140. A list of combustions for the years 1139–1141 provides further evidence of their currency around this time, as does the reference to the year 1138 in a commentary on pseudo-Ptolemy's *Iudicia*, which devoted a whole section to the associated tables for solar longitudes and ascensions.

The appearance of this section in the commentary makes it one of several pieces of evidence that hint at a close connection between the *Iudicia* and the tables discussed in this article. Indeed, the possibility arises that the tables and the pseudo-Ptolemaic astrological text not only circulated together, but were at one point regarded as a single work, notwithstanding the fact that the preserved text of the *Iudicia* makes no reference to tables. If this hypothesis is correct, a potential reason for the later separation between the text and the tables may be sought in practicing astrologers' changing preferences in the area of computation, as

[124] MS St Petersburg, Biblioteka Akademii Nauk, F. 8 (XXAb/IIII), fol. 172rb: «Hiis ita prelibatis doctrina tabularum primo docenda est. Et hoc est quod intendebamus. » The text breaks off at this point.

propelled by the increased availability of tables for mean motions and equations. Raymond of Marseilles's polemic in the *Liber cursuum planetarum* can be considered a harbinger of this change, perhaps even an overall turning point in our combustion tables' reception. Once pushed to the margins by the Toledan Tables as well as other *zījes*, not to mention perpetual almanacs and ephemerides, the combustion tables were threatened by quick obsolescence. Thanks to the singular testimony of Martin of Pamplona's canon (see Part V), it appears that the tables had not yet entirely fallen out of use by 1220. It is doubtful, however, that they remained an active part of Latin astrological practice for very long afterwards.

The hypothesis of the combustion tables' swift marginalization is consistent with the relatively poor state of their preservation. Of the tables themselves, only two full and three partial copies are known to be extant. The rate of survival appears to be poorer still for the associated canons, which seem to be incomplete even in their principal witness, MS *P*. Collecting and sorting the surviving manuscript evidence, as this article has done, can only be the first step towards a more in-depth analysis of the tables themselves. It is at this stage an unresolved problem how exactly the author of this so-called « almanac » went about constructing Tables A and B. Further studies will hopefully be able to shed light on this question as well as probe more deeply into the ultimate origins of the combustion tables, which must probably be found in al-Andalus.

Appendix

Computational rules for Mars, Table A[125]

Regula Martis ubi sit.[126] Cum[127] scire desideras ubi sit Mars, qui ceteris immanior[128] esse[129] perhibetur, noscas ubi Sol eum combussit[130] et iunge numerum graduum et mensium sicut videbis inferius, donec Sol comburat eum alia vice. Et sicut in uno facis, ita in[131] omni tempore peragas. Est autem mensis cui additur et mensis est[132] cui diminuitur.

Regula Arietis.[133] Si igitur accendatur Mars a primo gradu Arietis usque ad quintum,[134] iunge aut minue sextam tantum partem mensis illius de quo queris,[135] qui inscriptus est Arieti. Nota autem Arietem et cetera signa cum additionibus et minutionibus[136] XXVII menses[137] habere donec iterum accendatur.[138] Si a sexto[139] gradu Arietis incendatur usque ad decimum, terciam partem predicti[140] sui mensis iunge aut diminue. Ab undecimo illo incenso usque ad quintum decimum sume medietatem mensis illius addendo seu minuendo. A sexto decimo si comburatur Mars rutilus usque ad vigesimum gradum, adde aut minue duas <tertias> partes mensium numeri qui asscriptus est[141] ibi. A vigesimo primo si incendatur usque vigesimum quintum, adde seu[142] diminue[143] mediam et tertiam partem illius

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125 The following edition of the canon for Mars relies on MS Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 18927 (= *M*), fol. 70r–71r, and MS Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 7291, fol. 3r (= *P*). Cardinal and ordinal numbers are written out even where they are represented by Roman numerals in the manuscripts. Conjectural additions of text presumably missing from the manuscripts are placed in angled brackets. The apparatus below does not record mere spelling differences between the two witnesses. It uses the following abbreviations: *a.c. = ante correctionem*; *del. = delevit*; *hom. = homoioteleuton*; *mg. = in margine*; *om. = omisit*; *p.c. = post correctionem*; *s.l. = sub linea*.

126 regula ... sit] de marte *P*
127 cum] *add.* autem *P*
128 immanior] *s.l. P*
129 esse] *om. P*
130 sol eum combussit] combussit eum sol *P*
131 ita in] sic *P*
132 et mensis est] et est mensis *P*
133 arietis] in marte *add. P*
134 quintum] *add.* et *P*
135 partem ... queris] post quam feceris secundum communem regulam *add. s.l. M*
136 cum ... minutionibus] *om. P*
137 menses] *s.l. P*
138 accendatur] Mars *add. s.l. M*
139 sexto] septimo *M*
140 partem predicti] predictam partem *a.c. M*
141 asscriptus est] est appositus *P*
142 seu] sive *P*
143 diminue] minue *P*

numeri.[144] Quod a vigesimo sexto gradu si incensus usque ad[145] tricesimum fuerit, numerum totum adde vel minue.

Regula Thauri.[146] Mars si incendatur a primo gradu Thauri[147] usque ad decimum, tolle numerum mensium Geminorum. Nam Tauro nullus inscriptus est numerus. Et adde vel[148] minue nonam partem illius numeri a numero graduum.[149] Si accendatur ab undecimo gradu usque ad[150] quintum decimum, iunge vel minue de novem partibus numeri Geminorum duas partes. Si comburatur a sexto decimo gradu usque ad vigesimum, iunge vel[151] minue tertiam partem numeri Geminorum.[152] Si peruratur a vigesimo primo usque ad[153] vigesimum quintum, de novem partibus iunge quatuor partes numeri Geminorum. A vigesimo sexto usque ad[154] tricesimum si comburatur, iunge vel[155] minue de novem partibus quinque partes numeri Geminorum.

Regula Geminorum.[156] Quod si Mars accendatur a primo gradu[157] Geminorum usque in quintum, iunge vel[158] minue de numero sibi asscripto[159] duas tertias[160] partes. Si accendatur a sexto usque ad decimum, iunge vel[161] minue de novem partibus septem[162] partes. Si accendatur ab undecimo usque ad[163] quintum decimum, iunge vel minue de novem partibus octo partes. Si accendatur a sexto decimo usque vigesimum, iunge vel minue totum numerum quem invenis ibi. Quod si comburatur a vigesimo primo usque ad[164] vigesimum quintum, cave[165] numerum Cancri et Geminorum et vide quantum numerus Cancri vincat numerum Geminorum, et econverso, et de proficuo tolle tertiam partem et iunge vel[166] minue

144 numeri] *om. P*
145 ad] in *P*
146 thauri] in marte *add. P*
147 thauri] tauri *s.l. P*
148 vel] aut *P*
149 graduum] id est, a communi cursu *add. s.l. M*
150 ad] *om. P*
151 vel] aut *P*
152 numeri geminorum] geminorum numeri *M*
153 ad] in *P*
154 usque ad] *om. M*; in *P*
155 vel] aut *P*
156 geminorum] in marte *add. P*
157 gradu] id est, a communi cursu *add. s.l. M*
158 vel] aut *P*
159 asscripto] iniuncto *P*
160 tertias] *om. M*; nonas *mg. P*
161 vel] aut *P*
162 septem] vi *M*
163 ad] *om. P*
164 ad] *om. P*
165 cave] *om. M*
166 vel] aut *P*

tertiam partem a numero Geminorum.[167] Quem numerum Geminorum[168] addere debes vel minuere a numero graduum. Si accendatur[169] a vigesimo sexto usque in tricesimum, iunge vel minue duas partes proficui Geminorum et Cancri numero Geminorum.

Regula Cancri.[170] Mars autem, si incendatur[171] a primo gradu Cancri usque ad[172] septimum, totum proficuum[173] Geminorum et Cancri adde vel minue numero Geminorum. Si comburatur ab octavo gradu in duodecimum, respice[174] numerum Leonis et Cancri et iunge aut minue septimam[175] partem proficui numero Cancri. Si vero comburatur a tertio decimo usque in decimum septimum,[176] proficui Cancri et Leonis de septem partibus duas iunge aut minue[177] numero Cancri. Si autem peruratur ab octavo decimo usque[178] in vigesimum secundum Cancri, de proficuo Cancri et Leonis[179] iunge aut minue numero Cancri tres partes de septem partibus. Si autem peruratur a vigesimo tertio usque[180] in vigesimum septimum, de proficuo Cancri et Leonis[181] quatuor partes de septem partibus adde vel minue numero Cancri. Si accendatur a vigesimo octavo in duos gradus Leonis, de proficuo Cancri et Leonis de septem partibus iunge aut minue quinque partes numero Cancri.

Regula Leonis, de cuius duobus gradibus iam diximus.[182] Cum autem Mars a tertio usque in septimum gradum Leonis incenditur, de proficuo Cancri et Leonis de septem partibus iunge sex partes numero Cancri. Quod si ab octavo incenditur[183] usque[184] ad duodecimum, totum proficuum Cancri iunge aut minue numero Cancri. Dum accenditur a decimo quarto usque ad[185] octavum decimum, numerum Leonis et Virginis[186] cave et de proficuo eorum adde vel minue septimam partem numero Leonis. Si accendatur a decimo nono usque in vigesimum tertium, iunge

167 geminorum] a communi cursu *add. M*
168 numerum geminorum] id est quam tertiam partem *add. M* | geminorum numerum *P*
169 accendatur] autem *add. P*
170 cancri] martis in cancro *P*
171 incendatur] accendatur *P*
172 ad] in *P*
173 proficuum] id est differentiam *add. s.l. M*
174 respice] aspice *P*
175 septimam] id est dat intelligere numerum in VII dividere *add. s.l. M*
176 septimum] *om. M*
177 minue] de *add. P*
178 usque] *om. M*
179 leonis] iunge vel minue *add. sed del. M*
180 usque] in *P*
181 iunge ... leonis] *om. per hom. M*
182 de ... gradibus] in marte. sed duos gradus ex eis *P*
183 incenditur] incendatur *P*
184 usque] *om. P*
185 ad] *om. P*
186 virginis] cancri *MP*

vel minue[187] de proficuo Virginis et Leonis duas partes septimas Leonis numero. Si accendatur a vicesimo quarto in vigesimum octavum, iunge vel minue de proficuo Leonis et Virginis tres septimas numero Leonis. Cum accenditur a[188] vigesimo nono in tribus gradibus Virginis, intende vel remitte de proficuo eorum quatuor septimas Leoni.

Regula Virginis.[189] Cum[190] autem Mars incenditur a quarto gradu Virginis usque in octavum, de proficuo Leonis et Virginis iunge vel minue quinque septimas[191] Leoni. Si a nono accendatur[192] usque tertium decimum, de proficuo eorum iunge vel minue sex septimas Leoni. Cum accendatur[193] a quarto decimo in octavum decimum, totum proficuum iunge vel minue Leoni. Si a nono decimo in vigesimum secundum accendatur, cave numerum Virginis et Libre et de proficuo eorum iunge aut minue tertiam partem Virgini. Cum incenditur a vigesimo tertio in vigesimo septimo, de proficuo eorum iunge vel minue duas tertias Virgini. Si autem a vigesimo octavo in duos gradus Libre, proficuum iunge vel minue totum Virgini.

Regula[194] ***Libre.*** Cum[195] Mars incenditur a tertio[196] gradu Libre in septimum gradum, cave numerum Libre et Scorpionis[197] et de proficuo eorum iunge vel minue nonam partem numero Libre. Si accenditur[198] ab octavo in duodecimum, de proficuo Libre et Scorpionis[199] iunge vel minue duas nonas numero Libre. A tertio decimo si accendatur[200] in septimum decimum,[201] de proficuo eorum tres nonas iunge vel[202] minue numero Libre. Ab octavo decimo in vigesimum secundum quatuor nonas iunge[203] vel minue Libre de proficuo eorum. Si a vigesimo tertio in vigesimum septimum, quinque nonas. A[204] vigesimo octavo in duos gradus Scorpionis si incenditur, sex nonas adde vel minue.

187 iunge vel minue] auge vel remitte *P*
188 a] *om. P*
189 virginis] in marte *add. P*
190 cum] dum *P*
191 septimas] partes *M*
192 accendatur] incendatur *P*
193 accendatur] incendatur *P*
194 regula] regule *M* | de marte in incensione *P*
195 cum] dum *M*
196 tertio] iiii *M*
197 libre et scorpionis] scorpionis et sagittarii *MP*
198 accenditur] accendatur *P*
199 libre et scorpionis] scorpionis et sagittarii *MP*
200 accendatur] incendatur *P*
201 septimum decimum] xvi *M*
202 vel] aut *M*
203 iunge] adde *M*
204 a] in *M*

Regula Scorpionis.[205] Si Mars incenditur a tertio gradu Scorpionis in septimum, de proficuo Libre et Scorpionis[206] adde vel minue septem nonas Libre. Ab octavo in duodecimum octo nonas numero Libre adde[207] vel minue de proficuo eorum. A tertio decimo usque in septimum decimum, totum proficuum Libre et Scorpionis[208] adde numero Libre. De nono decimo in vigesimum primum si accendatur, de proficuo Scorpionis et Sagittarii iunge vel minue septimam partem numero Scorpionis. De vigesimo secundo[209] in vigesimum sextum si accendatur, adde vel minue de proficuo eorum duas septimas Scorpioni. A vigesimo septimo in primum gradum Sagittarii tres septimas de proficuo Sagittarii et Scorpionis adde vel minue Scorpioni.

Regula Sagittarii.[210] A secundo gradu Sagittarii in sextum si Mars incenditur,[211] quatuor septimas de proficuo Sagittarii et Scorpionis adde numero Scorpionis vel minue. A septimo[212] in undecimum adde vel minue quinque septimas[213] de proficuo[214] Scorpionis et Sagittarii. A duodecimo in sextum decimum adde vel minue de proficuo eorum sex[215] septimas Scorpioni. A septimo decimo in vigesimum primum adde vel minue totum proficuum Scorpionum et Sagittarii numero Scorpionis. Si Mars accendatur a vigesimo secundo in vigesimum quintum, cave[216] numerum Sagittarii et Capricorni[217] et de[218] proficuo eorum[219] adde vel minue quintam partem numero Sagittarii. A vigesimo sexto[220] in tricesimum adde vel minue de proficuo eorum duas quintas numero Sagittarii.[221]

Regula Capricorni.[222] Dum Mars comburitur a primo gradu Capricorni in quintum, minue de proficuo Sagittarii et Capricorni tres quintas[223] vel[224] adde numero Sagittarii. A sexto in decimum quatuor quintas numero Sagittarii.[225] Ab

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205 scorpionis] martis *add. P*
206 libre et scorpionis] scorpionis et sagittarii *MP*
207 adde] addas *M*
208 libre et scorpionis] scorpionis et sagittarii *MP*
209 vigesimo secundo] xxi *M*
210 sagittarii] incensionis martis *add. P*
211 incenditur] incendatur *P*
212 septimo] sexto *P*
213 septimas] scorpionis *add. P*
214 de proficuo] *om. M*
215 vi] vii *M*
216 cave] minue *p.c. P*
217 sagittarii et capricorni] scorpionis et sagittarii *M*
218 et de] inde *P*
219 eorum] *om. P*
220 vigesimo sexto] xvi *M*
221 numero sagittarii] sagittarii numero *P*
222 capricorni] de marte *add. P*
223 tres quintas] quintas tres *P*
224 vel] et *P*
225 numero sagittarii] sagittarii numero *P*

undecimo in quintum decimum[226] totum proficuum Capricorni et Sagittarii adde vel minue numero[227] Sagittarii. A sexto decimo in vigesimum Capricorni Mars si accendatur, cave numerum Capricorni et Aquarii et nonam partem proficui eorum adde vel minui Capricorno. A vigesimo primo in vigesimum quintum duas nonas proficui eorum da vel aufer Capricorno. De vigesimo sexto in tricesimum tres nonas adde vel minue[228] de proficuo Capricorni et Aquarii Capricorno.

Regula Aquarii.[229] Cum Mars uritur in quinque gradibus Aquarii, tribue[230] vel aufer de proficuo Capricorni et Aquarii quatuor nonas Capricorni. Usque ad decimum quinque nonas. Ad quintum decimum sex nonas. Ad vigesimum septem[231] nonas. Usque ad vigesimum quintum octo nonas. Ad tricesimum totum[232] proficuum Capricorni et Aquarii da vel aufer Capricorno.

Regula Piscium.[233] Si Mars accenditur[234] in quinque gradibus Piscium, cave numerum Aquarii et Piscium et[235] de proficuo eorum adde vel minue tertiam partem numero Aquarii. Ad decimum duas tertias de proficuo eorum. Ad quinum decimum totum proficuum Aquarii et Piscium da vel aufer numero Aquarii. A sexto decimo[236] si accendatur in vigesimum, cave numerum Piscium et Arietis et de proficuo eorum da vel minue tertiam partem numero Piscium. Inde ad vigesimum quintum adde vel minue de proficuo eorum duas tertiam numero Piscium. Usque ad tricesimum adde vel minue[237] totum proficuum Piscium et Arietis numero Piscium.[238]

226 decimum] *om. M*
227 numero] *om. P*
228 minue] aufer *P*
229 aquarii] de marte *add. P*
230 tribue] tribuo *M*
231 septem] vi *M*
232 totum] *om. P*
233 piscium] in Marte *add. P*
234 accenditur] incenditur *P*
235 et] *om. P*
236 sexto decimo] xvii *P*
237 adde ... minue] *om. M*
238 piscium ... piscium] *om. M*

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On the Origin of John Philoponus's *De contingentia mundi*

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Abstract

The article re-examines the question of the origin of a text by the sixth-century Greek philosopher and Christian theologian John Philoponus, extant only as an epitome in Arabic translation, the so-called *De contingentia mundi*. It analyses the evidence for the existence of an anti-eternalist work by Philoponus in addition to those known in Greek and examines the correspondence between a portion of the Arabic epitome and a Greek fragment of Philoponus's *Against Aristotle* that was preserved by Simplicius. Based on the vocabulary and phraseology of the epitome, the article proposes to attribute the Arabic epitome to the circle of the ninth-century Muslim philosopher al-Kindī. Finally, the article attempts to explain the evidence concerning the transmission of the epitome in milieus as diverse as that early Islamic philosophical circle and the later Christian Arabic tradition, which preserved it.

Key Words

Philoponus; *De contingentia mundi*; *Contra Aristotelem*; circle of al-Kindī; Christian Arabic tradition

The Arabic tradition has preserved the epitome of an otherwise lost Greek work by the philosopher and Christian theologian John Philoponus[1] (490–570 CE) that is

[1] On Philoponus, see in the *Dictionnaire des philosophes antiques*, publié sous la direction de Richard Goulet, vol. *VA. De Paccius à Plotin*, C.N.R.S. Éditions, Paris 2011, the entry by Giovanna R. Giardina, « Philopon (Jean -) », p. 455–502; and by Emma Gannagé, « Philopon (Jean -). Tradition arabe », p. 503–563. Contributions on Philoponus and the Arabic tradition also in Robert Wisnovsky, « Yaḥyā al-naḥwī », in Peri Bearman (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Islam New Edition Online (EI-2 English)*, Brill (https://doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_7961, last accessed October 2023); Elias Giannakis, « Philoponus, Arabic », in Henrik Lagerlund (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Medieval Philosophy. Philosophy Between 500 and 1500*, Springer, Dordrecht 2020[2] (2011), p. 1469–1473; Cristina

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conventionally entitled *De contingentia mundi*. The aim of this article is to address two interrelated issues: the origin of its contents and the origin of the Arabic epitome itself. The former was addressed by previous scholarship, but this issue has left room for some scepticism, as will be seen below, thus calling for a fresh assessment. The latter has not received any substantial separate treatment thus far; therefore, a hypothesis will be proposed in this regard.

I. *The transmission of Philoponus's so-called* De contingentia mundi

The text of the epitome is extant in the MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Huntington collection 240, fol. 105v–109v.[2] The manuscript is a collection of Christian Arabic treatises compiled by an unknown Coptic scholar. It consists of two parts: the older and main part, which includes *De contingentia mundi*, is dated by a colophon to the year 1549 CE, whereas other folios are later additions, likely dating from the early sixteenth century. Philoponus's epitome consists of three extracts (*maʿānī*). The title of the first extract specifies that they are drawn « from the book of John the Grammarian concerning the proof for the creation of the world » (*min kitāb Yaḥyā al-naḥwī fī l-dalāla ʿalā ḥadaṯ al-ʿālam*). According to the titles, the three extracts derive from the first, second, and third « discourse » or « section » (*maqāla*), respectively, of the lost work. In 1972, Shlomo Pines published an annotated English translation of the text, showing, at the same time, that a polemical treatise by Avicenna concerning « the proofs of those who affirm that the past has a temporal beginning » refutes arguments that are Philoponian in character and

D'Ancona, « Philoponus, or 'Yaḥyā al-naḥwī'. An Overview », *Studia Graeco-Arabica*, 9 (2019), p. 203–242.

2 Alfred F.L. Beeston, « An Important Christian Arabic Manuscript in Oxford », *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 19 (1953), p. 197–205; previous mention in Luwīs Maʿlūf, « Al-Risāla fī waḥdāniyyat al-ḫāliq wa-taṯlīṯ aqānīmihi, taʾlīf Īliyyā muṭrān Naṣībīn, ʿuniya bi-našrihā al-Ab Lūīs Maʿlūf al-Yasūʿī », *Al-Mašriq*, 6 (1903), p. 111–116: p. 111. Before Beeston, Graf also listed the Oxford manuscript, as pointed out by the online catalogue « Fihrist. Union Catalogue of Manuscripts from the Islamicate World » (https://www.fihrist.org.uk/catalog/manuscript_982, last accessed October 2023); however, Graf listed it among the manuscripts preserving the Arabic translation of *Against Proclus*, which is a distinct work: Georg Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, Città del Vaticano, 1944 (Studi e testi, 118), vol. I, p. 418. Updates to Beeston's description in Adel Sidarus, « À propos de deux textes sur la création-contingence du monde transmis dans un recueil médiéval copto-arabe (Yaḥyā al-naḥwī et Abū Šākir ibn al-Rāhib) », *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der arabisch-islamischen Wissenschaften*, 19 (2010–2011), p. 121–134.

partially akin to those of the epitome;[3] in 1984, Gérard Troupeau published the Arabic text of the epitome, accompanied by a French translation.[4]

The text is also extant in a further epitomised form, being embedded within the Christian Arabic theological work *Compendium of the Principles of Religion and the Received Tradition of What Has Been Found to be Certain* (*Maǧmūʿ uṣūl al-dīn wa-masmūʿ maḥṣūl al-yaqīn*), by the Coptic scholar al-Muʾtaman ibn al-ʿAssāl (d. between 1270 and 1286 CE).[5] Philoponus's text is quoted in Chapter 4, which is devoted to the divine creation of the world, in paragraphs 1–34.[6] The text from *De contingentia mundi*, as provided by al-Muʾtaman's *Compendium*, is introduced as follows: « Extracts of the three sections of the book by the most illustrious, unique, knowing teacher John the Grammarian, the Jacobite, the *Askalānī*, through which he refuted the upholders of the eternity of the world » (*maʿānī al-maqālāt al-ṯalāṯ min kitāb al-šayḫ al-aǧall al-awḥad al-ʿālim Yaḥyā al-Naḥwī al-yaʿqūbī al-Askalānī, alladī radda bihi ʿalā l-qāʾilīna bi-qidam al-ʿālam*), with the term *Askalānī* presumably being a corruption of the Syriac *eṣkūlāyā* (i.e., 'scholastic').[7] Philoponus is recalled in a very similar wording in the list of biblical and patristic authorities provided in Chapter 1, paragraph 15 of the *Compendium*: « The most illustrious, unique, knowing, wise teacher John the *Askūlānī*, author of the *Book of the creation of the world* [*kitāb ḥadaṯ al-ʿālam*],

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3 Shlomo Pines, « An Arabic Summary of a Lost Work of John Philoponus », *Israel Oriental Studies*, 2 (1972), p. 320–352 (= Id., *The Collected Works of Shlomo Pines II. Studies in Arabic Versions of Greek Texts and in Mediaeval Science*, Magnes Press, Jerusalem 1986, p. 294–326). Since then, Avicenna's work studied by Pines has been published in: *Ḥudūṯ al-ʿālam. Afḍal-ad-Dīn [...] Ibn Ġaylān; al-Ḥukūma [...] Ibn Sīnā*, ed. Mehdi Mohaghegh, Dānešgāh-e Tehrān, Tehrān 1998, p. 131–152.

4 Gérard Troupeau, « Un Épitomé arabe du 'De contingentia mundi' de Jean Philopon », in Enzo Lucchesi, Henri-Dominique Saffrey (eds.), *Mémorial André-Jean Festugière. Antiquité païenne et chrétienne*, P. Cramer, Genève 1984, p. 77–88 (= Id., *Études sur le christianisme arabe au Moyen Âge*, Variorum, Aldershot 1995, V).

5 His complete name is al-Muʾtaman Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm ibn al-ʿAssāl; see the following entries: Aziz S. Atiya, « Muʾtaman Abū Isḥāq Ibrāhīm ibn al-ʿAssāl », in Aziz S. Atiya (ed.), *The Coptic Encyclopedia*, vol. VI, Macmillan, New York 1991, p. 1748b–1749a; Wadi Awad, *Al-Muʾtaman ibn al-ʿAssāl*, in David Thomas, Alex Mallett (eds.), *Christian-Muslim Relations. A Bibliographical* History, *Volume 4: (1200–1350)*, Brill, Leiden – Boston 2012 (History of Christian-Muslim Relations, 17), p. 530–537. Pines, « An Arabic Summary », p. 321, gives an incorrect name, « Hibat Allāh b. al-ʿAssāl », which is really the name of al-Muʾtaman's brother, who was a Christian Arabic theologian himself (his complete name being al-Asʿad Abū l-Farağ Hibat Allāh ibn Abī l-Mufaḍḍal ibn Abī Isḥāq ibn al-ʿAssāl).

6 Critical edition and Italian translation: al-Muʾtaman ibn al-ʿAssāl, *Maǧmūʿ uṣūl al-dīn wa-masmūʿ maḥṣūl al-yaqīn* [*Summa dei principi della religione*], ed. Awad Wadi, trans. Bartolomeo Pirone, 6 vols., The Franciscan Centre of Christian Oriental Studies, Cairo – Jerusalem 1998–2002 (Studia Orientalia Christiana Monographiae, VIa–VIb, VIIa–VIIb, 8–9).

7 Thus Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, vol. I, p. 417, n. 4 (reading *al-Askulāʾī*); see Gannagé, « Philopon (Jean -). Tradition arabe », p. 503. Pines, « An Arabic Summary », p. 321, n. 4, read *al-Askalānī*, taking it to mean « of Askalon ».

upholders of the eternity of the world; it is said that he was a Nestorian, although I am not certain about his doctrinal adherence ».[8]

The information provided by al-Muʾtaman indicates that he was not familiar with the historical figure of John Philoponus. Apart from the corrupt designation *al-Askalānī/al-Askūlānī* (also employed by al-Muʾtaman's contemporary Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa),[9] several other elements point in the same direction: the hesitation concerning his actual Christological adherence (« Jacobite » or « Nestorian », with the former being substantially correct because Philoponus was a miaphysite); the merging of Philoponus's anti-eternalist works *Against Proclus*[10] and *Against Aristotle*[11] into a single book, identified as one *Book of the Creation of the World*; and, finally, the praises associated to Philoponus's name, which entail ignorance of his condemnation as heretic on behalf of his tritheism by the third Constantinopolitan council in 680–681 CE.[12] Additionally, some manuscripts of the *Compendium*, in

8 Al-Muʾtaman ibn al-ʿAssāl, *Maǧmūʿ*, ed. Wadi, vol. VIa, p. 43.8–10.

9 As noticed by Pines, « An Arabic Summary », p. 321, n. 4. See the open access edition *A Literary History of Medicine - The ʿUyūn al-anbāʾ fī ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbāʾ of Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿah*, ed. Emilie Savage-Smith, Simon Swain, Geert J. van Gelder, 5 vols., Brill, Leiden 2020 (Handbook of Oriental Studies. Section 1 The Near and Middle East, 134), vol. II/1, chapter 6.1.1. Cf. the same epithet in the later catalogue of Christian literature by the Coptic Christian Abū l-Barakāt ibn Kabar (d. 1324 CE), which is contained in chapter 7 of his work *The Lamp of the Darkness and the Illumination of the Service* (*Miṣbāḥ al-ẓulma wa-īḍāḥ al-ḫidma*): Wilhelm Riedel, « Der Katalog der christlichen Schriften in arabischer Sprache von Abū 'lBarakāt », in *Nachrichten von der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Philologisch-historische Klasse*, 5, Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, Berlin 1902, p. 635–706: p. 651.11 (= *Miṣbāḥ al-ẓulma fī īḍāḥ al-ḫidma li-l-qass Šams al-Riʾāsa Abū l-Barakāt al-maʿrūf bi-bn Kabar*, vol. I, ed. Samīr Ḫalīl, Maktabat al-Kārūz, al-Qāhira 1971, p. 301.4).

10 The Greek text of all the quotations from *Against Proclus* is taken from Ioannes Philoponus, *De aeternitate mundi contra Proclum*, ed. Hugo Rabe, in aedibus B. G. Teubneri, Lipsiae 1899 (Bibliotheca scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana); Rabe's text was reprinted by Scholten, who also had access to MS Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, *gr.* 236: Johannes Philoponos, *De aeternitate mundi / Über die Ewigkeit der Welt*, ed. Clemens Scholten, Brepols, Turnhout, vol. I–II, 2009; vol. III–V, 2011 (Fontes Christiani, 64/1–5). The English translations of the same work are drawn from: Philoponus, *Against Proclus On the Eternity of the World*, trans. Michael Share et al., 4 vols., Bloomsbury, London – New Delhi – New York – Sydney 2004–2006 (Ancient Commentators on Aristotle).

11 Collection of the fragments in English translation in Philoponus, *Against Aristotle On the Eternity of the World*, trans. Christian Wildberg, Duckworth, London 1987 (Ancient Commentators on Aristotle). Throughout this article, I will refer to the numbering of the fragments of *Against Aristotle* provided by this volume. It should be mentioned that since Wildberg's work, *Against Aristotle* is considered to have consisted of eight books (not six, as previously thought), as indicated by the existence of one Syriac fragment drawn from the eighth book of the work.

12 *Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum. Series secunda, volumen secundum, pars prima. Concilium universale Constantinopolitanum tertium. Concilii actiones I–XI*, ed. Rudolf Riedinger, De Gruyter, Berlin 1990, p. 480.14–16: Ἰωάννης ὁ γραμματικός, ὁ τὴν ἐπωνυμίαν Φιλόπονος, μᾶλλον δὲ ματαιόπονος, Κόνων τε καὶ Εὐγένιος, οἱ τρεῖς τῆς τριθεΐας τρισκατάρατοι πρόμαχοι (« John the Grammarian,

Chapter 4, provide the name of the Syriac miaphysite (« Jacobite ») Christian Arabic writer Yaḥyā ibn ʿAdī (893–974 CE), instead of the correct *Yaḥyā al-Naḥwī* (i.e., « John the Grammarian »). This confusion is frequent in the Arabic tradition[13] and further confirms that John Philoponus was a figure of little renown.

The collation of the Oxford text with the text embedded in al-Muʾtaman's *Compendium* shows that the latter is an additionally shortened version, providing no independent information of its own.[14] Consequently, the following discussion will focus only on the epitome as provided in the Oxford manuscript.

The prologue of the work itself explains its nature:

> I have already composed books [*kutuban*] before in order to refute the sophistries and the equivocal statements by means of which Proclus, Aristotle and others among the Eternalists put the case in favour of the eternity *a parte ante* of the world. Now, however, in this book [*kitāb*] I wish to demonstrate that the world is created in time [*muḥdaṯ*], having come into existence after not having existed. I shall endeavour to make this clear and to validate the reasoning concerning this [matter]. For with respect to a matter which can [only] be known by syllogistic reasoning, one can acquire perfect knowledge only through a combination of two things: one of them being the establishment by demonstration [of the true knowledge] concerning this [matter], and the other the refutation of the sophistries and equivocal statements which prevent the speculative thinker from accepting it. For if we [confine ourselves] to demonstrating the conception which to our mind is the true one and let be the sophistries which prevent this conception from being accepted, we give to what is false and to what is true an equal [status], inasmuch as there are sophistries by which the truth is contrasted[15] which have not as yet been refuted; [accordingly] the speculative thinker is not clear about their being sophistries. On the other hand, if we refute the sophistries which run counter to the [correct] demonstration,[16] but do not demonstrate [the conception], its acceptation is not

nicknamed 'lover of labour', or rather 'vain labourer', as well as Conon and Eugenius, the three thrice-cursed fighters for tritheism »).

13 Gannagé, « Philopon (Jean -). Tradition arabe », p. 504.

14 Both Pines and Troupeau used some manuscripts of al-Muʾtaman's *Compendium*, which was unpublished at the time of their research, in order to improve some readings of the text of the *De contingentia mundi* provided by the Oxford manuscript: Pines, « An Arabic Summary », p. 320–321 (MS Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, *ar.* 103, fol. 45v–49r; Pines wrongly provides the page numbers 30a–32b); Troupeau, « Un Épitomé arabe », p. 78, n. 9 and n. 13 (MSS Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, *ar*. 200, fol. 28v–31v; and *ar*. 201, fol. 54r–58v). The manuscripts employed by the two scholars are among those employed by Wadi in his edition of al-Muʾtaman's *Compendium*.

15 Troupeau, « Un Épitomé arabe », p. 79.7: *yuḍāddu bihā*. Pines originally translated: « inasmuch as there are sophistries (attendant) upon that which is false which have not as yet been refuted ».

16 Troupeau, « Un Épitomé arabe », p. 79.8: *al-ḥaqq* (« the truth »); but see p. 79, n. 3 (variant reading *al-burhān*, meaning « demonstration »).

> necessary, and it may be [regarded] by the speculative thinkers as uncertain, inasmuch as it has not yet been demonstrated. For this [reason] I considered it as necessary for the correctness of the debate to compose, after the books in which I refuted the arguments of the eternalists, a special [*al.* comprehensive][17] book [*kitāban*] [devoted to] improving the proof for the temporal creation of the world [*al-dalāla ʿalā ḥadaṯ al-ʿālam*]. I shall start upon this [task] at this place[18].

The prologue represents the beginning of the first of the three aforementioned « discourses » or « sections », each of which presents one proof against the world's eternity and for creation. The first proof consists of exploiting the tenet that every finite body, including the world, must possess a finite power, so that the world cannot be eternal; even if it acquired eternal duration from a superior divine power, it has been proven to be created by nature. The second proof points out that the total sum of finite temporal durations is finite; the objection that there may be an infinite composed by an infinite number of finite things is refuted in the case of both linear and circular time. The third proof rests on the intraversability of the infinite, showing the impossibility of an infinite succession of past men ever reaching the present moment and the consequent necessity for the series to begin starting from individuals who have come to exist directly in actuality in the past.

II. *Authorship of* De contingentia mundi

The authorship of the contents of *De contingentia mundi* is beyond doubt. In his article, Pines provided doctrinal parallels between the Arabic epitome and *Against Proclus* that confirm this.[19]

The prologue also appears to be genuine. In fact, the methodology it describes, namely the necessity of both refuting errors and positively establishing the truth, which leads to the composition of *De contingentia mundi*, is mirrored briefly, as it seems to me, by a passage in *Against Proclus*. There, Philoponus refutes the view, which was upheld by the Middle Platonist Taurus (second century CE), that according to the *Timaeus*, the world was not really generated. Philoponus justifies his lengthy refutation of Taurus by pointing out that as long as some people are convinced by the view of his adversaries, his refutation is necessary and by stating that « we must proclaim the truth free from all obstruction » (δεῖ δὲ πάσης

17 Pines, « An Arabic Summary », p. 322, n. 21, states that he reads *kitāb ḫāṣṣ* (« a special book »). Troupeau, « Un Épitomé arabe », p. 79.9, reads *kitāban ǧāmiʿan* (translated as « un livre global », p. 84).

18 Arabic text in Troupeau, « Un Épitomé arabe », p. 79.2–10; trans. by Pines, « An Arabic Summary », p. 321–322, modified.

19 Pines, « An Arabic Summary », p. 341–343.

ὀχλήσεως ἐλευθέραν ἡμῖν ἀναδειχθῆναι τὴν ἀλήθειαν);[20] this twofold methodological obligation appears consistent with the prologue of *De contingentia mundi*.

The only doubt concerning the authorship of the Arabic epitome was raised by Herbert A. Davidson in his classical monograph on creation in Medieval Islamic and Jewish philosophy. This doubt is limited to the second proof, which in his opinion « is probably attributed to Philoponus erroneously ». He provides the following reasoning:

> The argument is that the lives of individuals mark off the time continuum into segments, each of which is finite; and finite segments of time, no matter how many there might be, could not join together to constitute infinite time. By contrast, Philoponus, *De aeternitate* [*mundi contra Proclum*, ed. Rabe], p. 9, takes the common sense position that an infinite number of past time segments, each of which was finite, would indeed constitute an infinite past time.[21]

The passage from *Against Proclus* referred to by Davidson does not contradict *De contingentia mundi*; on the contrary, it provides a parallel for its second proof, as indicated by Pines.[22] The passage from *Against Proclus*[23] pointed out by Davidson is embedded within a broader set of arguments against eternity and briefly precedes a reference to another anti-eternalist work. There, Philoponus simply states that *if* one endorses the view that the world is eternal, then one would have an actual infinite number of time segments marking off the durations of the lives of past individuals, as well as that *on the assumption of the world's eternity*, one cannot escape this impossible conclusion by taking the contrary stance that their number is finite, because the total sum of finite time segments must be finite as well. The second proof of the *De contingentia mundi* clearly adopts the same argument based on the actual infinity of past individuals. The same principles are simply laid down differently: if the world is eternal and each individual has a finite duration in time, then past time is composed of finite durations and, thus, the world cannot be eternal. The possibility that there may be an infinite composed by an infinite number of finite things is subsequently raised as an objection; it is refuted on the grounds that time is finite at least at one of its ends, namely the moment before

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20 Philoponus, *Against Proclus* VI, 21, ed. Rabe, p. 189.13–21 (= ed. Scholten, vol. III, p. 712). The same term ὄχλησις is used by Philoponus in *Against Proclus* VII, 6 (see below, T3), when affirming that elsewhere he will get rid of the « obstruction » of the difficulties involved in the view that the world is eternal and prove that it cannot be eternal.

21 Herbert A. Davidson, *Proofs for Eternity, Creation, and the Existence of God in Medieval Islamic and Jewish Philosophy*, Oxford U.P., New York – Oxford 1987, p. 94, n. 54.

22 Pines, « An Arabic Summary », p. 342.

23 Philoponus, *Against Proclus* I, 3, ed. Rabe, p. 9.4–10.2 (= ed. Scholten, vol. II, p. 336–338).

the present.[24] Therefore, in both works the same assumption of a finite total duration for the lives of past individuals is shown to conflict with the assumption of the world's eternity. As a result, Philoponus is consistent in both works, and we need not reject the authorship of the second proof of *De contingentia mundi*.

III. *Traces of a third anti-eternalist work by Philoponus*

A separate issue concerns the actual existence of a third anti-eternalist work by Philoponus, in addition to *Against Proclus* and *Against Aristotle*, and whether or not it should be identified with the text that has come down to us as the Arabic epitome called *De contingentia mundi*. The prologue of the Arabic epitome, which is quoted above, states clearly that what follows belongs to a further book (*kitāb*), one composed as a distinct work after the previous works against Proclus, Aristotle and other upholders of the world's eternity. In his article on the epitome, Pines pointed out[25] that two scholars, Étienne Évrard and Herbert A. Davidson, based on independent evidence, have argued for the existence of such a further work, one devoted to the proof of creation. Because the arguments of Évrard and Davidson directly touch on the nature of the epitome and the key texts to be discussed below, I shall recall them briefly.

Évrard[26] appealed to three texts from Philoponus's *Against Proclus* (T1–3 below) and the prologue of his *De opificio mundi* (T4), all of which, in Évrard's opinion, indicate that Philoponus intended to write a further book on creation.

> T1. But that the infinite cannot in any way exist in actuality, whether by existing all at once or by coming into existence bit by bit, we shall, if God permits, in due course demonstrate at greater length in another [work], when, having looked into all of the puzzles surrounding the issue of an everlasting world, we shall finally establish on our own account that it cannot be everlasting [ἐν ἑτέρῳ μὲν προϊόντες θεοῦ διδόντος ἐντελέστερον δείξομεν, ἐπειδὰν πάσας τὰς περὶ τοῦ ἀίδιον εἶναι τὸν κόσμον ἀπορίας ἐλέγξαντες αὐτοὶ λοιπὸν ἐφ' ἑαυτῶν κατασκευάζομεν, ὡς οὐκ ἐνδέχεται αὐτὸν εἶναι ἀίδιον]. And I shall cite Aristotle himself explicitly arguing this very point – I mean that the infinite can in no manner exist in actuality.[27]

[24] Troupeau, « Un Épitomé arabe », p. 80.12–81.2.

[25] Pines, « An Arabic Summary », p. 337–346.

[26] Pines relied on Évrard's unpublished *mémoire de licence*, which he quotes as follows: Étienne Évrard, *Philopon contre Aristote*, Livre I, Université de Liège, Liège 1942–1943. Since then, Évrard's work has been lost: see Étienne Évrard, *Études philoponiennes. Philosopher à l'école d'Alexandrie*, textes d'Étienne Évrard réunis et édités par Marc-Antoine Gavray, Presses Universitaires de Liège, Liège 2020 (Série Philosophie, 8), p. 19. His arguments for the existence of another Philoponian work can be read in the latter volume, at p. 212–213.

[27] Philoponus, *Against Proclus* I, 3, ed. Rabe, p. 9.20–10.2 (= ed. Scholten, vol. II, p. 338); trans. Share, vol. I, p. 24.

> T2. So if these absurdities, and, as we shall demonstrate elsewhere [ὡς ἐν ἑτέροις δείξομεν], many others necessarily arise if the world is ungenerated, it is not possible that the world is ungenerated and without a beginning.[28]
>
> T3. In regard to the circular movement which the heavenly bodies exhibit, it will be shown more fully, if God permits, in *Objections Against Aristotle On the Everlastingness of the World* [ἐντελέστερον μὲν ἐν ταῖς πρὸς Ἀριστοτέλην περὶ τῆς τοῦ κόσμου ἀιδιότητος ἀντιρρήσεσιν], that it too is not everlasting; for we shall need to produce additional arguments against this position. However, if it has been adequately demonstrated in the first chapter [of *Against Proclus*] that it is impossible for the generation of the world to be everlasting (something, indeed, which will be demonstrated even more fully on our own account when we have got rid of the obstruction arising from all of the puzzles [ὥσπερ οὖν καὶ ἐντελέστερον ἰδίᾳ δειχθήσεται, ἐπειδὰν τὴν ἐκ πασῶν τῶν ἀποριῶν ὄχλησιν ἀποσκευασώμεθα]), it is clear that circular movement cannot be everlasting either.[29]

T4 occurs in the prologue of *De opificio mundi*. After affirming that he has refuted, in several works, the convoluted philosophical fallacies aimed at proving that the world is ungenerated, Philoponus adds the following:

> T4. I have also demonstrated that it [the world] has a beginning of existence, arguing for this by means of many efforts [δέδειχα δὲ καὶ ὡς ἀρχὴν ἔχει τοῦ εἶναι, πλείοσιν ἐπιβολαῖς τοῦτο συλλογισάμενος].[30]

Concerning T4, Pines[31] notes that the word συλλογισάμενος (also translatable as « using syllogistic reasoning ») finds a correspondence with the prologue of *De contingentia mundi*, which refers to establishing the proof for creation « through syllogism » (*bi-l-qiyās*).[32]

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28 Philoponus, *Against Proclus* I, 3, ed. Rabe, p. 11.14–17 (= ed. Scholten, vol. II, p. 342); Rabe and Scholten read δείξωμεν instead of the correct future tense, δείξομεν, which is the reading of the *editio princeps* (Ἰωάννου Γραμματικοῦ Ἀλεξανδρέως τοῦ Φιλοπόνου κατὰ Πρόκλου περὶ ἀϊδιότητος κόσμου / *Ioannis Grammatici Philoponi Alexandrini contra Proclum de mundi aeternitate*, ed. Victor Trincavelus, Venice 1535, p. 4.1 of the Greek text); trans. Share, vol. I, p. 25.

29 *Against Proclus* VII, 6, ed. Rabe, p. 258.22–259.6 (= ed. Scholten, vol. III, p. 840); trans. Share, vol. II, p. 96 (modified).

30 Joannis Philoponi *de opificio mundi libri VII*, ed. Gualterus Reichardt, in aedibus B. G. Teubneri, Lipsiae 1897 (Scriptores sacri et profani, 1), p. 1.13–14 = Johannes Philoponos, *De opificio mundi / Über die Erschaffung der Welt*, ed. Clemens Scholten, 3 vols., Herder, Freiburg – Basel – Wien – Barcelona – Rome – New York 1997 (Fontes Christiani, 23/1–3), vol. I, p. 72; my translation.

31 Pines, « An Arabic Summary », p. 240.

32 Troupeau, « Un Épitomé arabe », p. 79.4.

Évrard's references are supplemented by two further references (T5–6) suggested by Koenraad Verrycken.[33] The former is taken from *Against Proclus*:

> T5. That time does indeed have a beginning I shall show elsewhere [ὅτι μὲν οὖν ἀρχὴν ἔχει ὁ χρόνος, ἡμεῖς ἐν ἑτέροις δείξομεν].[34]

The latter belongs to Philoponus's analysis of the infinite in his commentary on *Physics*, book III:

> T6. But let us consider specifically the more complete argument concerning this [τὸν δὲ περὶ τούτων ἐντελέστερον λόγον ἰδίᾳ ἐπισκεψώμεθα].[35]

T6 presents us with a problem because in this form, it is simply a transitional passage, providing no cross-references to other works. Verrycken refers to it because he takes the subjunctive verb ἐπισκεψώμεθα to be in the future tense, accordingly construing the sentence to mean « I will consider » or « I will inquire ». The future-tense ἐπισκεψόμεθα, which would make the reference valid, is attested (as indicated by Vitelli's edition of Philoponus's commentary on *Physics*), but only as the reading of Trincavelli's *editio princeps*.[36] Trincavelli's reading is tempting because, in the previous lines, Philoponus argues against infinite time on the grounds that an actual infinite can never exist, neither all at once nor bit by bit. He does so in a way that is similar to the section of *Against Proclus* that comprises T1. Moreover, in T6, ἐντελέστερον recalls T1 and T3, and ἰδίᾳ recalls T3 (provided that the verb is in the future tense, the latter may be understood as « on our own account »). Therefore T6, while not providing firm independent evidence, cannot be entirely discarded as a potential cross-reference.

The references agree in stating that « elsewhere » (ἐν ἑτέρῳ T1; ἐν ἑτέροις T2, T5), after solving the puzzles (ἀπορίαι T1, T,3) involved in the view that the world is eternal, Philoponus intended to prove, on his own (αὐτοί [...] ἐφ' ἑαυτῶν T1; ἰδίᾳ

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33 Koenraad Verrycken, « The Development of Philoponus' Thought and Its Chronology », in Richard Sorabji (ed.), *Aristotle Transformed. The Ancient Commentators and Their Influence*, Cornell U.P., Ithaca (NY) 1990, p. 233–274: p. 254 and n. 129.

34 Philoponus, *Against Proclus* V, 4, ed. Rabe, p. 117.20–21 (= ed. Scholten, vol. II, p. 580); trans. Share, vol. I, p. 87.

35 Ioannis Philoponi *in Aristotelis Physicorum libros tres priores commentaria*, ed. Hieronymus Vitelli, Typis et impensis Georgii Reimeri, Berolini 1887 (Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca, 16), p. 430.9–10. Translation taken from Philoponus, *On Aristotle Physics 3*, trans. Mark J. Edwards, Bloomsbury, London – New Delhi – New York – Sydney 1994 (Ancient Commentators on Aristotle), p. 97.

36 Ἰωάννου Γραμματικοῦ ὑπόμνημα εἰς τὰ περὶ φυσικῆς τέσσαρα πρῶτα βιβλία τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλους / *Ioannis Grammatici in primos quatuor Aristotelis de naturali auscultatione libros commentaria*, ed. Victor Trincavelus, Venice 1535.

T3, T6),[37] in a more complete way (ἐντελέστερον T1, T3, T6), that the infinite cannot exist in actuality (T1) and that the world cannot be eternal (T2; also phrased by saying that its generation cannot be eternal in T3). These references do, indeed, fit the content of the prologue of the Arabic *De contingentia mundi* well.[38] However, it should be noted that none of these references explicitly refers to a third work, that is, one beyond *Against Proclus* and *Against Aristotle* (a conclusion also reached by Clemens Scholten concerning the cross-references found in *Against Proclus*).[39] On the other hand, remarkably, two of the cross references, T1 and T3, contain a reference to Philoponus's criticism of Aristotle; T3 is especially explicit in referring to *Against Aristotle*, in addition to providing the generic cross-reference to a future refutation of the world's eternity.

I believe that a further reference can be added to those gathered by previous scholars. In *De opificio mundi* IV, 7 Philoponus, after declaring that divine creation must have started from « complete » or « perfect » (τέλεια) individuals, as opposed to « incomplete » or « imperfect » ones (ἀτελῆ), affirms that he has « often shown elsewhere » (ἐν ἑτέροις πολλάκις ἐδείξαμεν) that generation cannot reach the present moment through infinite individuals.[40] While the proof referred to is found not only in *De contingentia mundi*, but also other Philoponian works,[41] one element suggests that *De contingentia mundi* is also meant. The discussion in *De opificio mundi* concerning the fact that creation began with perfect individuals, along with the anti-eternalist argument this evokes, is paralleled by the third proof of *De contingentia mundi*. From the impossibility of an infinity by succession, this proof concludes that the first ancestors were produced perfect and in

37 According to Simplicius's testimony, in proving that every body must possess finite power, Philoponus proceeded in the same way, i.e., both appealing to the Aristotelian argument with a critical aim and providing fresh proofs (δι' οἰκείων ἐπιχειρημάτων): Simplicii *in Aristotelis Physicorum libros quattuor posteriores commentaria*, ed. Hermannus Diels, Typis et impensis Georgii Reimeri, Berolini 1895 (Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca, 10), p. 1329.13–19.

38 Other references found in Philoponus's commentary on Aristotle's *Meteorologica* point to *Against Aristotle*, rather than to a third anti-eternalist work: see Christian Wildberg, *John Philoponus' Criticism of Aristotle's Theory of Aether*, De Gruyter, Berlin – New York 1988 (Peripatoi. Philologisch-historische Studien zum Aristotelismus, 16), p. 175, n. 177.

39 Johannes Philoponos, *De aeternitate mundi / Über die Ewigkeit der Welt*, ed. Scholten, vol. I, p. 163–173.

40 Philoponus, *De opificio mundi* IV, 7, ed. Reichardt, p. 176.29–177.6 = ed. Scholten, vol. II, p. 400.

41 Cf. Philoponus, *Against Proclus* I, 3, ed. Rabe, p. 10.22–11.2 = ed. Scholten, vol. II, p. 340. The idea that creation began from actualised, perfect individuals is also found in Philoponus's commentary on the second book of *De anima*: Ioannis Philoponi *in Aristotelis de anima libros commentaria*, ed. Michael Hayduck, Typis et impensis Georgii Reimeri, Berolini 1897 (Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca, 15), p. 217.4–7. However, there it is not paired with the anti-eternalist argument from the intraversability of an infinite succession of individuals.

actuality, as opposed to imperfect and in potentiality.[42] However, this new cross-reference, just like the previous ones, does not explicitly mention a third anti-eternalist work.

To sum up, all the cross-references in Philoponus's works are simply too vague to prove the existence of a third anti-eternalist work that is lost in Greek.

Another line of argument in favour of the existence of a third anti-eternalist work is provided by Davidson,[43] who exploits the quotations and testimonies contained in the commentary on Aristotle's *Physics* authored by the pagan Neoplatonist Simplicius (480–560 CE), a source hostile to Philoponus's creationism. Davidson holds that Simplicius's commentary on book VIII of Aristotle's *Physics* refutes texts drawn from two distinct Philoponian works: *Against Aristotle*, book VI, comprising both objections to Aristotle and positive arguments for creation, with the latter being closely followed by the conclusion of the discussion of the sixth book (corresponding to Simplicius's commentary, ed. Diels, p. 1182.28–39),[44] and, later on, limited to a specific section of Simplicius's commentary (ed. Diels, p. 1326.38–1336.34),[45] another unnamed work or at least an appendix to *Against Aristotle*. Davidson argues as follows: first, in the former of these two sections of his commentary, Simplicius appears to conclude his discussion of *Against Aristotle* VI. Second, the Philoponian quotations in Simplicius's later section, which argue from the finite power of the universe, refer to « book IV of *Against Aristotle* », which is, arguably, an odd way of providing a cross-reference within a single work and, according to Davidson, never found in the previous quotations.[46] Third, the Arabic

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42 See the entire third proof, especially Troupeau, « Un Épitomé arabe », p. 83.14–24, for the priority of the perfect over the imperfect at the beginning of creation.

43 Herbert A. Davidson, « John Philoponus as a Source of Medieval Islamic and Jewish Proofs of Creation », *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 89/2 (1969), p. 357–391: p. 357–359.

44 Roughly corresponding to *Against Aristotle*'s fr. 133 Wildberg (= Simpl. *in Phys.*, ed. Diels, p. 1182.28–36). According to Davidson, book VI is discussed up to Simpl. *in Phys.*, ed. Diels, p. 1182.28 (with overall concluding remarks in the following lines).

45 A commented English translation of this section was published separately: Philoponus, *Corollaries on Place and Void, with* Simplicius, *Against Philoponus on the Eternity of the World*, trans. David Furley, Christian Wildberg, Bloomsbury, London – New Delhi – New York – Sydney 1991 (Ancient Commentators on Aristotle).

46 Simpl. *in Phys.*, ed. Diels, p. 1329.38 (δεδεῖχθαι δέ φησιν αὐτῷ ἐν τῷ τετάρτῳ Τῶν πρὸς Ἀριστοτέλη [...]); p. 1333.32 (ὡς ἐδείξαμεν ἐν τῷ τετάρτῳ Τῶν πρὸς Ἀριστοτέλη); p. 1334.40–1335.1 (ἀλλ' ὅσα μὲν περὶ τούτου γέγραφεν, ὥς φησιν, ἐν τῷ τετάρτῳ Τῶν πρὸς Ἀριστοτέλη [...]). In fact, Simplicius does report one of Philoponus's cross-references outside the section devoted to the unnamed Philoponian work, that is, within his discussion of *Against Aristotle* book VI; however, in this case, Simplicius only mentions a « fourth book », without adding « against Aristotle » as in the other instances: *in Phys.*, ed. Diels, p. 1175.16–17 (ἐν τῷ τετάρτῳ λόγῳ δεδειχέναι φησίν [...]). This discrepancy may mean that the latter cross-reference, unlike the others, comes from *Against Aristotle* (thus, this reference alone does not specify « against Aristotle »); this may add weight to Davidson's argument in favour of Simplicius's *Physics* commentary dealing with two distinct Philoponian works.

bibliographers list as separate items *Against Aristotle* and an otherwise unknown work: *Book on the Fact That Every Body is Finite, Hence its Power is Finite, One Discourse* (*Kitāb fī anna kull ǧism mutanāhī fa-quwwatuhu mutanāhiyya maqāla*).[47] Davidson maintains that this title corresponds to the unnamed Philoponian work discussed by Simplicius in the second relevant section of his commentary (ed. Diels, p. 1326.38–1336.34).

Davidson's second argument should be partially corrected. Two out of the three cross-references provided by Simplicius are actually in the third-person singular; thus, in both instances, it is Simplicius who is referring to Philoponus's *Against Aristotle*, book IV. Because Simplicius has previously completed his criticism of books I to VI of *Against Aristotle*, it makes sense that in the later section, when he resumes his polemic against Philoponus, he specifies that he is now referring to book IV of that work. Despite this minor correction, the remaining cross reference indicated by Davidson (ed. Diels, p. 1333.32) still stands.

Building on Davidson's conclusions, Pines argues that the missing Philoponian work titled *That Every Body is Finite, Hence its Power is Finite*, which is supposedly discussed in Simplicius's second section, is identical with the first « discourse » (*maqāla*) of the Arabic *De contingentia mundi* because *De contingentia mundi* contains the same argument from the finite power of the universe.[48] Therefore, according to Pines, *De contingentia mundi* preserves in epitomised form, either entirely or partially, the contents of the *Book on the Fact That Every Body is Finite, Hence its Power is Finite* that is recorded by the Arabic bibliographers. Pines is aware of the discrepancy between the number of «discourses » (three *maqālāt*) of *De contingentia mundi* and that of the Arabic title provided by the Arabic bibliographers (one *maqāla* only). However, he hypothesises that only the first discourse of *De contingentia mundi* was translated into Arabic in full and, thus, recorded by the Arabic bibliographers, whereas the other two were never translated in full. From this, he infers the possibility that the epitome was initially composed in Greek and subsequently translated into Arabic. This reconstruction, as Pines himself avows, is purely hypothetical.

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47 Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-fihrist*, ed. Gustav Flügel, vol. I, Vogel, Leipzig 1871, p. 254.25–26 = *Kitāb al-fihrist* li-l-Nadīm Abū al-Faraǧ Muḥammad ibn Abī Yaʿqūb Isḥāq al-maʿrūf bi-l-Warrāq, ed. Muḥammad R. Taǧaddud, Markaz-i Našr-i Dānišgāhī, Tehrān 1971, p. 315.5 = *Kitāb al-Fihrist* li-Abī al-Faraǧ Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq al-Nadīm, ed. Ayman F. Sayyid, vol. II, Muʾassasa al-Furqān li-l-tūrāṯ al-islāmiyya, London 2009, p. 179.7. Same title in Ibn Abī Uṣaybiʿa: see Savage-Smith, S. Swain, van Gelder (eds.), *A Literary History of Medicine*, vol. II/1, chapter 6.2 (title no. 28). Ibn al-Qifṭī's *Taʾrīḫ al-ḥukamāʾ*, ed. August Müller, Julius Lippert, Dieterich'sche Buchhandlung, Leipzig 1903, p. 356.5–6, has a corrupt text: *Kitāb fī anna kull ǧism mutanāhī wa-mawtuhu* [read *fa-quwwatuhu*] *muntahāhin* [*al. mutanāhin*] *maqāla wāḥida*.

48 Cf. respectively Troupeau, « Un Épitomé arabe », p. 79.20–22 and Simpl. *in Phys.*, ed. Diels, p. 1326.38–1329.19.

To sum up, scholars believe that Philoponus, in addition to *Against Proclus* and *Against Aristotle*, wrote a distinct unnamed text that is lost in Greek and devoted to proving that the world cannot be eternal. Allusions that may or may not refer to the lost text are found in the extant works by Philoponus. Moreover, Simplicius's commentary on *Physics* VIII contains a specific section, arguably refuting that lost text, after the end of his refutation of *Against Aristotle*, book VI. Davidson identifies it with the Arabic title *That Every Body is Finite, Hence its Power is Finite*. Pines followed his lead, adding the hypothesis that the Arabic epitome *De contingentia mundi* preserves part of that missing work. In what follows, I will attempt to add another element to the current reconstruction concerning the provenance of the *De contingentia mundi* and provide a fresh assessment of its origin.

IV. *A textual correspondence between* De contingentia mundi *and* Against Aristotle *and its implications*

The element I wish to introduce is found in the first section of Simplicius's commentary on *Physics* VIII discussed by Davidson. The section belongs to Simplicius's broader commentary on *Physics* VIII 1, 251b28–252a5, covering p. 1171.21–1182.39 (ed. Diels). Here, Simplicius quotes and refutes the last fragments of *Against Aristotle* book VI, declaring he has completed his criticism of this book at the end of the section. The Aristotelian lemma commented on is devoted to proving that movement is incorruptible and, thus, endless (just as Aristotle has shown above that it must be beginningless).[49] Consequently, the main set of fragments of *Against Aristotle* provided by Simplicius in this section (fr. 127–131 Wildberg) is aimed at refuting the incorruptibility of movement in order to prove that the world can come to an end.

The key text is listed by Wildberg as fr. 132 of *Against Aristotle*, book VI. It can be analysed as consisting of two parts. In the first part, Simplicius provides a crucial transitional passage:

> Having said this, he claims that he will show that the world does not change into absolute nothingness but into something different, greater and more divine. And it is remarkable that on the one hand he believes that the destruction of the world is a change into something which is and is more divine, yet on the other hand says that the generation <of the world> did not take place from what existed. He declares that this world changes into another world which is more divine – a <proposition> he elaborates in the following books – not realising that this is not a destruction of the world but a perfecting. In concluding the arguments against the propositions which show motion to be ungenerated and indestructible he says that he has refuted

[49] Arist. *Phys.* VIII 1, 251a17–28.

> them sufficiently – by this rotten chatter of his. And as if he has refuted these <propositions>, he even dares to demonstrate on his own that it is impossible that motion should be ungenerated.[50]

In turn, this text is clearly twofold. In it, Simplicius informs us of the following:

1) Philoponus had included an eschatological discussion of the transformation of the world into a better state (to be further elaborated on in the following books of *Against Aristotle*),[51] which Simplicius dismisses. The fact that Simplicius mentions, here, that *Against Aristotle* contained an eschatological discussion makes sense if we keep in mind that the text occurs within Simplicius's commentary of Aristotle's proof of the incorruptibility of time.

2) Because Philoponus has now concluded his refutation of the eternity of movement, from now on, he will proceed to prove « also on his own » (καὶ αὐτὸς καθ' αὑτὸν) that movement cannot be ungenerated.

This second point is especially relevant because it appears to mark a transition within book VI of *Against Aristotle* from a *pars destruens* to a *pars construens*.

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50 Philoponus, *Against Aristotle*, trans. Wildberg, p. 143–144, modified. See also the translation in Simplicius, *On Aristotle Physics 8.1-5*, trans. István Bodnár, Michael Chase, Michael Share, Bloomsbury, London – New Delhi – New York – Sydney 2012 (Ancient Commentators on Aristotle), p. 76. Simpl. *in Phys.*, ed. Diels, p. 1177.38–1178.9: Ταῦτα εἰπὼν ἐπαγγέλλεται δείξειν, ὅτι οὐκ εἰς ἀνυπαρξίαν παντελῆ, ἀλλ' εἰς ἄλλο τι κρεῖττον καὶ θειότερον ἡ τοῦ κόσμου μεταβολὴ γίνεται. καὶ θαυμαστόν, ὅτι τὴν μὲν φθορὰν τοῦ κόσμου μεταβολὴν εἰς ὅν τι καὶ θειότερον οἴεται, τὴν δὲ γένεσιν οὐκ ἐξ ὄντος ἔχειν φησίν· ἐνδείκνυται δέ, ὅπερ ἐν τοῖς ἑξῆς βιβλίοις πραγματεύεται, ὅτι ὁ κόσμος οὗτος εἰς ἄλλον τινὰ κόσμον μεταβάλλει θειότερον, οὐκ ἐφιστάνων ὅτι τοῦτο οὐκ ἔστι φθορὰ τοῦ κόσμου, ἀλλὰ τελείωσις. συμπεραινόμενος δὲ τὰ πρὸς τοὺς ἀγένητον καὶ ἄφθαρτον τὴν κίνησιν δεικνύντας λόγους ἐπιχειρήματα, ἱκανῶς αὐτοὺς ἀπελεγχθῆναί φησιν ἐκ τῶν οὕτω σαθρῶν αὐτοῦ τερετισμάτων. καὶ ὡς ἐκείνους διελέγξας τολμᾷ καὶ αὐτὸς καθ' αὑτὸν ἀποδεικνύναι, ὅτι ἀδύνατον ἀγένητον εἶναι τὴν κίνησιν.

51 Davidson, « John Philoponus as a Source », p. 358, n. 9, avows that the reference to the following books is unclear to him because he believed that *Against Aristotle* consisted of six books only. However, since then Simplicius's allusion has become clear due to Wildberg's contributions showing that there were actually at least eight books (in addition to his collection of the fragments of *Against Aristotle*, see Christian Wildberg, « Prolegomena to the Study of Philoponus' *Contra Aristotelem* », in Richard Sorabji [ed.], *Philoponus and the Rejection of Aristotelian Science*, Duckworth, London 2010[2] [1987], p. 239–250). That Philoponus included a treatment of his eschatological views in *Against Aristotle* is confirmed by a heresiological source, *On the Readmission of the Heretics*, by Timothy of Constantinople, fl. around 600 CE or in the early eighth century: the earlier date is provided by Christiane Schmidt, « Timotheus von Kostantinopel », in Siegmar Döpp, Wilhelm Geerlings (eds.), *Lexikon der antiken christlichen Literatur*, 3rd ed., Herder, Freiburg – Basel – Wien 2002, p. 696; English trans.: Christiane Schmidt, « Timothy of Constantinople », in Siegmar Döpp, Wilhelm Geerlings (eds.), *Dictionary of Early Christian Literature*, Herder and Herder, New York 2000, p. 579; the later date is suggested by Filippo Carcione, « Il 'De iis qui ad ecclesiam accedunt' del presbitero costantinopolitano Timoteo. Una nuova proposta di datazione », *Studi e ricerche dell'Oriente cristiano*, 14 (1991), p. 309–320. See Patrologia Graeca, 86/1, 61c3–15.

The text quoted above is followed immediately by an exposition of Philoponus's own proof, constituting the main part of fr. 132 Wildberg of *Against Aristotle* VI. This is the second text I wish to discuss. Such a proof found in *Against Aristotle*, as noted both by Richard Sorabji and Davidson,[52] is very similar to a piece of the third proof of *De contingentia mundi*. For this reason, Sorabji has expressed scepticism concerning the provenance of the Arabic epitome, which is « suspiciously close in some ways to the *contra Aristotelem* ».[53] This is also the likely reason why Davidson concedes that *De contingentia mundi* may not be a separate work after all but, rather, « an appendix » to *Against Aristotle*.[54] More recently, an article by Cristina D'Ancona on Philoponus in the Arabic tradition lists both *De contingentia mundi* and *Book on the Fact That Every Body is Finite, Hence its Power is Finite* in a section featuring a question mark: « Other (?) writings on creation in time vs eternalism ».[55]

A comparison shows that the Arabic of the third proof can be considered a veritable translation of the Greek preserved in Simplicius, although the degree of closeness between the two text varies.

SIMPLICIUS, *On Physics*, ed. DIELS, p. 1178.9–1179.12 (modified: see footnotes); trans. Wildberg (PHILOPONUS, *Against Aristotle*, p. 144–145)	PHILOPONUS, *De contingentia mundi*, ed. TROUPEAU, p. 81.25–83.24 (modified: see footnotes); trans. Pines, modified (« An Arabic Summary », p. 330–336)
ἀξιώματα δὲ πρὸς τὴν ἀπόδειξιν προλαμβάνει τρία, ἓν μέν, ὡς εἴ τι τῶν γινομένων ἀναγκαίως δεῖται προϋπάρχοντός τινος, ἵνα γένηται, οἷον ναῦς ξύλων, οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο μὴ προγενομένων ἐκείνων· δεύτερον ὅτι ἀριθμὸν ἄπειρον ὑποστῆναι ἐνεργείᾳ ἀδύνατον ἢ διεξελθεῖν τινα ἀριθμοῦντα τὸν ἄπειρον, καὶ ὅτι μεῖζον εἶναι τοῦ ἀπείρου ἢ αὐξηθῆναι τὸ ἄπειρον ἀδύνατον· τρίτον ὡς, εἴ τινος εἰς γένεσιν ἄπειρα δέοι προϋποστῆναι ἓν ἐξ ἑνὸς γινόμενον, τοῦτο ἀδύνατον	قال يحيى: ينبغي أن نقدّم أمام حجّتنا هذه ثلاثة أصول متعالمة متعارفة غير مدفوعة ولا مشكوك فيها ولا في صحّتها: ١) الأصل الأوّل منها أنّ كلّ شيء يحتاج في وجوده الى شيء فانّه غير ممكن أن يوجد ان لم يكن يتقدّمه وجود ذلك الشيء الذي يحتاج اليه مثل السفينة والخشب، وذلك أنّه اذا كان يحتاج في وجود السفينة الى أن يتقدّمه وجود الخشب فغير ممكن أن تكون سفينة ان لم يكن قد تقدّم السفينة وجود الخشب. ٢) والأصل الثاني أنّه غير ممكن أن يكون عدد بالفعل لا نهاية له وان كان العادّ له يعدّه عدّا سرمديا، وذلك أنّ كلّ شيء يقف عليه منه فهو

52 See RICHARD SORABJI, *Time, Creation, and the Continuum. Theories in Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, Duckworth, London 1983, p. 228–229; DAVIDSON, *Proofs for Eternity, Creation, and the Existence of God*, p. 94.

53 SORABJI, *Time, Creation, and the Continuum*, p. 199.

54 DAVIDSON, « John Philoponus as a Source », p. 358; ID., *Proofs for Eternity, Creation, and the Existence of God*, p. 93.

55 D'ANCONA, « Philoponus, or 'Yaḥyā al-naḥwī' », p. 227.

محدود متناه لظهوره بالفعل، وما لم يخرج منه الى الفعل فهو بالقوّة غير متناه، وقد تبيّن ذلك أرسطاطاليس في المقالة الثالثة من كتاب سماع الكيان.

٣) والأصل الثالث أنّ كلّ شيء يحتاج في كونه الى أن يتقدّمه كون أشياء متقدّمة غير متناهية فغير ممكن وجوده، ومثال ذلك أنّ الألف ان كان غير ممكن أن تكون موجودة دون أن يتقدّم وجودها وجود الباء، والباء غير ممكن أن تكون موجودة دون أن يتقدّم وجودها وجود الجيم، والجيم غير ممكن أن تكون موجودة دون أن يتقدّم وجودها وجود شيء آخر، وذلك الشيء غير ممكن أن يكون موجودا دون أن يتقدّم وجوده وجود شيء آخر وهذا صاعدا الى ما لا نهاية له، فغير ممكن أن تكون الألف موجودة لأنّها تحتاج الى أن يتقدّمها وجود أشياء لا نهاية لعددها بالفعل، ووجود أشياء لا نهاية لعددها بالفعل يستحيل.

وبهذه الحجّة احتجّ أرسطاطاليس في المقالة الثانية من كتاب الكون والفساد في أنّ الأستقسّات الطبيعية متناهية فانّه غير ممكن أن تكون لا نهاية لها، وذلك أنّ النار ان كانت تتولّد من الهواء باستحالة الهواء اليها، والهواء يتولّد من الماء، والماء يتولّد من الأرض، والأرض تتولّد من شيء آخر ويكون صاعدا بلا نهاية، فمحال أن تتولّد الّا[60] النار من الهواء دون أن يسلك التولّد في الأجسام غير متناهية التي تتقدّم تولّد النار من الهواء، وما لا نهاية له فليس يمكن أن يسلك ويقطع حتّى يؤتى على آخره

γενέσθαι[56]. "ἐκ τούτου γάρ, φησί, καὶ Ἀριστοτέλης ἐν τῇ Περὶ γενέσεως[57] ἔδειξεν, ὅτι ἀδύνατον ἄπειρα εἶναι [καὶ][58] κατ' ἀριθμὸν τὰ τῶν σωμάτων στοιχεῖα, εἴπερ ἐξ ἀλλήλων αὐτοῖς ἡ γένεσις· τὸ γὰρ ἄπειρον ἀδιεξίτητον, ὥστε οὐ φθάσει τὸ πῦρ, εἰ τύχοι, γενέσθαι, εἰ ἀπείρων προγενομένων γένοιτο ἄν. Τούτων οὖν, φησί, προωμολογημένων, εἰ ἡ τοῦδε τοῦ πυρὸς μερικὴ κίνησις ἀρχὴν τοῦ εἶναι καὶ πέρας ἔχει, ἵνα δὲ αὕτη γένηται, ἔδει πρὸ αὐτῆς ἄλλην γενέσθαι κίνησιν, καθ' ἣν ἐξ ἀέρος φέρε μεταβάλλοντος ἔδει τὸ τοῦ πυρὸς σῶμα γενέσθαι, καὶ πάλιν πρὸ τῆς τοῦ ἀέρος κινήσεως τοῦ εἰς πῦρ μεταβεβληκότος προϋπῆρξεν ἑτέρα κίνησις ἡ τοῦ ὕδατος, εἰ τύχοι, καθ' ἣν εἰς ἀέρα μετέβαλε, καὶ πρὸ ἐκείνης ἄλλη καὶ τοῦτο ἐπ' ἄπειρον[59], εἴπερ οὐκ ἔσχεν ἀρχὴν οὔτε ὁ κόσμος οὔτε ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων εἰς ἄλληλα μεταβολή, ἀπείρους ἄρα ἔδει προϋπάρξαι κινήσεις, ἵνα τόδε τὸ πῦρ τὸ μερικὸν γένηται· οὐ γὰρ ἂν ἐγένετο, εἰ μὴ ἄπειροι προϋπῆρξαν, διὰ τὸ πρῶτον, ὡς λέγει, τῶν ἀξιωμάτων. εἰ οὖν ἀδύνατον

[56] A second quotation occurs below, at Simpl. *in Phys*., ed. Diels, p. 1180.34–36, which includes an addition at the end: εἴ τινος, φησίν, εἰς γένεσιν ἄπειρα δέοι προϋποστῆναι ἓν ἐξ ἑνὸς γινόμενον, τοῦτο ἀδύνατον γενέσθαι, ὅτι ἀπείρους αὐτῆς κινήσεις ἀναγκαῖον ἦν προϋπάρχειν.

[57] Cf. Simpl. *in Phys*., ed. Diels, p. 1181.4–5: ὁ δὲ Ἀριστοτέλης ἐν τῷ δευτέρῳ τῆς Περὶ γενέσεως, ἐπειδὴ καὶ ἐκείνων οὗτος ἐμνήσθη [...].

[58] Deleted by Wildberg based on the *editio Aldina* (Philoponus, *Against Aristotle*, trans. Wildberg, p. 144, n. 233).

[59] A paraphrastic second quotation in Simplicius also mentions the fourth element, earth, just as in the Arabic: Simpl. *in Phys*., ed. Diels, 1181.12–16: τοῦτο δὲ ἀκολουθεῖ τοῖς λέγουσιν οὐκ ἐπ' ἄπειρον ἁπλῶς, ὥσπερ ἡμεῖς λέγομεν, ἀνακυκλούμενα τῷ εἴδει, ἀλλὰ κατ' εἶδος ἐπ' ἄπειρον ἐξαλλάττεσθαι τὰ γινόμενα ἐπ' εὐθείας προϊόντα, οἷον ἐκ πυρὸς ἀέρα καὶ ἐξ ἀέρος ὕδωρ καὶ ἐξ ὕδατος γῆν καὶ ἐκ γῆς ἄλλο τι κἀξ ἐκείνου πάλιν ἄλλο ἐπ' ἄπειρον [...].

[60] The Oxford manuscript reads *illā l-nār* (« unless fire »); Pines accepts this reading (Pines, « An Arabic Summary », p. 331, n. 175); Troupeau corrects the text by inverting the order of the two words.

لأنّه لا آخر له[63]، واذا كان هذا هكذا فغير ممكن أن يصحّ تولّد النار من الهواء، وكذلك القول في تولّد كلّ واحد من الأستقسّات من الأستقسّ الذي يليه، وقد صحّ وثبت تولّد الأستقسّات بعضها من بعض، فالأستقسّات اذن متناهية.

فنرجع بعد هذا الى الذي قدّمناه من هذه الأصول الثلاثة فنقول: ان كان العالم قديما لم يزل فانّ أشخاص الحيوان لم تزل فيه تتناسل بعضها من بعض، انسان من انسان وفرس من فرس وثور من ثور، وكان وجود الأب من هذه الأشخاص متقدّما لذاته لوجود الابن.

واذا كان هذا هكذا فقد تقدّم لا محالة وجود سقراط وجود أبيه، وقد تقدّم وجود أبيه وجود الأب الذي كان قبله، وكذلك يجري القول في أب قبل ابن الى ما لا نهاية له، وان كان هذا هكذا فقد تقدّم كون سقراط كون آباء لا نهاية لعددهم تناسل بعضهم من بعض وكان جميعهم قبل أن يكون سقراط، وكانوا علّة لكونه، فاذن يحتاج سقراط في وجوده الى أن يتقدّمه أناس لا نهاية لعددهم.

وقد قلنا في الأصل الأوّل من الأصول الثلاثة التي قدّمنا ذكرها انّ كلّ شيء يحتاج في وجوده الى وجود شيء آخر فليس بممكن أن يكون موجودا حتّى يتقدّم وجوده وجود ذلك الشيء الذي يحتاج اليه في وجوده.

وقلنا في الأصل الثاني انّه غير ممكن أن يكون شيء بالفعل لا نهاية لعدده، فان كان آباء سقراط لا نهاية لعددهم، ويستحيل وجود سقراط دون أن يتقدّمه وجود آبائه الذين يحتاج في وجوده اليهم فغير ممكن اذن أن يكون آباء سقراط البتّة لا نهاية لعددهم.

وقد كنّا قلنا في الأصل الثالث انّ كلّ شيء يحتاج في وجوده الى وجود أشياء لا نهاية لعددها تتقدّمه انّه لا يمكن أن يوجد أبدا، وسقراط قد وجد واذا لم يمكن أن يكون الناس الذين كانوا قبل سقراط في وجودهم وهم علّة لكونه لا نهاية لعددهم فهم اذن

ἀπείρους κατ’ ἐνέργειαν γεγονέναι κινήσεις διὰ τὸ τῶν ἀξιωμάτων δεύτερον, οὐδὲ ἄρα τὴν τοῦ μερικοῦ πυρὸς ὑποστῆναι κίνησιν δυνατὸν ἦν διά τε ταῦτα καὶ διὰ τὸ τρίτον ἀξίωμα τὸ λέγον, ὅτι οὗ[61] πρὸ τῆς γενέσεως ἄπειρα προϋποστῆναι ἀνάγκη, τοῦτο οὐκ ἂν γένοιτο. εἰ οὖν ἡ τοῦ μερικοῦ πυρὸς κίνησις γέγονεν, οὐκ ἂν προϋπῆρξαν αὐτῆς ἄπειροι κινήσεις κατὰ τὴν τῆς σὺν ἀντιθέσει ἀντιστροφῆς ἀνάγκην, (ὥς φησιν οὗτος ὁ καὶ τὴν σὺν ἀντιθέσει ἀντιστροφήν, ἥτις ποτέ ἐστιν, ἀγνοῶν, ὡς ἔδειξα οἶμαι τὰ πρὸς τὸ πρῶτον τῆς Περὶ οὐρανοῦ ῥηθέντα αὐτῷ βασανίζων)· εἰ οὖν διὰ πεπερασμένων, φησί, κινήσεων ἦλθεν ἡ φύσις, ἵνα τὴν τοῦ μερικοῦ πυρὸς ποιήσῃ κίνησιν, ἔστιν ἄρα τις πρώτη κίνησις, ἧς μὴ προϋπῆρξεν ἄλλη, καὶ ἐπὶ ἄλλων τῶν καθ’ ἕκαστα κινήσεων ὁ αὐτὸς λόγος, καὶ τοῦτο, φησί, τῷ φυσικῷ λόγῳ σύμφωνόν ἐστι. τὰ γὰρ τέλεια τῶν ἀτελῶν καὶ τὰ ἐνεργείᾳ τῶν δυνάμει πρῶτά ἐστιν. εἰ μὲν οὖν ἐπ’ ἄπειρον ἡ ἄνοδος γένοιτο, οὔτε τὰ τέλεια τῶν ἀτελῶν οὔτε τὰ ἐνεργείᾳ τῶν δυνάμει προηγήσεται, εἰ δὲ πεπερασμέναι, ἡ πρώτη δηλονότι ἅμα τῷ παντὶ συνυποστᾶσα ἐκ τοῦ ἐνεργείᾳ[62] καὶ τοῦ τελείου τὴν ἀρχὴν τῶν ἑξῆς πεποίηται κινήσεων. εἰ δὲ τῶν μερικῶν, φησί, κινήσεων ἀρχή τίς ἐστι καὶ οὐχ οἷόν τε ἐπ’ ἄπειρον ἄλλην πρὸ ἄλλης ἐπινοεῖν κίνησιν, ἀνάγκη καὶ τὴν ἐγκύκλιον τῶν

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61 οὗ is a correction introduced by Wildberg (Philoponus, *Against Aristotle*, p. 145, n. 234), whereas Diels’s edition reads οὐ.

62 τοῦ ἐνεργείᾳ is a correction introduced by Wildberg (Philoponus, *Against Aristotle*, trans. Wildberg, p. 145, n. 237), whereas Diels’s edition reads τοῦ ἐνεργείᾳ.

63 Troupeau prints *lā aǧzāʾ lahu* (« having no parts »); however, the correct reading must be *lā āḫir lahu*, as reflected in Pines’s translation « ultimate end » (Pines, « An Arabic Summary », p. 332).

οὐρανίων κίνησιν ἀπό τινος ἀρχῆς ἄρξασθαι πρότερον οὐκ οὖσαν. οὐ γὰρ ἐνδέχεται τὸν μὲν οὐρανὸν ἀεὶ ὡσαύτως ἔχειν, τὰ δὲ ἐντὸς γενητὰ καὶ φθαρτὰ μὴ ἐν τῷ γίνεσθαι καὶ φθείρεσθαι τὸ εἶναι ἔχειν.”	ذوو نهاية، وما كان له نهاية فله ابتداء، واذا كان هذا هكذا فليس العالم اذن غير ذي ابتداء، لا بل أيّ حال توهّمنا فيها وجد أنّ العالم قبل كون سقراط فيه، فلا بدّ من أن يكون واحد من آباء سقراط قد كان موجودا فيه، واذا كان واحد من آباء سقراط قد كان فالعالم له ابتداء، وواجب أن يكون الأب المبتدأ من آباء سقراط انّما كان وجوده من انسان، فكذلك القول في سائر الأشخاص من الحيوان والنبات. وهذا القول هو الحقّ وهو شبيه بالأقوال الطبيعية، وذلك أنّ الأشياء التامّة هي الأشياء الكائنة بالفعل، والأشياء الناقصة هي الأشياء الكائنة بالقوّة، واذا كان هذا هكذا فالأشياء التامّة ينبغي أن تتقدّم الأشياء الناقصة، والأشياء التي بالفعل ينبغي أن تسبق الأشياء التي بالقوّة اذ كانت عللا لها، وذلك أنّ الأشياء التي بالقوّة تبطل ببطلان الأشياء التي بالفعل، ولا تبطل الأشياء التي بالفعل ببطلان الأشياء التي بالقوّة، وذلك أنّ الأشياء التي بالفعل اذا لم تكن لم يكن الانسان الذي بالقوّة، فان كان العالم ليس بذي ابتداء لم يكن الانسان الذي بالفعل متقدّما للانسان الذي بالقوّة، لأنّه لا يجب أن يكون كلّ انسان من آباء سقراط قد كان في الآباء الذين بالقوّة قبله فيكون ليس أحداً[64] من آبائه موجودا بالفعل تامّا من غير أن يكون كان بالقوّة، وهذا خارج عمّا في الطبائع، لأنّ الأمر الذي في الطبائع هو الانسانية التامّة التي بالفعل تتقدّم الأشياء الناقصة أعني التي بالقوّة، لأنّها هي العلل المحركة المخرجة لها من القوّة الى الفعل. واذا كان العالم محدثا له ابتداء فمع ابتدائه نجمت فيه الأشخاص التي هي آباء لما يتولّد عنها من سائر أشخاص الحيوان والنبات، وتلك الآباء هي التي ظهرت بالفعل تامّة كاملة، فكانت أصولها[65] تتولّد عنها هذه الأشخاص التي تكون بالقوّة في أشخاص مثلها ثمّ تظهر بالفعل.
For this proof he assumes three axioms beforehand. One is that if in order to be	John has said:

64 Reading *laysa aḥadan* with al-Muʾtaman's *Compendium*: Al-Muʾtaman ibn al-ʿAssāl, *Maǧmūʿ*, ed. Wadi, vol. VIa, p. 101.10. Troupeau corrects the manuscript reading to *kull wāḥid* (« everyone, each one »).

65 Reading *uṣūluhā* with the manuscripts, instead of correcting to *uṣūlan* with Troupeau.

generated, each of the things generated necessarily needs something which pre-exists, as for instance a ship <needs> wood, <then> it cannot be generated if those things have not been generated before. The second is that it is impossible for an infinite number to exist in actuality, or for anyone to traverse the infinite in counting, and that it is also impossible that <anything> should be greater than the infinite, or that the infinite should be increased. The third one is: If it were necessary for the generation of something that an infinite <set of things> should pre-exist, one generated out of another, <then> it would be impossible for that thing to be generated. "For Aristotle himself", he says, "showed from this in the *de Generatione*[66] that it is impossible that the elements of bodies should be infinite in number, if indeed one is generated out of the other. For the infinite cannot be traversed, so that fire, for example, would not be generated if it were generated <only> after an infinite <number of things> had been generated before. Let these <axioms>", he says, "be granted beforehand; now if the particular motion of this fire possesses a beginning of existence and an end, and if in order that this <motion> might be	It is necessary[67] that we set forth in the first place, before (we expound) our argument, these three principles (which are generally) known and recognized, (which cannot) be refuted, and (cannot) be doubted, nor can their soundness. The first of these principles is that it is impossible for anything which requires in order to exist (another) thing to exist, if its (existence) is not preceded by the existence of the thing which is required. (Thus), for example, a ship and wood. For if it is requisite for the existence of a ship that it should be preceded by the existence of wood, then it is impossible that there should be a ship, unless the existence of wood precedes the ship. The second principle is that it is impossible that there should be an infinite number in actuality, even supposing that someone should (go on) counting for ever. For it would be limited and finite, because of its manifestation in actuality, whatever the point in the numbering might be at which he would stop. (On the other hand) that in it which does not become actual is infinite in potentiality. Aristotle has explained this in the third treatise of the book *De Auditu Naturali*[68].

66 Arist. *Gen. corr.* II 5, esp. 332b30–32, according to Troupeau; II 4, according to Pines, « An Arabic Summary », p. 331, n. 168.

67 Pines reads *mablaġī* (« my objective ») instead of *yanbaġī*, as printed by Troupeau and followed here.

68 The reference is to Arist. *Phys.* III 7, 207b1–12, as indicated by Pines, « An Arabic Summary », p. 331, n. 158.

generated, another motion had to be generated first as a prerequisite for the generation of the body of the fire, from, say, air that was undergoing change, and again, if there was another motion before the motion of the air which changed into fire, <say> the <motion> of water in virtue of which the <water> changed into air, and if before this <motion> there was another one and so on *ad infinitum* – provided that neither the world nor the change of things into one another possessed a beginning, it was, then, necessary that an infinite <number of> motions existed first, in order that this particular fire might be generated. For it would not have been generated unless an infinite <number of motions> existed first, because of the first axiom," so he says. "Now if it is impossible for an infinite <number of> motions to have come to be in actuality because of the second axiom, it will then not have been possible for the motion of the particular fire to exist, both because of this and because of the third axiom, which says that that thing will not be generated for the generation of which an infinite <number of things> must pre-exist. If, then, the motion of the particular fire came to be, an infinite <number> of motions surely did not exist first – according to the necessity of the conversion with negation." (So he says, though ignorant of what conversion with negation is, as I have	The third principle is that the existence of any thing for whose (coming into) being it is requisite that it be preceded by the coming into being of an infinite (number of) things that precede (it), is impossible. For example, if it is impossible for *alif* to exist, unless its existence is preceded by that of *bāʾ*; and if it is impossible for *bāʾ* to exist, unless its existence is preceded by that of *ǧīm*; and if it is impossible for *ǧīm* to exist, unless its existence is preceded by that of some other thing; and if it is impossible for that thing to exist, unless its existence is preceded by that of some other thing, and so on ad infinitum; then it is impossible for *alif* to exist, for it is requisite that it be preceded by the existence of things whose number is infinite in actuality; but the existence of things whose number is infinite in actuality is absurd. This proof is used by Aristotle in the second treatise of the book of *Generation and Corruption* (in order to show) that the natural elements[69] are finite, for it is impossible that they should be infinite. For if fire is generated from air, the air being changed into it, and if air is generated from water, and water from earth, and earth from some other thing, and this is continued ad infinitum; then it is impossible that there should be only a generation of fire from air,

[69] *ustuqussāt* according to Troupeau's text (here as well as in the other instances); *usṭuqusāt* according to Pines's transliteration (Pines, « An Arabic Summary », p. 331, n. 169).

shown, I think, when I examined what he said against the first <book> of the *De caelo*.)[70] "So if nature", he says, "went through a limited <number of> motions in order to create the motion of the particular fire, there exists therefore some first motion which was not preceded by <any> other <motion>. And the same account <applies> in the case of the other individual motions, and this is in agreement with the physical account. For complete things are <prior> to incomplete, and actual prior to potential. So if on the one hand the ascent took place *ad infinitum*, complete things would not precede the incomplete, and the actual not the potential; but if on the other hand <the motions> are limited <in number>, then the first <motion>, which evidently exists together with the universe, has made a beginning which starts from something actual and complete for the subsequent motions. But if there is some beginning," he says, "of the particular motions, and if it is not possible to conceive of one motion before the other *ad infinitum*, then it is necessary that the circular motion of the things in heaven, too, had a beginning <and> did not exist before. For it is impossible that the heavens are always in the same state, whereas the generable and destructible things inside do not have their being in being generated and destroyed."	without the occurrence of generation in infinite bodies preceding the generation of fire from the air. It is (however) impossible that (generation) should not have stopped until its ultimate (end) was reached; for it has no ultimate end. If this is so it is impossible that it be correct that fire is generated from air. And this discourse (also applies) to the generation of every one of the elements from the element which is close to it. It is however correct and established (as true) that the elements are generated from one another. The elements are therefore finite. After this we shall go back to what we have previously set forth (concerning) these three principles. We shall accordingly say: If the world is eternal a parte ante (and) has never ceased (from existing), (then) the individuals of living beings (must) have never ceased from being procreated in it from one another, a man from a man, a horse from a horse, and a bull from a bull. (As regards) these individuals the existence of the father essentially precedes the existence of the son. If this is so, the existence of Socrates must be indubitably preceded by the existence of his father; the existence of his father being preceded by that of the father who was before him. One can speak in this manner about

[70] The reference is to Simplicii *in Aristotelis de caelo commentaria*, ed. Iohannes Ludovicus Heiberg, Typis et impensis Georgii Reimeri, Berolini 1894 (Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca, 7), p. 28.12–30.26, as indicated by Wildberg (Philoponus, *Against Aristotle*, trans. Wildberg, p. 145, n. 236).

	fathers before sons ad infinitum. If this is so, Socrates's having come into existence (must have) been preceded by the coming into existence of an infinite number of ancestors who were procreated by one another; all of them (must) have come into existence before Socrates and have been a cause for his having come into existence. It would therefore be [requisite] for Socrates in order to exist to be preceded by an infinite number of people. We have (however) said in the first of the three principles which we have mentioned above that it is impossible that any thing that requires in order to exist the existence of (some) other thing, should exist, unless its existence is preceded by that of the thing required for its existence. In the second principle we have said that it is impossible that there should be a thing in actuality whose number is infinite. If then Socrates's ancestors are infinite in number, and if it is impossible for Socrates to exist unless his (existence) is preceded by that of his ancestors, which is requisite for him in order to exist, it is then altogether impossible that Socrates's ancestors should be infinite in number. In the third principle we have said that it is impossible for any thing which in order to exist requires the existence of an infinite number of things which (must) precede it, ever to (come into) existence. Socrates (however) did come into existence. It

	is therefore impossible that the people who existed prior to Socrates and were the cause of his coming into existence should have been infinite in number. Therefore, they (must) have been finite (in number). And what is finite has a beginning. If this is so, then the world is not without beginning. To put it even more strongly: whatever state (of things) we might imagine, it would be found that before Socrates was (in existence) in the world, there (must) necessarily (always) have been in existence in it some ancestor of Socrates. And if one of the ancestors of Socrates did exist, then the world has a beginning. And it is necessary that the existence of the commencing ancestor among the ancestors of Socrates (has proceeded) from a man. (The same applies) to the other individuals (which are) animals or plants. This statement is true; it is similar to physical statements. For the perfect things are those which exist in actuality, and the imperfect things are those which exist in potentiality. If this is so, the perfect things must precede the imperfect, and the things which (exist) in actuality must come before the things which (exist) in potentiality, for (the former) are the causes of (the latter), inasmuch as the things which (exist) in potentiality cease (to exist) with the cessation (of the existence) of the things which (exist) in actuality; (whereas) the things which (exist) in actuality do not cease (to exist) with the cessation (of the

	existence) of the things which (exist) in potentiality. For if the things which (exist) in actuality had not existed, the man who (exists) in potentiality would not come to exist. If (however) the world had no beginning the man who (exists) in actuality would not precede the man who (exists) in potentiality. For it must not (be the case) that every man from among the ancestors of Socrates has been among the ancestors who have existed in potentiality prior to him in such a way that none of his ancestors would have existed in actuality in a perfect way without having existed in potentiality. This (however) is (contrary) to what is in nature. For the thing that is in nature is perfect humanity, (which) precedes in actuality the imperfect things, that is, those that (exist) potentially. (This is) because (the former) are the causes which moves (the latter) making them go over from potentiality to actuality. If the world has been created in time, it had a beginning; and the individuals which are the ancestors of the other animal and plant individuals born of them sprung simultaneously with its beginning. These ancestors are those which became manifest in actuality complete and perfect. Accordingly from their roots those individuals are born that exist in potentiality in individuals that are similar to them and afterwards appear in actuality.

The two sources appear to refer to one and the same text. However, if this is so, neither Simplicius nor the Arabic epitome can be taken as entirely faithful testimonies of their source. On the one hand, Simplicius can be proven to have paraphrased to some extent. After quoting fr. 132 Wildberg of *Against Aristotle*, he goes on to refute Philoponus. In so doing, he occasionally quotes some sentences anew. On two occasions, the second quotation rephrases Philoponus's words in a way that has an even closer correspondence in the Arabic. Thus, in the second quotation,

1) Simplicius specifies that the passage of Aristotle's *On Generation and Corruption* put forward by Philoponus is found in the second book of that work,[71] as also reported in the Arabic epitome;

2) Simplicius adds a mention of the fourth element, earth, in the sequence of the reciprocal transformation of the four elements;[72] this element is also mentioned by the Arabic epitome.

This proves that the Arabic version is not necessarily responsible for the discrepancies between the parallel texts. On the contrary, the Arabic preserves a feature that is likely to go back to Philoponus's original formulation: the correct reference to Aristotle's *Physics* (III 7, 207b1–12) as a counterproof of the second initial axiom.

On the other hand, however, the Arabic text cannot be said to preserve the original text without any changes either. The most likely trace of change in the Arabic is the simplification of the argument set forth in the third axiom with reference to Aristotle's *On Generation and Corruption*. The Arabic argues that fire can only be generated through a finite succession of elemental changes, whereas the Greek argues that the *movement* of fire can only be generated in this way. The latter version of the argument is more likely to be adherent to Philoponus's original formulation, both because it corresponds to Simplicius's preliminary statement, as seen above, that Philoponus is about to prove on his own « that movement is ungenerated » (ὅτι ἀδύνατον ἀγένητον εἶναι τὴν κίνησιν) and because it preserves the link with the Aristotelian argument on the incorruptibility of movement that it aims to refute; as seen above, it is the Aristotelian lemma containing that argument that prompts Simplicius to refute the corresponding Philoponian criticism. Therefore, it is plausible that, in this instance, it is the Arabic formulation that has simplified the argument.

After the text quoted in the table above, the Greek fr. 132 Wildberg, Simplicius goes on to add a fourth point and a fifth point, aimed at further proving the impossibility of ungenerated movement. The fourth argues from the impossibility

71 Simpl. *in Phys.*, ed. Diels, p. 1181.4–5.

72 Simpl. *in Phys.*, p. 1181.12–16.

of an increase in the infinite, which would take place through the addition of future movements to past ones; the fifth argues from the impossibility of the multiplication of the infinite, an idea illustrated through the different velocities of the revolutions of the stars.[73]

After quoting Philoponus, Simplicius goes on to refute him. Finally, Simplicius explicitly concludes his discussion of *Against Aristotle*, book VI (fr. 133 Wildberg). Among his concluding remarks on the subject, Simplicius incidentally says of Philoponus: « Having proceeded as far as the aforementioned remarks, however, he considered that he had completed his counter-argument against the everlastingness of motion » (μέχρι δὲ τῶν εἰρημένων προελθὼν τέλος ἔχειν ἐνόμισεν αὐτῷ τὴν ἀντιλογίαν τὴν πρὸς τὴν ἀιδιότητα τῆς κινήσεως).[74]

To sum up, the relevant section of Simplicius's commentary contains, in the following order: a discussion of fragments 127–131 Wildberg of *Against Aristotle* VI; a mention of the fact that they were followed by an eschatological discussion (further developed in the following books); an allusion to the transition from Aristotle's refutation to Philoponus's own arguments showing that movement cannot be ungenerated; a Philoponian proof closely corresponding to the third and last proof of the Arabic *De contingentia mundi*; Simplicius's criticism of it; and his final comments, including the fact that he is now concluding his discussion of *Against Aristotle*, book VI.

How should the Greek-Arabic correspondence be explained? One possible explanation for the close similarity between the Greek text in Simplicius and the third proof of *De contingentia mundi* is that the latter stems from *Against Aristotle* VI. This would explain why the Greek parallel to the Arabic epitome occurs within Simplicius's broader discussion of book VI of *Against Aristotle*. In this hypothesis, the Arabic epitome would not be the remnant of a third anti-eternalist work, but of *Against Aristotle* VI. Such a hypothesis is not contradicted by Philoponus's aforementioned references, which have been used by scholars to infer the existence of a third anti-eternalist work, because such references, as pointed out above, are actually vague and simply state that proofs against the eternity of the world will be provided « elsewhere » (ἐν ἑτέρῳ or ἐν ἑτέροις). Indeed, if those references are to be used at all, they may even corroborate the hypothesis put forth here because some of them also recall *Against Aristotle*; moreover, they are formulated in a way that is close to Simplicius's testimony, seen above, according to which Philoponus, after refuting Aristotle, goes on to demonstrate the opposite view « even [...] on his own » (καὶ αὐτὸς καθ' αὑτὸν) in *Against Aristotle*. One can compare this to the analogous expressions αὐτοί [...] ἐφ' ἑαυτῶν and ἰδίᾳ found in the relevant Philoponian cross-references put forward by previous scholars. If one

73 Simpl. *in Phys.*, p. 1179.12–26.

74 Simpl. *in Phys.*, p. 1182.32–33.

accepts this hypothesis, the first two proofs of the Arabic epitome do not appear in Simplicius simply because he left them out. Indeed, it may even be argued that Simplicius's reference to a « fourth » point and a « fifth » point, immediately following the Greek-Arabic correspondence, adds plausibility to the provenance of the Arabic from *Against Aristotle*, book VI. In fact, these two points, showing the impossibility of an increase in or a multiplication of the infinite, are independent from the previous reasoning, which is based on the three axioms and rests on the intraversability of the infinite. Therefore, the numeration « fourth » and « fifth » may, more naturally, refer to the fact that these points were preceded by three arguments, the same making up the three proofs of *De contingentia mundi*.

On the other hand, the main difficulty in supposing that *De contingentia mundi* stems from *Against Aristotle* is the prologue of the Arabic epitome. There are no reasons to doubt that it is genuine; indeed, as seen above, it can be argued that it is consistent with Philoponus's original works. If the prologue is genuine, as I believe, it is difficult to reconcile its explicit definition of *De contingentia mundi* as a separate « book » (*kitāb*), following the « books » (*kutub*) against Proclus and Aristotle with the possibility that it is drawn from *Against Aristotle*, book VI.

Of course, an alternative explanation for the Greek-Arabic correspondence would be that Philoponus repeats relevant portions of the same argument word by word both in *Against Aristotle*, book VI, and a separate work, subsequently epitomised as *De contingentia mundi*. It is true that Philoponus repeats several of his arguments in different works.[75] This can be verified in *De contingentia mundi* itself, which contains several parallels matching *Against Proclus*, as indicated by Pines; overall, even a certain doctrinal and terminological consistency can be conceded to Philoponus's repeated treatments of similar topics.[76] However, neither these nor, to the best of my knowledge, other parallels in Philoponus's works are phrased as similarly as the one seen above. Therefore, this explanation, while not impossible, is not as natural as it may appear at first sight.

One may attempt to reconcile the conflicting evidence by making *De contingentia mundi* neither a properly separate work nor an ordinary part of *Against Aristotle*, book VI, but, rather, something halfway, an « appendix » of *Against Aristotle* VI, as tentatively suggested by Davidson. One could exploit, to this end, Simplicius's transitional passage introducing fr. 132 Wildberg (the transition from a *pars destruens* to a *pars construens*, i.e., from Philoponus's refutation of Aristotle concerning the eternity of movement to Philoponus's own arguments against it).

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75 See the remarks in Johannes Philoponos, *De aeternitate mundi / Über die Ewigkeit der Welt*, ed. Scholten, vol. I, p. 218–219.

76 Cf., for example, the above references (n. 40 and 41) to Philoponus, *De opificio mundi* IV, 7, ed. Reichardt, p. 176.29–177.6 (= ed. Scholten, vol. II, p. 400); Philoponus, *Against Proclus* I, 3, ed. Rabe, p. 10.22–11.2 (= ed. Scholten, vol. II, p. 340); and Philoponus's *De anima* commentary, ed. Hayduck, p. 217.4–7.

Still, the compromise would be unsatisfactory because, once again, it would mean downplaying the statement in the prologue of the Arabic epitome to the effect that its contents form a separate work, a « book » (*kitāb*), indeed perhaps even a « special book » (*kitāb ḫāṣṣ*), according to Pines's reading of the Oxford manuscript.[77]

The only way to avoid these difficulties would be to suppose that *De contingentia mundi* is a collage of texts of different provenances, namely, both *Against Aristotle* and the third anti-eternalist work; however, this solution is doomed to remain entirely speculative and is not particularly economic. As a result, it appears preferable to leave the entire issue open. While avowing that I am not able to account for the claim, in the prologue of the Arabic work, that it contains materials from a separate book, I am inclined to believe that the epitome has *Against Aristotle* as at least one of its sources.

Finally, one may wonder where the Arabic title *Book on the Fact That Every Body is Finite, Hence its Power is Finite*, in one « discourse » (*maqāla*), fits into this picture. If such a work existed at all in Philoponus's intentions and was not simply extrapolated from his works in the Arabic tradition, the above analysis suggests that we should be careful in identifying it with *De contingentia mundi*. As mentioned above, according to Davidson, the work *That Every Body is Finite* may be identical with a section of Simplicius's *Physics* commentary (ed. Diels, p. 1326.38–1336.34). The proximity indicated by Pines between the Philoponian quotations in Simplicius's relevant section and the topic of the first proof of *De contingentia mundi* does not necessarily mean that they should be traced back to one and the same work. First, as avowed by Pines himself, *De contingentia mundi* has three « sections » (*maqālāt*) whereas *That Every Body is Finite* has one section. Additionally, as mentioned above, Philoponus does repeat his arguments throughout his works. This can also be proven for the argument from the finitude of bodily power, which is repeated with different nuances not only in *De contingentia mundi* and Simplicius's relevant section but also in *Against Proclus* and *Against Aristotle*.[78] In conclusion, it is uncertain whether *De contingentia mundi* was originally identical to *That Every Body is Finite*.

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77 See the text of the prologue quoted above and n. 17.

78 See, respectively, Philoponus, *Against Proclus* VI, 29, ed. Rabe, p. 235.2–19 (= ed. Scholten, vol. III, p. 796); Simpl. *in Cael.*, ed. Heiberg, p. 142.22–25 (forming a part of *Against Aristotle*, book IV, fr. 80 Wildberg). Philoponus's conclusion in *De contingentia mundi* (Troupeau, « Un Épitomé arabe », p. 79.23–80.5) that the world, though preserved by divine power, is perishable by nature is echoed, in addition to Simplicius's relevant section (*in Phys.*, ed. Diels, p. 1331.7–10), as well in the aforementioned passage of *Against Proclus* VI, 29 (ed. Rabe, p. 235.2–237.15 = ed. Scholten, vol. III, p. 796–800; this is one of the parallels already pointed out by Pines, « An Arabic Summary », p. 341 and n. 276).

V. *A hypothesis on the milieu that produced the Arabic* De contingentia mundi

Thus far, I have discussed the source of the Arabic epitome. Now, I wish to turn to the question of who translated the Greek materials into Arabic, how they did so, and when they did so.

As seen above, Pines hypothesised that only the first proof of the Greek original of *De contingentia mundi* was translated into Arabic in full and circulated with the title *Book on the Fact That Every Body is Finite, Hence its Power is Finite*, whereas the remainder of the work was never translated in full. Therefore, in order to explain the existence of the epitomised Arabic *De contingentia mundi*, Pines had to appeal to a Greek epitome that was subsequently translated into Arabic. However, Pines's initial assumption that *De contingentia mundi* stems from the same Greek text as *That Every Body is Finite* is hypothetical, and it has no special plausibility, as I have attempted to show above. Consequently, the ensuing reasoning is not compelling either (as mentioned, Pines himself admitted that it was purely hypothetical).

Another hypothesis was set forth by Marwan Rashed in a 2013 article.[79] Rashed hypothesised that the Greek original of *De contingentia mundi* was part of the now missing pages at the beginning of the MS Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, gr. Z. 236 (coll. 754), dating back to the ninth century and containing Philoponus's *Against Proclus*. The manuscript also contains some annotations in Arabic alphabet, a fact that according to Rashed suggests a circulation in an Arabic-speaking milieu. However, as Rashed himself affirms elsewhere, the annotations in Arabic alphabet, almost illegible today, are probably in Turkish language.[80]

Given the unverifiable nature of the previous hypotheses, I shall attempt to investigate the origin of the translation on other grounds. This will lead me to an alternative hypothesis: I would like to suggest the possibility that the Arabic *De contingentia mundi*, based on its style and vocabulary, originated in ninth-century Baghdad, within the circle of translators gathered around the Muslim philosopher al-Kindī (d. before 252 H./ 866 CE).[81] I will argue for this through a comparison of

[79] Marwan Rashed, « Nouveaux fragments antiprocliens de Philopon en version arabe et le problème de l'origine de la théorie de l' 'instauration' (*ḥudūth*) », *Les études philosophiques*, 105/2 (2013), p. 261–292 (on p. 268–271).

[80] Marwan Rashed, « Nicolas d'Otrante, Guillaume de Moerbeke et la 'collection philosophique' », *Studi medievali*, 43 (2002), p. 693–717, on p. 707 and n. 38 (= Id., *L'héritage aristotélicien. Textes inédits de l'Antiquité*, Les Belles Lettres, Paris 2007 [Anagôgê], p. 513–541, on p. 527 and n. 38).

[81] On al-Kindī's circle and its philosophical project, see Gerhard Endress, « The Defense of Reason: the Plea for Philosophy in the Religious Community », *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der arabisch-islamischen Wissenschaften*, 6 (1990), p. 1–49; Id., « The Circle of al-Kindī. Early Arabic Translations from the Greek and the Rise of Islamic Philosophy », in Gerhard Endress, Remke Kruk (eds.), *The Ancient Tradition in Christian and Islamic Hellenism: Studies on the Transmission of*

the Arabic epitome with Endress's reference study of the translation technique of the circle of al-Kindī.[82] In so doing, I will be following in the footsteps of an analogous previous study by Ahmad Hasnawi, who linked two Arabic paraphrastic translations of Philoponus transmitted under the name of Alexander of Aphrodisias to the Kindian circle.[83] At the same time, I will occasionally supplement the comparison with references to further lexicographic resources and to other Arabic texts translated within this circle.[84] Of course, in this case, the Greek-Arabic lexical correspondences that can be deduced from the texts compared in the table above are very few; however, they are supplemented by the correspondences between the phraseology of the epitome and that of the translations stemming from the circle of al-Kindī.

A) Vocabulary

1) *Individual terms*. Two renderings indicated by Endress as typical can be verified by comparing the Arabic epitome and Simplicius:

- *tāmm* = τέλειος. Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, § 1.05, p. 115–117. Cf. ed. Troupeau, p. 83.14: *al-ašyāʾ al-tāmma* = Simpl. *in Phys.*, ed. Diels, p. 1179.3: τὰ [...] τέλεια.

Greek Philosophy and Sciences, Research School CNWS, Leiden 1997 (CNWS Publications, 50), p. 43–76.

82 Gerhard Endress, *Proclus Arabus. Zwanzig Abschnitte aus der* Institutio Theologica *in arabischer Übersetzung*, Steiner Verlag in Kommission, Wiesbaden – Beirut 1973 (Beiruter Texte und Studien, 10).

83 Ahmad Hasnawi, « Alexandre d'Aphrodise vs Jean Philopon: notes sur quelques traités d'Alexandre 'perdus' en grec, conservés en arabe », *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 4 (1994), p. 53–109.

84 In addition to Manfred Ullmann, *Wörterbuch zu den griechisch-arabischen Übersetzungen des 9. Jahrhunderts*, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, vol. I, 2006; vol. II, 2007, and the entries available thus far in Gerhard Endress, Dimitri Gutas (eds.), *A Greek and Arabic Lexicon*, Brill, Leiden 1992–ongoing (*GALex*), the online resources *Glossarium Graeco-Arabicum* (https://glossga.bbaw.de/) and *G2A Web App* (https://g2a.ilc.cnr.it/Teologia_Wapp/Home.xhtml) were consulted (last accessed October 2023), as well as Gerhard Endress, *Die Entwicklung der Fachsprache*, in Wolfdietrich Fischer (ed.), *Grundriss der Arabischen Philologie*, vol. III (Supplement), Reichert, Wiesbaden 1992, p. 3–23, and the glossaries and indexes included in the following volumes: *Aristoteles'* De anima*. Eine verlorene spätantike Paraphrase in arabischer und persischer Überlieferung*, ed. Rüdiger Arnzen, Brill, Leiden – New York – Köln 1998 (Aristoteles Semitico-Latinus, 9); Plotino, *La discesa dell'anima nei corpi (Enn. IV 8 [6]). Plotiniana arabica (pseudo-Teologia di Aristotele, capitoli 1 e 7; "Detti del sapiente greco")*, ed. Cristina D'Ancona et al., Il Poligrafo, Padova 2003 (Subsidia Mediaevalia Patavina, 4); Plotino, *L'immortalità dell'anima IV 7[2]. Plotiniana Arabica (pseudo-*Teologia di Aristotele*, capitoli I, III, IX)*, ed. Cristina D'Ancona, Pisa U.P., Pisa 2017 (Greco, Arabo, Latino. Le vie del sapere, 5).

- *istiḥāla* = μεταβολή. Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, § 1.07, p. 122–124. Cf. ed. Troupeau, p. 82.14: *bi-stiḥāla* = Simpl. *in Phys*., ed. Diels, p. 1178.22–24: μεταβάλλοντος or μεταβεβληκότος.

2) *Use of hendiadys*. Another typical feature of the Kindian translations is the Arabic use of a hendiadys for the rendering of one single Greek term (Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, § 2.11, point b, p. 158–162). Several of them are found in the Arabic epitome; although their Greek counterparts cannot be verified, two of them are identical to expressions listed by Endress as idiosyncratic:[85]

- *tāmm kāmil* = τέλειος. Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, § 1.05, p. 115–117. Cf. ed. Troupeau, p. 80.9; 80.10; 83.23.
- *ġayru mumkin* [...] *al-batta* = simple negation in Greek. Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, § 2.11, p. 159. Cf. ed. Troupeau, p. 83.6.

3) *Further compatible terms.* Several terms in the Arabic epitome, though lacking a Greek counterpart, are consistent with the typical translation vocabulary of the Kindian circle:

- *dahr* or *dāʾim* = αἰών, αἰώνιος. Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, § 1.08, p. 124–126. Cf. ed. Troupeau, p. 79.12–13 (*taḥfaẓu ḏātahu ḥifẓan dāʾiman sarmadiyyan*); 79.15 (*tafʿaluhu fiʿlan dāʾiman*); 79.24 (*taḥfaẓuhu fī l-mustaʾnaf ḥifẓan dāʾiman sarmadiyyan*); 79.3; 79.9; 80.4; 80.5; 80.12 (*ahl al-dahr*).
- *ʿilla* = αἰτία, αἴτιον. Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, § 1.16, p. 141–143. Cf. ed. Troupeau, p. 83.1; 83.9; 83.16; 83.21.
- *nayl* or *istifāda* = μεθέξις. Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, § 1.18, p. 144–148. Cf. ed. Troupeau, p. 79.26; 79.27; 80.1 (forms of *nāla*); p. 80.1 (*yastafīdu*).
- *qadīm* = ἀΐδιος. Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, § 1.20, p. 148–149. Cf. ed. Troupeau, p. 82.19 (*qadīman lam yazal*).

[85] Some hendiadys do not have an exact correspondence among the translation texts from the circle of al-Kindī. However, similar expressions can be found for the following:
- *al-baqāʾ wa-l-dawām* (ed. Troupeau, p. 80.11). Cf. Aristotle's *pseudo-Theology* (without counterpart in the original Greek): *al-dāʾima al-bāqiyya* and *tabqā wa-tadūmu* (Plotino, *La discesa dell'anima nei corpi*, ed. D'Ancona et al., p. 235.7 and p. 252.5); *bāqiyya dāʾima* and *bāqin dāʾim* (Plotino, *L'immortalità dell'anima*, ed. D'Ancona, p. 405.3 and p. 451.9); Arabic translation of *De caelo* II 3, 286a9 (versio B by Ibn al-Biṭrīq): *dawām wa-baqāʾ*, rendering ἀθανασία (source: *Glossarium Graeco-Arabicum*).
- *al-tanāsul wa-l-tawālud* (ed. Troupeau, p. 80.10). Cf. Aristotle's *pseudo-Theology*: *bi-l-kawn wa-l-tanāsul*, without Greek counterpart (Plotino, *La discesa dell'anima nei corpi*, ed. D'Ancona et al., p. 252.5).

Two further terminological correspondences between *De contingentia mundi* and translations traceable to the Kindian circle should be mentioned, even if they concern terms not listed in Endress's *Proclus Arabus*. They are as follows:

- *duṯūr*, i.e., « extinction » (ed. Troupeau, p. 80.3): this term and other forms of the same root are also found, e.g., in the Arabic *Liber de causis* and the Arabic Plotinus.[86]
- the title *Samāʿ al-kiyān* for the *Physics* (ed. Troupeau, p. 82.6), as opposed to the alternative Arabic title *al-Samāʿ al-tabīʿī*: the form *Samāʿ al-kiyān* is also employed by one of the Arabic adaptations of Philoponus analysed by Hasnawi.[87]

B) *Syntax*

Hypothetical construction with elliptical protasis. Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, § 2.22, point b, p. 171. Cf. ed. Troupeau, p. 80.10: *wa-lawlā ḏālika, la-*[...] (« were it not [so], then [...] »).

C) *Phraseology*

The relevant section for comparison is Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, § 2.3, p. 171–185.

1) *Introductory formulas* (Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, § 2.31, p. 171–174)

- *qad taqaddamtu fa-waḍaʿtu* (*kutuban*) (ed. Troupeau, p. 79.2).
- *fa-ammā al-āna urīdu an uqīma al-burhān* (ed. Troupeau, p. 79.3).
- *fa-aqūlu* (ed. Troupeau, p. 79.11).

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86 *Die pseudo-aristotelische Schrift ueber das reine Gute bekannt unter dem Namen Liber de causis*, ed. Otto Bardenhewer, Herder'sche Verlagshandlung, Freiburg im Breisgau 1882, prop. 4, p. 67.5, 69.3; prop. 5, p. 71.4, 71.5; prop. 10, p. 81.7; prop. 26, p. 107.2, 107.5, 107.7; prop. 27, p. 109.3; prop. 31, p. 116.6 (corresponding to *Al-Aflāṭūniyya al-muḥdaṯa ʿinda al-ʿarab*, ed. ʿAbdurraḥmān Badawī, Dār al-qalam, Bayrūt 1977[2] [al-Qāhira 1955], prop. 4, p. 8.6, 7.10; prop. 5, p. 9.10, 9.11; prop. 10, p. 13.15; prop. 26, p. 27.2, 27.5, 27.6; prop. 27, p. 28.3; prop. 31, p. 32.4). For the Arabic Plotinus see, for example, the instances listed by the « Indice dei termini arabi » in Plotino, *La discesa dell'anima nei corpi*, ed. D'Ancona et al., p. 487; and Plotino, *L'immortalità dell'anima*, ed. D'Ancona, p. 665.

87 Hasnawi, « Alexandre d'Aphrodise vs Jean Philopon », p. 78. The text (D9, *Treatise by Alexander Concerning the Fact That Actuality is More General Than Movement According to Aristotle's View*) is published in: *Arisṭū ʿinda al-ʿarab*, ed. ʿAbdurraḥmān Badawī, Maktaba al-nahḍa al-miṣriyya, al-Qāhira 1947, p. 293–294; the relevant reference is found on p. 293.9 (corresponding to Philoponus, *Against Proclus*, IV, 4, ed. Rabe, p. 65.7 = ed. Scholten, vol. II, p. 468). The Arabic text also refers to the alternative title *al-Samāʿ al-tabīʿī* (ed. Badawī, p. 293.4); however, this is an introductory section without a counterpart in the Greek and is, thus, not necessarily indicative of the translation technique of the circle of al-Kindī.

- *yanbaġī an nuqaddima* (ed. Troupeau, p. 81.25: for *nuqaddima* cf. the Greek προλαμβάνει in Simpl. *in Phys.*, ed. Diels, p. 1178.9).

2) *Hypothetical clauses as formulas adding demonstrative cogency* (Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, § 2.32, p. 174–178)

- *wa-iḏā kāna hāḏā hākaḏā* (ed. Troupeau, p. 79.17; 80.14–15; 82.17; 82.22; 83.10, 83.15); *wa-in kāna hāḏā hākaḏā* (ed. Troupeau, p. 82.23).
- *inna hāḏā iḏā kāna ʿalā mā waṣafta* (ed. Troupeau, p. 80.18); *wa-iḏā kāna hāḏā ʿalā mā waṣafnā* (ed. Troupeau, p. 81.14).
- *lā maḥālata* in apodosis (ed. Troupeau, p. 80.15; 82.22).

3) *Return to the main topic after a digression* (Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, § 2.33, p. 178–180)

- *fa-narǧiʿu baʿd hāḏā ilā allaḏī qaddamnāhu* [...] *fa-naqūlu* (ed. Troupeau, p. 82.19).

4) *Formulas concluding demonstrations* (Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, § 2.34, p. 180–183)

- *wa-hāḏā muḥāl ʿalā mā bayyannāhu* (ed. Troupeau, p. 81.2).
- *wa-qad ṣaḥḥa wa-ṯabata* (ed. Troupeau, p. 82.18).

5) *Formulas expressing objection and answer* (Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, § 2.35, p. 183–184)

- *fa-in qāla qāʾil* [...] *qulnā* (ed. Troupeau, objection p. 79.23, answer p. 79.26; ed. Troupeau, objection p. 80.16, answer p. 80.18). Cf. also the following formulas: *wa-ḏālika mušabbih li-qāʾil yaqūlu* (ed. Troupeau, p. 81.4); *qad yustankaru qawl man qāla* (ed. Troupeau, p. 81.10; 81.10–11); *qawl al-qāʾil* (ed. Troupeau, p. 81.11).

6) *Explanatory formulas* (Endress, *Proclus Arabus*, § 2.36, p. 184–185)

- *al-ašyāʾ al-nāqiṣa aʿnī allatī bi-l-quwwa* (ed. Troupeau, p. 83.21). *Aʿnī bi-* occurs in two more instances (ed. Troupeau, p. 79.14; 79.16); however, in those instances, it does not have an epexegetic value (« namely », « that is »), but it is found at the beginning of a sentence as an introduction for a definition (« by x I mean [...] »).

These elements, especially Section C (phraseology), indicate that *De contingentia mundi* is compatible with the features of the translations produced in the circle of al-Kindī. By contrast, such features are not found at all in the extant Arabic fragments of *Against Aristotle*, that are preserved by other Arabic sources, namely

al-Fārābī (d. 339 H./ 950–951 CE),[88] the *Selection of the Repository of Wisdom* (*Muntaḫab ṣiwān al-ḥikma*, 586–639 H./ 1191–1241 CE)[89] and the *Book of Benefit* (*Kitāb al-manfaʿa*) by ʿAbdallāh ibn al-Faḍl al-Anṭākī (d. after 1052 CE).[90] Therefore, if *De contingentia mundi* does indeed preserve materials stemming from the lost *Against Aristotle*, its origin is independent from the translation or translations quoted by these sources. Circumstantial arguments can also be made in favour of the provenance of *De contingentia mundi* from the circle of al-Kindī. Several works and proofs by Philoponus were known within this circle. As mentioned above, Hasnawi has shown that two short Arabic treatises attributed to Alexander of Aphrodisias by the manuscript tradition are actually adaptations of Philoponus's *Against Proclus* stemming from this circle.[91] More recently, Elvira Wakelnig has published an Arabic version of the first eight arguments of Proclus's so-called *De aeternitate mundi* (that is, the work quoted in full and refuted in *Against Proclus*), which is likely to go back to the circle of al-Kindī.[92] Again, one of the two Arabic versions of Alexander of Aphrodisias's *On Providence*, which was produced within the Kindian circle, introduces, in its paraphrasis of Alexander's text, the Philoponian argument for creation that argues from the finitude of bodily power.[93] Moreover, as far as al-Kindī's original works are concerned, it has long been observed that several of

88 Published by Muhsin Mahdi, « The Arabic Text of Alfarabi's *Against John the Grammarian* », in Sami A. Hanna (ed.), *Medieval and Middle Eastern Studies in Honor of Aziz Suryal Atiya*, Brill, Leiden 1972, p. 268–284; translation in Muhsin Mahdi, « Alfarabi Against Philoponus », *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 26/4 (1967), p. 233–260.

89 Joel L. Kraemer, « A Lost Passage from Philoponus' *Contra Aristotelem* in Arabic Translation », *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 85/3 (1965), p. 318–327.

90 Marwan Rashed, « The Problem of the Composition of the Heavens (529–1610): a New Fragment of Philoponus and Its Readers », *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies. Supplement*, 83 (2004), p. 35–58.

91 Hasnawi, « Alexandre d'Aphrodise vs Jean Philopon ».

92 Elvira Wakelnig, « The Other Arabic Version of Proclus' *De Aeternitate mundi*. The Surviving First Eight Arguments », *Oriens*, 40 (2012), p. 51–95.

93 Following the list of Alexander's works in Albert Dietrich, *Die arabische Version einer unbekannten Schrift des Alexander von Aphrodisias über die Differentia specifica*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1964 (Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen I. Philologisch-historische Klasse, 2), p. 92–100, this text is usually indicated as D15. Edition in Hans-Jochen Ruland, « Die arabischen Fassungen von zwei Schriften des Alexander von Aphrodisias. Über die Vorsehung und Über das liberum arbitrium », Ph.D. Diss., Saarlandes University, Saarbrücken 1976. The argument, occurring on p. 89.7–91.4 (version D15), can be compared to *De contingentia mundi*: cf. Troupeau, « Un Épitomé arabe », p. 79.20–22 and to *Against Proclus* VI, 29, ed. Rabe, p. 235.2–237.15 (= ed. Scholten, vol. III, p. 796–800). Remarkably, the former two texts include the reference to the first book of *De caelo* on the finitude of the body of the world, whereas such a reference is not provided in the parallel version of the argument found in *Against Proclus*.

them contain proofs for creation and against eternity, which are clearly reminiscent of Philoponus's own.[94]

In addition to the known echoes of Philoponian arguments, I could only find a very small hint that al-Kindī may have known *De contingentia mundi* specifically. In two of his works, al-Kindī provides a proof for the finiteness of the body of the world, with a view to proving that the world cannot be eternal, thus, in a context which is reminiscent of Philoponus's anti-eternalism. Al-Kindī phrases the proof in a similar way in both instances. In both the Kindian works, the proof is introduced in a way reminiscent of the way in which the third proof of *De contingentia mundi* is introduced, by announcing and setting out a list of several preliminary self-evident principles. Thus, al-Kindī in chapter 2 of his major metaphysical work, *On First Philosophy*, writes as follows: « Among the first, true premises which are conceived without any intermediary is the fact that [...] » (*inna min al-muqaddimāt al-uwal al-ḥaqqiyya al-maʿqūla bi-lā tawassuṭ anna* [...]).[95] Analogously, in his work *On the Oneness of God and the Finiteness of the Body of the World*, he writes as follows: « The first, clear premises which are conceived without any intermediary are that [...] » (*inna l-muqaddimāt al-ūlā l-wāḍiḥa l-maʿqūla bi-ġayri tawassuṭ anna...*).[96] These statements can be compared to the *incipit* of the third proof in *De contingentia mundi*: « It is necessary that we set forth in the first place, before [we expound] our argument, these three principles [which are generally] known and recognized, [which cannot] be refuted, and [cannot] be doubted, nor can their soundness » (*yanbaġī an nuqaddima amāma ḥuǧǧatinā hāḏihi ṯalāṯa uṣūl mutaʿālima mutaʿārifa ġayr madfūʿa wa-lā maškūk fīhā wa-lā fī ṣiḥḥatihā*, paraphrasing the Greek ἀξιώματα).[97]

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94 Richard Walzer, « New Studies on al-Kindī », *Oriens*, 10/2 (1957), p. 203–232: p. 218–224 = Id., *Greek into Arabic. Essays on Islamic Philosophy*, Harvard U.P., Cambridge (MA) 1962 (Oriental Studies, 1), p. 175–205: p. 190–196; Davidson, « John Philoponus as a Source », p. 370–373; Id., *Proofs for Eternity, Creation, and the Existence of God*, p. 106–116.

95 *Rasāʾil al-Kindī al-falsafiyya*, ed. Muḥammad ʿA. Abū Rīda, Dār al-fikr al-ʿarabī, al-Qāhira 1950, p. 114.12 = *Oeuvres philosophiques et scientifiques d'al-Kindī. Volume II. Métaphysique et cosmologie*, ed. Roshdi Rashed, Jean Jolivet, Brill, Leiden – Boston – Köln 1998 (Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science. Texts and Studies, 29/2), p. 29.8–9. Ivry's commentary on al-Kindī's *On First Philosophy* usefully analyses the Kindian proofs for creation by providing parallels with individual Philoponian passages that are extant in Greek: *Al-Kindi's Metaphysics. A Translation of Yaʿqūb ibn Isḥāq al-Kindī's Treatise "On First Philosophy" (fī al-Falsafah al-Ūlā)*, ed. Alfred L. Ivry, State University of New York Press, Albany 1974 (Studies in Islamic Philosophy and Science), p. 147–164; on al-Kindī's proofs for creation, see also Kevin Staley, « Al-Kindi on Creation: Aristotle's Challenge to Islam », *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 50/3 (1989), p. 355–370.

96 *Rasāʾil al-Kindī al-falsafiyya*, ed. Abū Rīda, p. 202.4–5.

97 Troupeau, « Un Épitomé arabe », p. 81.25; modified translation taken from Pines, « An Arabic Summary », p. 330. Cf. the preliminary propositions in the first proof, which are also said to be true in a primary way that does not require any demonstration: Troupeau, « Un Épitomé arabe », p. 79.14–19.

Once again, at first glance, the main difficulty in attributing *De contingentia mundi* to the circle of al-Kindī is the content of the prologue. As shown by Endress,[98] the circle of al-Kindī endorsed creation *ex nihilo* and philosophical arguments in its favour, within a harmonising view of the history of philosophy. According to such a view, which was aimed at easing the introduction of philosophy into the Islamic world, the Greek philosophers, especially the foremost philosophers, Plato and Aristotle, did not contradict one another, but, rather, substantially agreed in upholding a monotheistic and creationistic worldview, which was consistent with the revealed religion of Islam. It is in this vein that the Philoponian arguments reworked within this circle were either adapted by eliminating some polemical references and re-attributed to Alexander or presented as genuinely Aristotelian in spirit.[99] The prologue of *De contingentia mundi* may appear not to fit into this picture, both because it is correctly attributed to Philoponus and not to some proxy identity and because it openly presents this work as opposing the views of some eternalists, who explicitly included Proclus and Aristotle. However, it seems to me that the objection is not decisive. As a matter of fact, not every text stemming from the circle of al-Kindī must fit in the program outlined by Endress. For example, Endress himself attributes to the same circle a paraphrastic Arabic translation of Alexander of Aphrodisias's *Treatise on the Principles of the Universe*, which not only openly endorses the eternity of the world but even includes an explicit final addition, one without counterpart in the other extant Arabic version, to the effect that God, being wise, cannot will the ungenerated world to perish.[100] Given this and in light of the above linguistic and stylistic correspondences, it

98 Endress, « The Defense of Reason »; Id., « The Circle of al-Kindī ».

99 See, respectively, Hasnawi, « Alexandre d'Aphrodise vs Jean Philopon », p. 86–92; and Silvia Fazzo, Hillary Wiesner, « Alexander of Aphrodisias in the Kindī-Circle and in al-Kindī's Cosmology », *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 3 (1993), p. 119–153: p. 134 and n. 38.

100 Gerhard Endress, « Alexander Arabus on the First Cause. Aristotle's First Mover in an Arabic Treatise attributed to Alexander of Aphrodisias », in Cristina D'Ancona, Giuseppe Serra (eds.), *Aristotele e Alessandro di Afrodisia nella tradizione araba. Atti del colloquio La ricezione araba ed ebraica della filosofia e della scienza greche Padova, 14–15 maggio 1999*, Il Poligrafo, Padova 2002 (Subsidia Mediaevalia Patavina, 3), p. 19–74 (the addition is found at p. 74.6–8). For the other Arabic translation see Alexander of Aphrodisias *on the cosmos*, ed. Charles Genequand, Brill, Leiden – Boston – Köln 2001 (Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science. Texts and Studies, 44); Alexandre d'Aphrodise, *Les principes du tout selon la doctrine d'Aristote*, ed. Charles Genequand, Vrin, Paris 2017 (Sic et Non). An earlier Syriac adaptation by Sergius of Reš'aynā (d. 536 CE) is also extant: Emiliano Fiori, « L'épitomé syriaque du *Traité sur les causes du tout* d'Alexandre d'Aphrodise attribué à Serge de Reš'aynā. Édition et traduction », *Le Muséon*, 123/1–2 (2010), p. 127–158 (previous Italian translation by Giuseppe Furlani, « Il trattato di Sergio di Rêsh'aynâ sull'universo », *Rivista trimestrale di studi filosofici e religiosi*, 4/1 [1923], p. 1–22); an analysis of the doctrinal adaptations, including creationistic ones, is found in Daniel King, « Alexander of Aphrodisias' *On the Principles of the Universe* in a Syriac Adaptation », *Le Muséon*, 123/1–2 (2010), p. 159–191.

seems to me that the making of *De contingentia mundi* in the circle of al-Kindī is tenable and that the text, despite the polemical thorns of the prologue, could have served as a sort of working material for assimilating the creationist arguments necessary to al-Kindī's philosophical project.

VI. *Final Remarks: From* falsafa *to Christian Speculative Theology*

Subsequent potential traces of the Arabic circulation of *De contingentia mundi* are no longer found in the Islamic philosophical tradition but, rather, in Christian sources. The first examples of the Christian circulation of *De contingentia mundi* are most likely to be found within a circle of Christian Arabic philosophers and theologians, also referred to as the « Baghdad school », which flourished in the tenth century and in the first half of the eleventh century.[101] The main piece of evidence from within the Baghdad circle is a short treatise by the Christian Ibn Suwār (d. 1017 CE), entitled *That the Proof of John the Grammarian for the Creation of the World is Preferable to the Proof of the Theologians* (with « theologians » being the *mutakallimūn*, i.e., the Islamic dialectical theologians).[102] The treatise provides the Philoponian proof from the finitude of bodily power cast in a syllogistic form, adding that « John deduced the creation of the world from many proofs » (*wa-qad istadalla Yaḥyā bi-ʿidda adilla ʿalā ḥadaṯ al-ʿālam*),[103] a formulation that may be reminiscent of the Arabic title of *De contingentia mundi*. The same proof from the finitude of bodily power was known to Ibn Suwār's master, Yaḥyā ibn ʿAdī (d. 974 CE), based on his answer to one of the questions asked of him by a Jew from Mosul named Ibn Abī Saʿīd, dating from 952 CE. However, Yaḥyā ibn ʿAdī only mentions the proof briefly and states that it is found in an unspecified « treatise » (*maqāla*).[104]

Finally, as seen at the beginning of this article, it is the later Christian Arabic tradition that transmitted this text to us. If the hypothesis that *De contingentia*

101 On the Baghdad circle, see Gerhard Endress, Cleophea Ferrari, « Die Bagdader Aristoteliker », in Ulrich Rudolph, Renate Würsch (eds.), *Die Philosophie in der Islamischen Welt. Band 1: 8.–10. Jahrhundert*, Schwabe, Basel 2012 (Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie), p. 290–362; English trans.: « The Baghdad Aristotelians », in Ulrich Rudolph, Rotraud Hansberger, Peter Adamson (eds.), *Philosophy in the Islamic World. Volume 1: 8th–10th Centuries*, Brill, Leiden – Boston 2017 (Handbook of Oriental Studies, 115, 1), p. 421–525.

102 Edition in *Al-Aflāṭūniyya al-muḥdaṯa ʿinda al-ʿarab*, ed. Badawī, p. 243–247. Translation in Bernhard Lewin, « La notion de *muḥdaṯ* dans le kalām et dans la philosophie. Un petit traité inédit du philosophe chrétien Ibn Suwār », *Orientalia Suecana*, 3 (1954), p. 84–93.

103 *Al-Aflāṭūniyya al-muḥdaṯa ʿinda al-ʿarab*, ed. Badawī, p. 246.17.

104 *Maqālāt Yaḥyā ibn ʿAdī al-falsafiyya* / Yaḥyā ibn ʿAdī, *The Philosophical Treatises*, ed. Saḥbān Ḫalīfāt, al-Ǧāmiʿa al-Urdūniyya, ʿAmmān 1988, p. 319.9–320.5 (Ibn Abī Saʿīd's question) and p. 332.7–9 (Yaḥyā ibn ʿAdī's answer). On the epistolary exchange, see Shlomo Pines, « A Tenth Century Philosophical Correspondence », *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research*, 24 (1955), p. 103–136.

mundi stems from the circle of al-Kindī is correct, one should wonder why Philoponus's Arabic epitome, though it originated in an Islamic intellectual environment, appears to have left later echoes especially in the Christian tradition, as well as why it has been transmitted exclusively by Christian sources. I believe the answer lies in the fact that after the initial project on the part of al-Kindī and his collaborators, the mainstream Arabic Islamic *falsafa* abandoned the notion of creation as entailing a temporal beginning of time and came to embrace either the Aristotelian view of the eternity of the world or the Neoplatonic view upholding its perpetual duration, dependent on an eternal cause for its existence. Therefore, Philoponus's arguments either did not generate much interest in Islamic philosophy or mostly a polemical interest,[105] as attested to by Avicenna's work against « those who affirm that the past has a temporal beginning ». On the other hand, such arguments were well-received in both Muslim dialectic theology (*kalām*)[106] and the Eastern Christian tradition, which saw the divine creation of the world out of non-being as a non-negotiable, time-honoured theological tenet. The historical oblivion of Philoponus's theological misdeeds as a tritheist and a proponent of his own theory of resurrection, an oblivion attested to by the mistakes and hesitations concerning Philoponus in al-Muʾtaman ibn al-ʿAssāl's *Compendium*, removed the only potential obstacle in this regard and helped a severed fragment of Philoponus's imponent anti-eternalist enterprise to survive in Arabic until today.

105 In addition to Davidson, *Proofs for Eternity, Creation, and the Existence of God*, see the more recent article by Michael Chase, « Philoponus' Cosmology in the Arabic Tradition », *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie médiévales*, 79/2 (2012), p. 271–306.

106 As observed by Endress, *The circle of al-Kindī*, p. 75. On Philoponian arguments in Islamic theology, see Harry A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of the Kalam*, Harvard U.P., Cambridge, MA-London 1976 (Structure and Growth of Philosophic Systems from Plato to Spinoza, 4), p. 374–382 and p. 410–434.

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The Margins at the Centre: New Light on Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Arabe 2967*

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Abstract

Marginal elements within manuscripts, especially when unsystematic, disorganised, and heterogenous, are often ignored by scholars who intentionally decide to prioritise the centre over the margins. Accordingly, the lion's share of printed and online catalogues addresses the margins *en passant*. But to what extent is this approach fruitful to a comprehensive study of manuscripts? By focusing exclusively on margins, this article proposes to demonstrate that marginal annotations are instrumental in providing an exhaustive study of manuscripts in terms of historical reconstruction, and with regard to the annotators' life, interests, and expertise. The interdisciplinarity of the study of margins stands out inasmuch as it mixes first-hand palaeographical and codicological examinations with a scrutinization of the sources. Specifically, the history of Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Arabe 2967 will be unveiled with regard to the major events and people connected to it.

Key Words

Arabe 2967; Marginal annotations; Palaeography; Codicology; *Typographia Medicea*

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I. *Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Arabe 2967*[1]

Composed of 200 leaves, the manuscript is a paper codex measuring 21×16 cm. It is a deliberate assemblage of medical texts ordered as follows:

- fol. 2v–135v: *Taqwīm al-adwiya* by Ibn Abī Saʿīd al-ʿAlāʾī.[2]
- fol. 136r: medical remedy.
- fol. 138r: incipit of an unidentified text which is stopped *in medias res.*
- fol. 138v–149r: blank leaves presumably arranged for the copying of the text started at fol. 138r.
- fol. 149v: table of contents of *al-Qarābādīn* by Najīb al-Dīn al-Samarqandī[3] (which starts at fol. 151r).
- fol. 150r: excerpt from the *Shifāʾ* by Ḥājjī Pasha,[4] « On the Preparation of Potions ».

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1 <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b11002406s/f2.item.r=arabe%202967.zoom#> (Accessed December 2022). See Georges Vajda, *Notices de manuscrits arabes rédigées par Georges Vajda, Notices des manuscrits Arabe 2760 à 3184*, ed. Hermann Lehmann <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8470424s> (Accessed January 2023), p. 73; and William Mac Guckin De Slane, *Catalogue des manuscrits arabes*, Imprimerie nationale, Paris 1883–1895, p. 530.

2 The *Taqwīm al-adwiya al-mufrada* (« Organization of Simple Remedies ») by Ibrāhīm b. Abī Saʿīd b. Ibrāhīm al-Maghribī al-ʿAlāʾī (*fl.* sixth/twelfth c.) is a treatise on medicinal substances organised into synoptical tables. It is also known as *Kitāb al-munjiḥ fī al-ṭibb wa-l-tadāwī min ṣunūf al-amrāḍ wa-l-shakāwā* (« Success in Medicine and in Therapy among the Categories of Diseases and Complaints »). Simples are mentioned following the *abjad* order, and they are described according to 16 categories: name (*al-adwiya*), quality (*al-māhiyya*), type (*al-nawʿ*), preferred state (*al-ikhtiyār*), temperament (*al-mizāj*), strength (*al-quwwa*), usefulness for parts of the head (*manfaʿa fī aʿḍāʾ al-raʾs*), usefulness for respiratory ailments (*manfaʿa fī ālāt al-nafs*), usefulness for digestive organs (*manfaʿa fī aʿḍāʾ al-ghidhāʾ*), usefulness for the body in general (*manfaʿa fī jamīʿ al-badan*), manner of production (*kayfiyya istiʿmāli-hi*), how much is to be used (*kamiyya istiʿmāli-hi*), harmful properties (*muḍarratu-hu*), antidote (*iṣlāḥu-hu*), substitute (*badalu-hu*), and the number of the simple [assigned to it in the treatise] (*ʿadad al-adwiya*). See Carl Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur. Supplementband I–II*, Brill, Leiden 1937–1938, vol. I, p. 890–891; Manfred Ullmann, *Die Medizin im Islam*, Brill, Leiden 1970 (Handbook of Oriental Studies. Section 1 The Near and Middle East, 9/6/1), p. 275–276; Henri-Paul-Joseph Renaud, « Une problème de bibliographie arabe: Le *Taqwim al-Adwiya* d'al-ʿAlaʾi », *Hespéris*, 16 (1933), p. 79–81.

3 The *Kitāb al-qarābādīn ʿalā tartīb al-ʿilal* (« Pharmacopeia Arranged according to Illnesses ») is a pharmacopeia on composed drugs. For an uncritical edition of the work, see Georges Tohmé (ed.), *Pharmacopée sur la classification des causes par Néjibeddine Assamarkandi*, Maktabat Lubnān Nāshirūn, Beirut 1994. On Najīb al-Dīn al-Samarqandī, see Juliane Müller, « Najīb al-Dīn al-Samarqandī », in Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Devin J. Stewart (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Islam, THREE* [henceforth, EI3] <ttp://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_36695> (Accessed May 2023).

4 On the *Shifāʾ al-asqām wa-dawāʾ al-ālām* (« Recovery from Illnesses and Remedy for Pains »), see Brockelmann, *Geschichte der arabischen Litteratur*, vol. II, p. 326. On Ḥājjī Pasha, see Miri Shefer-

- fol. 150v: « On Weights and Measures » (*Fī al-awzān wa-l-makāyīl*).
- fol. 151r–196v: excerpt from *al-Qarābādīn* by Najīb al-Dīn al-Samarqandī. The text presents major lacunae at fol. 164v, 165r–166v, 170, 175, 180v–182v.
- fol. 197r: excerpt from the *Shifāʾ* by Ḥājjī Pasha, « On the Cure of the Plague » (*ʿIlāj al-ṭāʿūn*).
- fol. 197v: medical remedy in *garshūnī*.
- fol. 198r–200v: list of drugs.

At fol. 135r, the colophon of al-ʿAlāʾī's *Taqwīm* provides us with a chronological reference: the text is said to have been completed on 1 *Rabīʿ al-ākhir* 953 (12 June 1546).

II. *Arabe 2967 and France: Eusèbe Renaudot and the monastery of Saint-Germain-des-Près*

As far as the French history of Arabe 2967 is concerned, fol. 1r gathers all the information we need. Apart from the *ex-libris* of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, we should focus on the label at the leaf's centre as it provides safe evidence regarding the manuscript's whereabouts prior to its relocation at the Bibliothèque nationale de France. The label reads as follows:

> Ex Bibliotheca V. CL. Eusebii RENAUDOT
> quam Monasterio sancti Germani à Pratis
> legavit anno Domini 1720.[5]

The manuscript belonged to Eusèbe Renaudot (1648–1720), French theologian and Orientalist, who « holds a relevant place among the scholars who, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, illustrated the religious science and the Church of France ».[6] He came from a prestigious family. His grandfather

Mossensohn, « Ḥājjī Pasha », in EI3 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_30206> (Accessed May 2023).

5 This *ex-libris* was added to every single volume donated by Renaudot to the monastery (Alfred Franklin, *Les anciennes bibliothèques des Paris. Églises, monastères, colléges, etc.*, Imprimerie Nationale, Paris 1867, vol. I, p. 117).

6 Antoine Villien, *L'abbé Eusèbe Renaudot. Essai sur sa vie et sur son oeuvre liturgique*, Librairie Victor Lecoffre, Paris 1904, p. viii: « L'abbé Renaudot tient une place considérable parmi les érudites qui ont illustré, à la fin du XVII et au commencement du XVIII siècle, la science religieuse et l'Église de France ». The first section of this work provides a detailed biography of Renaudot (ibid, p. 1–148).

Théophraste (1586–1653) had been the court physician of the king of France, Louis XIII (1601–1643); also, he had created the famous magazine *Gazette de France*. Such a high-profile pedigree enabled Renaudot to pursue his studies. While he was primarily focused on Christian theology, he also studied a number of Oriental languages, including Arabic.[7] Apparently, he managed to master them quite quickly; indeed, in the preface to the third volume of the *Perpétuité de la foi de l'Église catholique sur l'Eucharistie* published in 1674, Antoine Arnauld (1612–1694) praises Renaudot's thorough knowledge of the Oriental languages:

> But the variety of these acts, and of the books from which these excerpts were taken, which are written some in common Greek, some in Arabic, some in Syriac, some in Coptic, some in Ethiopian, show the extraordinary understanding which he [Renaudot] has of all these languages.[8]

In 1700, Renaudot travelled to Italy for the conclave which elected Pope Clement XI (1649–1721). The period he spent in Florence interests us closely, for he was asked by the Grand Duke of Tuscany Cosimo III de' Medici (1642–1723) to redact a catalogue of the Oriental manuscripts preserved at the Biblioteca Palatina Medicea.[9] Upon Renaudot's departure, Cosimo III donated to him a couple of Syriac manuscripts as a personal gift as well as loaning some other material.[10] Two documents preserved at the National Library in Florence – Firenze, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, Cl.X.66, and Palatino 1002 – prove this; the annotations recorded on the covers mention Renaudot as the addressee of the material sent on loan to Paris.[11] It is possible that manuscripts were involved.[12] One

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7 Villien, *L'abbé Eusèbe Renaudot*, p. 18: « Il joignit à l'étude déjà si ample du dogme catholique une connaissance plus approfondie des langues orientales. Il possédait déjà les éléments de plusieurs de ces langues avant d'entrer à l'Oratoire ».

8 Antoine Arnauld, *Perpétuité de la Foi de l'Église catholique touchant l'Eucharistie, défendue contre les livres du sieur Claude, Ministre de Charenton*, Sigismond D'Arnay & Compagnie, Paris 1781, vol. III, p. 14: « Mais la diversité de ces actes et des livres dont ces extraits ont été tirés, qui sont écrites les uns en grec vulgaire, les autres en arabe, les autres en syriaque, les autres en copte, les autres en éthiopien, font connaître l'intelligence extraordinaire qu'il a de toutes ces langues ».

9 Villien, *L'abbé Eusèbe Renaudot*, p. 119–120. Renaudot's catalogue is conserved in Firenze, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, Magl. Cl.X.66.

10 Angelo Michele Piemontese, « G.B. Vecchietti e la letteratura giudeo-persiana », *Materia giudaica*, 35–36 (2010–2011), p. 493.

11 « A. di 7. Febb: 1702. ab Inc: 1703 / Notisi che le altre scritture d'Inventario di Libri che mancano qui, si enno date in due volte al Si:r Magnolfi, perche le mandi a Parigi al Sig. Ab: Renaudot, dal quale à suo tempo hanno da essere rimandate à Fiorenza » (quoted in Piemontese, « G.B. Vecchietti », p. 493–494, note 53).

12 See the case of Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Syr.334; according to Borbone and Farina, the codex reached France either with Barthélemy D'Herbelot (1625–1695) or Renaudot (Pier Giorgio Borbone, Margherita Farina, « New Documents Concerning Patriarch Ignatius Naʿmatallah (Mardin, ca. 1515 – Bracciano, near Rome, 1587) », *Egitto e Vicino Oriente*, 37 (2014), p. 187).

might wonder whether Arabe 2967 was part of that loan as the codex does not present particular stylistic features or decorations nor contains famous or frequently used texts at the time. However, in the absence of direct proofs, we can only speculate. Be that as it may, the codex moved to France. According to the label, in 1720 it entered the collection of the monastery of Saint-Germain-des-Près as, upon Renaudot's death, his manuscripts were deposited there.[13] In 1794, a terrible fire broke out in the library, and the bulk of the material was lost for good. Some items were saved thanks to the courageous intervention of the librarian Poirier (1724–1803);[14] these were moved to the Bibliothèque impériale – now the Bibliothèque nationale de France – between December 1795 and January–February 1796.[15] The two *ex-libris* at fol. 1r, 200v, which read « Bibliothèque impériale », testify to that.

III. *Arabe 2967 and Italy: Giovanni Battista Raimondi*

All in all, the 'modern' history of Arabe 2967 can be reconstructed easily inasmuch as it does not present particular ambiguities. But what about its earlier history? In this regard, the margins are key as the annotations at fol. 20v, 22v suggest that, at some point, the codex was in Italy, where the Orientalist Giovanni Battista Raimondi (1536–1614) was active.[16] He is in fact the author of these annotations

[13] Léopold Delisle, *Le cabinet des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque impériale*, Imprimerie impériale, Paris 1868, vol. I, p. 45–46: « En 1720, Eusèbe Renaudot lui laissa plus de trois cents manuscrits, dont les plus importants contenaient des textes orientaux ». This library was particularly prestigious; indeed, it was considered as « l'une des plus nombreuses & des plus riches de Royaume, après celle du Roi », Luc-Vincent Thiéry, *Guide des amateurs et des étrangers voyageurs a Paris, ou description raisonnée de cette Ville, de sa Banlieue, & de tout ce qu'elles contiennent de remarquable*, Hardouin & Gattey, Paris 1788, vol. II, p. 514. For the history of the library, see Franklin, *Anciennes bibliothèques des Paris*, p. 107–134.

[14] Franklin, *Anciennes bibliothèques des Paris*, p. 124: « Pendant plusieurs mois, Don Poirier, aidé par Van Praet, passèrent leurs journées dans les caves humides où l'on avait jeté pêle-mêle tout ce qu'il avait été possible d'arracher aux flammes. Ils parvinrent ainsi à exhumer près de dix mille manuscrits que l'eau des pompes n'avait que faiblement endommagés. Ces précieux volumes furent déposés dans une des salles de l'abbaye, sous la garde de Dom Poirier, qui devint plus tard bibliothécaire à l'Arsenal. Il les y conserva jusqu'à l'année suivante, et ils furent alors transportés à la Bibliothèque nationale ».

[15] Delisle, *Cabinet des manuscrits*, p. 49.

[16] I have followed Görke-Hirschler's definition of 'manuscript notes' as « any written material that is found on a manuscript that does not belong to the main text(s), irrespective of whether it refers to the main text and the legal status of the manuscript or is entirely unrelated to text and manuscript itself » (Andreas Görke, Konrad Hirschler, « Introduction: Manuscript Notes as Documentary Sources », in Ead. (eds.), *Manuscript Notes as Documentary Sources*, Orient-Institut, Beirut 2020 [Beiruter Texte und Studien, 129], p. 9–10). For the biography of Giovanni Battista

which record the Latin synonyms of the simples mentioned in the text of the *Taqwīm* [Tab. 1]. Raimondi's authorship can be established on palaeographical grounds; his handwriting can be compared, for instance, with the glosses within the diagram at fol. 3v in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Syr.244.[17] More compelling evidence is the note he left at the top left corner of the front doublure of Arabe 2967, which almost certainly reads « Da Monsig. Pat.ca ». Raimondi used to annotate likewise all the manuscripts formerly owned by Patriarch (« Pat[riar]ca ») Ignatios Niʿmatallāh (c. 1505–1587), which had been acquired by the *Typographia Medicea* upon Niʿmatallāh's death (see *infra*, section IV). Plenty of manuscripts from the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence display this note in the exact same position.[18] Although the note has been cancelled, the marked descender of the 'g' as well as the 'ca' of « Pat.ca » written above the x-line can be identified easily.[19] As far as the contents of the annotations are concerned, perhaps Raimondi's source was the *De materia medica* by Dioscorides (first c.). Let us compare, for instance, the passage on citron as found in the *De materia medica*: « Medica mala, persicaue, aut cedromela, quae Latini citria vocant, nemini non cognita ».[20] As in Raimondi's annotation, both *citria* and *cedromela* (*citromala* in Raimondi's annotation) are mentioned. The latter are paralleled with the *medica mala* which is the Latin translation of the Arabic *al-tuffāḥ al-māʾī*; a synonym of this latter is *uttruj*, which is the simple mentioned in al-ʿAlāʾī's *Taqwīm*.[21] The case of the

Raimondi, see Mario Casari, « Raimondi, Giovanni Battista », *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani Treccani*, 86 (2016) <https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giovanni-battista-raimondi_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/> (Accessed April 2023). See also John Robert Jones, *The Arabic and Persian Studies of Giovan Battista Raimondi (c. 1536–1614)*, University of London, London 1981; and Angelo Michele Piemontese, « Per la biografia di Giovanni Battista Raimondi », in Eckhard Leuschner, Gerhard Wolf (eds.), *The Medici Oriental Press: Knowledge and Cultural Transfer Around 1600*, Leo S. Olschki, Firenze 2022 (Biblioteca di bibliografia. Documents and Studies in Book and Library History, 216), p. 3–16. Raimondi is known for his contributions to the enterprise of the *Typographia Medicea*. The literature on the *Typographia Medicea* is enormously vast; in this regard, see Alberto Tinto, *La Tipografia medicea orientale*, Pacini Fazzi, Lucca 1987; Sara Fani, Margherita Farina, *La via delle lettere: la Tipografia Medicea tra Roma e l'Oriente*, Mandragora, Firenze 2012 (Cataloghi, Studi e Classici); Leuschner, Wolf, *The Medici Oriental Press*.

17 <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10087546s/f7.item> (Accessed April 2023).

18 Margherita Farina, « La nascita della Tipografia Medicea: personaggi e idee », in Sara Fani, Margherita Farina (eds.), *La via delle lettere: la Tipografia Medicea tra Roma e l'Oriente*, Mandragora, Firenze 2012 (Cataloghi, Studi e Classici), p. 59.

19 Cf., for instance, the front doublure of Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Or. 298 <http://mss.bmlonline.it/s.aspx?Id=AWOS4NhQI1A4r7GxMdeB&c=Raccolta%20di%20testi#/oro/4> (Accessed May 2023).

20 Pietro Andrea Mattioli, *Commentarii in sex libros Pedacii Dioscoridis Anazarbei de Medica materia*, Ex Officina Valgrisiana, Venetiis 1565, p. 238.50–51.

21 Marwān ibn Janāḥ, *On the Nomenclature of Medicinal Drugs (Kitāb al-Talkhīṣ)*, ed. Gerrit Bos, Fabian Käs, Mailyn Lübke, Guido Mensching, Brill, Leiden – Boston 2020 (Studies and Texts, 170/1), p. 1128 (entry 1011).

meliloto (Ar. *iklīl al-malik*) is intriguing too.[22] As regards Raimondi's drawing on Dioscorides's work, the posthumous inventory of Raimondi's assets provides us with an interesting information; the mention of a « Pedacii Dioscoridis De medica materia greco et latino »[23] testifies that the Italian Orientalist owned a copy of the *De materia medica*. This comes as no surprise as Raimondi was deeply interested in botany and pharmacology[24] – the genre of al-ʿAlāʾī's *Taqwīm* as well. His approach was primarily lexicographic inasmuch as it was oriented primarily to the study of Avicenna's *Canon* (Ar. *al-Qānūn fī al-ṭibb*).[25] All in all, his annotations contained in Arabe 2967 can be categorised likewise.

fol. 20v				fol. 22v				
uttruj	*ās*	*ushna*	*iklīl al-malik*	*īrisā*	*isqīl*	*asārūn*	*abhul*	*al-uqḥuwān*
citria *citromala*	*mirtus* *mirtilla*	*musco*	*meliloto sertula campāa* [sic]	*iris*	*scilla* *squilla*	*asaro*	*sabina*	*parthenio*

Tab. 1: Line one: simple from the *Taqwīm al-adwiya*. Line two: Raimondi's annotations.

IV. *Arabe 2967 and Italy: Ignatios Niʿmatallāh*

Raimondi's allusion to « Monsig. Pat.ca » allows us to identify another major individual linked to the history of Arabe 2967, that is, Ignatios Niʿmatallāh syro-orthodox Patriarch in Ṭūr ʿAbdin. Forced to flee from his homeland due to

[22] Raimondi annotates *sertula campāa* (i.e., *campana*) beneath *meliloto*. The passage on the *meliloto* in the *De materia medica* reads: « Nascitur & in Campania circa Nolam, colore in luteum languescente, odore infirmo » (Mattioli, *Commentarii*, p. 728.31–32).

[23] Eckhard Leuschner, « Posthumous Inventory of Raimondi's House and the Medici Press », in Leuschner, Wolf (eds.), *The Medici Oriental Press*, p. 438.

[24] Farina, « Nascita della Tipografia Medicea », p. 55. Raimondi's epistolary correspondence with the Neapolitan physician Mario Schepani proves this (Margherita Farina, « Uno scambio epistolare fra Mario Schepani e Giovan Battista Raimondi. Lo studio della lingua araba nel tardo Rinascimento, interesse scientifico e curiosità », *Egitto e Vicino Oriente*, 36 (2013), p. 63–72).

[25] Margherita Farina, Sara Fani, « The Typographia Medicea and the Humanistic Perspective of Renaissance Rome », in Maurizio Arfaioli, Marta Caroscio (eds.), *The Grand Ducal Medici and the Levant. Material Culture, Diplomacy, and Imagery in the Early Modern Mediterranean*, Harvey Miller, Turnhout 2016 (The Medici Archive Project, 3), p. 172: « With regard to the study of the Canon, Raimondi's approach was firstly lexicographic, as testified by the number of glossaries and lexical apparati he produced. These glossaries include lemmata in alphabetical order, in Arabic with the Latin or Italian translation or vice versa ».

dangerous conditions, Niʿmatallāh reached Italy in 1577.[26] After a period spent in Venice, in 1578, he travelled to Rome where he became deeply involved with the *Typographia Medicea.*[27] He stipulated a contract with cardinal Ferdinand I de' Medici (1549–1609), Gran Duke of Tuscany since 1587 and financial promoter of the *Typographia*, according to which he would have sold his entire collection of manuscripts in exchange for an annual pension of 25 *scudi d'oro.*[28] Upon Niʿmatallāh's death, all his manuscripts came into the possession of the *Typographia*. As far as Niʿmatallāh's ownership of Arabe 2967 is concerned, apart from Raimondi's note, evidence from the bookbinding must be considered as well. It is well-known that Niʿmatallāh reordered and rebounded his manuscripts so that they would appear more attractive in the Western market.[29] These secondary bindings present standardised features, such as floral motifs inscribed into a central mandorla, floral decorations at the four corners, decorations with tools in the outer margins, and the use of marbled paper for the doublures.[30] These features can be observed on Arabe 2967 as well [Fig. 1]. Evidence of a secondary binding carried out on Arabe 2967 is provided by fol. 136r, which was ploughed so as to have all leaves equal in size. Consequently, part of the text at the top and left-hand margins is lost.

[26] Recently, the idea that Niʿmatallāh's journey was totally disorganised (maintained by Pier Giorgio Borbone, « From Tur ʿAbdin to Rome: The Syro-Orthodox Presence in Sixteenth-century Rome », in Herman Teule, Elif Keser-Kayaalp, Kutlu Akalin, Nesim Doru, M. Sait Toprak (eds.), *Syriac in its Multi-Cultural Context*, Peeters, Leuven – Paris – Walpole 2017, p. 284) has been challenged by Alabdullah. See Hazim Alabdullah, « The Road to Rome: Patriarch Ignatios Niʿmatullah between Faith and Profit », in Leuschner, Wolf (eds.), *The Medici Oriental Press*, p. 23. On Niʿmatallāh's Roman period, see Giorgio Levi Della Vida, *Documenti intorno alle relazioni delle chiese orientali con la S. Sede durante il pontificato di Gregorio XIII*, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Città del Vaticano 1948 (Studi e Testi, 92), p. 1–44.

[27] The centrality of Niʿmatallāh in the project of the *Typographia* is stated in the foundational *Instrumento* (Farina, « Nascita della Tipografia Medicea », p. 59).

[28] The terms of the agreement are contained in a document preserved in the State Archive in Florence (Firenze, Archivio di Stato di Firenze, Misc. Med. 719, doc. 40).

[29] Margherita Farina, « La circulation de manuscrits syriaques en Orient et entre Orient et Occident entre la fin du XVe et le XVIe siècle », in Bernard Heyberger (ed.), *Les chrétiens de tradition syriaque à l'époque ottomane*, Geuthner, Paris 2020 (Études syriaques, 17), p. 101.

[30] For a codicological comparison see, for instance, Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Or. 230 <http://mss.bmlonline.it/s.aspx?Id=AWOS4NLkI1A4r7GxMddx&c=Horreum%20mysteriorum#/oro/3> (Accessed May 2023). More interestingly, see Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Or. 208, which is quite similar to Arabe 2967; it also presents Raimondi's note in the front doublure <http://mss.bmlonline.it/s.aspx?Id=AWOS4NCI1A4r7GxMddt&c=Vita%20Gregorii%20Barhebraei%20Orientis%20Maphriani#/oro/3> (Accessed May 2023).

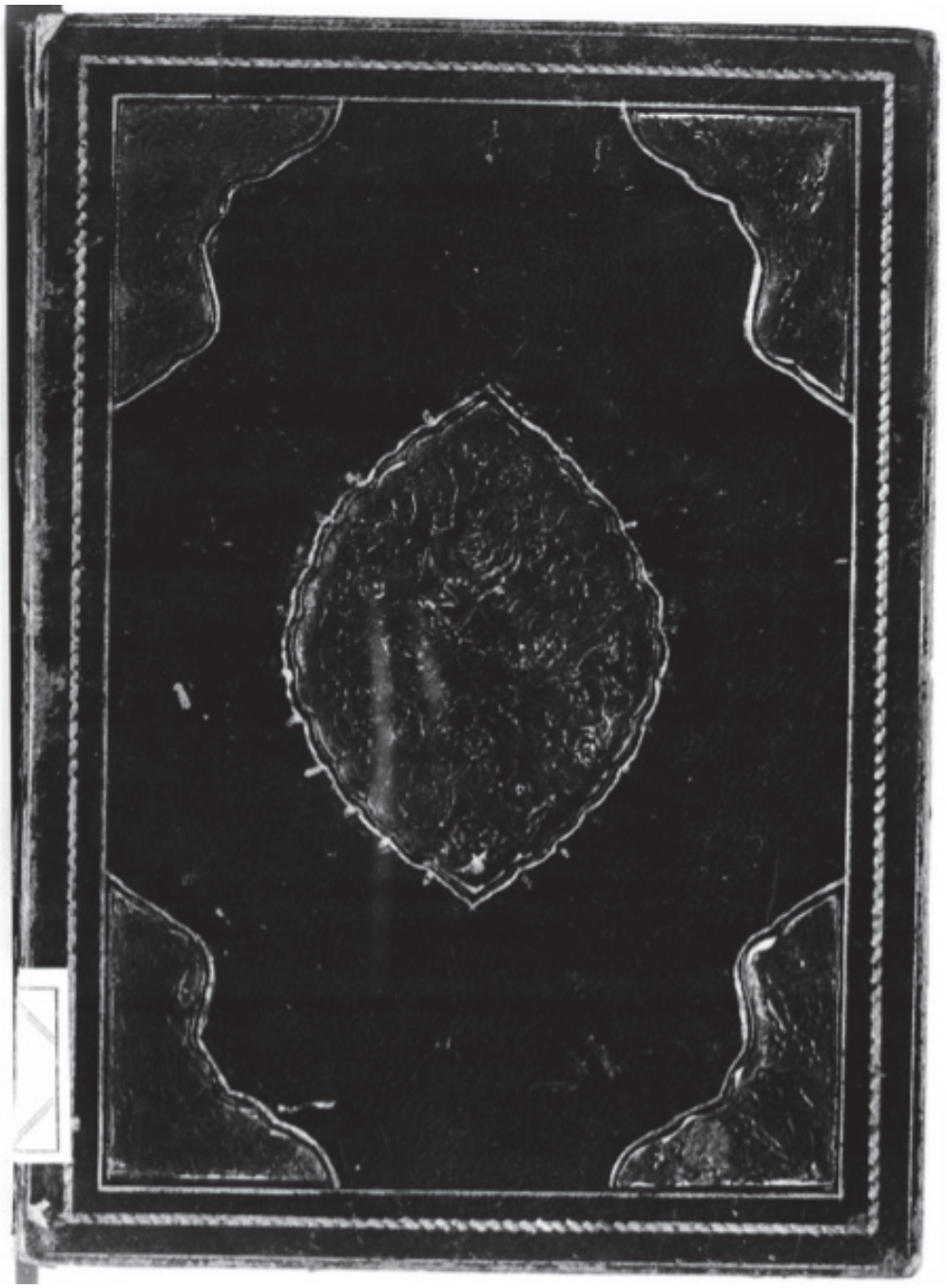
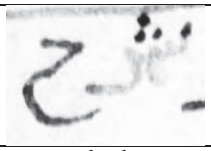
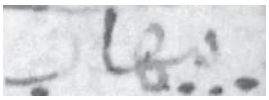
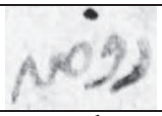
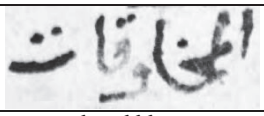


Fig. 1: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Arabe 2967: front cover.

On palaeographical grounds, it can be established that Niʿmatallāh annotated the manuscript. A comparison can be done with his marginal annotations in Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Or. 27, Or. 231, and Or. 458.[31] As regards the *ductus* of the letters, Niʿmatallāh's Arabic handwriting is characteristic. The most interesting graphic traits are [Tab. 2]:

Isolated *ḥā* with a horizontal top stroke and an unsteady loop	*fī* with a subscribed *fāʾ* and a *yāʾ* traced horizontally	Sharp-cornered *lam*, usually traced at an angle of 90^0
		
sharḥ	*fī*	*al-maḥmūl*
Medial *hāʾ* in the form of an '8'	Final *hāʾ* with no counter and oriented downwards	*waw* with a 'flattened' descender
		
bīhār	*rawḍa*	*al-makhlūqāt*

Tab. 2: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Arabe 2967, fol. 1r, 30v: characteristic graphic traits of Niʿmatallāh's handwriting.

V. *Niʿmatallāh's annotations*

The annotations by Niʿmatallāh scattered throughout Arabe 2967 will be analysed thoroughly in this section. In particular, I will attempt to demonstrate how an in-depth study of *marginalia* can help shedding some light upon the annotator's expertise and intellectual interests.

Let us start with the annotations to the *Taqwīm al-adwiya* [see the Appendix].[32] They are on the *verso* at fol. 20–34, 36–39, 48, 52, 53, 55, 65, 83, 84, 93, 101, 102, 105, 107, 114, 118, 122, 125, 127, 130. Initially, red and black inks are alternated; then, starting with fol. 29v, he uses red ink exclusively. These annotations are undoubtedly the most interesting. Let us take a look at how they are ordered:

[31] For an analysis of the annotations of Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Or. 27, which records fascinating details regarding Niʿmatallāh's journey to Italy, see ALABDULLAH, « Road to Rome », p. 24–28.

[32] Vajda attributes these annotations to a « Européen » (VAJDA, *Notices*, p. 73).

- At the top, the name of a simple in Arabic.
- In the middle, a kind of *scriptio plena* transliteration of the simple in Arabic characters.
- At the bottom, the Latin translation of the simple.

The term in the middle is by far the most riveting. It is fully vocalized; often times, it disregards the orthographical rules of Arabic. At fol. 25v, for instance, *ammūniyākū*, which corresponds to Latin *Ammoniacum*, is written with a double *mīm* instead of the usual spelling *mīm* with a *shadda* on top. Likewise at fol. 55v, *al-kānnā*, which corresponds to Latin *Alcanna*, is written with a double *nūn*. All things considered, the term in the middle arguably can be interpreted as a 'phonetic' transliteration; it probably had some kind of auxiliary role linked to the Latin term, to which it bears a close resemblance in terms of pronunciation. The fact that these annotations were authored by Niʿmatallāh, who was certainly unfamiliar with Latin, would strengthen this interpretation. Niʿmatallāh's unfamiliarity with Latin can be proved also by means of a palaeographical examination of his annotations' script. The proportions in the forms of the letters are extremely heterogeneous, even within the same word. Likewise, the script is quite 'wavy' as he is unable to maintain a firm baseline. Specific features can be identified, such as:

- A widespread confusion between 's' and 'f' – e.g., fol. 23v: *Atratisus* instead of *Atratifus*; or fol. 25v, 28v: *Ardisrigi* instead of *Ardifrigi*.
- The use of the modern graphic form for the 's' within words, while earlier this was used exclusively at the end of words – e.g., fol. 23v: *Atratisus*. Also, the 's' is always slanted rightwards – e.g., fol. 31v: *Balsamus*.
- The 'k' has two oblique strokes hooked inwards – e.g., fol. 30v: *Baheke*.
- The 'g' is written in the form of an '8' – e.g., fol. 23v: *Alguasen*; or fol. 27v: *Abugilise*.
- The 'l' is written within the x-line – e.g., fol. 24v: *Amgailem*.

The feeling is that Niʿmatallāh was copying mechanically from his source which was the *tractatus secundus* of Book II of Avicenna's *Canon*. This would point to the fact that he annotated the manuscript in Rome, where he probably had easier access to the book.[33] Furthermore, it seems that the version of the *Canon* available

[33] The contract stipulated with Ferdinand I de' Medici established that Niʿmatallāh remained in possession of his manuscripts until his death; consequently, he could use them once settled in Rome. See Guglielmo Enrico Saltini, « Della Stamperia Orientale Medicea e Giovan Battista Raimondi: Memoria compilata sui documenti dell'Archivio Centrale di Stato », *Archivio Storico*

to Niʿmatallāh was the one translated by Andrea Alpago (1450–1521).[34] Two annotations in particular seem to reveal this:

1) At fol. 21v, the Latin *Anisum* is rendered as *Nisum*, even though the first letter of the term in the middle is an *alif waṣla*. In the Alpago-Rinio edition, the initial 'A' is oversized and decorated [Fig. 2]; perhaps, to an unfamiliar eye, it might have appeared extraneous to the word it actually belongs.[35] Indeed, Niʿmatallāh annotated *Nisum* instead of *Anisum*. Furthermore, the 'n' is majuscule as in the printed edition.
2) At fol. 38v, the Arabic *bayḍ* ('egg') mentioned in the *Taqwīm* is rendered as *Ouanota* instead of the correct *Oua*. While the *nota* refers to the 'quality' (Ar. *māhiyya*) of the simple, Niʿmatallāh interpreted it as part of the name of the simple [Fig. 3].

Italiano, 12/2 (1860), p. 262. The hypothesis that he annotated the manuscript earlier is highly unlikely. It is improbable that Niʿmatallāh might have had access to a Latin version of Avicenna's *Canon* in his homeland. The possibility that he annotated the manuscript during his journey to Italy is problematic as well; the bulk of the material was carried by some associates of his who travelled independently, until they finally re-joined with Niʿmatallāh in Venice in 1577 (Alabdullah, « Road to Rome », p. 35–37).

34 It might be useful to emphasise that Raimondi owned a copy of the *Canonis Avicennae* in the version of Andrea Alpago (Jones, *Arabic and Persian*, p. 126). An « Avicenna latino grande vecchio bene » is mentioned in the posthumous inventory of his assets (Leuschner, « Posthumous Inventory », p. 477). Alpago's translation is based on the translation made by Gerard of Cremona (d. 1187). The 1555 edition published by Giunta and edited by Benedetto Rinio (1485–1565) had the widest diffusion – it was also reproduced in the Basel edition published in 1556. See *Avicennae liber canonis, de medicinis cordialibus, et cantica*, trans. Andrea Alpago, ed. Benedetto Rinio, Giunta, Venetiis 1555. According to Siraisi, « the most important features of the Alpago-Rinio version were the insertion of Alpago's emendations into the body of the text and the provision of innumerable cross-references keying the *Canon* to passages in Greek and other medical authors » (Nancy G. Siraisi, *Avicenna and Renaissance Italy: the Canon and Medical Teaching in Italian Universities after 1500*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1987 [Princeton Legacy Library], p. 140). Interestingly, the College of Philosophers and Physicians endorsed Alpago's translation as « it appears likely that the members believed his glossary of Arabic technical terms would help to unravel the confusions in botanical and pharmacological nomenclature for which the Canon had so often been criticized over the last thirty years » (Siraisi, *Avicenna and Renaissance*, p. 96). On the issue of the endorsement, see Francesca Lucchetta, *Il medico e filosofo bellunese Andrea Alpago († 1522), traduttore di Avicenna*, Antenore, Padova 1964 (Contributi alla Storia dell'Università di Padova, 2), p. 35–56.

35 Regarding the display scripts of Insular manuscripts, Tilghman argues that: « Making sense of that writing is one of the great maddening joys of Insular manuscripts, and to the untrained eye it can be difficult even to determine what is a letter and what is not » (Benjamin C. Tilghman, « Writing in Tongues: Mixed Scripts and Style in Insular Art », in Column Hourihane (ed.), *Insular and Anglo-Saxon: Art and Thought in the Early Middle Ages*, Penn State University Press, University Park, PA 2011, p. 93).



Fig. 2: *Avicennae liber canonis*, trans. Alpago, ed. Rinio, liber II, tractatus II, p. 98, Cap. 1: *Anisum.*

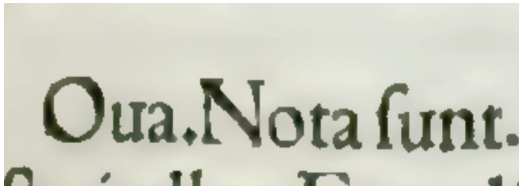


Fig. 3: *Avicennae liber canonis*, trans. Alpago, ed. Rinio, liber II, tractatus II, p. 151, Cap. 527: *Oua.Nota sunt.*

Apart from the anomalies of Niʿmatallāh's Latin, these annotations testify to his interest in pharmacology. The comments to the text of the *Taqwīm* at fol. 39r, 82r, 128r, 151r point to the same direction. Not by chance, Niʿmatallāh was considered an expert in medicine;[36] probably due to that, he was appointed as the head of the committee responsible for producing an Arabic-Latin edition of the *Qānūn fī al-ṭibb.*[37] It would be tempting to contextualise his work on the *Taqwīm* within this assignment.

At fol. 1v, Niʿmatallāh annotated brief excerpts from the *Kitāb al-thamara* by Ps.-Ptolemy, an astrological treatise composed of one hundred aphorisms on varied matters which circulated through the commentaries by Abū Jaʿfar Aḥmad b. Yūsuf (d. 299/912) and Naṣīr al-Dīn al-Ṭūsī (d. 672/1274)[38] [Tab. 3]. The three annotated aphorisms, which belong to the field of medical astrology (or iatromathematics), are not that significant in themselves; rather, they refer to Niʿmatallāh's primary intellectual interest, i.e., astronomy. During his stay in Rome, his profound

36 Levi Della Vida, *Documenti intorno alle relazioni*, p. 5.

37 The committee included « un Giovan Battista lucchese, medico del cardinal Savello, un turco fatto cristiano di nome Paulo Orsino, e Giovan Battista Raimondi » (Saltini, « Stamperia Orientale Medicea », p. 263, note 1). The Arabic text was printed in 1593 with the title *Avicenna Canonis Medicinae*; the Latin version was never completed.

38 The *Kitāb al-thamara* is mentioned in the *Fihrist* by Ibn al-Nadīm as among Ptolemy's original works (Ibn al-Nadīm, *Kitāb al-fihrist*, ed. Gustav Flügel, F. C. W. Vogel, Leipzig 1871, vol. I, p. 268). For an overview of the treatise with regard to its contents and origin, integrated with an exhaustive bibliography, see Emanuele Rovati, « 'Pseudo-Ptolemy, Kitāb al-Thamara' (update: 15.03.2023), Ptolemaeus Arabus et Latinus. Works » <http://ptolemaeus.badw.de/work/190> (Accessed May 2023).

expertise in the field had granted him a place on the committee of experts designated by Pope Gregory XIII (1501–1585) to reform the calendar.[39]

thamara 21	*thamara 22*	*thamara 23*
idhā tanāwala al-insān mushilan wa-l-qamar fī qirān al-mushtarī qaṣara ʿamal al-mushil wa-qalla fiʿlu-hu.	*mass al-ʿuḍw bi-l-ḥadīd wa-l-qamar fī burj dhālika al-ʿudw makrūh.*	*tanāwul al-dawāʾ al-mushil wa-l-qamar fī al-ʿaqrab aw al-saraṭān aw al-ḥūt wa-ṣāhib al-ṭāliʿ muttaṣil bi-kawkab taḥta al-arḍ maḥmūd, wa-in ittaṣala bi-kawkab fī wasaṭ al-samāʾ qadhafa al-dawāʾ wa-lam yastaqirr fī al-maʿida.*
Aphorism 21 If a laxative is taken when the Moon is in conjunction with Jupiter its efficacy is limited.[40]	Aphorism 22 To perform surgery (lit. 'to touch the part of the body with iron') on a part of the body when the Moon is in the sign of that part is dreadful.[41]	Aphorism 23 To take a laxative when the Moon is in Scorpio, or Cancer, or Pisces and the owner of the ascendent (i.e., the patient) is connected to a planet beneath the Earth is commendable. If he is connected to a planet at the centre of the sky, the substance is puked as it does not settle in the stomach.

Tab. 3: Excerpts from the *Kitāb al-thamara* by Ps.-Ptolemy annotated by Niʿmatallāh.

Other unsystematic annotations by Niʿmatallāh are scattered throughout Arabe 2967. The aforementioned work of the reorganisation of his material assets might provide a plausible explanation for their presence. At fol. 159r, 197r, he added titles to the excerpts from Ḥājjī Pasha's *Shifāʾ*. Likewise, at fol. 149v, he annotated the title and table of contents of al-Samarqandī's *Qarābādīn*. As for the latter, he also annotated the beginning of the chapters as well as relevant sections in the outer margins.[42] The annotation at the bottom of fol. 1r is much more interesting

[39] Farina, « Nascita della Tipografia Medicea », p. 60. We do not know to what extent Niʿmatallāh contributed to this reform. Based on vibrant complaints addressed to the scholars of the Curia preserved in Niʿmatallāh's letters, Levi Della Vida argues that his contribution was limited (Levi Della Vida, *Documenti intorno alle relazioni*, p. 21).

[40] Maria Papathanassiou, « Iatromathematica (Medical Astrology) in Late Antiquity and the Byzantine Period », *Medicina nei Secoli Arte e Scienza*, 11/2 (1999), p. 371.

[41] This is the first condition described in the *Apotelesmatica* by Hephaistion of Thebes (*fl.* fourth/fifth c.) (ibid, p. 370).

[42] Sijpesteijn advocates that within utilitarian texts, visual markers were meant to « facilitate the text's navigation for quick reference » (Petra Sijpesteijn, « Arabic Medical-Magical Manuscripts: A Living Tradition », in Marcela A. Garcia Probert, Petra Sijpesteijn (eds.), *Amulets and Talismans of*

inasmuch as it probably preserves a catalogue (*jumla kutub*) of manuscripts on the topic of medicinal simples (*al-mufradāt*) owned by Niʿmatallāh:[43]

jumla kutub al-naẓar (?) *fī al-mufradāt awwalan hādhā al-maḥmūl ʿAlī al-Iyādī*
wa-ghayru-hu / mufradāt al-Qānūn[44] */ al-Mūjaz sharḥ*[45] */ ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt*[46]
wa-qalīl fī Shifāʾ Ḥajjī [sic] *Bāshā Turkī*[47] */ wa-qalīl fī al-Qānūnča*[48] */ wa-qalīl fī Rawḍat al-ʿiṭr*[49]
wa-Manāfiʿ al-[...]*wān fī Ikhwān al-Ṣafāʾ / wa-fī ʿAjāʾib al-makhlūqāt*

Documentary evidence might seem to support the hypothesis of the catalogue of manuscripts. Indeed, none of these works is mentioned in the list of scientific manuscripts drafted by Niʿmatallāh himself which had to be purchased on behalf

the Middle East and North Africa in Context, Brill, Leiden 2022 [Leiden Studies in Islam and Society, 13], p. 96).

43 For an interesting case of a catalogue of manuscripts contained in a note, see Arianna D'Ottone, « La bibliothèque d'un savant yéménite du XIIIe siècle d'après une note manuscrite autographe », in Christian Müller, Muriel Roiland-Rouabah (eds.), *Les non-dits du nom. Onomastique et documents en terres d'Islam*, Institut Français du Proche-Orient, Damascus – Beirut 2013, p. 67–84.

44 Probably Book II of the *Qānūn fī al-ṭibb*, which provides a list of simples ordered alphabetically. It might have been part of the one-volume *Qānūn* owned by Niʿmatallāh, mentioned in Firenze, Biblioteca Nazionale di Firenze, Cl.III.102, fol. 11r: « Un volume con cartone coperto di pelle negra, li Canoni di Avicenna » (Sara Fani, Margherita Farina, « An Inventory of Manuscripts and Typographic Materials in the Typographia Medicea Drafted during Raimondi's Lifetime », in Leuschner, Wolf (eds.), *The Medici Oriental Press*, p. 381). This has been identified with Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Or. 44 (Farina, Fani, « Typographia Medicea and the Humanist Perspective », p. 173).

45 *Al-Mūjaz* (« The Epitome ») by Ibn al-Nafīs (d. 687/1288), « the most widely read (and commented upon) abridgment of the *Qānūn* » (Nayhan Fancy, « Ibn al-Nafīs », in EI3 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_30903> [Accessed May 2023]).

46 The second *maqāla* of the famous *Cosmography* by Zakariyyāʾ al-Qazwīnī (600–682/1203–1283), devoted to terrestrial things (*al-sufliyyāt*), contains a section on plants (*al-nabāt*). See Chedly Bouyahia, « Al-Ḳazwīnī, Zakariyyāʾ », in Clifford Edmund Bosworth, Emeri van Donzel, Bernard Lewis, Charles Pellat (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, Brill, Leiden 1997, vol. IV, p. 865.

47 The reference might be specifically to Book II which deals with simple and compound remedies. See Shefer-Mossensohn, « Ḥājjī Pasha ».

48 The *Qānūnča* (« The 'little *Qānūn*' ») is an abridgment of Avicenna's *Qānūn,* authored by the polymath Sharaf al-Dīn Abū ʿAlī Maḥmūd b. Muḥammad b. ʿUmar al-Jaghmīnī (d. c. 618/1221–1222). The work had a wide circulation, and it was translated into many languages. See Sally P. Ragep, « al-Jaghmīnī », in EI3 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_32689> (Accessed May 2023).

49 Arguably the *Rawḍat al-ʿiṭr* (« The Garden of Drugs ») by Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd al-Shirwānī. See Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd al-Shirwānī, *Rawḍat al-ʿiṭr. A 15th-Century Arabic Pharmaceutical Encyclopedia. Critical Edition and Arabic-English Translation*, ed. Ayman Yasin Atat, De Gruyter, Berlin (forthcoming, August 2024).

of the *Typographia Medicea.*[50] On the contrary, some of them seem to be mentioned in Firenze, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, Cl.III.102; at fol. 11r–18v, this document preserves a list of manuscripts formerly owned by Niʿmatallāh which had been inherited by the *Typographia.*[51] Ibn al-Nafīs's *Mūjaz*, for instance, might be « 20:-: Un volume con cartone coperto di pelle negra, l'Abbreviatione delle cose di Medicina d'Avicenna fatta da Abu Hassa Alcorascij con l'espositione di Deu Napbisi ».[52] The *Shifāʾ* by Ḥājjī Pasha might be « 68:-: Un volume legato con carta pecora, contiene la medicina di Haggi Bassa ».[53] But there is more, as this document seems to contain a reference to Arabe 2967 as well. Let us examine the description of manuscript no. 22: « 22:-: Un volume con cartone coperto di pelle verde, si chiama Tacuin delli medicamenti di Haggi Bascia vi è ancora un trattato de medicamentis compositis experimentati di Nagibidin Gamaz Cadi ».[54] The « Tacuin delli medicamenti » might be the *Taqwīm al-adwiya*. It is ascribed to Ḥājjī Pasha (« Haggi Bascia »), which is not that surprising if we consider that al-ʿAlāʾī was not as famous as Ḥājjī Pasha – whose works are preserved in the manuscript as well, though in the form of excerpts. Then, the reference to Nagīb al-Dīn al-Samarqandī (« Nagibidin ») seems unequivocal.[55] The description of the binding corresponds, too. A green leather cover (« coperto di pelle verde ») still envelopes the textblock of Arabe 2967 – although as times goes by, it is gradually turning brown. A reference to Arabe 2967 might be contained in the posthumous inventory of Raimondi's assets, too.[56]

Finally, at fol. 198r–200v, annotations relating to drugs which are categorised according to various typologies are preserved. They include:

[50] The list is contained in Firenze, Archivio di Stato di Firenze, Misc. Med. 719, ins. 51, fol. 3. For an edition, see Hazim Alabdullah, « List of 'Religious' and 'Scientific' Books in Arabic and Persian Requested for the Typographia Medicea by Patriarch Ignatios Niʿmatullah and Giovanni Battista Raimondi », in Leuschner, Wolf (eds.), *The Medici Oriental Press*, p. 187–189.

[51] The document has been edited by Fani, Farina, « Inventory of Manuscripts », p. 379–400.

[52] Fani, Farina, « Inventory of Manuscripts », p. 382.

[53] Fani, Farina, « Inventory of Manuscripts », p. 387.

[54] Fani, Farina, « Inventory of Manuscripts », p. 382.

[55] The only puzzling element in this account is the integration of « Gamaz Cadi » within al-Samarqandī's name. Perhaps, the copyist's little knowledge of Arabic might explain this. Fani and Farina note that « in certain cases, [the copyist] misunderstood the script in the antigraph he had in front of him; the transliterations are certainly not scientific and not always consistent » (Fani, Farina, « Inventory of Manuscripts », p. 380).

[56] « tacuim di medicina arabo numero 124 » (Leuschner, « Posthumous Inventory », p. 462). At note 359, Leuschner parallels this manuscript with manuscript no. 22 in Firenze, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze, Cl.III.102 as well; however, at note 358 he identifies the « tacuim » with the much more famous *Taqwīm al-siḥḥa* (« Tacuinum Sanitatis ») authored by Ibn Buṭlān (d. 458/1066), without elaborating on that.

- fol. 198r: pills (*ḥubūb*), hieras (*iyārjāt*), purgatives (*faraghāt*), perfumes (*lakhlakhāt*), bandages (*kimādāt*).
- fol. 198v: pastilles (*aqrāṣ*), drops (*qaṭarāt*, written *quṭūrāt*).
- fol. 199r: liniments (*ṭulāwāt*), sternutatories (*saʿūṭāt*), fumigations (*bakhūrāt*).
- fol. 199v: fumigations/decoctions (*naṭūlāt*), electuaries (*maʿājīn*), poultices (*ḍimādāt*).
- fol. 200r: stomachics (*jawārishnāt* [sic]), decoctions (*maṭbūkhāt*), syrups, juices and collyria (*sharābāt, rubūb, jilāʾāt*), clysters (*ḥuqan*), oils (*adhān*).
- fol. 200v: different compound remedies (*al-adwiya al-murakkaba al-mukhtalifa*).

It is a mere list of medications with no remedy attached. Sometimes, the part of the body which would benefit from the use of a specific drug is provided.

VI. *Conclusions*

After having proceeded backwards, let us retrace the history of Arabe 2967 chronologically. The manuscript as a deliberate assemblage of medical texts was originally part of the collection of Ignatios Niʿmatallāh, syro-orthodox Patriarch in Ṭūr ʿAbdin. In 1755, it reached Italy, namely Venice, then Rome in 1578. It is plausible that Niʿmatallāh annotated it there. Upon Niʿmatallāh's death in 1587, the manuscript entered the collection of the *Typographia Medicea*. Contextually, the note « Da Monsig. Pat.ca » was added by Giovanni Battista Raimondi on the front doublure. The latter annotated a couple of leaves as well. When, in 1610, Cosimo II de' Medici (1590–1621) took the property of the *Typographia* back from Raimondi in order to save it from the financial bankruptcy, the manuscripts were moved to Florence, after a brief period in Pisa. It is plausible that Renaudot saw it there when, in 1700, he was working on the catalogue of the Oriental collection of the *Typographia.*[57] Then, the manuscript reached Paris.[58] Supposedly, it was part of

[57] Apparently, the manuscript is not mentioned in D'Herbelot's catalogue, the *Registro di Libri Orientali del Seren:mo Gran Duca con una succinta esplicitazione del contenuto de' medesimi fatta dal Sig.r Bartolomeo D'Herbelot, insigne Letterato Francese in Firenze l'Anno 1666* (see Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Italien 480, fol. 40v–49v). On the catalogue redacted by D'Herbelot, see Margherita Farina, « Stefano Evodio Assemani e la collezione orientale della Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana di Firenze », *Parole de l'Orient*, 47 (2021), p. 323.

[58] Indeed, it is not mentioned in Stefano Evodio Assemani's (1707–1782) catalogue (Stefano Evodio Assemani, *Bibliothecae Mediceae Laurentianae et Palatinae codicum mms. orientalium catalogus, sub auspiciis regiae celsitudinis Serenissimi Francisci III, Lotharingiae et Barri ducis Regis Hierusalem Mani*

the load of material destined to Renaudot which, eventually, never returned to Italy. Instead, we know for certain that, upon Renaudot's death, it was moved to the library of the monastery of Saint-Germain-des-Près.[59] After the fire of 1794, the manuscript was finally moved to the Bibliothèque imperiale, now the Bibliothèque nationale de France, where it is still preserved.

It goes without saying that the reconstruction of the history of Arabe 2967 as provided in this article would not have been possible without its marginal annotations. The example of Arabe 2967 demonstrates unequivocally that a great deal of information may hide beneath marginal annotations. Their potential is crystal-clear insofar as they can help us retrace the history of manuscripts as well as investigate the life, interests, and expertise of the people behind them.

Ducis Etruriae, Stephanus Evodius Assemanus archiep. Apameae recensuit, digessit, notis illustravit, Antonio Francisco Gorio curante, Ex Typographio Albiziniano, Florentiae 1742, p. 342–378) which was published in 1743 – though the frontispiece indicates 1742 (Farina, « Stefano Evodio Assemani », p. 319, note 3). Assemani laments the moving of some leaves of an Arabic manuscript over the Alps, i.e., to France (Assemani, *Bibliothecae Mediceae*, p. 95: « impius nescio quis ab ipso Codice, proh dolor ! avulsit, & in aliquam Bibliothecam, ni fallor, Transalpinam, remotis arbitris, exportavit »). The information is reported by Villien, *L'abbé Eusèbe Renaudot*, p. 121, note 1. Nonetheless, nothing compelling can be inferred from this. Assemani does not mention names, dates, or anything else. Moreover, he refers exclusively to the leaves of a particular manuscript; there is no mention whatsoever of a group of manuscripts that were moved to France.

[59] The shelf-mark « A. 404 » visible at fol. 1r can be referred to the cataloguing activity of Renaudot's collection carried out at the library of the monastery of Saint-Germain-des-Près. Vajda mentions « St. Germ. 404 » in the *cote anciennes* (Vajda, *Notices*, p. 73).

Appendix

Here, I provide the edition of Niʿmatallāh's annotations to al-ʿAlāʾī's *Taqwīm*. They have been cross-referenced with Avicenna's *Qānūn* in the Arabic and Latin versions. Organised into synoptical tables, the edition is structured as follows:

- Line 1: Niʿmatallāh's annotations: at the top, Arabic simple; in the middle, 'phonetic' transliteration; at the bottom, Latin simple.
- Line 2: Cross-reference with the *Qānūn fī al-ṭibb*, in the edition by Muḥammad Amīn al-Ḍanāwī – with the page reference to the correspondent simple between brackets.[60]
- Line 3: Cross-reference with the *Canon*, in the Alpago-Rinio version – with the reference to the *Capitolo* of the correspondent simple between brackets.[61]
- Line 4 (where present): correspondent simple in the *Taqwīm al-adwiya.*

fol. 20v			
الشفاني اسيفيني Aisefeni		اكتمكت اتامارايت Atharaet	
ألسفاني (٣٧٥)		اكتمكت (٣٧٥)	
Alsefeni (Cap. 25)		*Athamaraet (Cap. 23)*	
fol. 21v			
أومالى أمُومِيْلِي Amumeli	آنِيسو Nisum	اَبْسِينْتيّو Absinthiu	اللبخ اللابوخ Allabuch
أونومالي (٣٦٢)	أنيسون (٣٤٢)	أفسنتين (٣٤٣)	اللبخ (٣٧٣)
Amumeli (Cap. 13)	*Anisum (Cap. 1)*	*Absinthiu (Cap. 2)*	*Allabuch (Cap. 22)*
	انيسون	افسنتين	
fol. 22v			
الابار وانك الاهبار والاونوك Alahabar at Alaunoch	أسَّارُو Assarum	أبْهِيل Abhel	ارماك ارميك Armech
الأبار والأنك (٣٦٠)	أسارون (٣٥٠)	أبهل (٣٥١)	أرماك (٣٧٣)
Alaunoch & alahabar (Cap. 12)	*Assarum (Cap. 4)*	*Abhel (Cap. 5)*	*Armech (Cap. 21)*
	اسارون	ابهل	

[60] Avicenna, *Al-Qānūn fī al-ṭibb*, ed. Muḥammad Amīn al-Ḍanāwī, Dār al-kutub al-ʿilmiyya, Beirut 1999, vol. I.

[61] *Avicennae liber canonis*, trans. Alpago, ed. Rinio, Giunta, Venetiis 1555.

fol. 23v					
الوسن الجواسِين Alguasen	اناجاللیس Anagallis	أوريكولا Auricula	اذريميّا Adrimia	أنيُّودين Aniuden	اطراطيقوس اتراتيسوس Atratisus
آلوسن (٣٧٦)	أناغلس (٣٧٨)	آذان الفار (٣٧٠)	أذريون (٣٥٥)	أنجدان (٣٥٨)	أطراطيقوس (٣٧٦)
Alguasen (Cap. 26)	*Anagallys (Cap. 33)*	*Auricula muris (Cap. 18)*	*Adrimia (Cap. 6)*	*Aniuden (Cap. 9)*	*Atratifus (Cap. 27)*
	اناغالس	اذان الفار	اذريون	انجدان	
fol. 24v					
افسيون ابسيّو Absius	أمْغَيْلِيْم Amgailem	ازيداريح Azedaraeth	اشترغار اشتيرعار Astirgar		
	أم غيلان (٣٦٢)	أزاندرخت (٣٦٣)	اشترغاز (٣٥٩)		
Absius (Cap. 32)	*Amgailem (Cap. 15)*	*Azedaraeth (Cap. 17)*	*Astirgar (Cap. 10)*		
	ام غيلان	ازاذدرخت			
fol. 25v					
اردياجى اردسريجي Ardisrigi	أَمْمُونياكو Ammoniacum	أَكَاتِيّا Acatia	ابوطولون ابوتيلون Abutilon		
	أشق (٣٥٨)	أقاقيا (٣٤٦)	أوبوطيلون (٣٧٧)		
Ardifrigi (Cap. 28)	*Ammoniacum (Cap. 8)*	*Acatia (Cap. 3)*	*Abutilon (Cap. 29)*		
	اشق	اقاقيا			
fol. 26v					
اسيوس اسيّو لا يبدى Asius	Abanus	اطبوط أَتِيوت Athiuth			
أسيوسي (٣٧٧)	أبنوس (٣٧٠)	أطيوط (٣٧٧)			
Asius (Cap. 30)	*Ebenus (Cap. 230)*	*Athiuth (Cap. 31)*			
	ابنوس				
fol. 27v					
ابوجلسا ابوجيليسي *Abugilise*	بلانتي ديرانتيي *Blacte disantie*	الماس أَلْمِيْسُوْ *Almesu*			
أبو حلسا (٣٧١)	أظفار الطيب (٣٥٢)	الماس (٣٧٢)			
Abugilise (Cap. 19)	*Blacte bizantie (Cap. 81)*	*Almesu (Cap. 20)*			
	اظفار				

fol. 28v			
اوسند اوسيد Ausid	ادريناجى اردیسریکی Ardisrigi	انتيمونيوم Antimonium	اسيوس أسيّو Asius
أوسبيد (٣٧٨)		أثمد (٣٥٦)	أسيوسي (٣٧٧)
Ausid (Cap. 35)	*Ardifrigi (Cap. 28)*	*Antimonium (Cap. 7)*	*Asius (Cap. 30)*
		اثمد	

fol. 29v			
ابرقة *Abrich*	اغالوجي أغالوجين *Agaluin*	اطا اتا *Ata*	اذاراقي اتاراكيك *Atharachic*
أبرق (٣٧٨)	أغالوجى (٣٦٢)		إذاراقى (٣٦٣)
Abrich (Cap. 34)	*Agalugin (Cap. 14)*	*Ata (Cap. 40)*	*Atharachic (Cap. 16)*

fol. 30v					
بنجنجشت اجنوكاستو Agnucastus	بِيشِجْواشين Besceguascen	بيهار Bihar	بيدارونجي Bedarungi	بيديرينزيجو Bederenzegum	بنقة باهقى Baheke
بنجنكشت (٤٠٦)	برشياوشان (٤٠٣)	بهار (٤٠٠)	باذروج (٤٠٣)	باذرنجبويه (٣٩٨)	بنقسة (٤٠٢)
Agnucastus (Cap. 44)	*Besceguascen (Cap. 103)*	*Bihar (Cap. 100)*	*Bedarungi (Cap. 104)*	*Bederenzegum (Cap. 95)*	*Baheke (Cap. 102)*
	برشاوشان	بهار	باذروج	باذرنبويه	

fol. 31v				
بل بولى Bule	بين Ben	بِيتار Etnos (?)	بالسامو Balsamus	برنجاسف بيرينجاسيف Berengesif
بل (٣٩٧)	بان (٣٨١)	بطباط (٤١٥)	بلسان (٣٨٤)	برنجاسف (٣٨٧)
Bule (Cap. 93)	*Ben (Cap. 82)*		*Balsamus (Cap. 84)*	*Berengesif (Cap. 86)*
	بان	بطباط	بلسان	

fol. 32v				
بوس دربندى بيوسديربيرديو Beusderbendium	أمِيْربيريس Amirberis	بيلليريكيس Belliryci	اناكردو Anacardus	بوقيضا بوقيدا Buckida
	أثبرباريس (٣٥٩)	بليلج (٣٩٨)	بلاذر (٣٨٨)	بوقيصا (٤٠٠)
Beusderbendium (Cap. 111)	*Amirberis (Cap. 11)*	*Belliryci (Cap. 94)*	*Anacardus (Cap. 41)*	*Buckida (Cap. 99)*
	برباريس	بليلج	بلاذر	

fol. 33v			
بهرامج بيهريميجي Beheremigi	بَاذوارِيد Bedoard	بوزييديم Buzeidem	بداسفان باداسيكان Bedasfan
بهرامج (٣٩٩)	باذاورد (٣٨٣)	بوزيدان (٣٩٩)	بداسفان (٤١٤)
Beheremigi (Cap. 97)	*Bedoard (Cap. 83)*	*Buzeidem (Cap. 98)*	*Bedasfan (Cap. 109)*
	باذاورد	بوزيدان	

fol. 34v		
بِيّن Been	أَدْرِيميًّا Adrimia	بونكو Bunchum
بهمن (٣٨٧)		بنك (٣٩٤)
Been (Cap. 85)	*Adrimia (Cap. 6)*	*Bunchum (Cap. 91)*
بهمين	بخور مريم	بنك

fol. 36v					
برطانيقي بيرتانيقي Bertaniki	أَويللأَنَا Auellana	بوسورو وبالما Besser & Belha	كاييي Caepe	بولبو Bulbus	بقلة يهودية بديلليو Bdellium
برطانيقي (٤٠٤)	بندق (٤٠٦)	بسر وبلح (٣٩٣)	بصل (٣٩٠)	بلبوس (٣٩٢)	بقلة يهودية (٤١٤)
Bertaniki (Cap. 105)	*Auellana (Cap. 43)*	*Besser & Belha (Cap. 90)*	*Cæpe (Cap. 122)*	*Bulbus (Cap. 88)*	*Bdellium iudaicum (Cap. 115)*
[quoted at fol. 33v]	بندق	بسر وبلخ	بصل	بلبوس	

fol. 37v		
بابليس بيبيليسي Bebilisi	باتيخا Batecha	بيلمون بيلومون Bilomon
بابلس (٤١٢)	بطيخ (٣٩٥)	بيلون (٤٠٤)
Bebilisi (Cap. 107)	*Batecha (Cap. 92)*	*Bilomon (Cap. 106)*
	بطيخ	

fol. 38v					
بوصير بوسيري Busiri	باوراك Baurach	اويس Oua nota	اناتى Anas	بِيْنيكجَواريدين Benecguariden	برنك كابلى بوراك كابولى Baurachkebuli
بوصير (٤٠١)	بورق (٣٨٩)	بيض (٣٩٦)	بط (٤٠٢)	بنات وردان (٤١٤)	برنك الكابلي (٤٠٠)
Busiri (Cap. 101)	*Baurach (Cap. 87)*	*Oua (Cap. 527)*	*Anas (Cap. 42)*	*Benec gauriden (Cap. 108)*	*Baurach kebuli (Cap. 96)*
	بورق	بيض	بط	بنات وردان	

fol. 48v	
اكأرو Acorus	Roza
وج (٤٥٣)	ورد (٤٥١)
Acorus (Cap. 46)	*Rosa (Cap. 575)*
وج	ورد

fol. 39v	
حناح ألَلايي Alae	بويانس بوجانيس Bugenis
جناح (٣٢٦)	بويانس (٣٩٣)
Alæ (Cap. 45)	*Bugenis (Cap. 89)*

fol. 53v
أرْسِينِيكُو Arsenicum
زرنيخ (٤٦٠)
Arsenicum (Cap. 49)
زرنيخ

fol. 52v
أترِيمينتُو Atrimentum
زاج (٤٥٩)
Atrimentum (Cap. 48)
زاج

fol. 55v			
حمار اسينو Asinus	الكاننا Alcanna	أسّاء Assa	حماص الما أكيتُوسَا Acetosa
حمار (٤٩٥)	حناء (٤٧٤)	حلتيت (٤٧٩)	
Asinus (Cap. 55)	*Alcanna (Cap. 51)*	*Assa (Cap. 53)*	*Acetosa (Cap. 54)*
	حناء	حلتيت	

fol. 84v	fol. 83v	fol. 65v
أَمُولى Amylum	امِيوس Ameos	أَبِيّو Apium
نشا (٥٧٩)	نانخواه (٥٧٩)	كرفس (٥٢٨)
Amylum (Cap. 60)	*Ameos (Cap. 61)*	*Apium (Cap. 56)*
نشا	نانخواه	كرفس

fol. 102v	fol. 101v	fol. 93v	
ألوي Aloes	ارزينتو - ارجينتو Argentum	عرطنيثا ارتانيتا Artanita	أَمْبَرَا Ambra
صبر (٦٤٠)	فضة (٦٢٤)	عرطنيثا (٦١٠)	عنبر (٦١٣)
Aloes (Cap. 66)	*Argentum (Cap. 65)*	*Artanita (Cap. 62)*	*Ambra (Cap. 63)*
صبر	فضة		عنبر

fol. 105v		fol. 107v	fol. 114v
اروماتيكو Aromaticum	ابروتانو Abrotanum	أروندينى Arundo	أنِيتو Anethum
قصب الذريرة (٦٤٤)	قبصوم (٦٥٥)	قصب (٦٤٤)	شبث (٦٧٨)
Aromaticum *(Cap. 79)*	*Abrotanum* *(Cap. 68)*	*Arundo* *(Cap. 67)*	*Anethum* *(Cap. 71)*
قصب الدريرة	قبصوم	قصب	شبث

fol. 118v			fol. 122v
شجرة البق اربوري كيميكوم Arborcimicum	اديبي Adips	شجرة مريم اربوري ماريا Arbor mariae	اللِيو Allium
شجرة البق (٦٨٤)	شحم (٦٨٢)	شجرة مريم (٦٧٥)	ثوم (٦٩٥)
Arbor cimicum *(Cap. 73)*	*Adeps* *(Cap. 72)*	*Arbor mariæ* *(Cap. 69)*	*Allium* *(Cap. 74)*
	شحم		ثوم

fol. 125v	fol. 127v		fol. 130v
أَلْتَايَا Althaea	أَكِيتُو Acetum	خنثى أفوديلو Aphodilus	أورُو Aurum
خطمي (٧٠١)	خل (٧١٤)	خنثى (٧٠٨)	ذهب (٧١٩)
Althæa *(Cap. 75)*	*Acetum* *(Cap. 77)*	*Aphodilus* *(Cap. 76)*	*Aurum* *(Cap. 78)*
خطمي	خل		ذهب

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Los inicios del Ismailismo Nizarí: Traducción comentada de la obra *Reconocimiento a Dios* del Ḫwāǧah Qāsim Tuštarī*

The Beginnings of Nizari Ismailism: Annotated Translation of Ḫwāǧah Qāsim Tuštarī's *Recognizing God*

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Abstract

La obra de Ḫwāǧah Qāsim Tuštarī *Reconocimiento a Dios* (*Maʿrifat-i Ḫudāy taʿālā*), recientemente descubierta, es uno de los únicos textos que se conservan del primer periodo alamūtí de la historia musulmana ismailí. Esta obra conserva pruebas de la « nueva convocatoria » (*daʿwat-i ǧadīd*) a la fe ismailí que, según al-Šahrastānī (fallecido en 548/1153), fue inaugurada por el Imām fatimí al-Mustanṣir billāh (fallecido en 487/1094) y defendida por Ḥasan-i Ṣabbāḥ (fallecido en 518/1124). El texto subraya que el fin último de la existencia humana es conocer a Dios, y que el camino hacia este conocimiento pasa por el Imām del Tiempo. El texto, compuesto probablemente entre 525/1131 y 533/1139, contiene referencias casi contemporáneas a Sanāʾī Ġaznawī (fallecido hacia 525/1131) y apunta al desarrollo muy temprano de la poesía homilética, devocional y piadosa persa, así como del « metro *maṯnawī* » en el entorno ismailí. Más tarde, Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār (fallecido hacia 618/1221) y Ǧalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (fallecido en 672/1273) utilizaron célebremente este metro en sus composiciones místicas. El artículo incluye una introducción y una traducción comentada de *Reconocimiento a Dios*, de Qāsim Tuštarī.

Palabras claves

Alamūt; Ismailismo; Sufismo; Sanāʾī Ġaznawī; Qāsim Tuštarī

* La traducción de este artículo al castellano ha sido realizada por Virginia Martos Armenteros. Agradecemos a Sara Venturini su revisión de este artículo y sus útiles sugerencias.

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Abstract

Ḫwāǧah Qāsim Tuštarī's recently discovered *Recognizing God* (*Maʿrifat-i Khudāy taʿālā*) is one of the only texts known to have survived from the early Alamūt period of Ismaili Muslim history. It preserves evidence of the « new Invitation » (*daʿwat-i jadīd*) to the Ismaili faith that al-Šahrastānī (d. 548/1153) tells us was inaugurated by the Fatimid Imām al-Mustanṣir billāh (d. 487/1094) and championed by Ḥasan-i Ṣabbāḥ (d. 518/1124). The text emphasizes that the ultimate purpose of human existence is to know God and that the path to this knowledge is through the Imām of the Time. Likely composed between 525/1131 and 533/1139, the text contains near-contemporary references to Sanāʾī Ġaznawī (d. ca. 525/1131) and points to the very early development of homiletic Persian pious, devotional, and homiletic poetry as well as the « *mathnawī* metre » in Ismaili environments. This metre was later famously used by Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār (d. ca. 618/1221) and Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (d. 672/1273) in their mystical compositions. The article includes an introduction and annotated translation of Qāsim Tushtarī's *Recognizing God.*

Keywords

Alamūt; Ismailism; Sufism; Sanāʾī Ġaznawī; Qāsim Tuštarī

Al no conservarse fuentes nizaríes de la época de Ḥasan-i Ṣabbāḥ, es imposible saber cómo los primeros nizaríes percibían a su comunidad hace unos nueve siglos.
Farhad Daftary[1]

I. *Antecedentes*

La obra de Ḫwāǧah Qāsim Tuštarī *Reconocimiento a Dios* (*Maʿrifat-i Ḫudāy taʿālā*), recientemente descubierta, es uno de los pocos textos conocidos que han sobrevivido del primer periodo de Alamūt de la historia musulmana ismailí. Los nuevos estudios han ampliado gradualmente nuestro conocimiento del ismailismo en Alamūt desde la época del Imām Ḥasan, normalmente referido bajo el nombre de Imām Ḥasan ʿalā ḏikrihi's-salām (fallecido en 561/1166) en adelante, sobre todo con la publicación de ediciones, traducciones y estudios que abarcan autores y

[1] Farhad Daftary, « Hasan-i Sabbah and the Origins of the Nizari Ismaili *Daʿwa* and State », en *Ismailis in Medieval Muslim Societies*, I.B. Tauris in association with Insititute of Ismaili Studies, Londres 2005 (Ismaili Heritage Series), p. 124.

obras como *Los protocolos y la invitación de los fieles a la augusta presencia* (*al-Dustūr wa-daʿwat al-muʾminīn liʾl-ḥuḍūr*) atribuida a Šams al-Dīn ibn Aḥmad (o Muḥammad) ibn Yaʿqūb al-Ṭayyibī (fallecido en 652/1254),[2] *El paraíso de la sumisión* (*Rawḍah-yi taslīm*) de Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Ḥasan-i Maḥmūd (fallecido después de 640/1243) y Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī (fallecido 672/1274) junto con otras obras[3] como *Poemas de la resurrección* (*Dīwān-i qāʾimiyyāt*) de Ḥasan-i Maḥmūd y otros poetas ismailíes,[4] y el *Poema que rima en Tāʾ* (*Tāʾiyyah*) de ʿĀmir ibn ʿĀmir al-Baṣrī (fallecido después de 700/1300).[5] Sin embargo, aparte de algunos avances significativos en el conocimiento de la obra de al-Šahrastānī (fallecido en 548/1153), el periodo anterior ha recibido menos atención y destaca por su escasez de fuentes. En este contexto, el descubrimiento de la obra *Reconocimiento a Dios*, de Ḫwāǧah Qāsim Tuštarī, es un testimonio especialmente significativo de los inicios de la rama nizarí del ismailismo. Compuesta probablemente entre 525/1131 y 533/1139, la breve misiva arroja luz sobre esta etapa crucial del desarrollo de la comunidad.[6] Este primer periodo de la historia nizarí, como ha indicado Farhad Daftary, es un periodo del que prácticamente no se conservan otras fuentes ismailíes.

Con la muerte del profeta Muḥammad, la comunidad musulmana adoptó diversas interpretaciones de su mensaje. Entre las diversas escuelas que surgieron, la šīʿah imāmí asumió la posición privilegiada de los imāmes hereditarios de la familia del Profeta, adhiriéndose estrechamente a su guía. Tras la muerte del Imām Ǧaʿfar al-Ṣādiq en 148/765, la comunidad se dividió. Entre los grupos que surgieron,

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2 Šams al-Dīn ibn Aḥmad (o Muḥammad) ibn Yaʿqūb al-Ṭayyibī (atrib.), « al-Dustūr wa-Daʿwat al-Muʾminīn liʾl-Ḥuḍūr », en ʿĀrif Tāmir (ed.), *Arbaʿ rasāʾil Ismāʿīliyyah*, Maktabat al-ḥayāt, Beirut 1978.

3 Naṣīr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Ṭūsī, Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Ḥasan-i Maḥmūd-i Kātib, *Rawḍah-yi Taslīm (Taṣawwurāt)* [Paradise of Submission: A Medieval Treatise on Ismaili Thought; A New Persian Edition and English Translation of Naṣīr al-Dīn Ṭūsī's Rawḍa-yi taslīm], trad. Seyyed Jalal Hosseini Badakhchani, I.B. Tauris in association with Institute of Ismaili Studies, Londres 2005 (Ismaili Texts and Translations Series); Naṣīr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Ṭūsī, Ṣalāh al-Dīn Ḥasan-i Maḥmūd-i Kātib, *Rawḍah-yi Taslīm (Taṣawwurāt)*, 1ª [Mīrāṯ-i Maktūb] ed. ʿUlūm wa Maʿārif-i Islāmī, Markaz-i Pazhūhašī-yi Mīrāṯ-i Maktūb (Miras-e Maktoob) bā hamkārī-yi Muʾassasah-yi Muṭālaʿāt-i Ismāʿīlī (The Institute of Ismaili Studies), Teherán 1393 HS/2014 AC.

4 Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Ḥasan-i Maḥmūd-i Kātib, *Dīwān-i Qāʾimiyyāt* [Poems of the Resurrection], 2ª ed., Markaz-i Pazhūhašī-yi Mīrāṯ-i Maktūb (Miras-e Maktoob) bā hamkārī-yi Muʾassasah-yi Muṭālaʿāt-i Ismāʿīlī (The Institute of Ismaili Studies), Teherán 1395 HS/2016 AC.

5 ʿĀmir ibn ʿĀmir al-Baṣrī, *Tāʾiyyah* [Poésie ésoterique Ismailïenne: La Tāʾiyya de ʿĀmir b. ʿĀmir al-Baṣrī], trad. Yves Marquet, Editions Maisonneuve & Larose, París 1985. Sobre la discutida autoría de este texto, véase Hermann Landolt, « Reseña de Poésie ésoterique ismaïlienne. La Tāʾiyya de ʿĀmir b. ʿĀmir al-Baṣri, de Yves Marquet », *Bulletin Critique des Annales Islamologiques*, (1987), p. 64–65, 245–246.

6 La datación del texto se discute en la obra Shafique N. Virani, « Alamūt, Ismailism and Khwājah Qāsim Tushtarī's Recognizing God », *Shii Studies Review*, 2/1–2 (2018), p. 193–227.

uno llegó a reconocer el imāmato de su hijo Mūsā al-Kāẓim,[7] mientras que otros mantuvieron la designación (*naṣṣ*) de Ǧaʿfar al-Ṣādiq en favor de su hijo mayor, Ismāʿīl al-Mubārak. Con el paso del tiempo, los seguidores de esta línea mayor pasaron a denominarse al-Ismāʿīliyyah,[8] mientras que la línea más joven acabó conociéndose como Iṯnāʿašariyyah, o Chíies Duodecimanos, tras la desaparición de su duodécimo Imām.

En el año 297/909, el Imām ismailí ʿAbd Allāh al-Mahdī (fallecido en 322/934) instauró el califato fatimí. En el apogeo de su poder, los califas fatimíes reclamaron el dominio de todo el norte de África, Egipto, Sicilia, la costa africana del mar Rojo, Yemen, Siria, Palestina y el Hiğaz junto a las ciudades santas de La Meca y Medina. Una característica notable del ismailismo era su invitación organizada (*daʿwah*) a reconocer al Imām de la época. Con la muerte del Imām al-Mustanṣir en 487/1094, el visir y comandante de los ejércitos, al-Afḍal (fallecido en 515/1121), colocó en el trono a su cuñado, el hijo menor de al-Mustanṣir, Aḥmad, en lugar del sucesor designado, Abū Manṣūr Nizār.[9]

Los ismailíes orientales y sus líderes, fuera del alcance de los ejércitos fatimíes, apoyaron la causa de Nizār y se separaron del Cairo. El castillo de Alamūt se convertiría más tarde en el cuartel general de los ismailíes nizaríes durante más de siglo y medio. ʿAṭā-Malik Ǧuwaynī, asistente e historiador de Hūlāġū Ḫān, que visitó la célebre biblioteca de Alamūt, « cuya fama se había extendido por todo el mundo »,[10] nos informa de la multitud de libros religiosos ismailíes que encontró allí, lo que indica que había habido una importante producción literaria. Sin embargo, en 654/1256 la comunidad sufrió un duro golpe cuando las hordas mongolas arrasaron Oriente Próximo y destruyeron su capital. Ǧuwaynī incendió

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7 La mayoría de los seguidores de Mūsā aceptaron inicialmente las afirmaciones del hijo de Ǧaʿfar al-Ṣādiq, ʿAbd Allāh al-Afṭāḥ. Sin embargo, la muerte de este poco después de la de su padre hizo que reconocieran a Mūsā al-Kāẓim. Véase Marshall G.S. Hodgson, « Djaʿfar al-Ṣādiḳ », en Peri J. Bearman et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Online, 2ª ed., E.J. Brill, Leiden 2012, <https://doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_1922>; Abū ʿAbd Allāh Ǧaʿfar ibn Aḥmad al-Aswad Ibn al-Hayṭam, *Kitāb al-Munāẓarāt* [The Advent of the Fatimids: A Contemporary Shiʿi Witness], trad. Wilferd Madelung, Paul E. Walker, I.B. Tauris in association with Institute of Ismaili Studies, Londres 2000, p. ed. 35–37, p. trad. 90–92; Hossein Modarressi, *Crisis and Consolidation in the Formative Period of Shīʿite Islam: Abū Jaʿfar Ibn Qiba al-Rāzī and His Contribution to Imāmite Shīʿite Thought*, Darwin Press, Princeton 1993, p. 53ff; Farhad Daftary, *The Ismāʿīlīs: Their History and Doctrines*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1990, p. 94.

8 Para conocer más acerca de la historia de su nombre y sus diversas variantes, consulte Shafique N. Virani, « La hierohistoria en el fundamento de la interpretación simbólica (*Asās al-taʾwīl*) de Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān: el nacimiento de Jesús », trad. Virginia Martos Armenteros, *Occhialì: Rivista sul Mediterraneo islamico*, 9 (2021), p. 5, n. 2.

9 A lo largo de este documento, cuando se emplean las palabras ismailí e ismailismo en el contexto del entorno posterior a la escisión, se hace referencia a la rama nizarí de la comunidad.

10 ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn ʿAṭā-Malik Ǧuwaynī, *Taʾrīḫ-i Ǧahāngušāy* [The History of the World-Conqueror], trad. John Andrew Boyle, 2 vols., Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA 1958, vol. 2, p. 719.

la biblioteca y sólo salvó ejemplares del Corán y algunos tratados.[11] Los propios ismailíes, condenados a un destino similar al de sus libros, también fueron perseguidos y masacrados indiscriminadamente. La devastación fue tan completa que durante mucho tiempo se asumió que la comunidad y prácticamente toda su literatura habían dejado de existir.[12]

Por ello, el descubrimiento de la obra *Reconocimiento a Dios*, de Ḫwāğah Qāsim Tuštarī, reviste tanta importancia. El texto ilustra los nuevos énfasis de la Invitación ismailí (*daʿwah*) inaugurada por el Imām fatimí al-Mustanṣir billāh (fallecido en 487/1094) y defendida por Ḥasan-i Ṣabbāḥ (fallecido en 518/1124) y sus colegas. Esta obra afirma que el fin último de la existencia humana es conocer a Dios, y postula que el camino hacia este conocimiento pasa por el Imām del Tiempo y los miembros de su jerarquía espiritual, los *ḥudūd*. En este tratado se recogen muchos de los dichos del Profeta y de los imāmes que se han convertido en el centro de atención de la literatura ismailí alamūtí y post-alamūtí, y en este volumen se ha incluido una amplia documentación de los mismos procedente tanto de fuentes ismailíes como no ismailíes. Cabe destacar que esta obra proporciona referencias poco frecuentes a algunas personalidades ismailíes de la época y contiene referencias casi contemporáneas a Sanāʾī Ġaznawī (fallecido en torno a 525/1131) en la literatura ismailí. *Reconocimiento a Dios* atestigua el desarrollo muy temprano de la poesía homilética persa y del « metro *maṯnawī* » en el entorno ismailí. Más tarde, esta misma métrica apareció en los escritos de Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār (fallecido en torno a 618/1221) y Ǧalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (fallecido en 672/1273).

La misiva de Ḫwāğah Qāsim Tuštarī ha sido ampliamente analizada en dos artículos del presente autor que profundizan en estos temas, *Alamūt, ismailismo y Reconocimiento a Dios por Ḫwāğah Qāsim Tuštarī* y *Poesía persa, sufismo e ismailismo: El testimonio de Reconocimiento a Dios de Ḫwāğah Qāsim Tuštarī*, ambos basados en la traducción comentada que aquí se ofrecen.[13]

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[11] *Ğahāngušāy*, vol. 3, p. 186–87, 269–70; *World-Conqueror*, vol. 2, p. 666, 719.

[12] Véase Shafique N. Virani, « Surviving Persecution: Ismailism and Taqiyyah after the Mongol Invasions », en Leonard Lewisohn, Reza Tabandeh (eds.), *Sufis and their Opponents in the Persianate World*, Jordan Center for Persian Studies, Universidad de California, Irvine, CA 2020, p. 205–236. Shafique N. Virani, « The Right Path: A Post-Mongol Persian Ismaili Treatise », *Journal of Iranian Studies*, 43/2 (2010), p. 197–221, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00210860903541988>, Shafique N. Virani, « An Old Man, a Garden, and an Assembly of Assassins: Legends and Realities of the Nizari Ismaili Muslims », *Iran: Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies*, 61/2 (2023): 272-284, <https://doi.org/10.1080/05786967.2021.1901062>.

[13] Shafique N. Virani, « Persian Poetry, Sufism and Ismailism: The Testimony of Khwājah Qāsim Tushtarī's Recognizing God », *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society Series 3*, 29/1 (2019), p. 17–49, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1356186318000494>.

II. *La bibliografía*

En 1922, una epístola sin nombre se convirtió en la primera obra ismailí genuina en prosa persa publicada. Editada por el erudito ruso Wladimir Ivanow, que la tituló *Sobre el reconocimiento del Imām* (*Faṣl dar bayān-i šinaẖt-i imām*), el texto, cuyo título actual es *La mina de misterios* (*Maʿdin al-asrār*), contenía información sin precedentes sobre el ismailismo nizarí.[14] Fechado después de 939/1533, el texto hace referencia a varias obras de Alamūt, lo que indica que al menos algunas de ellas debieron de sobrevivir a las invasiones mongolas hasta la época del autor.[15] Aquí y en otras partes de este estudio, Alamūt se refiere no sólo al castillo en sí, sino a los diversos territorios administrados desde la sede central.

Al enumerar los poetas aludidos en *La mina de misterios*, Ivanow menciona al autor de una única copla citada en el texto como: « Ḫwāğah Qāsim Tuštarī, a quien no he podido localizar en ninguna parte ».[16] Su obra *Guía de la literatura ismailí* de 1933 no añadió ninguna información adicional sobre este misterioso autor, sino que remitió a los lectores a su edición de 1922 y glosó el nombre de Qāsim Tuštarī bajo el comentario « aparentemente un auténtico ismailí ».[17] La nueva traducción de 1947 y la edición de 1949 de la obra, producida en la serie de la Sociedad Ismailí, tampoco añadieron nuevos detalles sobre esta figura.[18] Sin embargo, en su edición de 1960, Ivanow escribe: « En 1950, un erudito amigo ismailí de Dar es Salaam, en

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[14] Muḥammad Riḍā ibn Ḫwāğah Sulṭān Ḥusayn Ġūriyānī Ḫayrḫwāh-i Harātī (pseud. atrib.), *Maʿdin al-Asrār (Faṣl dar bayān-i šināẖt-i imām)* [Fasl dar Bayan-i Shinakht-i Imam (On the Recognition of the Imam)], ed. Wladimir Ivanow, 3ª ed., Ismaili Society, Teherán 1960 (Ismaili Society Series B, Texts and Translations); *Maʿdin al-asrār (Faṣl dar bayān-i šināẖt-i imām)* [Fasl Dar Bayan-i Shinakht-i Imam or On the Recognition of the Imam], ed. Wladimir Ivanow, [2ª] ed., Published for the Ismaili Society, E.J. Brill, Leiden 1949, (Ismaili Society Series B, Texts and Translations); *On the Recognition of the Imam (Faṣl Dar Bayān-i ShināKht-i Imām)*, ed. y trad. Wladimir Ivanow, 2ª ed., Published for the Ismaili Society by Thacker & Co., Bombay 1947, (Ismaili Society Series B, Texts and Translations); « Maʿdin al-Asrār (Faṣl dar bayān-i šināẖt-i imām) », ed. Wladimir Ivanow, *Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1922). Sobre este autor, su trabajo, y el título correcto de su obra, citada aquí, véase Shafique N. Virani, « Khayrkhvāh-i Harātī », en Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, Everett Rowson (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Islam*., 3ª ed., E.J. Brill, Leiden 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_35517>.

[15] La datación del texto se basa en la fecha de fallecimiento de Faḫr al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Ḥusayn Wāʿiẓ Kāšifī (fallecido en 939/1533), cuya poesía cita W.L. Hanaway, « Ṣafī », en Peri J. Bearman, et al. (eds.), 2ª ed., *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, E.J. Brill, Leiden 2012, <https://doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_6445>.

[16] Muḥammad Riḍā ibn Ḫwāğah Sulṭān Ḥusayn Ġūriyānī Ḫayrḫwāh-i Harātī (pseud. atrib.), « Maʿdin al-Asrār (Faṣl dar bayān-i šināẖt-i Imām) », ed. Wladimir Ivanow, *Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1922), p. 6, 19 (ed.), p. 36 (trad.). Cita modificada para representar el nombre del poeta en alfabeto latino.

[17] Wladimir Ivanow, *A Guide to Ismaili Literature*, Royal Asiatic Society, Londres 1933, p. 118.

[18] Ḫayrḫwāh-i Harātī (pseud. atrib.), *Šināẖt-i Imām – 1947*, p. 36; *Šināẖt-i Imām – 1949*, p. 17.

el África oriental británica, tuvo la amabilidad de enviarnos un valioso manuscrito que contenía una colección de 16 obras ismailíes (662 páginas) ».[19] Este manuscrito contaba con otro ejemplar de *La mina de misterios*, lo que permitió a Ivanow realizar su tercera edición del texto. El nuevo manuscrito, sin embargo, se refería al autor de la copla única como Ḫwāğah Qāsim Turšīzī, en lugar de Tuštarī, lo que añade confusión sobre la zona geográfica con la que estaba asociado. No disponemos de información definitiva que lo vincule a una u otra localidad, por lo que, en aras de la conveniencia, su apellido toponímico (*nisbah*) se dejará como Tuštarī.[20]

En su obra de 1963, *Literatura Ismailí: Una Encuesta Bibliográfica*, una segunda edición ampliada de su *Guide to Ismaili Literature* publicada en 1933, bajo el epígrafe de Qāsim Tuštarī (al que añade la pronunciación más familiar de Šuštarī), Ivanow escribe: « otro poeta aparentemente del mismo periodo [de Alamūt]. Citas muy breves de su poesía aparecen en las primeras obras nizaríes. Hasta ahora no se ha podido encontrar nada que aporte más precisión sobre su biografía ».[21] La alusión a « obras » (en plural) es digna de mención, y probablemente refleja la creencia de Ivanow, apuntada en la misma bibliografía, de que Qāsim Tuštarī fue citado en el *Panǧ Suḫan* del Imām ʿAbd al-Salām ibn al-Mustanṣir billāh de Anǧudān (fallecido en 900/1494).[22] En su *Biobibliografía de la literatura ismailí* de 1977, I.K. Poonawala atribuye a Ḫwāğah Qāsim Tuštarī (cuyo *nisbah* se ha modificado de la forma encontrada en los manuscritos a las variantes más familiares Šuštarī y Tustarī) una « colección de poemas », señalando que « Ivanow afirma que sus poemas se citan con frecuencia en las obras nizaríes ».[23] Estas afirmaciones, por supuesto, deben matizarse, ya que hasta ahora sólo se conoce la existencia de una única copla del autor, y ésta se cita en una única obra nizarí, fechable, como muy temprano, en el siglo X–XVI. Si hubiera compuesto otras obras poéticas, cabe imaginar que se habrían recogido en los *Poemas de la resurrección* (*Dīwān-i qāʾimiyyāt*), de siete volúmenes, de los que sólo se conservan dos.[24] La mayoría de los poemas de esta recopilación son de Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Ḥasan-i Maḥmūd-i Kātib, pero también se ha incluido la poesía de otros poetas ismailíes.[25] En 2007, identifiqué una obra en prosa

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19 *Šināḫt-i Imām – 1960*, p. 4. *Dares-selam* modificado a *Dar es Salaam*.

20 Para una explicación más detallada, véase Virani, « Alamūt, Ismailism », p. 215–216.

21 Wladimir Ivanow, *Ismaili Literature: A Bibliographical Survey*, 2ª ed. ampliada, Tehran University Press, Teherán 1963 (The Ismaili Society), p. 134

22 Ivanow, *Ismaili Literature*, p. 140; Virani, « Alamūt, Ismailism », p. 198.

23 Ismail K. Poonawala, *Biobibliography of Ismāʿīlī Literature*, ed. Teresa Joseph, Undena, Malibú 1977 (Studies in Near Eastern Culture and Society), p. 263.

24 Seyyed Jalal Hosseini Badakhchani, « Preface », en Sayyid Ǧalāl Ḥusaynī (Seyyed Jalal Hosseini) Badaḫšānī (Badakhchani) (ed.), *Dīwān-i Qāʾimiyyāt*, Markaz-i Pazhūhašī-yi Mīrāṯ-i Maktūb (Miras-e Maktoob) bā hamkārī-yi Muʾassasah-yi Muṭālaʿāt-i Ismāʿīlī (The Institute of Ismaili Studies), Teherán 1395 HS/2016 AC, p. 7–9.

25 Muḥammad-Riḍā Šafīʿī-Kadkanī, « *Qāʾimiyyāt wa ǧāygāh-i ān dar šiʿr wa adab-i Fārsī* », en Sayyid Ǧalāl Ḥusaynī (Seyyed Jalal Hosseini) Badaḫšānī (Badakhchani) (ed.), *Dīwān-i Qāʾimiyyāt* (1390 HS/2011 AC),

de Qāsim Tuštarī desconocida hasta entonces, la obra *Reconocimiento a Dios*, traducida aquí.[26]

III. *Fuentes manuscritas y litográficas*

El principal manuscrito utilizado para reconstruir la epístola es una pieza no catalogada con el número de acceso 15048 de la colección del Instituto de Estudios Ismailíes, Londres. Se trata de una copia en papel producida, según me han informado, a partir de fotografías tomadas en 1979 de un manuscrito cuyo original estaba, al parecer, en posesión de un ismailí no identificado en Irán. Los números manuscritos en inglés del 41 al 46 aparecen como añadidos posteriores en la parte inferior de lo que parece ser el verso de cada página, lo que sugiere que se trata de un extracto de un volumen mayor. Lamentablemente, el extracto del que dispongo no incluye colofón ni otra información que permita identificar al escriba o el año de redacción. Sin embargo, en el Instituto de Estudios Ismailíes hay otro manuscrito con la misma letra que sí tiene colofón. Se puede suponer que el manuscrito نخ, utilizado en la edición crítica de Jalal Badakhchani de los *Poemas de la Resurrección (Dīwān-i qāʾimiyyāt)* de Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Ḥasan-i Maḥmūd-i Kātib (fallecido en 645/1246), fue realizado por la misma mano. Una imagen de la última página de نخ, reproducida en la edición de Badakhchani, indica que el escriba fue Muḥammad Ḥusayn ibn Marḥūm Mīrzā ʿAlī, conocido como « el artista del calzado ʿArabī », de Sidih, y que lo terminó « el martes 25 del mes de Muḥarram de 1101 AH », que corresponde a 1689 AC.[27] El Imām Nizār ibn Ḫalīl Allāh ʿAlī (fallecido en

p. 19–21. Badakhchani proporciona las diversas formas del nombre tal y como aparecen en distintas fuentes, Badakhchani, « Preface », p. 10–11. Para mayor especificidad, he optado por incluir a Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, como se atestigua en Naṣīr al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Ṭūsī, *Sayr ū sulūk* [Contemplation and Action: The Spiritual Autobiography of a Muslim Scholar], trad. Seyyed Jalal Hosseini Badakhchani, I.B. Tauris in association with Institute of Ismaili Studies, Londres 1999, p. ed. 6, p. trad. 30, y aprobado no sólo en otras obras de Ṭūsī, sino en Rašīd al-Dīn Aḥmad ibn Muḥammad Maybudī, *Kašf al-asrār wa-ʿuddat al-abrār, Maʿrūf bi-tafsīr-i Ḫwāǧah ʿAbd Allāh Anṣārī*, 10 vols., vol. 9, Dānišgāh-i Tihrān, Teherán 1331–1339 HS/1952–1960 AC, citado por Badakhchani. Aunque « Kātib » figura en el nombre registrado en la publicación del *dīwān*, esta forma no parece estar atestiguada en las fuentes citadas por Badakhchani. Sin embargo, Ṭūsī sí se refiere a él como *malik al-kuttāb*.

[26] Shafique N. Virani, *The Ismailis in the Middle Ages: A History of Survival, a Search for Salvation*, Oxford University Press, Nueva York 2007, p. 13, 26, 72, 87–90, 95, 120.

[27] Sayyid Ǧalāl Ḥusaynī (Seyyed Jalal Hosseini) Badaḫšānī (Badakhchani), « *Muqaddimah-yi Muṣaḥḥiḥ* », en Sayyid Ǧalāl Ḥusaynī (Seyyed Jalal Hosseini) Badaḫšānī (Badakhchani) (ed.), *Dīwān-i Qāʾimiyyāt*, Markaz-i Pazhūhašī-yi Mīrāṯ-i Maktūb (Miras-e Maktoob) bā hamkārī-yi Muʾassasah-yi Muṭālaʿāt-i Ismāʿīlī (The Institute of Ismaili Studies), Teherán 1390 HS/2011 AC, p. cxxviii. El exhaustivo diccionario Anandrağ ofrece la siguiente explicación para ʿarabī, que tiene sentido en este contexto: « *wa nīz ʿarabī nawʿī az pā-afẓār kih tamām pā-rā mī-pūšad wa ān-rā aǧlāf-i wilāyat mī-pūšand*

1134/1722) sería, por tanto, el líder reinante de la comunidad en el momento de su transcripción. En particular, el escriba indica que copió el *Dīwān* de un manuscrito fechado en Ǧumādā al-ūlā 855 AH, o 1451 AC. He encontrado varios textos no catalogados con la misma caligrafía, y está claro que este Muḥammad Ḥusayn de Sidih, en el sur de Ḫurasán, un pueblo entre Qāʾin y Bīrǧand que todavía cuenta con una importante población ismailí, disponía de abundante material escrito. Salvo algunas excepciones, cada página del manuscrito contiene trece líneas de texto con una caligrafía bastante clara, aunque poco elegante.

El MS 15048 se complementa con el MS 814, que originalmente se conservaba en la Sociedad Ismailí de Bombay (donde parece haber tenido el número de acceso 376, como se indica en la última página del manuscrito), y que ahora se encuentra en la colección del Instituto de Estudios Ismailíes de Londres. Es posible que este texto estuviera a disposición de Wladimir Ivanow, lo que dio lugar a cierta confusión sobre su contenido. En su obra *Literatura ismailí*, al describir una obra titulada *Cinco discursos pronunciados por Šāh Islām* (*Panǧ suḫan kih Ḥaḍrat-i Šāh Islām farmūdah and*), Ivanow escribe que la obra es:

> Un opúsculo instructivo de 30 pequeñas páginas, que trata de las virtudes propias de los buenos creyentes. Hace referencia a *fuṣūl-i mubārak*, a (Ḥasan) *ʿalā ḏikrihi's-salām*, Bābā Sayyid-nā, *Faṣl-i Fārsiyān*, los poetas Qāsim Tuštarī, Ṯanāʾī y un tal Faḫru'l-muḥaqqiqīn Šarafu'd-Dīn Muḥammad.[28]

En realidad, se trata de un error de lectura. En el MS 814, los *Cinco discursos* van seguidos inmediatamente de la obra *Reconocimiento a Dios*, sin que haya ninguna indicación física del comienzo de un nuevo texto. La misma confusión se produce en la litografía descrita a continuación. Es probable que esta secuencia existiera en una tradición manuscrita temprana y que proliferara posteriormente. No se refleja en el manuscrito 15048, donde el texto comienza con el tradicional *Allāhumma Mawlānā*, « Oh Alá, nuestro Señor », que suele marcar el inicio de las obras ismailíes en la tradición manuscrita persa.

El manuscrito 814 consta de 114 páginas sin numerar que, para facilitar la consulta, se han numerado en esta edición. *Reconocimiento a Dios* abarca desde la página 50 hasta la 68. La página 97 indica que la copia se terminó el miércoles, primer día del mes del « Qurbān » (es decir, Ḏū'l-ḥiǧǧah), en 1313 AC (= 14 de mayo de 1896 AC), que el escriba identifica como el « Año del Perro » (*sāl-i sag*). En las páginas 104–105, el escriba indica como fecha el viernes, tercer día del mes de Ḏū'l-

az ahl-i zabān ba-taḥqīq paywastah. sayf. » [Šād, pseud.], Muḥammad Pādšāh ibn Ġulām Muḥyī al-Dīn, *Farhang-i Ānand-Rāǧ*, 7 vols., vol. 4, Kitāb-ḫānah-yi Ḫayyām, Teherán 1335 HS/1956 AC), s.v. ʿarabī.

[28] Ivanow, *Ismaili Literature,* p. 140. La interpolación de Ḥasan por Ivanow antes de la bendición *ʿalā ḏikrihi's-salām* es innecesaria y, dada la fecha de la misiva, parece incorrecta.

qaʿdah, bajo el signo de Aries, 1313 (= 17 de abril de 1896 AC), identificado de nuevo como el « Año del Perro ». La mano de un nuevo escriba aparece a partir de la página 110, y la fecha, en otra mano, aparece en la página 113 como el diecinueve del mes de Muḥarram, bajo el signo de Tauro, 1354 (= 23 de abril de 1935). Parece haber cierta confusión en la datación, ya que el año chino correspondiente a 1313/1896 habría sido el Año del Mono y no el Año del Perro, que se produciría a continuación, en 1315/1898. También es inusual que la fecha que aparece en las páginas 104–105 sea anterior, y no posterior, a la de la página 97, ya que Ḏū'l-qaʿdah es el mes inmediatamente anterior a Ḏū'l-ḥiǧǧah. Es posible que el « Mes del Sacrificio » (*māh-i qurbān*) significara algo diferente para el escriba que el significado común del término como Ḏū'l-ḥiǧǧah, el mes de la Fiesta Musulmana del Sacrificio, comúnmente conocida como ʿĪd al-aḍḥā, o ʿĪd-i qurbān.

El escriba se da a conocer bajo el nombre de Sayyid Šā[h] ʿIsmat [A]llāh de Iškāšim.[29] Actualmente hay dos ciudades con este nombre en Badaḫšán, una frente a la otra a través del río Panǧ, una en Afganistán y la otra en Tağikistán. La población de ambas ciudades, capitales de sus respectivos distritos del mismo nombre, es predominantemente ismailí. La mayoría de las páginas tienen entre 9 y 11 líneas de texto, con letra bastante legible.

En 1962, Ḥāǧǧī Qudrat Allāh Beg ibn Maḥabbat Allāh publicó una edición litografiada del *Haft Bāb* de Abū Isḥāq Quhistānī.[30] El libro, publicado en Gilgit (Pakistán), también contenía varias obras más breves, entre ellas los ya mencionados *Cinco discursos* (*Panǧ suḫan*). Al igual que en el manuscrito 814, los *Cinco discursos* van seguidos inmediatamente, sin separación, de la obra *Reconocimiento a Dios*, por lo que ambos se identifican como un único texto. Las copias de la publicación de Qudrat Allāh Beg son extremadamente raras. Esta litografía, bellamente escrita, constituye la tercera fuente del texto.[31]

[29] En los manuscritos producidos en el Pamir, la letra ه o « *hāʾ* » suele omitirse en posición final de palabra. Del mismo modo, la inicial ا o *alif* no suele escribirse cuando es muda (*hamzat al-waṣlah*).

[30] Bū Isḥāq Quhistānī, *Haft Bāb* [*Kitāb-i mustaṭāb-i haft bāb-i Dāʿī Abū Isḥāq*], Gilgit, Pakistan 1962.

[31] La edición crítica del texto fue publicada por el autor en 2019. Shafique N. Virani, « Early Nizari Ismailism. Critical Edition and Annotated Translation of Khwajah Qāsim Tushtari's Recognizing God », *Iran: Journal of the British Institute of Persian Studies*, 57/2 (2019), p. 245–266, <https://doi.org/10.1080/05786967.2018.1493359>.

IV. *Reconocimiento a Díos: traducción comentada*

Oh Dios, Nuestro Maestro
[Reconocimiento a Dios (exaltado sea)]
Ḫwāğah Qāsim Tuštarī dice:

§1 La comunidad de los que responden y los amigos de la fe, los buscadores en el camino de la certeza y los amantes de la Buena y Pura Familia [de la profecía] (que Dios mejore siempre el estado de sus asuntos) deben saber que para los maestros de la perspicacia y la convicción religiosa es tan claro como el sol mismo que el mundo material fue creado para el bien de la existencia humana. El propósito de la existencia humana es reconocer a Dios (exaltado sea), para que el significado de « Ennoblecimos a los hijos de Adán » (*wa-la-qad karramnā banī Ādam*, 17:70), pase de ser meramente potencial, y se convierta en la esencia de los seres humanos. En todas las épocas y tiempos, éste ha sido y seguirá siendo el decreto de los Portavoces de las dispensaciones divinas (*nāṭiqān-i šarāʿi*) y de las Pruebas de las realidades espirituales (*ḥuǧǧatān-i ḥaqāʾiq*) (sea con ellos la paz).

§2 Todos los que hacen caso omiso de esto son ignorantes (*ǧāhil*) y han caído del rango de « Ennoblecimos a los hijos de Adán » (*wa-la-qad karramnā banī Ādam*) a la posición de « Son como ganado – ¡ay! Aún más extraviados incluso » (*ulāʾika ka'l-anʿām bal hum aḍall*, 7:179). Así, cuando la muerte los arrebata de la posada del cuerpo físico, quedan desconcertados ante las estaciones descendentes de los siete portales del infierno y son presos del tormento eterno, exclamando: « ¡Ay de mí, si sólo fuera polvo! » (*yā laytanī kuntu turāb*, 78:40). Además, el Glorioso Corán ha decretado que tales personas « están muertas, no viven » (*amwāt ġayru aḥyaʾ*, 16:21), lo que significa que, aunque parezcan vivos, en realidad están muertos.

§3 Estos argumentos racionales y pruebas escritas demuestran que corresponde a todo ser humano alcanzar el reconocimiento de Dios (exaltado sea). Si no lo consigue, se encontrará entre los ignorantes (sg. *ǧāhil*), y la morada de los ignorantes es el infierno.[32] Como la búsqueda de este significado más profundo es absolutamente obligatoria para la humanidad, los setenta y dos grupos (descarriados) afirman que reconocen a Dios a través de su propio intelecto y conocimiento. Sin embargo, si prestáramos atención a su afirmación sobre el reconocimiento y la unidad de Dios, estaría en contradicción con la palabra de Dios

[32] Se trata de una alusión a la conocida tradición profética: « Quien muere sin reconocer al Imam de su tiempo muere la muerte de la era de la ignorancia (*ǧāhiliyyah*), y el ignorante está en el fuego », (*man māta wa-lam yaʿrif imām zamānih māta mītah ǧāhiliyyah wa'l-ǧāhil fi'l-nār*). Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān (fallecido en 363/974), *Daʿāʾim al-islām wa-ḏikr al-ḥalāl wa'l-ḥarām wa'l-qaḍāyā wa'l-aḥkām*, 3 vols., vol. 1, Dār al-Maʿārif, El Cairo 1951, p. 25 recoge la tradición como sigue: *man māta la yaʿrifu imām dahrih ḥayyan māta mītah ǧāhiliyyah*.

(exaltado sea) y el dicho de Su Profeta (sobre quien la paz sea). La Palabra Divina ha rechazado su afirmación con el siguiente versículo: « Poned vuestro rostro exclusivamente en la religión de la verdadera fe, la naturaleza primordial por la que Dios formó a la humanidad. No hay alteración de la creación de Dios. Esa es la verdadera religión, pero la mayoría de la gente no la conoce » (*fa-aqim waǧhaka lil-dīn ḥanīfan fiṭrata'llāh allatī faṭarā'n-nās ʿalayhā lā tabdīl li-ḫalqi'llāh ḏālika'l-dīnu'l-qayyim wa-lākinna aḵṯara'l-nās la yaʿlamūn*, 30:30). Dado que el Glorioso Corán afirma que la mayoría de la gente no sabe distinguir entre el camino y la fosa, es evidente que debe existir un grupo de personas que, en apariencia, son una minoría en comparación con los demás, pero que, en realidad, han alcanzado la unicidad y el reconocimiento de Dios (exaltado sea). En este sentido, el Mensajero (sobre quien la paz sea) ha dicho: « Mi comunidad se dividirá en setenta y tres sectas, de las cuales una se salvará y las demás serán destruidas » (*sataftariqu ummatī min baʿdī ʿalā ṯalāṯ wa-sabaʿīn firqah, firqah minhā nāǧiyah wa'l-bāqūna hālikūn*).[33] Queda así bien establecido y confirmado que de estas setenta y tres sectas sólo una está salvada y ha tomado el camino de reconocer a Dios (exaltado sea). Su pretensión e invitación (a los demás) es que sin la mediación del Proveedor de la Verdad (*muḥiqq*), que es el representante de Dios de entre los descendientes del Profeta en todos los tiempos, ningún intelecto de pensador ni visión de erudito ha alcanzado ni podrá alcanzar jamás la palabra de Su unidad divina.

§4 Como dice a este respecto Ḥakīm Sanāʾī (fallecido en torno a 525/1131) (que la misericordia de Dios sea con él):

bah ḫudaš kas šināḫt na-t(a)wānist
ḏāt-i ū badū tawān dānist
karam-aš guft mar ma-rā bi-šināsˌ
war nah, na-š(i)nās-yaš bah ʿaql ū ḥawās
ay šudah az šināḫt-i ḫud ʿāǧiz
kay šināsī Ḫudāy-rā hargiz
tū kih dar ʿilm-i ḫwud zabūn bāšī
ʿārif-i kirdigār chūn bāšī
chūn na-dānī tū sirr-i sāḫtan-aš
kay tawwahum kunī šināḫtan-aš[34]

[33] Para más información sobre las fuentes de este conocido *hadiz* y sus variantes, véase en Ḥusayn Ṣābirī, *Taʾrīḫ-i firaq-i Islāmī* [History of the Islamic Sects], Ilāhīyāt, Sāzmān-i Muṭālaʿah wa-Tadwīn-i Kutub-i ʿUlūm-i Insānī-yi Dānišgāh-hā, Teherán 1388 HS/[2009 AC], p. 34; Israel Friedlander, « The Heterodoxies of the Shiites in the Presentation of Ibn Hazm », *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 28 (1907), p. 6–7; Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd al-Karīm ibn Abī Bakr Aḥmad al-Šahrastānī, *al-Milal wa'l-niḥal* [Livre des religions et des sectes], trad. Daniel Gimaret, Guy Monnot, Peeters, Leuven 1986 (Collection Unesco d'Œuvres Représentatives. Série Arabe), p. 108–109.

[34] Abū'l-Maǧd Maǧdūd ibn Ādam Sanāʾī Ġaznawī, *Ḥadīqat al-ḥaqīqah wa-šarīʿat al-ṭarīqah*, 6ª ed., Intišārāt-i Dānišgāh-i Tihrān, Teherán 1387 HS/[2008 AC], p. 63. El texto editado presenta

Nadie puede alcanzar el reconocimiento divino por sí mismo
Su esencia sólo puede ser conocida a través de Él
Fue por Su misericordia que dijo: « ¡Conóceme [a través de Mí mismo]! »
Porque si no, tu intelecto y tus sentidos nunca podrán conocerle a Él
Demasiado débil para reconocerte a ti mismo
¿Cómo puedes esperar reconocer a Dios?[35]
Indefenso para conocerte a ti mismo
¿Cómo puedes conocer al Creador?
Ni siquiera conoces el misterio de Su creación
¿Cómo puedes soñar con comprenderle?

§5 Le preguntaron a Haḍrat Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn sobre el reconocimiento de Dios (exaltado sea). Respondió (que su mención sea exaltada): « El reconocimiento de Dios es el reconocimiento por parte de la gente de todas las épocas de su Imām, a quien la obediencia incumbe a todos » (*maʿrifat Allāh maʿrifat ahl kull zamān imāmahum allaḏī yaǧibu ʿalayhim taʿatuh*).[36] Por lo tanto, queda establecido que el

pequeñas variaciones. La métrica es *ḫafif-i musaddas-i maḫbūn-i maḥḍūf*. En la línea siguiente, la edición de Raḍawī dice *chūn tū ham kunī*. Debe corregirse por *chūn tawahhum kunī*.

[35] Una referencia al famoso hadiz, *man ʿarafa nafsah faqad ʿarafa rabbah*, « Quien se reconoce a sí mismo, reconoce a su Señor ». Un ejemplo de cita e interpretación fatimí de este dicho puede encontrarse en AL-MUʾAYYAD FĪʾL-DĪN AL-ŠĪRĀZĪ, *al-Miʾah al-ṯāliṯah min al-Maǧālis al-Muʿayyadiyyah*, p. 3. El *hadiz* también se encuentra en NĀṢIR AL-DĪN ʿABD AL-RAḤĪM IBN ABĪ MANṢŪR MUḤTAŠAM, NAṢĪR AL-DĪN MUḤAMMAD IBN MUḤAMMAD ṬŪSĪ, *Aḫlāq-i Muḥtašamī*, Silsilah-yi Intišārāt-i Muʾassasah-yi waʿẓ wa tablīġ-i Islāmī, Dānišgāh-i Tihrān, Dāniškadah-yi ʿUlūm-i Maʿqūl wa Manqūl, Teherán 1339 HS/1960 AC, p. 8.

[36] La traducción persa añade la glosa « sobre todos ». La misma tradición, atribuida al imám al-Ḥusayn, se encuentra en MUḤAMMAD BĀQIR IBN MUḤAMMAD TAQĪ AL-MAČLISĪ, *Biḥār al-anwār al-ǧāmiʿah li-durar aḫbār al-aʾimmah al-aṭhār*, ed. MUḤAMMAD BĀQIR MAḤMŪDĪ, ʿABD AL-ZAHRĀʾ ʿALAWĪ, 2ª ed., vol. 23, Dār al-iḥyāʾ al-Turāṯ al-ʿArabī wa-Muʾassasat al-Wafā, Beirut 1403 AH/1983 AC, p. 83 y Abūʾl-Fatḥ Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī ibn ʿUṯmān al-Karāǧikī (fallecido en 449/1057), *Kanz al-Fawāʾid*, 2 vols., vol. 1, Dār al-Adwāʾ, Beirut 1985, p. 328. Al-Karāǧikī ha recibido escasa atención en la erudición occidental. Aunque estudió en Bagdad, pasó la mayor parte de su carrera en territorios fatimíes, y sus escritos sobre el concepto de *imāmah* reflejan interacciones suníes e ismailíes. Véase DEVIN J. STEWART, « An Eleventh-Century Justification of the Authority of Twelver Shiite Jurists », en BEHNAM SADEGHI et al. (ed.), *Islamic Cultures, Islamic Contexts: Essays in Honor of Professor Patricia Crone*, E.J. Brill, Leiden 2015 (Islamic History and Civilization: Studies and Texts). Su *al-iḫtiyār min al-aḫbār* es un resumen del *Daʿāʾim al-Islām* del jurista ismailí Qāḍī al-Nuʿmān, « Introduction », en DEVIN J. STEWART (ed.), *The Disagreements of the Jurists: A Manual of Islamic Legal Theory*, New York University Press, Nueva York 2015, (Library of Arabic Literature), p. xv. IMAM REZA NETWORK, « Abul Fath al-Karajiki », Aalul Bayt Global Centre for Information, <http://www.imamreza.net/eng/imamreza.php?id=6881>. En particular, mientras que las fuentes de los Chíies Duodecimanos suelen atribuir esta tradición al Imām Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī, el autor de la obra del periodo alamūtí *Haft Bāb-i Bābā Sayyidnā*, al igual que Qāsim Tuštarī, la atribuye al Imām Zayn al-ʿĀbidīn. ḤASAN-I ṢABBĀḤ (SAYYIDNĀ, pseud.) (atrib.), ṢALĀḤ AL-DĪN ḤASAN-I MAḤMŪD-I KĀTIB (atrib.), « Haft Bāb-i Bābā Sayyidnā », en *The Order of Assassins: The Struggle of the Early Nizārī Ismāʿīlīs against the Islamic World*, AMS Press, Nueva York 1980, p. 285–286. Seyyed Jalal

reconocimiento de Dios (exaltado sea) es el reconocimiento del Imām del Tiempo y que el cielo y la tierra no pueden existir ni por un momento sin el Imām del Tiempo. Como dice el Profeta (la paz sea con él): « Si la tierra se viera privada de un Imām aunque sólo fuera por un instante, se convulsionaría con toda su gente » (*law ḫalat al-arḍ min imām sāʿah la-māddat bi-ahlihā*),[37] es decir, si la superficie de la tierra se viera privada de la presencia del Imām legítimo aunque sólo fuera por un instante, el cielo y la tierra dejarían de existir, sin encontrar constancia.

§6 El Imām aparece físicamente para que la humanidad exista y busque reconocerlo. Como dice Dios (exaltado sea) en el Noble Corán: « Ciertamente, designo un representante en la tierra » (*innī ǧāʿil fī'l-arḍ ḫalīfah*, 2:30). El representante de Dios lleva a cabo la perfección de la humanidad guiando a los seres humanos por el camino del reconocimiento divino. La gente acepta esto con pura convicción y, una vez aceptado, actúa en consecuencia, para que sus reivindicaciones tengan sentido. De hecho, ¿qué beneficio hay en hablar de boquilla, pero no poner en práctica esta aceptación?

§7 Como dice Faḫr al-Dīn Muḥammad en un poema:

agar kasī bah zabān ʿahd-i ū qabūl kunad
wa layk guftah-yi ḫwud-rā bah fiʿl na-rasānad
bah rūz-i ḥašr zi Iblīsiyān buwad bī-šakk
badān dalīl kih qawl-aš bah qawl-šan mānad
wagar bah ʿahd wafā kard umīd bāyad dāšt
kih sahw ū ġaflat-aš Īzad barū bi-pūšānad[38]

Aquellos que de boquilla proclaman Su pacto
Pero cuyas acciones traicionan sus palabras
se encontrarán entre los secuaces del diablo en el Día del Juicio Final
Porque sus palabras se parecen a las de ellos

Hosseini Badakhchani está preparando una nueva edición y traducción del *Haft bāb-i Bābā Sayyidnā* y postula la autoría de Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Ḥasan-i Maḥmūd-i Kātib (comunicación personal).

37 Se trata de una tradición bien conocida, recogida en términos ligeramente diferentes en, por ejemplo, Ṭūsī, Ḥasan-i Maḥmūd-i Kātib, *Rawḍah-yi Taslīm (Taṣawwurāt)*, p. ed. 148, p. trad. 120; Abū Ǧaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Yaʿqūb al-Kulaynī, *al-Uṣūl min al-Kāfī*, ed. Muḥammad Bāqir Kamarāʾī, 4 vols., vol. 1, al-Maktabah al-Islāmiyyah, Teherán 1392 HS/1972, p. 332–334. Para más referencias, véase Amir-Moezzi, *The Divine Guide in Early Shiʿism*, p. 43, 125, 229 n. 673–675. Es la tradición más citada en Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Ḥasan-i Maḥmūd-i Kātib, *Dīwān-i Qāʾimiyyāt* [Poems of the Resurrection], Markaz-i Pazhūhašī-yi Mīrāṯ-i Maktūb (Miras-e Maktoob) bā hamkārī-yi Muʾassasah-yi Muṭālaʿāt-i Ismāʿīlī (The Institute of Ismaili Studies), Teherán 1390 HS/2011 AC. Esta observación y otras fuentes de las Chíies Duodecimanos de la tradición pueden encontrarse en Šafīʿī-Kadkanī, « *Qāʾimiyyāt wa ǧāygāh-i ān dar šiʿr wa adab-i Fārsī* », p. 30.

38 La métrica es *muǧtass-i maḫbūn-i maḥḏūf*, es decir, ˘ – ˘ – / ˘ ˘ – – / ˘ – ˘ – / ˘ ˘ – . La primera *misraʿ* del segundo *bayt* parece defectuosa (con un error en el tercer pie).

Pero si se aferran a su pacto, deben tener esperanza
Que Dios velará su olvido y negligencia

En otras palabras, todos los interrogados de diversas tierras deben darse cuenta de que la salvación de la gente del mundo reside en el reconocimiento del Imām del Tiempo (la alabanza y la postración sean sobre su mención), y que han alcanzado la gnosis y el reconocimiento del Imām siguiendo el mandato de un verdadero maestro (*muʿallim-i ṣādiq*).

Como dice el sabio (*ḥakīm*) [Sanāʾī]:

dīn chū mān dādah-ī yaqīn mān dih
gar chih īn hast bīš az īn mān dih[39]

Ya que nos has concedido la religión, ¡concédenos también la certeza!
Aunque tengamos esto, ¡concédenos más!

§8 Para continuar, a menudo oímos (¡y la veracidad de tales relatos la atribuimos a los narradores!) que algunos de los interrogados no obedecen (ya sea en asuntos específicos o generales) el mandato (*farmān*) del verdadero maestro (*muʿallim-i ṣādiq*) Šaraf al-Dīn Muḥammad, el orgullo de los que buscan la verdad y líder de la gente de la certeza (que sus virtudes aumenten y sus bendiciones perduren).[40] No se dan cuenta de que, si hacen de esto un hábito, no llegarán a lo general desde lo específico, y que el corazón de una persona está ennegrecido por los pecados. La fe no mora en un corazón cuando éste se oscurece, pues el corazón es la esencia misma de la existencia humana. La morada de una persona así será el infierno, y buscamos refugio en Dios para evitarlo. Se ha dicho en un poema:

dil chū tārik gašt, ǧān ham murd
dil chū murd-aš bah sū-yi dūzaḫ burd[41]

Cuando el corazón se oscureció, el alma también murió
Cuando el corazón murió, se lo llevó al infierno

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[39] Aquí, en el MS 814 se lee *ḥakīm* y en la litografía qaf se lee *ḥakīmī*, mientras que en el MS 15048 se especifica *Ḥakīm Nizārī*. La copla no existe en la obra publicada de Ḥakīm Nizārī, sino que procede del Huerto de la realidad de Sanāʾī, que se cita ampliamente a lo largo del tratado Sanāʾī Ġaznawī, *Ḥadīqat al-ḥaqīqah*, p. 151.

[40] Una variante hallada únicamente en el ms 15048, nuestro testimonio más antiguo, añade *al-hādī ilā ṭarīq al-yaqīn bar-guzīdah-yi ḥaḍrat-i rabb al-ʿālamīn*, « el guía en el camino de la certeza, elegido por el señor de los mundos ». Aunque estos títulos se utilizarían más comúnmente para referirse al Profeta o al Imām, encontramos una expresión similar empleada en el prefacio del *Paraíso de la Sumisión* (*Rawḍah-yi taslīm*), a quien se describe como *ḫwaǧah-yi kāyināt wa dāʿī al-duʿāt, iḫtiyār-i mawlā al-ʿālamīn*, « el principal misionero y maestro de la creación, elegido por el señor de los mundos ». Ṭūsī, Ḥasan-i Maḥmūd-i Kātib, *Rawḍah-yi Taslīm (Taṣawwurāt)*, p. ed. 8, p. trad. 13.

[41] Fuente no identificada. La métrica es – ˘ – – / ˘ – ˘ – / – –, es decir, *Ḫafīf-i sālim-i maḫbūn-i aslam-i musabbaġ*.

§9 El Todopoderoso dice: « Dios no ha puesto dos corazones en el pecho de ningún hombre » (*mā ǧaʿala'llah li-raǧul min qalbayn fī ǧawfih*, 33:4), queriendo decir que Dios (exaltado sea) no ha puesto dos corazones en ningún hombre de tal manera que pueda guardar uno de las deficiencias en asuntos generales y el otro de las deficiencias en asuntos específicos.[42] Tales tratos no van a ninguna parte con Dios. Por lo tanto, el remedio es confiar su voluntad al verdadero maestro (*muʿallim-i ṣādiq*) tanto en asuntos generales como específicos, para encontrar la liberación de ambigüedades difíciles y dilemas desconcertantes.

§10 El maestro (*ḫwāǧah*) al que nos hemos referido como (Šaraf al-Dīn Muḥammad), contestó en respuesta a un compañero (*rafīq*):

bandagī dānī chih bāšad ay pisar
war na-mī-dānī zi man bi-š(i)naw ḫabar
bandah bāyad bandagī kardan mudām
ta šawad dar bandagī kār-aš tamām
bāz agar pursand az way yak suḫan
tū ǧawāb-i ū šinaw aknūn zi man
īn suḫan gūyad zi rū-yi bandagī
tā na-bīnad dar rah-i dīn māndagī
man na-dānam tā chih gūyam dar ǧahān
anchah gūyand-am bi-gū, guyam hamān
īn suḫan Qāsim zi ustādān šunīd
az tamāmī-yi suḫan-hā bar-guzīd[43]

Hijo mío, ¿conoces el significado de la servidumbre?
Si no lo sabes, escucha mis palabras.
En constante servidumbre debe estar un siervo
Para que sea perfecto en su empresa.
Entonces, si se le preguntara de nuevo
Escuchad mi respuesta.
Esto es lo que diría sobre la servidumbre

[42] Las cuestiones generales (o universales, *kullī*) y específicas (o particulares, *ǧuzwī*) se refieren en primer lugar a la aceptación general de la soberanía de Dios (representada por la primera parte de la declaración de fe, « no hay más deidad que Dios »), y la aceptación específica de la soberanía de Su mensajero designado (representada por la segunda parte de la declaración de fe, « Muḥammad es el mensajero de Dios »). La negligencia y la indiferencia hacia el designado de Dios invalidan la fe. En el segundo caso, la expresión se refiere a la aceptación general de la soberanía del Imām como sucesor del Profeta, y específicamente a la aceptación de aquellos a los que nombra. Descuidar la soberanía de aquellos a quienes el Imām ha designado para puestos de autoridad, en este caso el verdadero maestro (*muʿallim-i ṣādiq*) Šaraf al-Dīn Muḥammad, también invalida la fe.

[43] La métrica es – ˘ – – / – ˘ – – / – ˘ –, es decir, *ramal-i maḥḏūf-i musaddas*. Se puede encontrar un análisis detallado de este versículo en la obra del presente autor, Virani, « Persian Poetry ».

Para que la torpeza no se sienta en el camino de la fe
Yo mismo no sé qué decir en el mundo
Digo exactamente lo que me dicen que diga.
De los maestros Qāsim escuchó estas palabras
Y las prefirió a todas las demás.

§11 Para continuar, los siervos de la Invitación Rectamente Guiada (*daʿwat-i hādiyah*, que Dios exaltado la fortalezca) saben que la pretensión e invitación de la Comunidad Rectamente Guiada (*ṭāʾifah-yi muḥiqqah*) ante las setenta y dos falsas denominaciones, y la de todos los Mensajeros y Pruebas de Dios (sobre quien la paz sea), ha sido y será siempre que nadie salvo Dios tiene derecho a invitar a Dios. Ahora bien, a este respecto, se debe observar que puesto que la raíz del credo de la Comunidad de los Justos y el mandamiento de Dios (exaltado sea) es que sólo Dios tiene derecho a invitar a Sí mismo, y que Dios (exaltado sea) está por encima de lo que la humanidad menciona acerca de los atributos de Su esencia pura – como dice Mawlānā ʿAlī: « La unicidad de Dios (*tawḥīd*) significa que no Le imagines, la justicia (*ʿadl*) significa que no dudes de Él, y la solidez de la certeza es el fundamento de la religión » (*al-tawḥīd allā tatawahhamah wa'l-ʿadl allā tattahimah wa-raʾs al-dīn ṣiḥḥat al-yaqīn*) –[44] por lo tanto, la misericordia de Dios requiere que alguien sea elegido y designado para transmitir el reconocimiento (*maʿrifat*) de Él (exaltado sea) a la humanidad. Éste es el Imām del Tiempo.

§12 El Imām del Tiempo transmite su reconocimiento a la Más Grande Prueba (*ḥuǧǧat-i aʿẓam*). La Más Grande Prueba (*ḥuǧǧat-i aʿẓam*) transmite lo que le llega de la luz del Imām del Tiempo a las Pruebas (*ḥuǧǧats*) de las islas (*ǧazīrah*). Las Pruebas de las islas lo transmiten a los Invitadores (*dāʿīs*), y por orden de las Pruebas, los Invitadores lo transmiten luego a los Licenciados (*maʾḏūns*) de cada isla, según su rango. Los Licenciados lo transmiten a los Interrogados (*mustaǧībs*).[45] Puesto que

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[44] Imām ʿAlī ibn Abī Ṭālib, *Nahǧ al-balāġah,* Bunyād-i nahǧ al-balāġah, Teherán nd, p. 501, ḥikmah 463. al-Muʾayyad fī'l-Dīn al-Šīrāzī, *al-Miʾah al-ṭāliṭah min al-maǧālis al-Muʾayyadiyyah*, 3 vols., vol. 3, Oxford, Mumbai, 1426 AH/2005 AC, maǧlis 294, p. 419. La traducción persa de la famosa sentencia del imám ʿAlī que se encuentra aquí es muy parecida a la que se encuentra en Muḥtašam, Ṭūsī, *Aḥlāq-i Muḥtašamī.*

التّوحيد الاّ تتوهّمه والعدل الاّ تتّهمه، رأس الدّين صحة اليقين

ترجمه: توحيد آن بود كه خداى را در وهم نيارى، و عدل آن بود كه او را متهم نداری، اصل دين درستى يقين بود

Sólo la primera parte se encuentra en el *Nahǧ al-balāġah* y en la obra de al-Muʾayyad. Curiosamente, la segunda parte se encuentra en la citada obra de al-Karāǧikī, *Kanz al-Fawāʾid*, vol. 1, p. 279. lo que sugiere una posible fuente fatimí para esta parte del refrán. Véase también en Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad al-Daylamī, *Aʿlām al-dīn fī ṣifāt al-muʾminīn*, Muʾassasah Āl al-Bayt ʿalayhim al-salām li-Iḥyāʾ al-Turāṯ, Qumm 1409 AH/1988 AC, p. 186.

[45] El pasaje anterior está muy corrompido en todos los manuscritos. Lo he reconstruido basándome en la jerarquía que se encuentra en numerosas obras ismailíes. Un ejemplo entre muchos es el siguiente pasaje encontrado en la *Risālah* de Ḫayrḫwah Harātī. Este pasaje omite la mención de las pruebas de las islas (*ḥuǧǧatān-i ǧazāʾir*) que se encuentran en *Reconocimiento a Dios* de Tuštarī,

cada uno posee un rango en la jerarquía que ha sido llevada de la potencialidad a la actualidad, y no transgreden su límite (*ḥadd*), reconocen a Dios a través de Dios, convirtiéndose en reconocedores con un solo reconocimiento. Esto es a condición de que no transgredan sus límites y su rango. En cuanto a los que hablan más allá de su rango, es como Dios (exaltado sea) dice en el Noble Corán, « los que transgreden los límites de Dios dañan su propia alma » (*wa-man yataʿadda ḥudūd Allāh fa-qad ẓalama nafsah*, 65:1), es decir, los que sobrepasan su rango cometen injusticia con su propia alma, y el lugar de los injustos es el infierno. Se dice que « la injusticia (*ẓulm*) es colocar algo donde no corresponde » (*al-ẓulm waḍʿ al-šayʾ fī ġayr mawḍiʿih*).[46] Tal fue el caso de la comunidad de Muḥammad (sobre quien la paz sea), que no asignó al Imāmat el lugar que le correspondía, alejando así a los pueblos del mundo del camino de la religión al abandonar sus filas. Dios (exaltado sea) ha prometido al injusto (*ẓālim*) y al incrédulo (*kāfir*) el mismo lugar y estación, como Él dice: « Los incrédulos son ellos mismos los injustos » (*waʾl-kāfirūn hum al-ẓālimūn*, 2:254).

§13 Una prueba mundana de esto es la siguiente. Si alguien confiara una propiedad a otra persona en confianza, y la segunda parte la entregara a un tercero sin la instrucción (*farmān*) del propietario original, un jurista (*ṣāḥib-i šarʿ*) le acusaría de injusticia y exigiría una compensación conforme a la ley (*šarīʿah*). Del mismo modo, ¿cómo puede alguien a quien el verdadero maestro ha confiado en depósito un asunto del mundo espiritual desembolsarlo sin el permiso del Maestro de la Invitación (*ṣāḥib-i daʿwat*)? ¿Cómo podría perdonarse este pecado? Dios (exaltado sea) ha dicho: « Los rostros ese día estarán cubiertos de polvo, envueltos en humo; son los incrédulos, los despilfarradores » (*wa-wuǧūh yawmaʾiḏin ʿalayhā ġabrah tarhaquhā qatarah ūlāʾika hum al-kafarah al-faǧarah*, 80:40–42). En otras palabras,

y añade los *muʿallim*, pero el paralelismo es, no obstante, claro. El pasaje no está presente en ninguna de las dos ediciones impresas disponibles de la obra, Muḥammad Riḍā ibn Ḫwāǧah Sulṭān Ḥusayn Ġūriyānī Ḫayrḫwāh-i Harātī (pseud.), « Risālah », en *Tasnifat-i Khayr-khwah-i Herati (Works of Khayr-khwah Herati)*, ed. Wladimir Ivanow, Ismaili Society, Teherán 1961, (Ismaili Society Series A); Muḥammad Riḍā ibn Ḫwāǧa Sulṭān Ḥusayn Ġūriyānī Ḫayrḫwāh-i Harātī (pseud.), « [Risālah] », en Sayyid Šāhzādah Munīr ibn Muḥammad Qāsim Badaḫšānī (ed.), *Ḫayrḫwāh-i muwaḥḥid-i waḥdat*, Maṭbaʿ-i Muṣṭafāʾī, Mumbai 1933 AH/[1915 AC]. Se encuentra en la página 144 del manuscrito persa con número de acceso 15091 de la Biblioteca del Instituto de Estudios Ismailíes.

[46] Abū Ǧaʿfar Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī, *al-Iʿtiqādāt [Fī maḏhab al-imāmiyyah]*, Kungarah-yi Šayḫ Mufīd, Qumm 1371 HS/1413 AH/1992 AC, p. 103: « *waʾl-ẓulm waḍʿ al- šayʾ fī ġayr mawḍiʿih, fa-man iddiʿā al-imāmah wa-laysa bi-imām, fa-huwa ẓālim malʿūn, wa-man waḍʿa al-imāmah fī ġayr ahlihā fa-huwa ẓālim malʿūn* ». Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī Ibn Bābawayh al-Qummī, *al-Ḫiṣāl*, Muʾassasat al-Našr al-islāmī, Qumm 1416 AH/1995 AC, p. 310; al-Mačlisī, *Biḥār al-anwār al-ǧāmiʿah li-durar aḫbār al-aʾimmah al-aṭhār*, p. 23. [Yūsuf bin Muḥammad al-Nīsābūrī] Abū Tammām, *Bāb al-Šayṭān min Kitāb al- Šaǧarah* [An Ismaili Heresiography: The « Bāb al-Shayṭān » from Abū Tammām's *Kitāb al-Shajara*], ed. y trad. Wilferd Madelung, Paul E. Walker, E.J. Brill, Leiden 1998 (Islamic History and Civilization Studies and Texts), p. ed. 2–4, p. trad. 20–22.

llegará un día en que se presentará un grupo con el humo del infierno saliendo de sus rostros. *Kafarah* (incrédulos) significa literalmente « los que ocultan », y *faǧarah* (despilfarradores) significa literalmente « los que hablan sin permiso (*farmān*) ».

§14 Se dice que no hay peligro en la fe en lo Invisible, porque « creen en lo Invisible » (*yuʾminūna biʾl-ġayb*, 2:3). Así pues, la solución para los buscadores en el camino de la verdad es dejar de lado sus propios egos, concepciones y puntos de vista, y abandonar las opiniones vanas y las analogías (*raʾy wa qiyās*), que son los métodos del maldito diablo, y someter toda su voluntad, en los asuntos mundanos y religiosos, al verdadero maestro que es verdadera y ciertamente un intermediario entre Dios y Sus criaturas, para que Satanás no los capture, ni siquiera sea capaz de hacerlo. Deben atender a las órdenes (*farmān*) del verdadero maestro en todo momento, absteniéndose de comer siquiera un bocado de pan o sorber un trago de agua por su propia voluntad sin la orden (*amr*) de su verdadero maestro, reconociendo que si lo hicieran, sería ilícito (*ḥarām*). No deben permitir que su arrogancia y egoísmo interfieran con su fe y confianza en el verdadero maestro. Como se ha dicho en el versículo:

tū wa man gumrāhīʾst zū parhīz
dar man ū tū bah ablahī māwīz
ḫuš būyīm andar-īn kuhan gulšan
chūn zi tū tū bi-raft wa zi man man[47]

« Tú » y « yo » son engañosos, ¡cuidado!
No discutas tontamente sobre « yo » y « tú »
Nos deleitaremos en este antiguo jardín.
Como « tú » se ha alejado de ti y « yo » de mí

§15 Estas pocas palabras de las Sagradas Epístolas (del Imām), y de la Gloriosa Palabra de Dios y las Tradiciones del Profeta están escritas en esta obra para que se sepa con certeza que Dios no se equivoca al elegir a alguien como líder de los mundos. Ahora bien, el deber de todos los compañeros (*rafīqs*) es comprender y no transgredir más allá de las palabras y mandatos de su maestro, como se dice:

tū na-dānī nah nīk ū nah bad-rā
ū tū-rā bih buwad kih tū ḫwud-rā[48]

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[47] Sanāʾī Ġaznawī, *Ḥadīqat al-ḥaqīqah*, p. 445. Para el poema se ha utilizado la edición crítica de Raḍawī, con las variaciones respecto a los manuscritos señaladas en el aparato. Como todos los manuscritos invierten el orden de los versos que figuran en la edición crítica, aquí se mantiene el orden de los manuscritos.

[48] Ġaznawī, *Ḥadīqat al-ḥaqīqah*, p. 77. El segundo hemistiquio en los manuscritos difiere ligeramente de la edición crítica de Raḍawī, y aquí se adopta esta última lectura. Nótese, sin embargo, que la variante proporcionada por Raḍawī en el aparato se asemeja a la lectura proporcionada por

No conocéis ni el bien ni el mal
Él es mejor para ti que tú para ti mismo

§16 Ahora bien, tanto en asuntos particulares como universales, deben prestar atención al mandato de su maestro (*amr*), para que puedan tener un buen nombre en este mundo y alcanzar la salvación en el otro, pues todas las Benditas y Santificadas Epístolas (de los Imāmes) y otros libros lo han reiterado: « Estad con los nobles para llegar a ser nobles ».

Mā namūdīm rāh-i rušd ū naǧāt
Ḫatam kardīm bar nabī ṣalawāt[49]

Hemos mostrado el camino de la guía y la salvación
Al final decimos « la paz sea con el Profeta y su progenie »

§17 El mejor camino para la congregación (*ǧamāʿat*) es comprometerse con la comunidad y los miembros de la congregación. El Mensajero (la paz sea con él) dice: « la congregación es una misericordia y la separación un tormento » (*al-ǧamāʿah raḥmah wa'l-furqah ʿaḏāb*),[50] es decir, estar con la congregación es una misericordia de Dios (exaltado sea), mientras que separarse de ella es un tormento de Dios. A este respecto, [el Profeta] ha dicho: « La mano de Dios está sobre los miembros de la congregación » (*yad Allāh ʿalā'l-ǧamāʿah*),[51] aunque la gente descuida este hecho por, pareado:

Zīrakān-rā chū rūz maʿlūm ast
kih šab ū rūz-i ġāfilān šūm ast
El sabio conoce como la luz del día
Que tanto la noche como el día son sombríos para el negligente

Pareado:

Nazdīkān-rā bīš buwad ḥayrānī
kīšān dānand siyāsat-i sulṭānī[52]

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nuestras tres fuentes. Los versículos citados son una alusión al Corán (33,6): « *al-nabī awlā bi'l-muʾminīn min anfusihim* ».« El Profeta está más cerca de los creyentes que ellos mismos ».

49 Ġaznawī, *Ḥadīqat al-ḥaqīqah*, p. 741.

50 Muḥtašam, Ṭūsī, *Aḫlāq-i Muḥtašamī*; Abū al-Futūḥ al-Ḥusayn ibn ʿAlī al-Rāzī, *Rawḍ al- Ǧinān wa-rawḥ al-Ǧanān (Tafsīr-i Abū al-Futūḥ al-Rāzī)*, vol. 2, np, Teherán 1382–1385 AH/1962–1965 AC, p. 537.

51 La frase anterior se reconstruye a partir de Muḥtašam, Ṭūsī, *Aḫlāq-i Muḥtašamī.*
yad Allāh maʿa'l- ǧamāʿah
dast-i ḫudāwandī bā ǧamʿiyat mutašakkal ast

52 Este verso, identificado como una copla (*bayt*), también se conoce como la primera línea de una cuarteta (*rubāʿī*), comúnmente atribuida a Abū Saʿīd Abī'l-Ḫayr (fallecido en 440/1049). El texto completo de la *rubāʿī* que se le atribuye, junto con la traducción de la segunda parte, es el siguiente:

Los más ansiosos de todos son los más cercanos al señor
Conocen bien el castigo real

No ignoran el significado de este versículo: « En cuanto a los que refrenan su ira y perdonan a sus semejantes, Dios ama a los benéficos » (*wa'l-kāẓimīn al-ġayẓ wa'l-ʿāfīn ʿan al-nās wa'llāh yuḥibbu al-muḥsinīn*, 3:134).

§18 Que el exaltado Señor mantenga a salvo a todos Sus siervos en aras de Su Verdad. La paz sea con vosotros. Amén, Señor de los Mundos.

nazdīkān-rā bīš buwad ḥayrānī
kīšān dānand siyāsat-i sulṭānī
mā-rā chih kih waṣf-i dast-gāh-i tū kunīm
mā-īm qarīn-i ḥayrat ū nādānī

¿Qué importa si alabo tus espléndidos ingenios?
Porque soy compañero del asombro y la insensatez

En el comentario del Corán *La revelación de los misterios y la provisión de los piadosos* (*Kašf al-asrār wa-ʿuddat al-abrār*), ʿAbd Allāh Anṣārī (fl. s. V / XI) y Abū'l-Faḍl Rašīd al-Dīn Maybudī (fl. principios del siglo VI / XII) y en su *Memorial de los santos* (*Taḏkirat al-awliyāʾ*), Farīd al-Dīn ʿAṭṭār (fallecido en 618/1221) cita la misma línea que Qāsim-i Tuštarī, omitiendo también la segunda mitad. Sin embargo, la procedencia del poema no es segura, ya que se han planteado dudas sobre el corpus atribuido a Abū Saʿīd, y varios eruditos niegan que dejara legado poético alguno. Véase, respectivamente, Maybudī, *Kašf al-asrār wa-ʿuddat al-abrār, Maʿrūf bi-Tafsīr-i Ḫwāǧah ʿAbd Allāh Anṣārī*, p. 9. En relación con el versículo citado, y otras referencias a citas del mismo, véase Muḥammad ibn Munawwar ibn Abī Saʿd ibn Abī Ṭāhir ibn Abī Saʿīd, *Asrār al-tawḥīd fī maqāmāt al-Šayḫ Abī Saʿīd*, 7ª ed., 2 vols., vol. 2, Muʾassasah-yi Intišārāt-i Āgāh, Teherán 1386 HS/[2007 AC]. Para una visión general de la autenticidad del corpus atribuido a Abū Saʿid, y otras referencias, véase Gerhard Böwering, « Abū Saʿīd Abi'l-Ḵayr », en Ehsan Yarshater (ed.), vol. 1, *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, Encyclopaedia Iranica Foundation, Nueva York 2011, <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/abu-said-fazlallah-b>; Najib Mayel Heravi, Farzin Negahban, « Abū Saʿīd b. Abī al-Khayr », en Wilferd Madelung, Farhad Daftary (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Islamica*, E.J. Brill, Leiden 2008, <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-islamica/abu-sa-i-d-b-abi-alkhayr-COM_0131>.

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Echoes of *Niranj* Magic in the Work of Albert the Great*

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Abstract

Niranj magic is a genre of magic which is closely connected with a cluster of texts known as *Pseudo-Aristotelian Hermetica*. As Charles Burnett's groundbreaking study has shown, a part of these texts has been translated in Latin, albeit not without problems. In fact, the term *niranj* as such was never translated in Latin and thus tracing the 'luck' of this genre of magic in the texts of the Middle Ages is a difficult and arduous task. Despite the aforementioned challenges, this paper aims to show that echoes of *niranj* magic can be tracked in the work of Albert the Great. In this regard, my study can be deemed as a natural sequel of Burnett's initial study.

Key Words

Niranj; Albert the Great; Medieval magic; *Picatrix*; Pseudo Aristotelian *Hermetica*

I. *Introduction*

The subject of *niranj* magic seems to pose great challenges in terms of its historiographical study and interpretation. A characteristic example of such a 'challenge' is the following case: the term *niranj* is found in Avicenna's *Divisions of Intellectual Sciences* where *niranj* is mentioned as one of the special sciences subordinated to natural philosophy. The modern scholarly translations of the Avicennan *Divisions* – as well as of the other Arabic books which contain it: Al Ghazali's *The aim of the philosophers* and *The incoherence of the philosophers*, and Averroes' *The incoherence of the incoherence* – all give a different translation when it comes to *niranj* magic. Therefore, the confusion that arises does not really

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contribute to the understanding of both the actual meaning of the term and its actual place in the historiography of magic. That said, Anawati translates *niranj* magic as « theurgy » and also the same translation is given by Mimoune.[1] On the contrary, Michot translates the same term as « science of the amulets ».[2] Similarly, Marmura in the translation of the *Incoherence of the Philosophers* translates *niranj* as « science of magic », while Van den Bergh in his translation of the *Incoherence of the Incoherence* translates *niranj* as « art of incantations ».[3] From the translations above, it is more than evident that modern scholars exhibit some confusion with respect to the meaning of *niranj*, while they also try through personal assumptions and criteria to subscribe *niranj* magic to a certain trend of magic.

Congruently, a similar attitude is attested in the first Latin translation of Avicenna's *Divisions* which was made by Andrea Alpago in the sixteenth century. The excerpt which contains the term runs as follows:

> Et ex illa scientia alnirangiat, id est scientia artis magice, et intentio in ea est permiscere virtutes que sunt in substantia mundi terreni, ut adveniat in eo virtus a qua proveniat actio extranea vel mirabilis.[4]

As we see, in Alpago's Latin translation the writer has attempted to phonetically preserve the Arabic-Persian word of *niranj* by giving it in its plural version alongside with its definitive article at the beginning, that is, *al niranjat*. Following this train of thought one can understand now what *alnirangiat* stands for, since it is the Latin transliteration of the word *al niranjat* which was mentioned before. What is interesting here is that this kind of transliteration shows that Alpago was unfamiliar with this kind of magic too and thus he explains its meaning by just saying that it is the « science of magic art ».

Given all the above, one gets the impression that *niranj* magic was a conundrum for all the scholars who dealt with it, and when it came to the translation of the term they usually depended on and adopted explanatory tools which were the product of their personal interpretation. Our knowledge on *niranj* magic though has significantly changed with the groundbreaking study by Charles Burnett, who

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1 George Anawati, « Les Divisions Des Sciences Intellectuelles d'Avicenne », *Mélanges de l'Institut d'Etudes Orientales*, 13 (1977), p. 329; Rabia Mimoune, « Epître Sur Les Parties Des Sciences Intellectuelles d'Abu 'Ali al-Husayn Ibn Sinâ », in *Etudes Sur Avicenne*, ed. Jean Jolivet, Roshdi Rashed, Les Belles Lettres, Paris 1984, p. 146.

2 Jean Michot, « Les sciences physiques et métaphysiques selon la Risālah fī Aqsām al-ʿUlūm d'Avicenne. Essai de traduction critique », *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale*, 22 (1980), p. 67.

3 Al-Ghazālī, *The Incoherence of the Philosophers*, ed. and trasl. Michael E. Marmura, Brigham Young University press, Provo 1997, p. 162; Averroes, *The Incoherence of the Incoherence*, ed. and trans. Simon Van Den Bergh, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1954, p. 311.

4 Avicenna, *Compendium de anima ...*, ed. Andreas Bellunensis, Gregg International Publishers, Farnborough 1969, p. 142.

meticulously showed on the one hand that *niranj* magic was both performed and flourishing in the Arabic world, while it was literally 'lost in translation' in the Latin medieval world since no Latin equivalent term is attested for the analogous term of *niranj*.[5] In this regard, trying to trace even echoes of *niranj* in the thought of medieval Latin scholars seems an arduous endeavor with little chance of a fruitful outcome.

This paper follows through on some of the issues in Burnett's article and therefore it aims to show that echoes of *niranj* magic are to be found in the work of Albert the Great (1200–1280) who was active during the thirteenth century. In what follows, I will first provide a short introduction to *niranj* magic and its 'fate' in the Latin medieval world and then I will proceed with adducing 'echoes of *niranj*' in the work of the Dominican master.

II. Niranj *magic and its Latin medieval fate*

The word *niranj* or *niranjat* in its plural comes from the Pahlavi (middle Persian) word *nerang* which was mostly used for incantations related to binding spirits or invoking stars.[6] In his *Divisions* Avicenna describes *niranj* magic as the science which aims at mixing the powers which are found in the substances of the terrestrial bodies to bring about a power from which wonderful things spring forth. With respect to the mixing of the powers of the terrestrial bodies, Avicenna provides us with more information in his *On actions and passions*, where he divides all actions into four categories: soul to soul, soul to body, body to soul, and body to body. It is the last category that is of interest to our discussion, since Avicenna reports that the action of a body to a body is like that of an element turning to another one or like the action of drugs and poisons to the human body. It is also at the end of this account that Avicenna presents *niranjat*, talismans, and alchemy as examples of a body-to-body action.[7] Yet, Avicenna's account is not complete and the studies of Manfred Ullmann and Charles Burnett allow us to visit the notion of *niranj* in a wider spectrum. In particular, Ullmann presents it as a kind of magic that uses a great variety of ingredients in its recipes and which applies to numerous cases like protection against weapons, love-magic, tongue binding, creation of illusions, etc.[8] Congruently, Burnett presents *niranj* as « a magical

[5] Charles Burnett, « Niranj: A Category of Magic (Almost) Forgotten in the Latin West », in Claudio Leonardi, Francesco Santi (eds.), *Natura, scienze e società medievali. Studi in onore di Agostino Paravicini Bagliani*, SISMEL–Edizioni del Galluzzo, Florence 2008, p. 37–66.

[6] Burnett, « Niranj: A Category of Magic », p. 37.

[7] Charles Burnett, « The Three Divisions of Arabic Magic », in Liana Saif et al. (eds.), *Islamicate Occult Sciences in Theory and Practice*, Brill, Leiden – Boston 2021, p. 44–45.

[8] Manfred Ullmann, *Die Natur- und Geheimwissenschaften im Islam*, Brill, Leiden 1972, p. 362–363.

practice which includes the mixing and processing of ingredients, the recitation of magical words, the burning of incense and the making of figurines in order to manipulate spiritual forces ».[9] Recently, Burnett extended further the applicability of *niranjat* by associating it with emotional control, psychological situations and the performance of illusions, which in turn entail that the imaginative powers of the weaker souls would be affected by the powers of a stronger human soul.[10]

The first attestations of *niranj/niranjat* are found in a cluster of Arabic texts which are known as Pseudo-Aristotelian *Hermetica* and were supposed to be written by Aristotle for his pupil, Alexander the Great. The date of these texts is uncertain and they have served as a source of other famous magical texts like the *De secretis naturae* of Pseudo Apollonius and the *Picatrix*.[11] Some of these Pseudo-Aristotelian *Hermetica* were translated into Latin. In particular, the part of the *Kitab al makhzun,* which deals with lunar mansions, was translated as *Liber lune secundum Aristotelem*, while the part of the same book which is concerned with the capturing of animals was translated as *Liber secundum Hermetem de quatuor confectionibus ad omnia genera animalium capienda.*[12] Additionally, a part of the *Kitab al Istamatis* and its commentary *Kitab al maditis*, which were probably known by Hermann of Carinthia, as well as a part of the *Kitab al istamakhis* were translated as *Liber antimaquis.*[13] The important thing for our study is that in all these translations of the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Hermetica* there is not any Latin word to be found which could be regarded as equivalent to *niranj/niranjat*. The lack of a Latin translation but also the weakness of Latin scholars to coin a Latin term for *niranj* is also attested and confirmed by the ensuing cases. For instance, in Hermann of Carinthia's *De essentiis* we find the term *neiringet*, in William of Auvergne's *De universo* we find the term *niiriangi* and in the *Liber de quatuor confectionibus* the term *anatigit*.[14] All these different variants show nothing more than the effort of the Latin translators to come up with a Latin transliteration which would give just the phonetical aspect of *niranjat* rather than its actual meaning. The kind of difficulty which is connected to the meaning of *niranjat* is also mirrored through the *Liber lune* and the *Liber antimaquis*. In the first one, the Latin translator preferred not to translate *niranj* and therefore we have a *lacuna*,[15] while in the second book the

[9] Burnett, « Niranj: A Category of Magic », p. 42.

[10] Burnett, « The Three Divisions of Arabic Magic », p. 52.

[11] Burnett, « Niranj: A Category of Magic », p. 38–41.

[12] Burnett, « Niranj: A Category of Magic », p. 44.

[13] Charles Burnett, « Hermann of Carinthia and the *Kitāb Al-Isṭamāṭīs*: Further Evidence for the Transmission of Hermetic Magic », *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 44 (1981), p. 167–169; for an edition of the *Liber antimaquis*, see Charles Burnett, « Aristoteles/Hermes: Liber Antimaquis », in Gerrit Bos, Charles Burnett, Paolo Lucentini (eds.), *Hermetis Trismegisti Astrologica et Divinatoria,* Turnhout, Brepols 2001, p. 177–221.

[14] Burnett, « Niranj: A Category of Magic », p. 46–47.

[15] I deal with *Liber lunae* later in my paper.

Arabic word is translated as « mirabilia ».[16] Likewise, in the Latin translation of *Ghayat al hakim* which is known as *Picatrix*, the word *niranjat* is either translated as « lapides » or « ymagines » and thus it has become equivalent to talismans or as « opus » or « mirabilia » when the word is interpreted as signifying a procedure or a wonderful outcome. However, all these Latin words that were adopted do not really convey the actual meaning of *niranj/niranjat*, as Burnett notes.[17]
In any case, it should be noted that any Latin attempt to translate *niranj* led either to confusion or distortion. To put it clearly, on the one hand, the Latin translations that aimed to phonetically imitate the word of *niranj/niranjat* resulted in creating Latin words that were meaningless and bearers of confusion, while on the other the Latin words that were chosen to translate the Arabic term only managed to distort the initial meaning of *niranj*.

III. *Albert the Great and* Niranj *magic*

According to what was presented before, it becomes obvious that the Latin Middle Ages did not coin a term that would be able to deliver the actual meaning of *niranj/niranjat* and thus this kind of magic was eventually consigned to oblivion. That said, searching for the presence of *niranj* magic per se in Albert the Great's work seems to be an unfruitful task, provided that we do not have an actual Latin term that we can rely on and search for. Yet, in what is left of this sub-chapter, I would like to draw attention to some facts and passages which are reminiscent of *niranj* magic. Firstly, I show how the general meaning of *niranj* magic is encountered in the work of Albert and then I proceed with more particular cases like those of *Liber lunae* and *Picatrix*.

Before delving into Albert the Great and *niranj* magic it should be stated that Albert has a positive attitude towards magic.[18] This positive attitude has been well articulated by Collins who recently stated that Albert exhibits « a willingness to evaluate claims of magical power sympathetically before isolating what in them deserved condemnation ».[19] Albert, in his *De mineralibus*, was particularly favorable

[16] Charles Burnett, « Aristoteles/Hermes: Liber Antimaquis », p. 211: « Isti sunt familiares spiritus Saturni 72 per quos faciebant multa mirabilia »; cf. p. 183.

[17] Burnett, « Niranj: A Category of Magic », p. 48.

[18] Henryk Anzulewicz, « Magie im Verständnis Alberts des Grossen », in Iñigo Atucha et al. (eds.), *Mots Médiévaux offerts à Ruedi Imbach*, FIDEM, Porto 2011, p. 419–431 and Athanasios Rinotas, « Compatibility between Philosophy and Magic in the Work of Albertus Magnus », *Revista Española de Filosofía Medieval*, 22 (2015), p. 171–180.

[19] David J. Collins, « Scholasticism and High Medieval Opposition to Magic », in Sophie Page, Catherine Rider (eds.), *The Routledge History of Medieval Magic*, Routledge, London – New York 2019, p. 466.

towards talismans whose power was due to their specific form, a doctrine which Albert took from Avicenna.[20] Likewise, Albert shows a positive attitude towards astrology and the influence of the superlunar world on the sublunar one.[21] Considering the above, Albert's name is well related to magic, something which is further attested by testimonies of other medieval scholars of the fourteenth century.[22]

Turning back to Albert and *niranj* magic, as we have already seen, the *Divisions* report that the mixing of the powers of the earthly things bring about something that is wonderful. Likewise, in the translations of the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Hermetica,* the *niranjat* were translated as *mirabilia* and it is worth searching whether there is a meaning of *mirabilia* in Albert's work that comes close to that of the *Divisions*. In this way, a first general connection or – maybe better – a strong compatibility between Albert and *niranj* magic will be accomplished which will serve as a springboard to proceed further with our study. There are many passages, especially in his commentary on Lombard's *Sententiae* and in the *Summa theologiae*, which discuss the subject of « mirabilia », albeit within a theological context. Specifically, the discussion revolves around such questions as « what the difference between *miracula* and *mirabilia* is » and « if demons can perform either of them». So, according to Albert, *miraculum* is the product of divine will and it appears when creation 'obeys' Christ's will, whereas *mirabilia* is the product of a sudden and very fast action that does not go beyond nature and is imperceptible in terms of time.[23] Yet, there is a text in Albert's commentary on the *De anima*,

[20] Nicolas Weill-Parot, *Les images astrologiques au Moyen Age et à la Renaissance: Spéculations intellectuelles et pratiques magiques (XIIe–XVe siècle)*, Champion, Paris 2002, p. 260–280.

[21] Darrel Rutkin, « Astrology and Magic », in Irven Resnick (ed.), *A Companion to Albert the Great*, Brill, Leiden 2013, p. 451–505, and Id., *Sapientia astrologica: Astrology, Magic and Natural Knowledge, ca 1250–1800*, vol. I: *Medieval Structures (1250–1500): Conceptual, Institutional, Socio-Political, Theologico-Religious and Cultural*, Springer International Publishing, Dordrecht 2019, p. 275–293.

[22] David J. Collins, « Albertus, Magnus or Magus? Magic, Natural Philosophy, and Religious Reform in the Late Middle Ages », *Renaissance Quarterly*, 63/1 (2010), p. 1–44; Agostino Paravicini Bagliani, « La légende médiévale d'Albert le Grand (1270–1435). Premières recherches », *Micrologus: Natura, Scienze e Società Medievali*, 21 (2013), p. 295–368.

[23] Albertus Magnus, *Summa Theologiae*, pars 2, tract. 8, q. 30, m. 1, art. 1, ed. Auguste Borgnet, Vives, Paris 1894–1895, p. 322b: « Ad id quod contra objicitur, dicendum quod vinum secundum naturam fit ex aqua digesta per vitis virtutem, impuro putrefacto ejecto per depurationem quae fit in vite: sicut dicit Aristoteles in IV Meteororum, quod omnis digestio, et maxime ea quae praepausis dicitur, quae est in fructiferis lignorum et herbarum, est completio a naturali et proprio calore ex contrajacentibus passionibus perfecta. Sed hoc modo Christus non fecit vinum ex aqua, sed solo imperio suae voluntatis, cui omnis creatura obedit. Unde illa objectio supponit falsum, quae dicit, quod solum sit miraculum propter hoc quod factum sit subito: sed miraculum est, quia super ordinem naturae fuit elevatum, et secundum solam obedientiam creaturae ad voluntatem Dei perfectam. Nec opera magorum vel daemonum facta sunt subito, hoc est, in nunc: sed facta sunt velocius quam natura ex talibus seminibus possit ea producere. Et ideo dicunt

which resembles the content of the description of *niranj* magic in the *Divisions*. In this passage, Albert speaks about the generation of things according to the model of Alexander of Aphrodisias:

> In the composite things, however, the elemental forms endure in some way and on top of that the forms of composite things are added to them; and therefore when elements recede through the blending of the things which rise above, then wonderful things are performed in nature.[24]

With respect to this passage, two things need to be stressed: firstly, the compatibility of this Albertian text with that of the *Divisions* is better clarified if one takes into account the other Avicennan text we saw before, that is, *On the actions and passions*. According to the latter, the blending of the earthly powers was explained by means of elemental mixtures and thus the *mirabilia* which are produced in the *niranj* magic of the *Divisions* are the result of elemental processes. Following this train of thinking, Albert's text bears a marked compatibility with the account of the two previous Avicennan texts, since the *mirabilia* which are produced in nature are also the result of elemental procedures. Secondly, by adducing this text of Albert, it should be noted that we cannot draw any direct connection or influence between Albert and Avicenna's *Divisions*. However, on the other hand, one cannot deny that some content of *niranj* magic which exists within the *Divisions* is present in Albert's work in a purely philosophical context.

III.1. The case of *Liber lunae*

Yet, the real question is whether Albert came across any text which was associated with *niranj* magic. If he did, the question that emerges in turn is how any ideas connected to *niranj* were communicated to him given that there was no standard Latin translation of the term. To begin with, Sannino has already indicated that the *Liber de quattuor confectionibus* is mentioned and listed in the *Speculum astronomiae* as a text which is not associated with illicit necromancy but with the licit or natural part of it.[25] Even though this book has been attributed to Albert the

quidam, quod facta sunt repente, hoc est, in non perceptibili tempore: propter quod mirabilia, et non miracula sunt ».

[24] Albertus Magnus, *De anima* III, tr. 2, c. 4, ed. Clemens Stroick, in *Opera omnia*, vol. VII/1, Aschendorff, Münster 1968, p. 182: « In compositis autem remanent secundum aliquem modum formae elementales, et insuper adiciuntur eis formae compositorum; et ideo, quando elementa per mixturam ab excellentiis recedunt, tunc in natura mirabilia operantur ».

[25] Antonella Sannino, « Ermete mago e alchimista nelle biblioteche di Guglielmo d'Alvernia e Ruggero Bacone », *Studi Medievali*, 41 (2000), p. 182–183; Paola Zambelli, *The* Speculum Astronomiae *and Its Enigma: Astrology, Theology and Science in Albertus Magnus and His Contemporaries*, Kluwer, Dordrecht 1992, p. 247–248.

Great there are many contrary scholarly voices which have not argued in favor of this possibility and therefore one may disregard this reference on the grounds that it belongs to the dubious works of Albert.[26] Looking into the genuine works of Albert one may come across sources which show that Albert was familiar with books which preserve ideas related to *niranj* magic. The first one is found in Albert's commentary of the second book of Lombard's *Sententiae* and it shows a direct knowledge of the *Liber lune secundum Aristotelem*. Albert clearly attributes it to Aristotle and he refers to it by the name *Liber de mansionibus lunae*.

With respect to this text, Albert attempts to answer the question of whether demons are helped in their operations by the constellations of stars (*Utrum daemones in suis operibus juventur constellationibus*).

In his answer Albert reports that in the talismanic books it is recited that demons are easier invoked when the moon is in one sign than another and he continues by saying that this invocation cannot be possible except because the demons know that at a certain point of time they are helped by signs and the aspects of the planets which in turn facilitate the effect that is pursued by the necromancer.[27] In support of his statement, that is, that demons are indeed helped by star constellations, Albert cites a part of the *Liber lune* almost verbatim. In order to show the close connection between the texts I will present them together. Therefore, Albert's words run as follows:

> Quod autem hoc verum sit, dicit Aristoteles in libro de Mansionibus lunae sic: ***Quando descendit selin albethaim, fac ad amorem dominatorum terrae, idola confla, Angelos ad te clama:*** et constat, quod non intelligitur de bonis Angelis: ergo mali facilius tunc veniunt quam alio tempore. Selin idem est quod luna. Albethaim est quaedam constellatio quae est in secunda mansione Arietis, ita quod primae mansioni dentur tredecim gradus et minuta septem de Arietis imagine: ergo videtur, quod superiora juvant daemones ad talia opera consequenda.[28]

[26] For a recent account on the authorship of the *Speculum astronomiae*, see Jeremiah Hackett, « Albert the Great and the *Speculum Astronomiae*. The State of the Research at the Beginning of the 21st Century », in Resnick (ed.), *A Companion to Albert the Great*, p. 437–449.

[27] Albertus Magnus, *Super IV Libros Sententiarum*, II, dist. 7, art. 9, p. 157a–b: « Videtur autem, quod sicut legitur in libris Imaginum, daemones luna existente in uno signo, facilius vocantur quam ipsa existente in alio: hoc autem non potest esse, nisi quia sciunt tunc se juvari a signis et adspectibus planetarum ad faciliorem effectum ejus quod intendit necromanticus, ut videtur ».

[28] Albertus Magnus, *Super IV Libros Sententiarum*, II, dist. 7, art. 9, p. 157b. I have highlighted with bold letters the part of Albertus' text which relates to the *Liber lune.*

Congruently, the analogous text of the *Liber lune* states the following:

> ***Quando descendit Albotaim, fac ad dominatores terre, idola confla, Angelos ad te clama***, coram dominis terre intra, uxorem non accipias, non compares, non novum vestimentum induas. Si aliquis natus fuerit, erit bonus, sapiens; femina meretrix.[29]

Before we proceed with analyzing the two sources, it should be stressed that Albert adduces the part from the *Liber lune* almost verbatim, something which is indicated by the words in bold letters and therefore it becomes quite evident that Albert indeed had knowledge of the *Liber lune.* Yet, we will begin with the analysis of the latter so as to better understand the reception of it by Albert the Great. As Charles Burnett informs us, the *Liber lune* is a translation of a part of the *Kitab al makhzun.* It discusses the place of the moon in each of the twenty-eight constellations and it gives guidance and advice for making *niranj,* talismans and poisons and for involving oneself in important life activities like getting married, travelling, buying or selling things etc. However, Burnett has also clearly shown that in the *Liber lune* the word *niranj* was never translated in Latin and therefore there is a *lacuna* as far as it concerns the object of the verb *fac*.[30] As a matter of fact, the Arabic text of the *Liber lune* impels the reader to make a *niranj* for the love of the rulers of earth when the Moon descends to Albutaim, while the absence of an equivalent Latin term for *niranj* and the complete omission of the latter leaves much space for the Latin readers to plausibly apply a different reading.

The last remark might give us a lead in interpreting Albert's approach towards the text of the *Liber lune* that he cites. It is well to remember that Albert wants to prove that demonic operations are indeed helped by star constellations. Thus, the Dominican master follows the ensuing steps: he first evokes Aristotle's authority in order to justify the truth of his previous words, then he adduces the excerpt from the *Liber lune* which supports Aristotle's position, he comes up with the suggestion that the excerpt speaks about bad angels and lastly he explicates the terms of *Selin* (moon) and *albethaim* (constellation) which all together will allow him to deduce his initial claim, which holds that demons are aided by constellations. Even though the original text of the *Liber lune* is not associated with demons, it is worth tracking how Albert might have come up with such a negative attitude towards the text. The first expression to be interpreted is the one of *confla idola*. In the translation of *Liber lune* Burnett translates the aforementioned

[29] Burnett, « Niranj: A Category of Magic », p. 57. The edition of the *Liber lune* is found at p. 50–66 of the aforementioned article. Translation by Charles Burnett at p. 62: « When she descends to Albutaim, make (a *niranj*) for (the love of) rulers of the earth, compose talismans, call angels to you, enter before the rulers of the earth, do not marry, do not buy, do not put on new clothing. If anyone is born, he will be good, wise; a female a whore ».

[30] Burnett, « Niranj: A Category of Magic », p. 49.

expression as « compose talismans ». Appropriate as this translation might be for the *Liber lune,* I deem that this might not be the case when it comes to Albert's interpretation. To begin with, the standard Latin word Albert uses for talismans is *imagines*, something which also becomes apparent at the beginning of our source where he speaks about *libri imaginum* and therefore it might be more than probable that the Dominican master conceives of *idola* in a different manner. A thorough research in Albert's *corpus* reveals that he usually uses the expression *conflare idola* and its variants in his theological works, while it is usually employed in order to denote the metallic fabrication of idols which may lead in turn to the worship of false gods.[31] That said, Albert could have understood the expression *confla idola* merely as « create metallic idols ».

Consequently, our focus is laid on the expression *fac ad amorem dominatorum terrae*. As has already been mentioned the word *niranj* is not translated in the *Liber lune* and therefore it is worth examining how this sentence could be conceived by Albert. Nicolas Weill-Parot, in his profound study on astrological images interprets the source which is under scrutiny as « make idola in order to acquire the love of the lords of the earth ».[32] In all probability, Weill-Parot either regards the word *idola* as being the object of *fac* or he disregards the presence of *fac* completely and he unites the adverbial expression of *ad amorem dominatorum terrae* with the one of *confla idola*. In any case, Weill-Parot does not seem to be aware of how the word *niranj* had affected the Latin translation of the *Liber lune* and thus he does not examine whether the expression *fac ad amorem dominatorum terrae* may render another meaning and therefore another interpretation on the source. In fact, the aforementioned expression may stand as it is and confer another meaning upon the source. The expression *facio ad aliquid/alicui* may also be translated as « to be good or of use for anything; to be useful, of service », as well as « to suit or fit ». Consequently, the expression *dominatores terrae* could possibly refer to planets but

[31] Albertus Magnus, *Postilla super Isaiam, Postillae super Ieremiam et Postillae super Ezechielem,* c. 2, ed. Ferdinand Siepmann, Heinrich Ostlender, in *Opera omnia*, vol. XIX, Aschendorff, Münster 1952, p. 45: « Et idola penitus conterentur. Chaldaei enim venientes et templa et idola, quae posuerant Iudaei, subvertebant; et tunc apparuit inutilitas idolorum. Exod. xxxii (20): "Arripiens Moyses vitulum conflatilem, quem fecerant filii Israel, combussit et contrivit in pulverem". Idola etiam conteruntur, quando simulacra, quae quilibet sibi facit per avaritiam, mundi vanitatem vel delicias, per compunctionem auferuntur »; Ibid., c. 42, p. 429: « "Confusus est omnis artifex in sculptili, quoniam falsum est, quod conflavit, et non est spiritus in eis." Omnia quae de idolis dicta sunt, de malis praelatis dici possunt moraliter et de his qui constituerunt eos »; Ibid., c. 42, p. 481: « quod idolum dicitur numinis opinati praesentis figura, sculptile ab arte, conflatile a materia, quia frequenter de metallis fiebant idola »; Id., *Super Baruch*, c. 1, ed. Auguste Borgnet, Vives, Paris 1893, versus 19, p. 369a: « Tunc enim ante montem Sina vitulum fecerunt conflatilem: illicita concupierunt : idolo Beelphegor initiati sunt, et idolothyta comederunt, et idola adoraverunt ».

[32] Weill-Parot, *Les images astrologiques*, p. 261.

also to demons since Albert in his *Super Isaiam* refers to demons as *principes terrae*.[33] That said, the Latin text that Albert quotes may be interpreted as follows: « When Selin (Moon) descends to Albethaim, make yourself of service/ become useful to the love of the lords of the earth, make/cast metallic idols and call angels to you ».

In that way, the quoted text becomes a 'guide-like' text for invoking bad angels according to which if one wants to gain the favor of the angels then he should first make himself favorable towards them (or the planets), then create metallic idols and finally invoke them. Following this train of thinking, one may now understand Albert's ensuing remark according to which the angels should be understood as bad angels and it is probably due to the signification of *idola* and *dominatores terrae* that the Dominican master deems that angels should be conceived of as being bad.

III.2 The case of *Picatrix*

As has become clear, Albert the Great had come into contact with at least one book which was associated with subjects of *niranj* magic, albeit that it was absent as a word. In addition, the Dominican master most likely connected the content of it with necromantic practices which in turn were associated with demonic invocations and thus an illicit and unchristian mark was bestowed upon it. This is also confirmed by another source of Albert's which speaks about Toz Graecus, that is, Hermes Trismegistus and the invocation of planets in terms of necromancy.[34] As a result, the subject of *niranj* which pertains to the manipulation of spiritual forces falls under the umbrella of necromancy in Albert's thought. The two references which were presented belong to the early works of Albert and evidently they portray his negative attitude towards necromancy. However, one may notice a shift in Albert's conception of necromancy especially in his 'third period' which is connected with the commentary of the Aristotelian corpus.[35] In Albert's references of this period to necromancy, one may detect a more favorable attitude towards the *science of necromancy* and one may wonder what were Albert's readings which made him adopt such a different attitude towards necromancy. Towards this answer, one might get some useful insight and knowledge by comparing Albert's thought on necromancy with that from the famous book *Picatrix*. Such a comparison, as we will see, provides some significant compatibilities between

[33] Albertus Magnus, *Postilla super Isaiam, Postillae super Ieremiam et Postillae super Ezechielem*, c. 14, ed. Siepmann, Ostlender, p. 205.

[34] Albertus Magnus, *Super Dionysium de divinis nominibus*, c. 4, ed. Paulus Simon, p. 168: « Secundum antiquitatis rationem, idest secundum opinionem gentilium, qui templum et aram soli consecrabant sicut deo, et sicut etiam Toz in libro quodam quem de nigromantia scripsit, docuit invocationes ad singulos planetas, attribuens unicuique proprium numen ».

[35] Fernand Van Steenberghen, *La philosophie au XIIIe siècle*, Publications universitaires de Louvain, Louvain 1966, p. 246.

Albert and the *Picatrix* with respect to necromancy, despite the fact that it is very difficult to prove that *Picatrix* might have been read indeed by Albert and thus molded his thought on necromancy. In addition, the *Picatrix* was a bearer of *niranj* magic too and therefore further encounters with this kind of magic may have been communicated to Albert via the *Picatrix.*

First of all, it should be stated that necromancy since the twelfth century has gradually started gaining a more favorable status, something which is confirmed by the work of Petrus Alfonsi who recognizes necromancy as one of the liberal arts, by the work of Gundissalinus who posits necromancy as a part of physics and by the fact that Constantinus Africanus was educated in necromancy.[36] Eventually, the term *nigromantia* is used as the Latin equivalent of the Arabic word for magic (sihr) and in the first half of the thirteenth century the word *nigromantia* is used to denote the 'science of properties', while it is also connected to the magical-astrological powers of talismans.[37] Turning to *Picatrix*, its Arabic original was the *Ghayat al hakim* (The goal of the sage) and it was probably written between 954–959 by al-Qurtubi.[38] The text was first translated in Castilian and then into Latin after 1256.[39] In the Arabic version of *Picatrix*, magic is a science (*sihr*) and it is divided into three branches according to the kind of influence or action. When it is a soul to soul action, this falls under the category of *niranj* magic, while when it is a soul to body action then it falls under the category of talismanic magic and lastly when it is a body to body action then it falls under the category of alchemy.[40] Charles Burnett has already noted the connection between the Avicennian *Divisions* and the Arabic version of *Picatrix* since the three last sciences which are mentioned by Avicenna (science of niranj, talismans and alchemy) are also presented in the

[36] Charles Burnett, *Magic and Divination in the Middle Ages: Texts and Techniques in the Islamic and Christian Worlds*, Variorum, Aldershot 1996, p. 1–3.

[37] Isabelle Draelants, « *Magica Vero Sub Philosophia Non Continetur* : Statut des arts magiques et divinatoires dans les encyclopédies et leurs *auctoritates* (1225–1260) », in Alessandro Palazzo, Irene Zavaterro (eds.), *Geomancy and Other Forms of Divination*, Sismel–Edizioni del Galluzzo, Florence 2017, p. 464 and 508. For the term *nigromantia*, see Jean-Patrice Boudet, « *Nigromantia*: brève histoire d'un mot », in Palazzo, Zavattero (eds.), *Geomancy and Other Forms of Divination*, SISMEL–Edizioni del Galluzzo, Florence 2017, p. 445–462.

[38] Godefroid de Callataÿ, Sébastien Moureau, « Again on Maslama Ibn Qāsim Al-Qurṭubī, the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' and Ibn Khaldūn: New Evidence from Two Manuscripts of *Rutbat al-Ḥakīm* », *Al-Qantara* 37/2 (2017), p. 329–372. About the *Picatrix*, its history and fortune in the Western world, see Jean-Patrice Boudet, Anna Caiozzo, Nicolas Weill-Parot (eds.), *Images et magie. Picatrix entre Orient et Occident*, Honoré Champion, Paris 2011.

[39] *Picatrix: A Medieval Treatise on Astral Magic*, trans. Dan Attrell, David Porreca, Penn State University Press, University Park, PA 2021, p. 1–4.

[40] Maslamah ibn Aḥmad Majrīṭī, *« Picatrix »: das Ziel des Weisen von Pseudo-Magrītī*, germ. trans. Hellmut Ritter, Martin Plessner, Kraus Reprint, Nendeln 1978, p. 7. It should be noted that the authors give the term « nirendsch » as a translation for the Arabic *niranjat*.

Ghayat al hakim as divisions of magic. The important thing here is that the Arabic text associates the influence of a soul to a soul with *niranj* magic and it is interesting enough to see first how the Latin text of the *Picatrix* refers to the matter.[41] In the second chapter of the first book, the author of *Picatrix* deals with the *scientia nigromantiae* and the text runs as follows:

> Scias quod ista sciencia nominatur nigromancia. Nigromanciam appellamus omnia que homo operatur et ex quibus sensus et spiritus sequuntur illo opere per omnes partes et pro rebus mirabilibus quibus operantur quod sensus sequatur ea admeditando vel admirando [...] Et pars istius sciencie est in practica propter quod sua opera sunt de spiritu in spiritum, et hoc est in faciendo res similes que non sunt essencia. Et ymaginum composicio est spiritus in corpore, et composicio alchimie est corpus in corpore. Et generaliter nigromanciam dicimus pro omnibus rebus absconditis a sensu et quas maior pars hominum non apprehendit quomodo fiant nec quibus de causis veniant.[42]

In the Latin text of *Picatrix,* the Arabic word for magic (*sihr*) is translated as *nigromancia* and it is recognized as a science. After a short definition of the term, the practical aspect of *nigromancia* is divided into three parts, the first of which included the word *niranjat* and it was therefore associated with *niranj* magic. Yet, as Burnett has already pointed out the Arabic word *niranjat* was completely lost in the translation and thus necromancy was presented as the science which had as parts soul-to-soul actions, talismans (soul to body) and alchemy (body to body).[43] Despite the fact that once again the Arabic term of *niranj/niranjat* was not translated in Latin, one should note the subject of *niranj* magic which was related to the soul-to-soul actions and influences was incorporated into necromancy and thus it provides us with a path through which one can trace its remnants. Following the path suggested, one may notice a similar pattern in some works of

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41 On the relationship between the *Ghayat al-Hakim* and the *Picatrix*, see Jean-Patrice Boudet, Jean-Charles Coulon, « La version arabe (*Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm*) et la version latine du *Picatrix*: Points communs et divergences », *Cahiers de Recherches Médiévales et Humanistes*, 33 (2017), p. 67–101.

42 *Picatrix: The Latin Version of the « Ghāyat Al-Ḥakīm »*, ed. David Pingree, The Warburg Institute, London 1986, p. 5; trans. Attrell, Porreca, *Picatrix,* p. 41: « Know that this science is called 'magic'. We call 'magic' any act someone performs in which the spirit and all the senses are engaged throughout the whole process and through which miracles are produced to the extent that the senses are driven to their contemplation and wonder [...] One part of this magical science is practical, on account of how it works by operating from spirit into spirit, making those things similar that are not so by their essence. Working with images, however, involves spirit in matter, and alchemical work involves matter in matter. Generally, we use the term 'magic' for everything hidden from the senses whose causes most of humanity cannot perceive ». The translators have chosen the word 'magic' as a translation of *nigromantia*. For the justification of their choice see p. 10–12.

43 Burnett, « Niranj: A Category of Magic », p. 48–49.

Albert the Great where necromancy is also called a science and it seems to follow the general division which was previously described in the *Picatrix.*

Albert the Great does not treat the subject of necromancy systematically and thus one should gather again his scattered references in order to construct and interpret his thought on the matter. When it comes to the science of necromancy and its parts, Albert distinguishes between – at least – two parts of necromancy. In particular, the Dominican master seems to follow the categorization of the *Picatrix,* since he speaks about a part of necromancy which is related to a soul-to-soul action and influence, and it involves the *scientia fascinativa et scientia incantativa.* Likewise, he accepts another part of necromancy which is associated with talismanic magic. With respect to the soul-to-soul action as a part of necromancy in Albert's work, the most characteristic excerpt is found in his *De causis et processu universitatis a prima causa* where he states the following:

> To this, however, they were adding that in the science which is called science of fascination (evil eye) and which is part of necromancy, the soul of one person after having marched out by means of its sense power, it (the soul) hinders the operations of other humans and even of natural things, in the like manner that the vision of one frequently hinders the operations of another and the sense of hearing of one binds another so as not to operate, just like it is clear in that part of necromancy which is called science of incantation. An example of which is the incantation of serpents and of other things.[44]

With respect to this source, it should be stressed that the work which contains it was written between 1264–1267 and therefore one should not exclude the possibility that the Dominican master might have become through indirect avenues aware of the content of *Picatrix* which was translated in turn in 1256.[45] This excerpt comes from a chapter in which Albertus examines the error of Heraclitus, according to which the truth of reality is the result of our sense perception and our mental representations of it and thus humans become the measure of all things. Albertus rejects this and states that reality is prior to sense perception and mental representation and therefore it is the former that creates the latter. In this regard, fascination and incantation are given as examples of

[44] Albertus Magnus, *De causis et processu universitatis a prima causa*, II, tr. 2, c. 26, ed. Winfridus Fauser, in *Opera omnia*, vol. XVII/2, Aschendorff, Münster 1993, p. 120: « Huic etiam addebant, quod in scientia, quae fascinativa dicitur, quae pars necromantiae est, quod anima unius per virtutem sensus egressa aliorum hominum et etiam naturalium rerum impedit operationes, ut visus unius frequenter impedit operationes alterius et auditus unius alium ligat, ne operetur, sicut patet in illa parte necromantiae, quae incantativa vocatur. Cuius exemplum est incantatio serpentium et aliorum ».

[45] *Albertus Magnus und sein System der Wissenschaften: Schlüsseltexte in Übersetzung Lateinisch-Deutsch*, Aschendorff, Münster 2011, p. 30.

mind's activity towards external reality.[46] With respect to fascination, Kovach has related fascination to the problem of 'action at a distance' in the work of Albert and specifically to the 'anti-contiguistic' kind of action.[47] Consequently, Palazzo has mitigated the 'anti-contiguistic' claims about fascination by showing that fascination's efficacy was performed by means of a 'bodily vector', the *spiritus*.[48] That said, the important thing that one should keep in mind is not only that Albert refers to a part of necromancy that pertains to a soul-to-soul action but also that this kind of action is discussed within a philosophical context. This becomes evident also in Albert's *De sensu et sensato* where he scrutinizes Avicenna's opinion that not all actions require contact. In fact, in the cases of God, intelligence and soul, which are all spiritual agents, contact is not required for their action and this is especially true for the « philosophy of necromancy and incantations in which often (action) affects that which it does not touch, like the soul of one person affects by means of fascination that which it does not touch ».[49] In this text, even though Albert does not speak of necromancy as fascination and incantations being its parts, one may understand on the one hand that these two have a close relation to necromancy and, on the other, that necromancy seems to have gained some points in Albert the Great's mind and he refers to it as 'philosophy'.

Turning to the other part of necromancy, Albert refers to talismans as part of necromancy in both his *De mineralibus* and *Summa theologiae*. With respect to the *De mineralibus*, one finds Albert's systematic treatment of the topic according to which talismans are regarded as *scientia*. It is also in the very same source that

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46 For a general account on Albert's attitude towards fascination and incantations, see Béatrice Delaurenti, *La puissance des mots, « virtus verborum »: Débats doctrinaux sur le pouvoir des incantations au Moyen âge*, Cerf, Paris 2007, p. 230–232; Ead., *Fascination. Une histoire intellectuelle du mauvais oeil (1140–1440),* Cerf, Paris 2023, p. 282–285.

47 Francis J. Kovach, « The Enduring Question of Action at a Distance in Saint Albert the Great », *The Southwestern Journal of Philosophy*, 10/3 (1979), p. 204–213.

48 Alessandro Palazzo, « Albert the Great's *Doctrine of Fascination* », in Susana Bullido del Barrio, Ludger Honnefelder, Hannes Möhle (eds.), *Via Alberti: Texte, Quellen, Interpretationen*, Aschendorff, Münster 2009, p. 198.

49 Albertus Magnus, *De Sensu et Sensato*, tract. 1, c. 10, ed. Auguste Borgnet, Vives, Paris 1890, p. 27a: « Sunt autem quidam quibus ista non placent, sicut Avicennae, dicentes non esse probatum a Peripateticis quod omnis actio sit per contactum, sed tantum esse dictum probabiliter, eo quod in pluribus agentibus physice non habeat instantiam. In his autem quae non agunt physice, sicut Deus, et intelligentia, et anima, omnino est falsum: et dicunt non posse inveniri rationem hoc probantem, quod omnis actio sit per contactum agentis ad patiens, nec acceptam esse hanc propositionem quasi ab auctoritate Antiquorum. Et confortavit ipsam admiratio: quia eo quod in multis agentibus physice videmus quod agunt per contactum, trahimur in admirationem si aliquid sit quod non tangit quando agit: et si haberemus inductionem de opposito, scilicet quod agentia non tangerent, tunc haberemus admirationem de hoc, utrum aliquid tangeret quando agit: et haec dictio praecipue est in necromantiae philosophia et incantationis, in quibus frequenter agit id quod non tangit: sicut anima unius fascinando agit in eum quem non tangit ».

Albert presents the 'science of talismans' as part of necromancy which in turn is a part of the second part of astronomy, that is, astrology.[50] Two things should be mentioned here: firstly, the Dominican master continues to preserve a positive attitude towards necromancy and he now asserts that it is due to the « goodness of the doctrine » (*propter bonitatem doctrinae*) that he decided to speak about this topic. Secondly, Albert further classifies necromancy under astrology probably in order to imply its conjectural character, and thus he echoes back to his *Super Porphyrium de V universalibus* where he subsumed both necromancy and astrology under the category of *scientia conjecturalis*.[51] Turning to the *Summa theologiae*, the intellectual milieu of the book changes and it becomes theological and thus Albert adopts a more conservative approach towards necromancy since he approaches it from its theological side. Albert poses the question of « whether demons can create illusions » and in his solution he responds positively and he says that this is taught in necromancy and its part which deals with talismans.[52] Despite the fact that this text does not present a favorable account of Albert for necromancy, it should be noted that once again the Dominican master acknowledges talismans as a part of it, albeit connected to demons rather than philosophy.

Thus far, we have seen that Albert seems to follow the general scheme of the first two parts of necromancy as they are witnessed in the *Picatrix*, but still it remains to be examined whether Albert accepts alchemy as a part of necromancy, just like the author of the *Picatrix* does. In principle, there is no reference in Albert's text which would allow us a direct or even indirect relation of necromancy to alchemy. It is true that Albert does not connect alchemy to any magical practice

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50 Cf. Albertus Magnus, *De Mineralibus* II, tract. 3, c. 1, ed. Auguste Borgnet, Vives, Paris 1890, p. 48a: « De imaginibus autem lapidum et sigillis post haec dicendum est: licet enim pars ista sit pars necromantiae secundum illam speciem necromantiae quae astronomiae subalternatur, et quae de imaginibus et sigillis vocatur: tamen propter bonitatem doctrinae, et quia illud cupiunt a nobis scire nostri socii, aliquid de hoc hic dicemus ».

51 Albertus Magnus, *Super Porphyrium de V universalibus*, tr. 1, c. 7, ed. Manuel Santos Noya, in *Opera omnia* vol. I/1a, Aschendorff, Münster 2004, p. 15: « Et in realibus scientiis aliter est in probabilibus, et aliter in necessariis et stantibus, et aliter est in coniecturalibus, quae sunt scientiae divinationum, sicut in physiognomia et secunda parte astronomiae et in geomantia, nigromantia et aliis huiusmodi scientiis ». In the *Picatrix* astrology is connected with the 'theoretical' part of necromancy. Cf. *Picatrix*, ed. Pingree, p. 6: « Et dico quod nigromancia dividitur in duas partes, scilicet in theoricam et practicam. Theorica est sciencia locorum stellarum fixarum, quia ex eis componuntur celestes figure et forme celi, et quomodo radios suos proiciunt in planetas se moventes, et ad sciendum figuras celi quando intendunt illud facere quod querunt ».

52 Albertus Magnus, *Summa Theologiae*, pars II, tract. 8, q. 30, m. 2, p. 327b: « Solutio. Dicendum, quod revera hujusmodi illusiones fiunt a daemonibus, et a maleficis arte daemonum: hoc enim expresse dicunt Sancti: et communis est omnium opinio, et docetur in necromantia in parte illa quae dicitur de imaginibus et annulis et speculis Veneris et sigillis daemonum Achot Graeco, et Grema Babylonico, et Hermete Egyptio ».

but this does not mean that a body-to-body action is completely absent in Albert's magic. Actually, Albert seems to accept that one of the fields of operation of magic is the transmutation of bodies and its veracity, albeit he does not make any connection or allusion to alchemy proper.[53] Similarly, in the *Summa theologiae*, the Dominican master refers once more to the matter of transmutation and its veracity, only that in this case he condemns the magical transmutations as « phantastical and deceptive ».[54] Given the evidence above, one can only infer on the one hand that the notion of a body-to-body action in terms of transmutation was not an alien subject to Albert's magic, but on the other there is no textual evidence that would allow us to extend our claims either to necromancy or to alchemy and therefore claim that alchemy is part of necromancy. However, one should keep in mind that there are many instances in Albert's work where he refers to magic as *scientia* too, while there are also excerpts where Albert discusses both magic and necromancy as being the same. In this regard, connecting the sources about magic and transmutation with necromancy would not be that far-fetched provided that Albert does not draw a sharp distinction between *scientia magica* and *necromantia*.

IV. *Conclusion*

Niranj magic seems to have a short life in the history of ideas. The main reason for this, as has already been explained, is that the original Arabic term was either literally 'lost in translation'" or was translated with Latin words which overly distorted the meaning of the initial term. This creates undoubtedly an inherent problem in the study of *niranj* magic in the Latin medieval world because researchers do not actually have a 'word-compass' which will allow in turn ways of tracing and thus studying this kind of genre of magic. Despite these difficulties, this paper purports to have found 'echoes' of *niranj* magic in the work of Albert the Great. I am talking about echoes because Albert's contact with any content pertaining to *niranj* magic was both indirect and unconscious. My claim that echoes of *niranj* magic are to be found in the work of Albert is indicated and congruently justified by the following arguments: firstly, as I have shown, the Avicennan description of *niranj* as a mixing of bodies which brings about *mirabilia* is something that one meets in Albert's work too. Additionally, and maybe most

[53] Albertus Magnus, *Super IV Libros Sententiarum*, II, dist. 7, art. 6, p. 151b: « quia duplex fit operatio artis magicae: una in praestigiis eorum quae apparent et non sunt, alia in transmutatione rerum quarumdam secundum veritatem ».

[54] Albertus Magnus, *Summa Theologiae*, pars II, tract. 8, q. 30, m. 1, art. 1, p. 321a: « Ergo transmutationes virgarum per magos factae, non fuerunt verae, sed phantasticae et deceptoriae ».

importantly, Albert was in contact with texts which carry ideas of *niranj*, like the *Liber lune*. The latter was employed by Albert to argue that stellar constellations may be of help to demons and thus the original practice of *niranj* magic was interpreted and understood within a demonic context by Albert. Another Latin book that was associated with *niranj* magic is the *liber de quatuor confectionibus* which is mentioned in the *Speculum astronomiae* and therefore is related to Albert's name. Yet, the attribution of this text to Albert is considered to be dubious and no valid connection can be made with him. Finally, the fact that Albert recognizes necromancy as a science that has -at least- two parts which in turn refer to a soul-to-soul action (fascination and incantations) and to a soul-to-body action (talismans) may suggest that Albert might have had some knowledge of the *Picatrix*. If this is true then Albert had one more source which contained ideas related to *niranj* magic.

As a final note, I would like to stress and maybe highlight the dynamic character of *niranj* magic. It is true that the Latin texts which were mentioned in this study did not bear any Latin name for *niranj/niranjat* and thus the ideas which were connected to this genre of magic could be regarded as 'orphans' in terms of context. Yet, this 'orphan-status' serves as a unique opportunity to see and study how ideas adapt in new cultural environments and how they progress. In this regard, *niranj* ideas – unconsciously and unknowingly – were associated with demonic magic, necromancy and soul-to-soul action in Albert's work. Such a realization is of great use since it provides new ways of approaching and studying the remains of *niranj* magic in the Latin medieval world.

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IN MEMORIAM

In memoriam
Michael J.B. Allen
(1.IV.1941–25.II.2023)

Valery Rees
School of Philosophy and Economic Science, London

with an appendix by

John Monfasani
University at Albany – Suny

When a great scholar dies there is an outpouring of appreciation as well as grief on his passing. When a man of truly great stature dies, people feel utterly bereft. This was certainly the mood last spring among those who had worked with Michael Allen over the years, who had come close to his genius and his geniality. At his funeral, which was widely shared online, colleagues and friends all spoke of his great gifts of friendship and warmth as well as his immense erudition. Michael brought joy to every occasion, not just through his sparkling wit, his empathy, and a certain playfulness of nature, but because those very qualities rested on a bedrock of humility, integrity and faith in human nature.

Over the course of his long life, many honours were bestowed on him. Amongst these were a Guggenheim Fellowship early in his career; the Eby Award for Undergraduate Teaching (UCLA's top teaching honour); UCLA's Faculty Research Lectureship and guest professorships at the universities of Munich, Toronto, and Tempe. In 2007 he received the Commendatore decoration from the Italian Republic, an Order of Merit with the rank of Commander. Another highly prized honour from Italy was the International Galileo Galilei Prize (2008) for his work on Florentine Platonism. In 2012 the British Academy in London welcomed him to the rank of Corresponding Fellow; in 2013, he was Scholar in Residence at the American Academy in Rome; and in 2015, the full significance of his contribution to scholarship was recognised by presentation of the Renaissance Society of

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America's Paul Oskar Kristeller Lifetime Achievement Award. He also prized highly the D. Litt *honoris causa* granted to him by Oxford in 1987 for his exceptional academic and scholarly work.

Michael Allen was born in England, and his training in literature and languages began at Lewes Grammar School in Sussex. Lewes is situated on the edge of the South Downs, where Simon de Montfort and the rebel barons defeated King Henry III. This provided a perfect place to develop a deep sense of history, as well as a pervasive love of botany and ecology, while roaming the downs on long walks, whether alone or as a Boy Scout, as they were then called. (Michael reached the highest rank of Queen's Scout before leaving Lewes. He never let the disability left by his encounter with polio earlier in childhood hold him back.) In Lewes too, he learned Latin and Greek, and developed a love of the music and liturgy of the English church, which was to serve him well when he came to pursue religious questions related to the authors in whom he specialised. From Lewes, he won a place to read English at Wadham College, Oxford, graduating in 1964, and earning a Master's degree in 1966. After that, adventure called, and he went to teach in Ohio, moving on to the vibrant university town of Ann Arbor in Michigan to study for a doctorate, which he was awarded in 1970. It was also there that he met his future wife, Elena, who was engaged in Theatre Studies and Art. A position in the English Faculty at UCLA was offered soon after and they took up residence in nearby Santa Monica.

At UCLA he soon made a reputation for himself as his lectures conveyed to his students an immediacy of engagement with the worlds of the past, from Beowulf and the Anglo-Saxons to Chaucer, Milton, Donne and Shakespeare. A combination of brilliant imagination and true erudition always shone out from Allen's writings and his talks. He was as deeply versed in English literature as he was in the philosophy of the ancients, Greeks and Latins, having mastered even the most difficult texts of the Platonic tradition to support his exploration of the works of Marsilio Ficino. Renowned among his undergraduate students at UCLA as the professor who brought Shakespeare to life with sparkling wit and boundless enthusiasm, it was nevertheless chiefly as a translator and expounder of Ficino that he made his mark on the academic world.

He also led parties from UCLA to various parts of the world, lecturing with his customary vivacity and style, linking the history of the places visited to philosophy and literature. For many years he gave seminars on the plays being performed each season at the Stratford-upon-Avon Shakespeare summer school, and later at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

From 1988 to 1993 he served as Director of UCLA's Center for Medieval & Renaissance Studies (CMRS). This led him deeper into the world of Renaissance studies, and from 1993 he was elected Senior Editor of the prestigious *Renaissance Quarterly*, serving in that post until 2001 and, after five more years of engagement

on the Society's higher Councils, he was elected President of the Renaissance Society of America (RSA), serving with great distinction from 2006 to 2008. In 2007–8 he was also National Visiting Scholar for the Phi Beta Kappa association, the oldest academic honour society in the United States. Always popular as a lecturer and invited speaker, he additionally gave a great deal of his time to attending academic conferences, where he never failed to encourage young scholars, even as he probed their work with searching questions. He had developed the gift of real listening, with the result that when he engaged in discussion it was always supportive, allowing new understandings to arise and new connections to be appreciated.

It was in the context of just such a conference that I first met Michael, in the wooded hills north of Budapest, at Piliscaba, in 1998. I was already familiar with his work, and was thrilled when he agreed to be the lead speaker at a Ficino conference I was organizing in London for the quincentenary of Ficino's death the following year. At the concluding dinner of the London conference he persuaded me to take on the task of editing the conference papers, promising to support and guide me in this, as I had never undertaken such work before. It proved to be a magnificent learning experience, conducted though it was at a distance of 5,500 miles, and often through late night telephone calls. The volume we produced together, *Marsilio Ficino: his Theology, his Philosophy, his Legacy* (2002), turned out to be immensely successful, like all his publications; for me, it certainly assisted the development of my subsequent career. With characteristic forethought, he also persuaded me to take an active role in running Ficino sessions at RSA, which I did for the following twenty years, his presence always guaranteeing a full room and a great sense of occasion. On his visits to London he was always generous with his time for the Ficino Letters group, helping us to appreciate the context of the material we were working with, giving inspiring talks, offering wisdom and guidance to individual members, and celebrating all the interests we had in common. To be counted among his *complatonici* was a truly happy attainment.

On his eventual retirement from UCLA in 2012 his official title was Distinguished Research Professor of English and Italian Renaissance Studies and it was his work in this latter field, Italian Renaissance Studies, that formed the basis of nearly all his research and publications. His first undertaking was a revised version of his doctoral thesis, an edition and translation of Ficino's commentary on Plato's *Philebus.* This appeared from the University of California Press in 1975, and was reissued by ACMRS in 2000. It set the path for making truly significant works available to a much wider public by rendering them into English. The rather relaxed style of English in this first work was something he refined in later works, but what is important is how he grappled with and made sense of its complex arguments and diverse themes, many of which required a thorough acquaintance with Ficino's sources – a truly impressive undertaking in itself.

There followed a series of books which combine explanatory essays with translation of the relevant texts. In those essays the reader can rely with confidence on his sure guidance through complex matters, even if on occasion he later refined some of his views. For example, *Marsilio Ficino and the Phaedran Charioteer* (UCP, 1981) was followed by *The Platonism of Marsilio Ficino* (UCP, 1984), and both together were revised and represented in the I Tatti Renaissance Library issue of *Marsilio Ficino: Commentaries on Plato: Volume* I: Phaedrus *and* Ion (HUP, 2008). Other Plato commentaries singled out for similar treatment were *Icastes: Marsilio Ficino's Interpretation of Plato's 'Sophist'* (UCP, 1989 and ACMRS, 2016) and a particularly challenging section of Book VIII of the *Republic*: *Nuptial Arithmetic: Marsilio Ficino's Commentary on the Fatal Number in Book VIII of Plato's 'Republic'* (UCP, 1994).

In 1998 he brought out a volume under the title of *Synoptic Art* (Olschki, 1998) which paints a broad canvas of the history of Platonic Interpretation, and then focuses in through the lens of Ficino's place in that tradition, noting the several different types of opposition Ficino encountered among his contemporaries. This volume encompasses a huge range of learning. It was published before an index had been compiled, which was a great shame given the encyclopaedic nature of the material presented. That deficiency has now been remedied in an appendix to this obituary by John Monfasani on pages 299–307 and Renaissance scholars the world over will be duly grateful.

Over a period of many years, Ficino's texts caused Allen to delve deeply into astronomy, numerology, theology, magic, and myth, the last of these giving rise to substantial articles on Saturn, Orpheus, Prometheus and other themes. Many of these essays were gathered together into two Variorum volumes, *Plato's Third Eye: Studies in Marsilio Ficino's Metaphysics and its Sources* (1995), to which I find myself returning again and again, and the equally valuable *Studies in the Platonism of Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico* (Routledge, 2017).

Perhaps it was through his immersion in the finest literature of the English language, and his determined mastery of the philosophy and literature of ancient Greece and Rome, that he was able to write compellingly in a variety of styles, and with a dazzling command of vocabulary, prosody and intonation. From epic to lyric poetry, from narrative and history to rhetoric and philosophic argumentation, he appreciated and was at home in every genre, perhaps even more so than Ficino who consciously modelled himself on Plato whom he famously described (in *Letters*, vol. II, p. 9) as writing in a style « that flows midway between prose and poetry ».[1] Perhaps the scholastic style was the one that least attracted

[1] Allen characteristically traced this phrase back beyond Ciceronian provenance to its ironic use by Aristotle. Michael Allen, *Marsilio Ficino and the Phaedran Charioteer*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1981, p. 40, n. 49.

Allen, though he dealt with it most competently when required, as it was, in some of his later translations. His expositions of material that was difficult or complex are always accessible, suffused with elegance and clarity. It delighted him to help others extend their mastery of language and develop their powers of independent critical thought, and his wit is reflected in some of the imaginative titles he gave to some of his papers: to quote just a few, « Ocean Blue » (2003) for discussion of his Plotinus commentary of 1492; « Life as a Dead Platonist » (2002), « Ficino's Magical Mousing Cat » (2007) and the well-known « Ficino, smoke, and the strangled chickens » (1992).

The two works which gave him most satisfaction, however, were Ficino's own magnum opus, the *Platonic Theology*, which came out as six volumes in the I Tatti series (HUP, 2001–2006), an undertaking shared with James Hankins, and his two volumes on Ficino's commentary on two works of Dionysius the Areopagite: vol. I: *On Mystical Theology & The Divine Names*, part I; vol. II: *On The Divine Names*, part II (HUP, 2015). Here he was able to follow his highly developed interest in what he had come to believe mattered more than anything to Ficino: the pursuit of divine wisdom for the soul, and its return to a state in which its divine essence could be fully realized. This fully united the Platonic and the Christian, in his view. This pursuit mattered also to Allen, and, as with Ficino, in no way conflicted with the responsibilities and benefits of living with and for his fellow human beings.

His greatest academic achievement was surely the opening up of the study of Ficino to a far wider circle than had previously been possible. But over and above all his academic achievements and honours, and the high standards he set in academic writing and research, let us not forget how highly he valued being a family man. With his wife, Elena, always at his side, he was a constant and stalwart support, first as son, revisiting his place of birth at least annually, then as husband, father, and grandfather to a growing tribe of whom he was immensely and justifiably proud. It was his delight to share with them – and with so many friends whom he welcomed into that family circle – his unquenchable sense of curiosity, his love of the outdoors, and of art and literature, poetry and theatre.

Being with him was always a joy, and conversation never lagged. One teenage family friend who had arrived early for dinner had with him what she later called the conversation of a lifetime while I was preparing the food. Memorable moments of this kind were frequent because he had developed the art of welcoming and valuing everyone he met. Even from his hospital bed in later times he was keen to hear about other people's progress and to probe the sometimes unfathomable aspects of British politics. His sunny disposition never left him, allowing him to make light of difficulties even as they multiplied, and he was always prompt to show his appreciation for anything done for him. Whether as mentor, as family, or friend, it was noticeable that advice he proffered was not only wise but always readily actionable.

John Monfasani, in an earlier edition of this journal, summarised Allen's career as « one of the most productive and consequential scholarly careers in the last half century ».[2] To his numerous publications, of which the database *Regesta Imperii* lists no less than 107, one must add the enormous influence he has had on three generations of scholars who have been inspired by him, and who have benefitted in so many ways from his friendship, his kindness and his generosity.

Since Michael was renowned for his hiking expeditions, it is utterly fitting that portions of his ashes have come to rest in the Santa Monica hills, and on the Sussex Downs, on the escarpment just below the beacon on Mount Harry, an old Norse holy place. Both these locations were very dear to him. But his memory lives on among so many of us, as a guiding star or Ficinian *daimon*.

[2] John Monfasani, Review of: Michael J. B. Allen, *Studies in the Platonism of Marsilio Ficino and Giovanni Pico*, Routledge, London – New York 2017 (Variorum Collected Studies Series, 1063). *Mediterranea. International Journal on the Transfer of Knowledge*, 7 (2022), p. 583–587.

Appendix

Michael J.B. Allen, *Synoptic Art: Marsilio Ficino on the History of Platonic Interpretation*, L. S. Olschki, Florence 1998 (Instituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento. Studi e Testi, 40)

Index Nominum

John Monfasani

Synoptic Art is Michael Allen's most historically oriented book as he delved deeply into Ficino's understanding of the history of the Platonic tradition and sundry aspects of this tradition, such as demons, dialectics, and poetry. When I asked why it had no index, Michael told me that to his surprise the book was published before he had a chance to prepare the index. The text below is an attempt to satisfy this *desideratum*. It is an index of names rather than of topics because in such a dense book only Michael would have been able to tease out all the allusions here and there to all possible topics. Themes such as Aristotelianism, Hermeticism, and Orphism, however, can be found in the *Index Nominum*. Because of their ubiquity, Marsilio Ficino and Plato are not indexed. References to Plato's various dialogues are indexed under *Platonic Dialogues* and to books of the Bible under *Scripture*. If a name is cited in the main text and also in the notes on the same page, the page is only listed once, e.g., (page) 19 and not (page) 19, 19n.

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In memoriam
Maria Rosa Antognazza
(10. IX.1964–28.III.2023)*

Jean-Paul De Lucca
University of Malta

Andrea Aldo Robiglio
KU Leuven

Concepts Have History

Maria Rosa Antognazza passed away after a short illness on 28 March 2023. An internationally renowned historian of philosophy, Antognazza was born on 10 September 1964, in Tradate, Province of Varese, Lombardy. After attending primary school at Venegono Inferiore,[1] she completed her secondary education at the « Istituto Magistrale » (i.e., a primary teachers' training college) in Tradate. Barely eighteen, Antognazza took up tenure as a schoolteacher at Castiglione Olona, less than 3 km away from the family home as the crow flies. Never one to sit on her laurels, while continuing to work at Castiglione Olona (1982–1986), the primary school teacher decided to study philosophy in Milan, at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore.

* The authors would like to thank professors Letizia Antognazza, Howard Hotson, Elena Rapetti, and Maria Grazia Zaccone Sina for their generous assistance in writing this obituary.

1 Maria Rosa Antognazza first attended the « Gambassi » State Primary School (until the end of the third grade) and then moved on to the « A. Manzoni » State Primary School (fourth and fifth grades). She subsequently spent three years at the « E. Fermi » Middle School, also in Venegono Inferiore (Province of Varese).

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The choice of *la Cattolica* for studying philosophy deserves a gloss, especially in the case of students for whom this was not a default choice. Such a choice would have certainly depended in part on personal motivations, which differed from case to case, but it also implied an objective predilection for the fields of studies undertaken. Comparing the academic study programmes in Milan in the early 1980s, one immediately notices how profoundly they diverged between the two universities where philosophy was taught. Far less flexible than the one offered at the State University (*la Statale*), the curriculum at the Catholic University was marked by a set of foundation courses of considerable breadth – with an eponymous compulsory course called « Institutions of Philosophy » –,[2] mostly anchored in the close reading of classical texts from the Western canon. This was an approach rooted in Sofia Vanni Rovighi's long-standing and profound teaching, to which – as has been acutely noted –[3] Maria Rosa Antognazza would remain loyal and grateful until her last hour.[4] At the Università Cattolica, Antognazza wrote her master's dissertation (*tesi di laurea*, which in terms of commitment, engagement with scholarly literature, and length could rival a PhD thesis of today) under the supervision of Giuseppe Cristaldi, then professor of Philosophy of Religion. She successfully defended it on 10 October 1988, graduating *summa cum laude*. Antognazza's thesis tackled the relationship between Christology and dialectics in Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel's early theological writings.[5] What immediately

[2] In the years when Antognazza was a student, the syllabus of the « Istituzioni di filosofia » course included the reading, from cover to cover, of Aristotle (viz. *Metaphysica*) and Aquinas (viz. *De ente et essentia*), as well as the study of Sofia Vanni Rovighi, *Elementi di filosofia*, 3 vols., La Scuola, Brescia 1963–1964. The three dense volumes of this 'initiation' to philosophy cover « Logic and Theory of Knowledge » (vol. I), « Metaphysics » (vol. II) and « Nature and the Human Being: Natural Philosophy, Psychology, and Ethics » (vol. III). For an interesting, critical appraisal of this successful work, see Gustavo Bontadini, « Gli 'Elementi di Filosofia' di Sofia Vanni Rovighi », *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica*, 70 (1978), p. 303–308.

[3] See Elena Rapetti, « Sull'utilità della storia della filosofia per la filosofia: in memoria di Maria Rosa Antognazza », *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica*, 115 (2023), p. 479–482.

[4] On Professor Vanni Rovighi's teaching, see also Mario Sina (ed.), *'Sapientiae studium'. La giornata operosa di Sofia Vanni Rovighi (1908–1990)*, Vita e Pensiero, Milan 1994 (« Scienze filosofiche », 57).

[5] The typescript of Antognazza's « tesi di laurea », a work of 400 pages, is available for consultation at the Library of the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, in Milan (shelfmark: T.44599). The full title reads: *Rapporto tra Cristologia e Dialettica negli Scritti teologici giovanili di Hegel. Annotazioni semantico-ermeneutiche*. After an introductory section (p. I-XI: « Introduzione », « Note sul metodo seguito », and « Avvertenza »), the thesis unfolds in four chapters devoted to a commented close reading of all the theological writings of the young Hegel, as edited by Herman Nohl (Tübingen 1907). Chapter 5, « L'incontro-scontro del giovane Hegel con Cristo », encapsulates the conclusions of the painstaking exegetical work and proposes the results of the whole investigation. A point of note is the distinction between *de facto* Hegelianism vs. « Hegelianism of intention » (p. 388–389) according to an articulation that had been developed by the more recent and sophisticated research on Hegel's Christology in the 70s and early 80s, such as Wilhelm Klein and Hans Küng's. Chapter 5 (p. 324–389) displays remarkable philosophical maturity in the sophistication with which secondary literature is referred to and engaged with, viz., in a positive

strikes the reader is Antognazza's early predilection for both close reading of philosophical sources and for their sober, well-balanced contextualization. Her solid philosophical as well as theological education emerges consistently throughout: for instance, when she deals with the disambiguation of conceptual analysis, she recalls first-hand Gottlob Frege (p. IV). The multi-column table compiled on p. 363 and devoted to the use of key terms such as 'Faith', 'Christ' and 'Jesus' – the latter terms were normally regarded as synonymous, or nearly so, by much of the specialized literature (e.g., Enrico De Negri, Jean Hyppolite, Massimo Borghesi, Bernard Bourgois, etc.) – is particularly significant of the young Antognazza's fastidiously precise exegesis.[6] There is not even the faintest shadow of flat paraphrasing in this early work of hers: « An attempt was made to examine the text directly, » she warns, « so that what Hegel did not say explicitly, but which may be read between the lines, would come to light » (p. X).

The taste for research had been awakened in the young woman. Antognazza soon applied for a doctoral scholarship funded by the Catholic University. The competition comprised a written examination on a subject chosen by lot, followed by an oral test to which only those who would have achieved the highest marks in the written component were admitted. She had no academic sponsors at the time, but her written examination attracted the attention of one of the members of the selection committee, Professor Mario Sina, who was struck by the student's lucid and precise prose, the clarity of argument, and the finesse of the short essay's

yet never mimetic manner. For the chronology of Hegelian writings, already debated by Dilthey and Nohl, Antognazza followed Gisela Schüler, « Zur Chronologie von Hegels Jugendschriften », *Hegel Studien*, 11 (1963), p. 111–159. A quick glance at the « Bibliografia » (p. 390–400) shows the author's profound knowledge of Hegel's writings, read in German or in any case compared to the original text; sixteen entries related to 18th and 19th century philosophy in general are listed, while the specialist literature in the field of the thesis's subject-matter amounts to no less than 70 entries. The use of Piero Coda's then newly published book *Il negativo e la Trinità* (Rome 1987) may appear as an obvious choice, but Antognazza shows also first-hand knowledge of earlier literature, e.g, see her careful engagement with Wolf-Dieter March's *Gegenwart Christi in der Gesellschaft* (Munich 1965). Last but not least, the author also draws upon two important book reviews by Sofia Vanni Rovighi, namely « Intorno al primo Hegel », *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica*, 52 (1960), p. 73–77, and « Hegel e il Cristianesimo in un libro recente di Hans Küng », *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica*, 64 (1972), p. 76–84. Antognazza's personal copy of her dissertation is kept by Professor Hotson, Maria Rosa's husband. Since she had prepared for her *viva voce* examination using this copy, its pages are peppered with meticulous marginalia, underlining, highlighting, and other annotations. As indirect evidence of the equivalence between the « tesi di laurea » in those years and a current PhD dissertation, one need only think of Umberto Eco's witty *How to Write a Thesis* (Milan 1977, first translated into English in 2015): though intended for a master's thesis, it is nowadays commonly used as a guide for writing a doctoral dissertation.

6 On p. IV, she writes: « We have tried to stick as closely as possible to the texts by directly interrogating the expressions used by Hegel in speaking of the person of Jesus. [...] It would be a matter here of ascertaining the weight assumed in the Hegelian writings by the different sense with which the two names *Jesus* and *Christ* denote the same 'object' » (our translation).

outline. An expert in modern philosophy, Sina perceptively sensed in the young woman the makings of a researcher: he decided to support her by offering her the opportunity to work under his supervision. Under Sina's learned guidance, Antognazza began to work on the problem of the Trinity in Leibniz, a topic that was neither easy nor conventional. As she would later often say: « I did not choose Leibniz, Leibniz chose me ».

The magnificent Herzog August Library in Wolfenbüttel, where Leibniz had been librarian, marked a further stage of Antognazza's *peregrinatio academica*. In 1993, only a few years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, she carried out a period of research in that tiny German village located on the far edge of the former Federal Republic. There she further investigated the subject of Trinitarian controversies in relation to Leibniz's unpublished manuscripts preserved at the Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek in Hannover. Among her earlier publications, in 1991 Antognazza had already published an article on some unpublished Leibnizian controversies on the Trinity.[7] The opening paragraph of this article encompassed *in nuce* the vast research programme Antognazza would undertake and accomplish over the following two decades: « The Leibnizian texts presented here are connected to the lively Trinitarian discussions that swept through Europe in the 17th century following the spread of Socinian Anti-trinitarianism. Originating on the theological terrain, these discussions became closely intertwined with philosophical problems, such as the relationship between faith and reason, the debate on the scope of the principle of non-contradiction, the reflection on the limits of the human intellect, the value and meaning of analogy; the legitimacy of the use of the concepts of 'nature', 'substance', and 'person', [and] the clarification of the concept of 'relationship' ». These considerations served as the cue for two noteworthy historical-speculative essays on Leibniz and the concept of person,[8] and for Antoganzza's first original monograph a couple of years later.[9] The unconventional angle from which she investigated Leibniz's

[7] Maria Rosa Antognazza, « Inediti leibniziani sulle polemiche trinitarie », *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica*, 83 (1991), p. 525–550. After a dense and sober introduction (p. 525–534), the edition of previously unpublished (or incompletely edited) notes by Leibniz follows at p. 535–550.

[8] Cf. Maria Rosa Antognazza, « Leibniz e il concetto di persona nelle polemiche trinitarie inglesi », in Virgilio Melchiorre (ed.), *L'idea di persona*, Vita e Pensiero, Milan 1996, p. 207–237. In the same year, Antognazza published another substantial article « *Hofmann-Streit*: il dibattito sul rapporti tra filosofia e teologia all'Università di Helmstedt », *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica*, 88 (1996), p. 390–420.

[9] Maria Rosa Antognazza, *Trinità e Incarnazione: il rapporto tra filosofia e teologia rivelata nel pensiero di Leibniz*, Milan: Vita e Pensiero, 1999 (xi–419 pp.); translated into English as Id., *Leibniz on the Trinity and the Incarnation: Reason and Revelation in the Seventeenth Century*, trans. Gerald Parks, Yale UP, New Haven 2007. One should recall another important publication from the *annus mirabilis* 1999: Maria Rosa Antognazza, Howard Hotson (eds.), *Alsted and Leibniz on God, the Magistrate and the Millennium*, Texts edited with introduction and commentary, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 1999 (Wolfenbütteler Arbeiten zur Barockforschung). Antognazza and Hotson had found a

oeuvre enabled her to open an untrodden path in relation to the German philosopher, who emerges as « neither a *proto-Deist* » who subordinates revelation to reason, « nor a Reformed epistemologist *ante litteram* ».[10] Let's rewind the film of her life for a moment.

It was the prospect of setting up a family with her husband Howard Hotson that led Maria Rosa Antognazza to move to Aberdeen in 1994. Relocating to a place with which she had no connection, she faced the challenges of having to learn English almost from scratch and the uncertainty of whether she would be able to progress in her career. The distance between the city that is home to the third oldest university of Scotland and the Italian region of Lombardy where she was born and studied was more than merely geographical. The prevalent philosophical culture in the English-speaking world was far removed from – and in many ways at variance with – the more historically-informed tradition in which she had been steeped as a young scholar. Not everyone would have had the patience, determination, and acumen to turn such barriers into opportunities. And yet it was in the 'city of granite' that Maria Rosa Antognazza first left her scholarly mark as a researcher and a lecturer.

Having successfully managed a demanding linguistic and climatic adaptation, all while learning the ropes of motherhood,[11] Antognazza joined Aberdeen's Department of Philosophy as a Research Fellow in 1996. The following year she remained there as the recipient of a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship. She was tasked with taking the lead of the Reid Project, a major research initiative intended to organise and promote scholarship around the manuscripts and works of a foremost figure of the Scottish Enlightenment, Thomas Reid, who had lectured at Aberdeen's King's College in the mid-18th century. The project, under the auspices of the then Regius Professor of Moral Philosophy, Gordon Graham, would grow into the Centre for the Study of Scottish Philosophy (now the Institute for the Study of Scottish Philosophy). Researchers from across the globe participated in the work of the Reid Project, giving Antognazza the opportunity to interact with many established and upcoming philosophers, historians of philosophy and intellectual historians. The work of the young and brilliant scholar did not go unnoticed at her home institution, for in 2000 she was appointed to a permanent

volume containing four works by Johann Heinrich Alsted, which included handwritten underlining and *marginalia* by Leibniz himself. As a reviewer (John Christian Laursen) promptly stressed, what one learns from Leibniz's underlining in the passages on God is precisely the « confirmation of the importance to him of the polemics between Socinians (antitrinitarians) and trinitarians ».

10 Maria Rosa Antognazza, « Faith and Reason », in Ead. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Leibniz*, Oxford UP, Oxford 2018, p. 718.

11 On how Antognazza united the identities of mother and philosopher, see the poignant essay by Clare Marie Moriarty, « Philosophia », in *The Philosophers' Magazine* (20 June 2023) URL: https://www.philosophersmag.com/essays/316-philosophia.

lectureship at Aberdeen. Based initially at the Old Brewery that housed the Department of Philosophy, she taught the whole range of history of philosophy courses from Plato and Aristotle to Nietzsche and Existentialism, and of course the classical anglophone « Descartes to Kant » modern philosophy courses. During this time, she also taught a course on a line of research that she would never abandon: « Philosophy, Science and Belief ». The relationship between faith and reason, belief and knowledge, and philosophy and theology would remain a cornerstone in Antognazza's philosophy, one which would intersect closely with her work on her philosopher of choice, Leibniz.

In 1999, Antognazza published her first book, based on her doctoral work mentioned above and entitled *Trinità e Incarnazione: il rapporto tra filosofia e teologia rivelata nel pensiero di Leibniz.*[12] Leibniz's trinitarian doctrine and other aspects of his theology were discussed in several articles she published during her Aberdeen years, steadily raising her international profile as a specialist of Leibniz. Antognazza's writings at this stage of her career contained the nucleus of the ideas she would develop in later years, a scholarly agenda of sorts, and one to which she would remain rigorously and innovatively committed.

In 2003, as she was about to become a mother for the third time, Antognazza was appointed to a lectureship at the Department of Theology and Religious Studies, King's College London. Over less than a decade, she would be promoted to Reader and Professor. Having moved to the Department of Philosophy, she served as its Head for the academic years 2011–12 and 2014–15. At the Strand Campus she taught a course on Spinoza and Leibniz, but both her undergraduate and postgraduate teaching shifted significantly to philosophical theology, the philosophy of religion, and epistemology. Former students testify to the effort she put into producing lecture notes that were at once comprehensive and propaedeutic, as well as to the humanity with which she approached philosophical concepts, and the clarity of her explanations. Graduate students who were privileged to have had her as their mentor or supervisor remember her as a *Doktormutter* in the most maternal sense of the term: she would never discuss a student's work without having first read and annotated their work, she would see to their wellbeing as well as to their academic formation, she was as gentle and kind as she was rigorous and exacting. On the example of 'her' Leibniz, she would commit seriously to the minutest of tasks as part of the pursuit for something bigger.

Antognazza's *Leibniz: An Intellectual Biography* (Cambridge UP, Cambridge 2009) stands out as both a masterpiece in the genre of intellectual biography and, *tout court*, the most incisive and expansive treatment of Leibniz's life, thought and works published to date. This book earned her the Pfizer Award (2010) from the

[12] See n. 10 above.

History of Science Society. Drawing on her own extensive research as well as the most recent directions in research on the German philosopher, Antognazza succeeded in the arduous task of recasting Leibniz scholarship by combining historical precision and context with the breadth and depth of his theoretical and practical endeavours. No work on Leibniz has ever captured so intelligibly the unitary character of his thought and works, thus challenging the long-standing fragmentation of his philosophy into unrelated and ostensibly dichotomous parts. As she herself notes in the Introduction, Bertrand Russell and others after him had insisted on putting forward dualistic and reductionist accounts of Leibniz, often depending on their own philosophical standpoints and with little respect for the context of his works and the harmony among them. Imposing anachronisms and partial appropriations on a figure who was « supremely capable of seeing the harmonies underlying seeming antitheses » is problematic from a methodological viewpoint and, more significantly, skewed at the level of interpretation. In Antognazza's work, which reminds the reader of the poignant motto Leibniz gave to the Society of Sciences of Berlin, *Theoria cum Praxi*, the truly harmonious Leibniz comes to the fore most forcefully in the unity of his theoretical and practical pursuits. To lose sight of this unity is to risk misinterpreting and misrepresenting the philosopher. It is also in consideration of the extent of Russell's pervading legacy throughout a century of Leibniz anglophone scholarship that Antognazza's work shines like a beacon for current and future scholarship.

Through and throughout her work on Leibniz, Maria Rosa Antognazza provides cues, reflections, and arguments for what she really considered to be the proper relationship between philosophy and its history. This was the subject she chose to speak about, programmatically, at her Inaugural Lecture at King's College London on 27 November 2013. A revised version of it was later published as « The Benefit to Philosophy of the Study of its History »,[13] an article that has become a standard feature in many course bibliographies around the world. Going beyond the justification that engaging with the history of philosophy is a way of doing philosophy, Antognazza here argues that the history of philosophy trains us to think alternatively, « outside the box of current philosophical orthodoxies ». Here too, she takes to task Russell's dualistic approach by rejecting his characterisation of what is « mainly philosophical » and « mainly historical » as independent approaches to philosophy (he discards the latter). Antognazza, on the other hand, argued that « the history of philosophy should be both a kind of history and a kind of philosophy », and illustrates how this is so by drawing on three case studies from epistemology, metaphysics, and the historiography of philosophy. The « long, broad, and deep conversation » of philosophy with its history is the best way,

[13] Maria Rosa Antognazza, « The Benefit to Philosophy of the Study of its History », *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, 23/1 (2015), p. 161–184.

she insists, to ward off all-too-common tendencies towards « antiquarianism » and « anachronism ». This is an important aspect of what she describes as the « subversive potential » of the history of philosophy, for by challenging philosophical 'dogmas' that condition the reception of, or impose themselves on, past ideas, our engagement with the history of philosophy is carrying out a quintessentially philosophical activity. Moreover, just like the unitary understanding of Leibniz, the benefit the study of its history brings to Philosophy is never purely theoretical. Antognazza's own engagement with philosophy and (its) history manifests in a most eminent manner how and why the history of philosophy is as practical a discipline as it is theoretical.

Appearing in print almost a decade after the publication of her monumental *Leibniz*, the *Oxford Handbook of Leibniz* (Oxford UP, Oxford 2018), edited by Antognazza, is equally indispensable as a starting point for anyone interested in the philosopher, be they an undergraduate student or a seasoned specialist. Forty-two chapters make up the 800 pages of this encyclopaedic work, organised along eight parts covering practically all the main areas of the polymath's output. Antognazza's constant and heightened interest in Leibniz's theological thought is markedly evident. Aside from a chapter on « Leibniz as Historian » (Ch. 33), she authored the Handbook's last three chapters, under Part VIII on Natural and Revealed Religion. The themes are as much about Leibniz as they reflect Antognazza's philosophical interest in and beyond him: « Faith and Reason » (Ch. 40); « Philosophical Theology and Christian Doctrines » (Ch. 41), and « Ecclesiology, Ecumenism and Toleration » (Ch. 42).

A crowning moment in Antognazza's career was celebrated on 14 November 2016. As *Leibniz-Professorin*, or holder of the Leibniz Professorship in Leipzig, she delivered in his birthplace the lecture marking the 300th anniversary of the philosopher's death. On that occasion, she returned to the themes in Leibniz's thought that were closest to her heart, noting how his properly theological concerns had been underestimated. She linked this omission to the kind of historiography that drew an equivalence between inevitable progress and irresistible secularization. It is only against the background of Leibniz's epistemologically grounded, pragmatic understanding of theology, which leads to the love of God and thus to salvation (which for him was eternal happiness), that his pragmatic politics could be properly understood. Placing his approach to theology as praxis alongside the prudential approaches to religious belief followed by Pascal and others, Antognazza, once again rejecting false dichotomies and challenging established 'dogmas', argues that this kind of pragmatic theology is neither in conflict nor in competition with explorations of a theoretical nature. Leibniz's view of the advancement of knowledge and the sciences, she insisted, was that this represented the highest celebration of the glory of God and his creation, because such advancement led to the improvement of the human condition and

hence to sustain human wellbeing. Here and elsewhere in her works on Leibniz, Antognazza shows how Leibniz's thought is always *ad altiora* and *ad maiora*, not in a formally metaphysical sense but above all in terms of truth and purpose.

During the academic year 2019–2020, Antognazza was awarded the *Mind* Senior Research Fellowship to work on her book-project « Thinking with Assent: Renewing a Traditional Account of Knowledge and Belief ». Displaying heroic tenacity and dedication, she devoted herself, until the very last days of her life, to the revision of the book *Thinking with Assent*.[14]

This forthcoming publication possibly constitutes Maria Rosa Antognazza's most ambitious and comprehensive philosophical endeavour and, in a way, brings to an original and unified conclusion the threads of her entire philosophical efforts. She was likely inspired by Timothy Williamson's *Knowledge and its limits* (Oxford 2000), which argues for a new « epistemology of knowledge » that should reject the 20th century's « analytical orthodoxy » according to which belief conceptually precedes knowledge. With the benefit of Williamson's insight and making good use of her familiarity with pre-modern philosophical analyses, Antognazza aims to push the « revolt against post-Gettier epistemology »[15] further, in a truly radical manner. Despite differences and variances within contemporary 'analytical' epistemology, the shared feature Antognazza focuses on is the lack of a « distinction in kind » between knowledge and belief, which leads to a « reductive analysis of knowledge in terms of belief plus additional conditions ». What may first appear to be a negative or 'deconstructive' approach in reality hides a robust positive proposal; one which uncovers, though a far-reaching understanding of the history of philosophy, those neglected tools for a craftsman-like reconstruction of concepts through a refined appreciation of their 'genesis'. The careful use of ancient (mostly Plato and Aristotle) and medieval thinkers is paramount in *Thinking with Assent.* This final book is the culmination of a long, meticulous scholarly preparation. A glimpse into this enduring process is provided in one of Antognazza's last articles, « Intuitive cognition in the Latin medieval tradition », which appeared in a special issue of the *British Journal of the History of Philosophy* devoted to « Intuition in the history of philosophy » (vol. 31, 2023, issue 4), which she co-edited with Marco Segala. Strikingly, this article includes a precise reference, *ad paginam*, to Sofia Vanni Rovighi's *Gnoseologia* (Brescia 1963). This 'return' to a work dating back to her formative years as a student in Milan is hardly

[14] The monograph was accepted for publication with Oxford University Press before Antognazza's untimely demise. After his wife's passing, Professor Hotson took upon him the task of preparing the book for publication, assisted by several colleagues of hers. It is expected to appear in print towards the end of Spring 2024.

[15] Here the reference is to the short, influential paper by Edmund L. Gettier, « Is Justified True Belief Knowledge? », *Analysis*, 23 (1963), p. 121–123. Here we refer to an earlier draft of *Thinking with Assent*, which Antognazza shared with us at the end of Summer 2021.

surprising, especially when it is read in the light of the following acknowledgement in *Thinking with Assent*: « I have been thinking about the views advanced in this book for over three decades, starting from my undergraduate studies in Milan. Over such a long period of time, my debts to a great many people have grown incrementally. First of all, I would like to acknowledge my impersonal and indirect but nevertheless very important debt to the philosophical thought of Sofia Vanni Rovighi (1908–1990), whose writings have shaped my formative years, and whose way of doing philosophy through the history of philosophy has reached me via her students, notably Mario Sina (my *Doktorvater*) and Maria Grazia Zaccone ». *Quale principium, talis est clausula.*

From 2014 to 2020, Maria Rosa Antognazza served, *inter alia*, as a member of the Advisory Board of the Max Weber College (University of Erfurt). She was elected as Chair of the British Society for the History of Philosophy in April 2017, and was confirmed for a second term in 2020. She was the President of the British Society for the Philosophy of Religion (2019–2023) and, since 2022, a member of the Academia Europea. She had served as a member of the executive committee of the Royal Institute of Philosophy from 2017 until her death. In its tribute to Antognazza, the Institute described her very aptly as having been « skilled in stewardship ».

The concepts one uses to read oneself and the reality around oneself carry with them the colour of the mind that understands and employs them. They usually have a history, albeit one which may be concealed at first glance. Yet we must patiently listen to the history of the history-teller in order to properly understand the story they tell; and we ought to have a sense for its unrealized possibilities, for every thought carries with it something that had remained so far unthought. The lines written by genuine thinkers draw also from what, unspoken, peeks from « between their lines ». Through her industrious scholarly efforts, Maria Rosa Antognazza bore remarkable witness to how philosophy and the transmission of knowledge are two sides of the same, precious coin.

In memoriam
Zenon Kaluza
(5.V.1936–5.VI.2023)

Christophe Grellard
École Pratique des Hautes Études, Paris

Hommage a Zenon Kaluza

« Nicolas d'Autrécourt s'éteignit inopinément soit le samedi 16, après le chapitre matinal, soit le dimanche 17 juin 1369 ».[1] Zénon Kaluza était très content de la formule qu'il avait trouvée pour conclure la partie biographique de son étude consacrée à Nicolas d'Autrécourt (où il avait pu, entre autres choses, identifier avec précision la date du décès du maître lorrain). Sans doute aurait-il été content aussi que l'on puisse écrire « Zénon Kaluza s'éteignit inopinément le 5 juin 2023 ». Inopinée, la mort d'un maître et d'un ami l'est toujours, tant il est difficile de s'y résoudre. Et Zénon Kaluza fut un maître et un ami pour un grand nombre d'entre nous, dans le milieu des études médiévales et au-delà.

Né le 5 octobre 1936 à Skrzynki en Pologne, Zénon Kaluza a été formé, à partir de 1956, à la faculté de philosophie de l'Université Catholique de Lublin, où il fut l'élève et l'assistant de Stefan Swiezawski. Ce dernier, bien connu pour ses travaux sur l'histoire de la philosophie, des sciences et de la théologie du XV^e^ siècle, était lié à certains médiévistes français comme Étienne Gilson et Marie-Thérèse d'Alverny. Sous la direction de Stefan Swiezawski, et initié à la lecture des manuscrits par Sofia Wlodek, Zénon Kaluza avait commencé à travailler sur Gilles

[1] Zénon Kaluza, « Nicolas d'Autrécourt. Ami de la vérité », *Histoire littéraire de la France*, 42/1 (1995), p. 145.

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Charlier à Lublin,[2] avant d'avoir l'opportunité de venir vivre et travailler en France en 1967, où il intègre le CNRS en 1968, auprès de Mgr Combes et de Paul Vignaux. Comme le rappelle Zénon Kaluza dans l'introduction au recueil d'articles *Études doctrinales sur le XIV^e^ siècle*, Paul Vignaux avait su réunir autour de lui « un milieu exceptionnel de quatorzièmistes », au nombre desquelles Jeanne Barbet, Francis Ruello, Eelcko Ypma et Jean-François Genest.[3] Dans le même temps, il va nouer des relations d'amitié profondes avec Édouard Jeauneau, Gilbert Ouy et Jean Jolivet. De fait, même si sa thèse (consacrée à Thomas de Cracovie), pour des raisons institutionnelles, a été soutenue le 6 juin 1974 à l'université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne sous la direction de Maurice de Gandillac,[4] on peut dire que Zénon Kaluza est resté lié de façon fondamentale à l'École pratique des hautes études (et à sa section des sciences religieuses) et à l'une de ses équipes de recherches appelée à se fondre ultérieurement dans le Laboratoire d'études des monothéismes (LEM, UMR 8584). C'est dans le cadre de ces institutions, où il côtoiera notamment Alain de Libera, qu'il fera toute sa carrière, jusqu'à sa retraite de directeur de recherches en octobre 2022. Il fut, en outre, à deux reprises chargé de conférences à la 5^e^ section de l'EPHE, en 1973 et 1986.[5] Par ailleurs, même s'il n'avait pas une appétence démesurée pour l'enseignement, il avait néanmoins accepté d'assurer trois séances de cours à l'Università degli Studi di Milano, à l'invitation de M.-T. Fumagalli Beonio Brochierri en 1986.[6] Il fut également invité à donner une série de cours à l'université de Fribourg.

Pendant toutes ces années, Zénon Kaluza avait en effet développé des relations d'amitié fortes avec les deux élèves de Mario Dal Pra, M.-T. Fumagalli Beonio Brocchieri d'une part, et Maria Elena Reina d'autre part, ainsi qu'avec leurs élèves (notamment E. Randi, L. Bianchi, M. Parodi, G. Alliney, L. Cova). En Italie, encore, il était proche d'Alfonso Maierù à Rome, et de son cercle d'élèves. Au-delà de l'Italie, il était en contact fréquent avec Ruedi Imbach et le cercle intellectuel et académique que ce dernier avait développé à Fribourg. C'est, notamment, leur intérêt commun pour l'héritage d'Albert le Grand et la diffusion du néo-platonisme

2 Ce premier travail a donné lieu à la publication de deux importants articles sur Gilles Charlier dans les *Archives d'histoire littéraire et doctrinale du Moyen Âge* en 1969 et 1971.

3 Zénon Kaluza, *Études doctrinales sur le XIV^e^ siècle. Théologie, logique, philosophie*, Vrin, Paris 2013, p. 9–10.

4 Le jury était composé de Maurice de Gandillac, Paul Vignaux et Gilbert Ouy. La thèse a été publiée sous le titre *Thomas de Cracovie. Contribution à l'histoire du collège de la Sorbonne*, Ossolineum, Wroclaw 1979.

5 En 1973, il donna un séminaire sur Étienne Gaudet. Voir *Annuaire de l'École pratique des hautes études, Sciences religieuses*, 82 (1973), p. 223–224. En 1986, il ne rendit pas son compte-rendu (*Annuaire*, 95 [1986], p. 448: « Liste des comptes-rendus non remis »), mais il m'a indiqué avoir fait un séminaire sur Jérôme de Prague.

6 Ces conférences ont été publiées en partie sous le titre *Les querelles doctrinales à Paris. Nominalistes et réalistes aux confins des XIV^e^ et XV^e^ siècles*, Lubrina, Bergame 1988.

au XV^e^ siècle qui les avait rapprochés. Enfin, Zénon Kaluza était lié aux collègues américains qui comme lui cherchaient à mieux connaître la théologie oxonienne du XIV^e^ siècle, en particulier William Courtenay et Katherine Tachau.

Même s'il ne fut pas enseignant, Zénon Kaluza avait à cœur de transmettre son savoir et d'aider les jeunes médiévistes en formation. Paul Bakker et moi-même pouvons en témoigner, qui avons bénéficié de ses conseils à la fin des années 1990. Mais d'autres encore en ont profité dans les années 2000, même après sa retraite du CNRS, qui n'impliquait nullement, pour lui, de mettre un terme à ses activités de chercheur. Il tenait en particulier à aider les jeunes chercheurs venus d'Europe centrale (parmi lesquels on peut citer Monica Brinzei, Dragos Calma, Pawel Krupa, Ota Pavliceck, Kristina Mitalaïté ou Elzbieta Jung). On peut se faire une idée des réseaux d'amitié intellectuelle qu'il forgea tout au long de ces années en se reportant aux listes de contributeurs des trois volumes d'hommage qui lui furent dédiés en 1998, 2002 et 2018.[7]

Enfin, lecteur infatigable et plein d'acribie, convaincu de l'importance de rendre compte avec sérieux mais sans complaisance des travaux de ses collègues, il proposa chaque année, de 1995 à 2003, un « Bulletin d'histoire des doctrines médiévales, XIV^e^ et XV^e^ siècles » pour la *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques*. Fidèle, aussi, à la maison d'édition J. Vrin, où il publia plusieurs de ses travaux, il fut membre du comité éditorial (et un contributeur prolifique) des *Archives d'histoire littéraire et doctrinale du Moyen Âge,* mais aussi des *Prezglad Tomistyczny*.

C'est dans ce cadre amical et institutionnel que Zénon Kaluza a poursuivi un ensemble de recherches consacrées principalement à la philosophie et à la théologie anglaises et françaises des XIV^e^ et XV^e^ siècles, qui étaient alors (et sont encore, dans une certaine mesure) les parents pauvres des études médiévales, du fait notamment d'une historiographie néo-scolastique, que Zénon Kaluza n'a cessé de combattre, qui y voyait une période de décadence.[8] Ses premiers travaux, à la fin des années 1960 et dans les années 70, ont porté sur Gilles Charlier, sur Heimeric de Campo, et sur Thomas de Cracovie. Les deux premiers auteurs l'invitaient à interroger les transformations de l'université parisienne dans les premières décennies du XV^e^ siècle, quand le nominalisme laisse la place au réalisme. Ces travaux trouvèrent un aboutissement dans la synthèse que constitue le livre *Les querelles doctrinales*, où l'arrière-plan que constitue Jean Gerson apparaît

[7] *Albert le Grand et sa réception au moyen âge. Hommage à Zénon Kaluza*, Editions Saint-Paul, Fribourg 1998 (*separatum* de *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie*, 45/1–2 [1998]); PAUL J.J.M. BAKKER, EMMANUEL FAYE (eds.), *Chemins de la pensée médiévale. Études offertes à Zénon Kaluza*, Brepols, Turnhout 2002; numéro spécial des *Prezglad Tomistyczny*, 24 (2018).

[8] La liste de ses travaux jusqu'en 2002 se lit dans *Chemins de la pensée médiévale*, p. XIII–XXIX. La bibliographie depuis 2002 est en ligne: https://lem-umr8584.cnrs.fr/IMG/pdf/bibliographie_de_z-kaluza.pdf (dernier accès: 19 mars 2024)

clairement. Le travail sur Thomas de Cracovie le conduisit à s'intéresser aux carnets d'Étienne Gaudet, qui lui offraient une vision synoptique de la théologie parisienne du XIV^e^ siècle (et notamment de Nicolas d'Autrécourt). Ces carnets révélaient également l'importance de la théologie anglaises des années 1330–1340 pour le développement de la théologie parisienne de la deuxième moitié du XIV^e^ siècle. Zénon Kaluza publia alors plusieurs travaux sur Thomas Bradwardine, et sur d'autres théologiens moins connus comme Richard Brinkley, Nicolas Aston ou Thomas Felthorp. Ces travaux sur le XIV^e^ siècle connurent un premier aboutissement académique quand il organisa, sous l'impulsion de Paul Vignaux, à Paris, un colloque international sur la philosophie et la théologie parisienne du XIV^e^ siècle, les 5–7 novembre 1981.[9] Ses recherches sur le XV^e^ siècle, et en particulier sur le réalisme et le platonisme, conduisirent Zénon Kaluza vers un nouveau champ de recherches qu'il exploita largement dans les années 1980 et 1990, à savoir la figure de Jérôme de Prague, et les liens entre la théologie pragoise de cette période avec Wyclif. Néanmoins, à partir des années 1990, c'est principalement Nicolas d'Autrécourt qui l'occupe. Dès 1984, André Vernet lui avait confié la tâche de rédiger une notice sur cet auteur pour l'*Histoire littéraire de la France*.[10] Ce qui devait, au départ, constituer une brève notice prit des proportions inattendues suite aux découvertes réalisées par Zénon Kaluza, qui finit par livrer la première véritable étude biographique et bibliographique de cet auteur clé de l'université de Paris dans les années 1330. Zénon Kaluza posait ainsi les bases de toutes les études futures sur ce philosophe et théologien, en particulier en vue d'une éventuelle nouvelle édition de son traité *Exigit ordo*. Dans les années 2000, tout en poursuivant ses travaux sur Nicolas d'Autrécourt, Zénon Kaluza revint plus souvent sur le XV^e^ siècle, avec des nouvelles études sur Jean de Maisonneuve, Heimeric de Campo et Jean Gerson, mais aussi sur les structures institutionnelles de l'université, en complément des travaux qu'il avait consacrés naguère aux condamnations du nominalisme en 1339–1340 et 1474–1482. Enfin, il consacra, ces dernières années, plusieurs travaux au chroniqueur polonais Vincent Kadlubek.

Il se dégage de l'œuvre de Zénon Kaluza, principalement constituée d'articles, dont certains ont cependant la taille de petits livres, une méthode de recherche dont les historiens de la philosophie pourraient utilement s'inspirer. Outre une parfaite maîtrise des sciences dites « auxiliaires », paléographie et codicologie, Zénon Kaluza fait preuve d'une double sensibilité, à l'histoire et au concept, double sensibilité qui devrait être la norme pour tout historien de la philosophie, mais qui se trouve finalement assez rarement réunie. Cette double sensibilité est qualifiée,

[9] Les actes en sont publiés (sous la direction scientifique conjointe de Zénon Kaluza et Paul Vignaux) sous le titre *Preuve et raisons à l'Université de Paris. Logique, ontologie et théologie au XIV^e^ siècle*, Vrin, Paris 1984.

[10] Voir *Comptes-rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 129/1 (1985), p. 85.

par Zénon Kaluza lui-même, au moyen de la distinction, voire de l'opposition, entre histoire institutionnelle et histoire doctrinale. Cette dernière, il l'entend comme l'étude de l'ensemble des thèses relatives à un problème, et de leur évolution. Il s'agit, par la lecture interne de textes philosophiques d'expliquer comment il a été répondu à telle ou telle question spéculative. Une telle explication ne peut se faire qu'en prenant en compte l'histoire du texte, son contexte de production (par qui, avec qui, contre qui), les évolutions implicites et explicites suscitées par d'éventuelles controverses, etc. De fait, Zénon Kaluza nous invite à être attentif aux filiations conceptuelles et aux médiations qui rendent possibles de telles filiations. Il faut, en quelque sorte, mettre au jour la boîte à outils conceptuelle dont fait usage chaque philosophe, par-delà ses déclarations explicites. Ainsi, par exemple, en dépit des critiques d'Aristote et d'Averroès par Nicolas d'Autrécourt, Zénon Kaluza montre bien que ce philosophe fait un large usage, de façon plus ou moins dissimulée, des cadres conceptuels hérités du Commentateur.[11] L'histoire doctrinale est donc l'histoire de l'usage des concepts en vue de répondre à des questions historiquement déterminées. Néanmoins, il ne faut pas perdre de vue que ces concepts, pour l'historien de la philosophie, s'incarnent dans des textes dont il faut faire l'histoire intellectuelle autant que matérielle. De fait, comme nous le rappelle Zénon Kaluza, l'historien de la philosophie ne peut pas se dispenser de faire, aussi, de l'histoire des textes et de l'histoire institutionnelle. C'est cette dernière, c'est-à-dire celle qui passe par la reconstitution des circonstances juridiques, politiques, etc. des controverses philosophiques, qui permet d'en comprendre les conditions de possibilité, les limites, et la signification exacte. L'histoire institutionnelle joue, en quelque sorte, le rôle de prolégomènes à la recherche doctrinale, de sorte que l'historien de la philosophie ne doit pas hésiter à s'adonner, à un moment ou un autre de son activité, à la recherche « purement historique ». En effet, loin de plaider pour la séparation des tâches, la démarche même de Zénon Kaluza mise en œuvre dans ses recherches plaide pour une alliance des deux types d'approche.

Zénon Kaluza, pendant un demi-siècle, a contribué avec rigueur et intelligence à approfondir notre compréhension de l'histoire intellectuelle du Moyen Âge. Il a montré, par ses travaux, l'importance des derniers siècles de cette période, encore aujourd'hui trop souvent négligés. Et il nous a légué un ensemble de résultats scientifiques, ainsi qu'une méthode pour les poursuivre et les approfondir. Il reste aux nouvelles générations de médiévistes à s'en emparer pour faire fructifier son héritage.

[11] Signalons que les articles de Zénon Kaluza (ainsi que quelques inédits) consacrés à Nicolas d'Autrécourt ont été réunis récemment par Dragos Calma dans Zénon Kaluza, *L'ontologie de Nicolas d'Autrécourt*, Brill, Leiden – Boston, 2023.

In memoriam
Nuccio Ordine
(18.VII.1958–10.VI.2023)

Chiara Cassiani
Università della Calabria

Un paladino del Rinascimento europeo

Le numerose attività culturali promosse da Nuccio Ordine, professore ordinario di letteratura italiana presso l'Università della Calabria, scomparso il 10 giugno 2023, sono state guidate da un programma comune, volto a individuare e potenziare i legami tra l'Italia e gli istituti culturali più prestigiosi d'Europa. Sempre diviso tra l'Italia e la Francia, da lui considerata una seconda patria, che lo aveva accolto fin da quando era un giovane studioso, consentendogli poi di insegnare nei più prestigiosi atenei (Paris-III Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris-IV Sorbonne, Université de Paris-VII Diderot, École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales di Parigi, École Normale Supérieure de Paris, Paris-VIII Vincennes-Saint-Denis, Institut d'Études Avancées IEA de Paris, Centre d'Études Supérieures de la Renaissance di Tours), Ordine era stato invitato come *visiting professor* in importanti università e istituti esteri, come il Warburg, l'Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung, il Max Planck Institute for the History of Science di Berlino e l'Università di Eichstätt; aveva insegnato negli Stati Uniti, a Yale e alla New York University, ma negli ultimi anni aveva trascorso lunghi periodi soprattutto in America Latina, dove amava visitare i paesi di García Márquez e insegnare all'Universidad de San Buenaventura di Bogotà e all'Università Iberoamericana di Città del Messico.

Per chi lo conosceva Ordine era sempre in partenza, con molto entusiasmo e una piccola valigia, guidato da una forte curiosità intellettuale e da un sincero desiderio di confronto con colleghi e studenti di altri paesi. Lo caratterizzava una grande abilità nell'entrare in rapporto con l'altro e nel creare amicizie profonde e

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durature, come quella con George Steiner, ben descritta nel volume a lui dedicato, *L'ospite scomodo*, La nave di Teseo 2022. Durante i suoi viaggi all'estero Nuccio era riuscito a costruire una fitta rete di contatti culturali sul piano internazionale di cui lui stesso, non di rado, costituiva il collante più forte, grazie al suo carattere energico e naturalmente propenso a ideare e realizzare progetti ambiziosi. Una infaticabile dedizione al lavoro e una fermezza nelle scelte, che distinguevano la sua indole, erano accompagnate da una chiarezza comunicativa non comune e da una indubbia schiettezza nelle modalità relazionali. Come docente era molto amato dai suoi studenti e, sebbene fosse spesso impegnato altrove, si dimostrava sempre desideroso di tornare a Cosenza dagli allievi dei suoi corsi e ai più bravi suggeriva di trascorrere un periodo di studi all'estero, nelle più grandi biblioteche europee. Attendeva con ansia l'inizio dell'anno accademico all'Unical per poter dialogare con i giovani, condividere le conoscenze acquisite e arricchirsi nell'insegnamento, che per lui significava sempre dedizione, scoperta e scambio reciproco.

Con queste premesse non è difficile comprendere le motivazioni umane e intellettuali per cui Ordine ha perseguito con tenacia e assiduità, nei suoi interventi pubblici, nei saggi e nella fitta attività editoriale, il sogno di una Repubblica delle lettere, sul modello rinascimentale, conducendo spesso individualmente una battaglia culturale difficile e diametralmente opposta rispetto all'odierna situazione politica internazionale. Il principio di conoscenza che durante il Rinascimento aveva incrementato la circolazione di scrittori, artisti, filosofi nei diversi centri europei era nato per conferire unità all'irreparabile crisi politica e linguistica della penisola. Ordine era ben consapevole della storica debolezza del progetto auspicato dagli umanisti, però riconosceva nelle istanze universali che consentirono la libera circolazione delle idee e degli intellettuali nelle corti e nelle accademie un principio di coesione di inesauribile vitalità. Pertanto, riteneva essenziale nell'epoca attuale puntare sul consolidamento di un programma comune per combattere la disgregazione e la frammentazione generata da politiche culturali scellerate e persino dimentiche dell'immenso patrimonio dei nostri archivi e delle nostre biblioteche. Ordine ribadiva sempre con fermezza il ruolo e l'importanza della cultura italiana del Cinquecento nell'odierna costruzione dell'identità europea, e proprio questa convinzione lo aveva spinto a fondare a Cosenza il Centro Internazionale di Studi Telesiani, Bruniani e Campanelliani, intitolandolo alla memoria di due grandi amici come Alain Segonds e Giovanni Aquilecchia. Grazie alla collaborazione di molti studiosi e di importanti istituti culturali, egli intendeva costruire una biblioteca ricchissima di esemplari antichi e moderni, dedicata all'opera dei tre più grandi filosofi meridionali del Rinascimento, destinata a ospitare ricercatori provenienti da tutto il mondo.

L'esperienza umana e intellettuale di Giordano Bruno, di cui Ordine è stato uno dei maggiori esperti in Europa, costituiva per lui un nodo cruciale del pensiero occidentale. Al filosofo aveva dedicato diversi volumi, a partire dal più fortunato, *La cabala dell'asino. Asinità e conoscenza in Giordano Bruno*, con prefazione di Eugenio Garin, Liguori 1987 (notevolmente accresciuto nella terza edizione, con premessa di Ilya Prigogine, per La nave di Teseo 2017), in cui lo studioso intreccia diversi campi del sapere, dalla letteratura alla filosofia, dalla scienza alla religione, dall'etica all'estetica, accostandoli alla concezione tipicamente bruniana di un universo infinito, soggetto a un continuo mutamento e in grado di annullare ogni rigida gerarchia, poetica e cosmologica. Il Nolano rigettò il formalismo dei pedanti e ritornò all'« antica vera filosofia », per ricercare una verità che non è da ritenersi un dato acquisito, perché il sapere è illimitato, mentre la nostra conoscenza si rivela sempre effimera e inevitabilmente soggetta all'errore. All'interno dei molteplici percorsi che contraddistinguono la produzione bruniana, Ordine ha individuato un filo rosso, che è stato al centro anche delle sue lezioni universitarie e che costituiva un monito costante per i suoi studenti, difficile da dimenticare per chi come me ha lavorato con lui per molti anni: l'acquisizione del sapere non è un dono, ma il frutto di una faticosa conquista e la conoscenza consiste sempre in un viaggio, in uno spostamento, che non presuppone mai il raggiungimento della verità, perché la meta è da ricercare nel percorso, proprio come recita la poesia *Itaca* di un poeta da lui amato come Konstantinos Kavafis.

Allo stesso modo, fedele all'ermeneutica del Sileno, nella letteratura e nella vita, il docente invitava a diffidare delle apparenze e a ricercare ciò che è nascosto dentro ciascuno di noi, per farlo vivere e fruttificare. Questi temi emergono con chiarezza negli scritti di Ordine e riescono ad attrarre i lettori per la loro straordinaria attualità (ne è testimonianza un altro suo libro fortunato come *La soglia dell'ombra. Letteratura, filosofia e pittura in Giordano Bruno*, prefazione di Pierre Hadot, Marsilio 2009[3]). Il pensatore che ha rappresentato più di ogni altro l'esempio del filosofo libero diveniva nelle parole del professore universitario lo strumento per insegnare ai suoi allievi il significato del pensiero critico, dell'indipendenza nelle opinioni, della ricerca di un desiderio autentico di apprendimento, da svilupparsi aprendo la mente e il cuore.

In Bruno Ordine ricercava la propria stessa visione del mondo ed era affascinato dai viaggi in Europa del filosofo, tra la corte di Enrico III e quella di Elisabetta I. Partendo da un'indagine sui due diversi *milieux* artistici e letterari aveva approfondito il dibattito europeo sulla religione e sul potere monarchico nel Cinquecento (*Contro il Vangelo armato. Giordano Bruno, Ronsard e la religione*, presentazione di Giulio Giorello, prefazione di Jean Céard, Raffello Cortina Editore 2009[2], e *Tre corone per un re. L'impresa di Enrico III e i suoi misteri*, prefazione di Marc Fumaroli, Bompiani 2015, prima ed. Les Belles Lettres 2011). Interpretando gli scritti del Nolano, nelle lezioni universitarie e nei suoi libri, il docente calabrese

poneva l'attenzione sul ruolo del sapere e della conoscenza per comprendere le guerre, le rivoluzioni religiose, cosmologiche e geografiche del passato, allo scopo di farne strumenti di interpretazione di un presente che ai nostri occhi sembra sempre più difficile da interpretare.

Parallelamente, egli si è fatto promotore della diffusione e della traduzione delle opere del filosofo, a partire dalla collana bilingue delle *Œuvres complètes de Giordano Bruno* (1993–1999), diretta insieme a Yves Hersant e pubblicata da Les Belles Lettres, con il patrocinio dell'Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Filosofici e del Centro Internazionale di Studi Telesiani, Bruniani e Campanelliani. Ha anche coordinato e introdotto l'edizione delle *Opere italiane*, con testi critici e nota filologica di Giovanni Aquilecchia, commento di G. Aquilecchia, N. Badaloni, G. Bárberi Squarotti, M. P. Ellero, M. A. Granada, J. Seidengart, 2 vol., Utet 2002.

L'attività di Ordine, tutta protesa verso la difesa dell'umanesimo e dei valori radicati nel pensiero europeo, è stata fortemente impegnata nella battaglia a favore dei classici e del loro ruolo educativo. Nella sua attività di insegnamento ha sempre ribadito la necessità per gli studenti di intraprendere una lettura integrale di grandi opere come la *Commedia*, il *Decameron* o l'*Orlando furioso*, che generalmente, per l'eccessiva mole, vengono proposte in versioni parziali e antologiche. Secondo lui, per sviluppare il pensiero critico e avviarlo a una ricerca libera, l'esperienza didattica dovrebbe proporre il testo nella sua totalità; soltanto in questo modo gli studenti riescono a viaggiare al suo interno e a ricercare individualmente il proprio punto di vista. Durante le lezioni, Ordine sapeva porsi da tramite tra l'oggetto dell'insegnamento e i suoi numerosissimi studenti, per lo più iscritti ai primi anni universitari, per affascinarli e risvegliare in loro entusiasmo e passione nei confronti delle discipline umanistiche. All'inizio di ogni corso chiedeva quale fosse lo scopo della loro presenza lì e motivava la propria, per spiegare a tutti che iscriversi all'università non poteva coincidere con l'aspirazione al conseguimento di una laurea, ma piuttosto la risposta andava ricercata nel desiderio di crescere e di diventare cittadini migliori. In tal modo attraeva l'attenzione dei giovani sulle opere di Boccaccio, Ariosto, Machiavelli, Bruno, prima quasi ignote all'uditorio, e magicamente queste prendevano corpo attraverso l'energia della sua voce e la sua gestualità appassionata.

Nell'insegnamento della letteratura Ordine lottava anche contro il disagio nascosto dietro l'assenteismo universitario, che spesso prende le forme della rassegnazione giovanile, diffusa sempre di più soprattutto nelle regioni meridionali, perché riteneva che la circolazione del pensiero potesse sorreggere le situazioni di difficoltà e di arretratezza culturale.

Proprio quando il sapere scientifico e umanistico apparivano irreparabilmente al servizio del profitto e del mercato, Ordine lanciava un chiaro messaggio di speranza alle giovani generazioni e, coinvolgendo anche i docenti e gli studenti delle scuole, si dedicava con energia alla promozione di un *pamphlet* tradotto

velocemente in tutto il mondo, *L'utilità dell'inutile. Manifesto*, Bompiani 2013 (prima ed. Les Belles Lettres 2013), in cui aveva tracciato il percorso di un ossimoro essenziale, per dimostrare la straordinaria importanza della gratuità della letteratura e della filosofia per rendere l'umanità più umana.

Soprattutto negli ultimi anni il suo impegno nella difesa dei classici nella scuola e nell'università si era intensificato, come testimoniano libri di diffusione internazionale (*Classici per la vita. Una piccola biblioteca ideale*, La nave di Teseo 2016; *Gli uomini non sono isole. I classici ci aiutano a vivere*, La nave di Teseo 2018). Con lo stesso vigore, dava vita a una nuova collana editoriale, 'I classici europei' della Bompiani, un collana diversa da quelle già dirette in Francia, con Yves Hersant, presso Les Belles Lettres, o in paesi come la Romania, il Brasile, la Bulgaria, la Russia, perché rappresentava il suo sogno di pubblicazione e di circolazione in edizioni bilingue, filologicamente curate, delle opere più importanti della letteratura mondiale, da Rabelais, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Spenser, Montaigne, a Kafka e Joyce. In un momento di grande difficoltà editoriale, Ordine si faceva promotore di un progetto che richiedeva un lavoro organizzativo di anni e si avvaleva delle competenze dei maggiori specialisti sul piano internazionale.

Numerosi sono i premi e i riconoscimenti che Ordine ha ricevuto per la sua indubbia capacità nel *transfer of knowledge*: è stato membro d'Onore dell'Istituto di Filosofia dell'Accademia Russa delle Scienze (2010) e membro dell'Académie Royale de Belgique, mentre in Francia è stato insignito delle Palme Accademiche (*Chevalier* 2009 e *Commandeur* 2014) e il Presidente della Repubblica gli ha concesso la *Légion d'honneur* (2012). Di certo il riconoscimento più prestigioso è ritenuto il più recente: il premio Principessa delle Asturie 2023 per la Comunicazione e per le discipline umanistiche. Quando Ordine ricevette la notizia, pochi mesi prima della sua scomparsa, ne fu molto lusingato e scelse di dedicare il premio « a coloro che insegnano e cambiano silenziosamente con il loro sacrificio la vita ». Con l'espressione « soltanto un buon professore può cambiare la vita dei suoi studenti » è ricordato da molti di noi all'Università della Calabria.

REVIEW ARTICLES

A Note on Two Works of George of Trebizond Edited by John Monfasani

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At the meeting of the Philosophical Review Club in March 2022, John Monfasani's volume *Vindicatio Aristotelis* was the subject of a discussion.[1] The book brings together a critical edition and a doctrinal study of two major writings by George of Trebizond, namely the *In perversionem Problematum Aristotelis quodam Theodoro Cage editam et problematice Aristotelis philosophiae protectio*, and the *Comparatio philosophorum Platonis et Aristotelis*. This note presents a critical discussion of Monfasani's edition of these two texts. It first considers the *Protectio*, discussed by Riccardo Saccenti; then the *Comparatio,* reviewed by Luca Burzelli.[2]

I. *The* In perversionem Problematum Aristotelis protectio

On 17 June 1452 George of Trebizond left Rome for Naples. The sharp contrast with figures such as Poggio Bracciolini and Giovanni Aurispa, as well as the open disagreement with Cardinal Bessarion and his intellectual circle, led George to give up his role in the Papal chancery to accept a position at the court of Alfonso of Aragon. Nicholas V's pontificate had seen a progressive deterioration of George's position in Rome, which was due not only to the changing political and

1 *Vindicatio Aristotelis. Two Works of George Trebizond in the Plato-Aristotle Controversy of the Fifteenth Century*, ed. and trans. John Monfasani, Arizona Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Tempe (Arizona) 2021 (Medieval and Renaissance Text and Studies, 573).

2 The first chapter of this review-article is by Riccardo Saccenti, while the second is by Luca Burzelli. Any reference to Monfasani's edition in the course of the paper is made by using the two sigla *Protectio* (from *Vindicatio Aristotelis*, part I) and *Comparatio* (from *Vindicatio Aristotelis*, part II), with the page number.

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ecclesiastical balance within the papal curia. The cultural policy of the Papacy had switched its orientation: the arrival in Roman circles of humanists such as Giovanni Tortelli and Lorenzo Valla as secretaries to the Pope, had marked a clear turn towards a humanistic culture which was quite alien to George's attitude. Not surprisingly, this latter returned to Rome only in 1455, after Nicholas V's death. During these tormented years of his biography, Trebizond was involved in a diatribe concerning the translation of the *Problemata* attributed to Aristotle. It was Nicholas V himself who had requested George to prepare a new Greek-Latin translation to provide a new reading of the text with respect to the medieval one. The final work of George of Trebizond had been the subject of radical criticism from Cardinal Bessarion and the authors close to him, who had instead exalted the much higher quality of Theodore Gaza's translation of the same text.

John Monfasani's volume *Vindicatio Aristotelis* provides a careful study of this phase of George of Trebizond's intellectual biography, framing it within the broader context of the doctrinal, rhetorical and philological disputes that animated the central decades of the fifteenth century. The story of the translation of the *Problemata* is an integral part of the struggle between alternative ideas of culture and understandings of the relationship between the *Christianita*s and the Classical heritage. Trebizond's place in this moment of the fifteenth-century intellectual history is shown by his *The Protection of Aristotle's Problematical Philosophy against the Perversion of Aristotle's Problems published by a certain Theodore Cages* (*In perversionem Problematum Aristotelis a quodam Theodoro Cage editam et problematice Aristotelis philosophie protectio*), a text of which Monfasani provides a critical edition in his volume.

The scholar deals with the study of the *Protectio* as a part of a larger research project concerning Trebizond's role in one of the central controversies of the fifteenth-century culture. In this light, the scholar carefully repositions George's text both in the chronology of its author's life and in the intellectual tensions to which he was subject. A crucial point was the delicate relationship with Cardinal Bessarion, that dated to the years George spent following Eugene IV's court between Ferrara, Florence and Rome. The connection with Bessarion was initially marked by the Cardinal's appreciation of George's culture and the commissioning of the Latin translation of Basil the Great's *Contra Eunomium* and *De Spiritu Sancto*. Later on, the relation between the two men deteriorated, arriving at open cultural dissent and contrast.

In addition, Monfasani also highlights the more narrowly cultural nature of the *querelle* at the origin of the *Protectio*. Dedicated to the king of Naples, the text marks George's clear stance in the dispute over the translation of the *Problemata* and is configured both as a harsh and violent criticism of Theodore Gaza's version and as a vindication of the goodness and quality of his Latin version of the Greek text. In particular, in the introduction to the edition, Monfasani stresses the issue around

which George sets up his argumentative strategy, which is to outline what is meant by the expression *fidus interpres*. Thus, the discussion revolves around the theory of translation and the need to carry out a transposition into Latin that can combine doctrinal adherence to the contents with philological and grammatical care for the letter. On these criteria, George makes his fierce criticism of Gaza's version, which in his opinion profoundly alters the text as well as the consolidated Latin lexicon of philosophy. According to George, this operation is evident in the misunderstanding of various technical terms, starting with the word *quaestio*. Gaza employs the term as a translation of the Greek '*problema*', which Aristotle uses to identify the issues dealt with in the books of the *Problemata*. According to George this is an erroneous translation, because the Aristotelian '*problema*' does not carry a dubitative sense: on the contrary, it has the sense of indicating a solution rather than a discussion.

In addition to this, the *Protectio* is also a precious historical witness. On the one hand, it preserves one of the leading voices of humanistic discussions on crucial matters such as the relation between Plato and Aristotle and the theory of translation. On the other hand, the *Protectio* records the memory of George's meeting with Pletho at the Council of Florence.

Monfasani's historical and doctrinal relocation of the *Protectio* also supports the philological discussion at the basis of the critical set-up of the text and also justifies the editorial choices. The *recensio codicum* presents the screening of the sixteen handwritten witnesses of the work, carefully described and collated. Monfasani identifies three different families: **α**, **β**, and **γ**. It is a distinction that identifies three different phases in the textual transmission of the *Protectio*, because while **α** appears directly linked to George's drafting work and his subsequent revisions, **β** and **γ** are rather two successive stages that only partially incorporate the revisions made by the author. According to Monfasani's enquiry, **α** has greater value for a critical edition of the text. This is because the explicit intention of the publisher is to publish the version that Trebizond fixed between 1456 and 1457 and that contains his latest revisions. Indeed, **α** appears to be internally articulated in a progression of three editorial stages. The first draft (α^1) is present in **T** (Salamanca, Biblioteca Universitaria, 95), a manuscript that Alfonso de Palencia copied in 1465 probably on the basis of a text in the possession of Trebizond himself.

The revision of this first version (α^2) is testified by the codex **R** (Roma, Biblioteca Casanatense, 77), copied by Theodericus Buckinck in 1456 in Rome, after George's return from Naples. The final redaction of the text (α^3) is present in manuscripts **L** (Leiden, Bibliothek der Rijksuniversiteit, BPL 151) and **W** (Vienna, Osterreichische Nationalbibliothek, Lat. 218), both copied between the end of 1456 and the first months of 1457. Monfasani's evaluation of the *recensio codicum* explains the distancing from the edition of the *Protectio* published by Ludwig

Mohler, which is based on **γ**, which is to say, the manuscript family that emerges as the most distant from George's drafting of the text.

The critical apparatus developed by Monfasani is perfectly coherent with this critical evaluation of the manuscript tradition. Indeed, the editor records the variants that highlight the differences among the three families of manuscripts and those within the α family that highlight the different editorial phases directly ascribable to Trebizond. Then there are the 'plausible' variants of **β** and those of **β** and **γ** which have value for the reconstruction of the editorial history of the text. Finally, Monfasani records the variants with respect to Mohler's edition, aiming to show the philological preferability of the new edition.

As regards the features of the edition, the edited text presents the division into chapters attested by three manuscripts of the **γ** family and which probably dates back to Trebizond himself. Monfasani adds a series of rubrics that are distinguished from the text by the use of square brackets and that explain the contents of each chapter. In addition to the critical apparatus, a series of notes makes it possible to highlight the main textual references present in the *Protectio*.

Monfasani's work also includes six textual appendixes: a concordance between Trebizond's translation of the *Problemata* and the Greek text of the work in modem editions; the list of problems discussed in the *Protectio*; the two *Tabulae Problematum* drawn up by George and contained in the manuscript **U** (Sevilla, Biblioteca Capitular y Colombina, Capitular 57-2-16); an edition of books 1, 4 and 30 of the *Problemata* following George's translation; the edition of Theodore Gaza's preface to Nicholas V; the preface of Nicolaus Gupalatinus to Sixtus IV on Gaza's translation. In this way, Monfasani brings together a precious dossier of documents linked with the *Protectio* and the controversy about the translation of the *Problemata* that opposes George of Trebizond and Theodore Gaza.

The critical edition of the *Protectio*, with the accompanying texts and historical-critical evaluations, offers a precious tool to reconsider some of central questions in the history of fifteenth-century philosophical culture. The necessary historical relocation of Trebizond's writing, which Monfasani himself introduces, brings out the full weight of the philological, rhetorical and philosophical arguments deployed in the *Protectio*, both relative to the author's production and relative to the disputes in which he was involved. Some preliminary notes in this direction may be mentioned by way of example.

Alongside the extremely violent tone towards Theodore Gaza, George articulates the text as an examination of the problems of translating the text of the *Problemata* from Greek. In the immediate background of this intellectual struggle there is the discussion about *translatio* that involved several humanists already in the early decades of the fifteenth century. Leonardo Bruni, in his *De interperetatione recta* composed in 1425, had addressed the theoretical and methodological questions connected with the Greek-Latin transfer of

philosophical and literary texts[3]. Bruni's discussion questioned the use of a single approach to translation and claimed the need to arrive at solutions in which truthfulness deriving from fidelity to the translated text stands together with the stylistic elegance of the translator's language. He highlighted how translation could not be approached only as linguistic transfer of terms, expressions and sentences. A broader approach was needed, capable of taking more general considerations into account. Translating one of Plato's dialogues, for instance, certainly requires an evaluation of the specific features of the text, together with an overall understanding of Plato's entire work.

The confrontation between Theodore of Gaza and George of Trebizond, twenty-five years after Bruni's *De interpretatione recta*, focuses again on the various problems of the translation as a leading intellectual form of humanistic culture. Therefore, George first discusses a range of lexical matters and then moves on to a sequence of textual comparisons between his own version and that of his opponent. George's intention is clearly to mark the distance between his own approach and that of Gaza, starting from the very *ratio* of translation. George conceives of the controversy in, so to speak, epistemological terms but in doing so he means to underline the greater effectiveness of his approach to the Greek text. These considerations emerge from the first lines of the *Protectio*, i.e., from the criticism of Gaza's translation of the Greek '*problema*' with the Latin term *quaestio*[4]. As Monfasani himself notes in the commentary notes, George recalls Gaza's preface to Pope Nicholas V, where it is explained: « Now the questions of the philosopher Aristotle, which set out problems of all sorts, I add them as a sort of last course so that you may be more satisfied with whole and solid food that others have prepared ».[5]

George questions the semantic equivalence between the Greek *problemata* and the Latin *quaestiones*, noting that: « a question, as everyone says, is a doubtful proposition ».[6] Here, the implicit reference is to the definition of question that Boethius establishes in his commentary on Cicero's *Topica*, therefore to an essential text from the point of view of the rhetorical and philosophical heritage

[3] See Johnny L. Bertolio, *Il trattato* De interpretatione recta *di Leonardo Bruni*, Istituto storio italiano per il Medio Evo, Roma 2020 (Antiquitates, 52).

[4] On the technical value of the term *quaestio* see the synthesis provided in Elisa Coda (ed.), *Insegnare e disputare. La vita intellettuale e universitaria nel Medioevo*, Carocci, Roma 2023.

[5] Theodori Graeci Thessalonicensis ad summum pontificem divum Thomam, Nicolaum V, praefatio in Problematibus Aristotelis, in *Vindicatio Aristotelis*, p. 326, II. 6–8: « Nunc Aristotelis philosophi quaestiones, quae Problemata inscribuntur Encyclia, quasi tragemata quaedam subiungo ut, ubi integro solidoque cibo, quern ceteri paraverant, satiatus es ».

[6] *Protectio*, p. 86: « Problema questionem esse ait, cum questio, ut omnes aiunt, propositio sit dubitabilis ».

mediated by scholastic culture.[7] George highlights how the Latin term *quaestio* has a technical sense, referring to both a specific rhetorical structure and to the practice that is linked to it, namely, scholastic disputation. Otherwise, the Greek term *problemata* refers not to the doubt between opposite alternatives but rather to the search for the *ratio* of something that is evident to the senses. Trebizond will reiterate this crucial argument in his approach to the Greek text of the *Problemata*, in the 1457 preface of his translation to Cardinal Prospero Colonna, where he explains: « The *Problemata* are nothing more than the search for reason of a thing that is manifest to the sense ».[8]

From this point of view, George's claim against Gaza's mistake cannot be reduced only to an erroneous translation: it is a matter of a radical cultural divergence concerning rhetorical and philosophical convictions. This core of the discussion can be evaluated from the continuation of the lexical analysis developed in the first chapters of the *Protectio*. Here George examines the correspondence of the Greek particle *ἤ* and the Latin conjunctions *an* and *vel*. George insists that the Greek conjunction, in the case of the *Problemata*, does not have a disjunctive value and therefore cannot be understood as equivalent to the formulation of a question in the Latin formula *Utrum... an ...* with the verbs in the subjunctive, i.e., as an indirect interrogative preposition. From a grammatical point of view, the same formula is correct, he explains, when used with indicative verbs, since the pseudo-Aristotelian text indicate things evident to the senses.

Beneath this grammatical and rhetorical discussion, there emerges George's cultural and philosophical concern, which is to highlight Gaza's lack of understanding of the nature of the scholastic *quaestio*. According to George, Theodore Gaza does not observe the radical difference between the dubitative formula of the question, which introduces a questionable matter, and the indicative formula, which rather describes a state of affairs and introduces an argumentative and inquisitive procedure, aiming at understanding the *ratio* of things. In this way, the textual passage from Greek to Latin is problematised in terms of the need to establish the correct relationship that links the internal coherence of Greek with that of Latin. George explains this point criticizing one of the peculiar features of Gaza's translation, namely the frequent use of transliterations of Greek terms. This practice is seen as misleading and it is rejected by recalling Cicero's argument about the value of transliterations as a

[7] Boethius, *In Ciceronis Topica*, in Johann Caspar von Orelli (ed.), *Ciceronis Opera*, Band 5, Teil 1, Füsslini et Sociorum, Zurich 1833, p. 277, l. 19: « Quaestio vero est dubitabilis propositio ». See Peter Boschung, « Boethius and the Early Medieval *Quaestio* », *Recherches de theologie et philosophie medievales*, 70/2 (2004), p. 233–259.

[8] BAV, Vat.lat. 5790, fol. lr–v: « Presertim cum ipsum esse hominis rationem susistat problemataque nihil aliud sit quam rationis rei sensu patentis inquisitio, quia ergo et sensum habemus et rationis particeps sumus ».

means of making Greek terms more intelligible and not as a strategy for transferring words that have no corresponding term in Latin.

The Ciceronian reference serves George's argumentative strategy, because it explains how the search for a stylistic quality of the Latin of the translation cannot prevail over the faithful rendering of both the content and the semantic value of the original Greek wording. In this way, George establishes the limits within which the definition of the translator as 'faithful interpreter' (*fidus interpres*) is set: a rigorous adherence to the lexicon of the original text as well as to its rhetorical form, so as to be able to restore both these aspects to the Latin reader. And these features are even more essential when translating a philosophical work such as the *Problemata*. In the case of a text of this kind, George notes, it remains crucial to transfer into Latin both the clarity and ambiguity of Aristotelian prose, insofar as this makes the text the potential object of philosophical analysis.

Thus, translation is seen as the first essential step in approaching the study and discussion of the Aristotelian text and so as an unavoidable precondition for teaching philosophy. In this sense, George explains that the translation of *scholia* to the pseudo-Aristotelian text fulfills an essential function: distinct from the body of the text, these glosses support the study of its philosophical contents and therefore engage the translator to the extent that they provide potential arguments for the exegesis of the text. George stands clearly against Gaza on this point. While the latter, in the preface to Nicholas V, rejects the *scholia* to the *Problemata* as non-Aristotelian additions that confuse and corrupt the Greek text and its elegant and readable Latin translation, George stresses that they are precious tools for dealing with the most complex and obscure passages of the writing.

The hiatus that Trebizond marks with respect to Theodore Gaza is not just a matter of the stylistic form of the translations. The dispute over the theory of translation highlights a radical difference also in terms of the conception of philosophy and the relationship between this discipline and the textual corpus on which its practice is based. George stresses the desire to place his work as a translator within the limits of the philosophy of the university *studia* of the time. This intention emerges from textual comparisons between the translations of the *Problemata* that George lists in the *Protectio* and that constitute the most substantial part of the work. Indeed, George always takes care to bring his own translation together with the medieval one produced by Bartholomew of Messina in the 1260s, stressing the proximity between the two texts as well as their radical difference compared to Gaza's version. The insistence on the conceptual and lexical concordance between his own translation and that of Bartholomew certainly aims to confirm the correctness of his work as opposed to that of Gaza. Moreover, George proposes his translation as a clear adoption of Bartholomew's work, at times placing it as an updating of the longstanding medieval version rather than

as a new one. This cultural orientation is consistent with the explicit adoption of a definition of philosophy, which George mentions in the preface to Prospero Colonna, echoing Cicero and combining elements of the scholastic tradition that are fully present, for example, in the approach to philosophy in force in the *studium* of Padua or in the school of Rialto in Venice.

« Philosophy – he explains at the opening of the preface – is the impetuous love for the knowledge of human and divine things. 'Sophia', that is wisdom, is the very knowledge of all things: of all, I mean, those that can be understood by human beings. In fact, those that we are not able to grasp with human ingenuity, either because they surpass it or because they are surpassed by it, since they are not contained by human wisdom, not even their knowledge can be desired by the philosopher; or if it can certainly must not ».[9]

George's approach to the text of the *Problemata* and to its translation appears to be consistent with Peter of Abano's *Expositio* of the pseudo-Aristotelian text, which already in the course of the fourteenth century, had affirmed itself as the canonical interpretation in the European universities. Indeed, in the prologue Peter observed how: « 'Problem' is the Greek <term> which stands for the Latin 'evidence'; for it is a difficult question that contains something that must be resolved with a dispute ».[10] And again: « From what <has been said> we deduce that this book cannot be fully understood except by the one who has studied philosophy in all its parts; for this reason, the glossators had been lazy in explaining it ».[11]

This scholastic background on which George bases his translation becomes explicit in the closing of the *Protectio*, where he recalls the essential importance of the medieval interpreters of the Aristotelian philosophy. According to George, the literalism of the Aristotelian medieval translations made possible the flowering of philosophy in Latin-speaking Europe, thanks to the contribution of authors such as Albert the Great, Giles of Rome and above all Thomas Aquinas. The *Protectio*

[9] BAV, Vat.lat. 5790, fol. lr: « Philosophia est uehemens amor cognoscendarum humanarum diuinarumque rerum. Sophia uero idest sapientia ipsa cognitio rerum omnium est, omnium dico que ah homine capi sciriue possunt. Nam que capere humano ingenio nequimus uel quia nimium excedant, uel quia nimium excedantur, ea cum humana non contineantur sapientia, nec cognitio eorum desiderari a philosopho potest, aut si potest certe non debet ». Cf. Cicero, *Tusculanae* IV, 26, 57: « Philosophia est rerum humanarum divinarumque cognitio cum studio bene vivere iuncta ». See also Augustinus, *De Trinitate*, XIV, 1.3.

[10] Petri de Abano *Expositio Problematum Aristotelis*, ed. Pieter De Leemans (in Pieter De Leemans, Maarten Hoenen, *Between Text and Tradition*, Leuven University Press, Leuven 2016, p. 21–52), p. 49, ll. 63–65: « 'Problema' quidem est grecum latine probationem importans; est enim questio difficilis aliquid continens quod disputatione soluendum ».

[11] Petri de Abano *Expositio Problematum Aristotelis*, p. 49, ll. 69–71: « Ex quo quidem deducitur quod liber hic non potest plene intelligi nisi ab illo qui philosophiam secundum omnem partem eius inspexerit ».

claims the full dignity of Latin as a philosophical language and thus stresses the need, when undertaking new translations from Greek, to remain faithful to the consolidated philosophical lexicon that had been developed by the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century university masters. From this point of view, the *Protectio* can be considered also as influential in the philosophical and theological discussion of the value of Scholasticism to which belongs, with a radically different perspective, Lorenzo Valla's *Encomium of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, composed just a few months after the final version of the *Protectio*.

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In *The Magic Mountain* Thomas Mann makes the Jesuit Naphta the icon of an antihumanistic culture, the champion of a medievalism that rests upon a rigid subordination of philosophy to theology. In this way Mann exemplifies one of the two cultures that fought for the soul of Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century. The struggle between medievalism and humanism, between Naphta and Settembrini, is both an ironic and tragic, leading to the roar of cannon with which the novel ends[12]. The polarization of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance that the German novelist places at the centre of the story of the individuals gathered in the Davos Dorf sanatorium transposes into a contemporary key some of the themes that emerge from the fifteenth-century diatribes involving authors such as Trebizond, Theodore Gaza and Bessarion.

Despite the distance that separates Mann from fifteenth-century Italian culture, the philosophical battle enacted *in The Magic Mountain* re-elaborates a crucial aspect of that close intellectual confrontation to which Trebizond's *Protectio* belongs. This text certainly takes the form of a heated and violent indictment concerning the form and features of the correct translation of Greek texts into Latin. And yet George clearly shows how his rhetorical and philological convictions are of a piece with adherence to a precise philosophical orientation: that of the university *studia*. In his approach we find the construction of an explicit link between the faithful translation of the Greek text and the *communis opinio* which he had learnt from university masters in philosophy. In this sense the *Protectio*, as well as Trebizond's Latin version of the *Problemata*, appear as witnesses to a fracture in fifteenth-century culture that deserves to be re-considered in the

[12] On how Thomas Mann outlines the humanistic culture in comparison with the Middle Ages, Jacob Burckhardt's notorious study on the culture in Renaissance Italy (see Jacob Burckhardt, *Die Kultur der Renaissance in Italien*, Schweighauser, Basel 1860), certainly had a significant impact. For a detailed examination of the various sources on which Mann drew for the elaboration of the relationship between the Middle Ages and Renaissance, see Luca Crescenzi's study dedicated to Mann's novel, available in Thomas Mann, *La montagna magica*, ed. Luca Crescenzi, Mondadori, Milan 2010.

light of Monfasani's editorial work. For, it marks a clear divergence that deals directly with philological and grammatical questions, but is rooted deeply in the philosophical substratum of the fifteenth century.

However, the use of the historiographical paradigm of the radical opposition between Scholasticism and Humanism is by no means absolute, and the case of the *Protectio* clearly shows both its usefulness and its limits. Such a reading certainly enlightened Trebizond's acquaintance with the cultural milieu of the *studia* and the scholastic heritage of the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century authors. At the same time, the *Protectio*'s appreciation of philological attention to the Greek letter and the critical evaluation of the doctrinal tradition fixed in the *scholia*, the rationale of the argument it develops and of George's translation of the *Problemata*, all these elements place the text within the cultural flourishing of Humanism in the central decades of the Italian Quattrocento. This coexistence of different attitudes in one and the same author or text is not a contradiction. On the contrary, it reveals how the alternative between Scholasticism and Humanism as cultures and doctrinal perspectives stands as a scholarly reading of the magmatic cultural development of the fifteenth century, whose crucial importance should not be considered in absolute terms. The rise of Humanism did not obliterate Scholasticism but rather led to a plurality of approaches for questioning, debatiing and overcoming the differences between these 'two cultures'.

Monfasani's work suggests that the *Protectio* presents one of the cultural perspectives that emerge in the mid fifteenth-century cultural debates. George of Trebizond's text is, indeed, plainly rooted in this milieu and its contents reveal a deep acquaintance with the major issues discussion of which proved to be a crucial turning point. The matters with which the *Protectio* deals, namely the theory of translation, the Plato-Aristotle controversy, and the handling of the scholastic heritage, reveal the emergence of a *novitas* that Trebizond clearly identifies in the writings and ideas of figures such as Theodore Gaza, Cardinal Bessarion and Lorenzo Valla. He understands the groundbreaking value of such a new perspective, and he throws himself with force against it.

II. *The* Comparatio philosophorum Platonis et Aristotelis

The composition of the *Comparatio* (around 1457–1458) can be hardly understood if we leave aside its background. As Monfasani clearly reconstructs, a 'controversy' between Plato and Aristotle had been launched some years earlier, when Pletho in his *De differentiis* (1439) praised Plato's philosophy and theology, while harshly criticising Aristotle. In the following years, the debate extended to include other intellectuals. Even though Cardinal Bessarion wrote an opuscule to conciliate the two Greek philosophers (perhaps in the spirit of Aquinas' *De substantiis separatis*

§ 3), up until the 1450s Plato and Aristotle could count on real partisan groups fighting against each other.[13]

In 1456 (one year before the *Comparatio*), Trebizond had a dispute concerning Aristotle's *Problemata* with Theodore Gaza, the famous translator defended by Bessarion. On that occasion, Trebizond wrote his *Protectio*. In this work, there is no strong condemnation of Plato, who is even quoted at the very beginning of the text for arguing that philosophers should rule the state. But, while Plato is mostly passed over silence, the same cannot be said of Gemistus Pletho, who is accused of pagan idolatry and religious impiety. Pletho, indeed, « left behind a book against Christ. The book is called *On the Republic*, and it lays out the foundation of a heathen regime » (*Protectio*, p. 35, probably referring to Pletho's work titled *Νόμων συγγραφή*). Between 1457 and 1458, Trebizond expanded this issue in a new work, titled *Comparatio*, with wider purpose and broader targets. Once more, Pletho was fingered as the most recent case of moral corruption, as he not only had mixed Christian theology with paganism and Platonism, but he had also permitted Plato's *Republic* to circulate. However, in this new treatise the criticisms were primarily directed against Plato, who was no longer ignored but rather charged with every possible sort of wrongdoing: falsity, impiety, moral depravity, incoherence, philosophical inconsistency. The main target of these attacks was Plato's *Republic*.

The word *Comparatio* is almost deceptive, as we may believe that we are dealing with a comparison – perhaps on a textual basis – of the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle. Actually, the treatise was designed to be much more than a textual comparison. First, it is an apologetic work, where Trebizond highlights the priority of Aristotle over the other philosophers and discusses his conciliation with Christian faith; second, it is a theoretical work, where Trebizond deals with several issues and debates of his age, mostly deriving from the scholastic tradition. The author openly declares that the two contenders in this comparison are not at all equal: indeed, Aristotle stands as a model of thought and behaviour, while Plato is charged with every sort of moral depravity and philosophical nonsense (*Comparatio*, p. 351). Hence, the most peculiar aspect of the *Comparatio* is its hybrid structure: it is not only a comparison, but also a tribunal of moral virtue and a work of condemnation (of course, against Plato).

Before discussing the contents of the treatise, it is useful to spend a few words on two important aspects of Monfasani's book, namely the *recensio codicum* and Trebizond's education.

The text of the *Comparatio* is conserved in 12 manuscript witnesses and one printed edition (1523). We also know a few further excerpts that were quoted in

[13] Eva Del Soldato, *Early Modern Aristotle. On the Making and Unmaking of Authority*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia 2020; Luca Bianchi, « Aristotle Redivivus and His Alter-Egos », *Mediterranea. International journal on the transfer of knowledge*, 6 (2021), p. 209–234.

Bessarion's and Perotti's own answers to Trebizond. John Monfasani divides the *stemma* into four families (**α**, **β**, **γ**, **δ**). For the constitution of the text, he declares that he follows the family **β**, in particular the ms. *Salamanca, University Library* 95, copied in Rome around 1465 by Alfonso de Palencia who – according to Monfasani – had access to authoritative manuscripts of Trebizond himself (*Comparatio*, p. 379–380, p. 439).

Monfasani has done huge work in reconstructing the *stemma codicum*, even though this was pretty complex and some aspects still remain unclear. If I may, I would like to underline two problems. Firstly, the *recensio* of the four branches of the *stemma* does not always rely on a complete collation of the witnesses. For instance, in the case of **β** and **γ** families, Monfasani collated only partially the witnesses **N**, **P**, **Y**, **X**, **W**. This, he says, was enough to establish that they are *descripti*; however, the reader finds no evidence of this dependence in the description. Perhaps it would have been useful to adduce some brief evidence in support of these *recensiones* – which Monfasani only does for codex **Q**, a *descriptus* of **R**. Of course, this absence does not invalidate the *stemma* as presented; however, it would certainly have helped to strengthen it. Moreover, I do not fully understand why Monfasani inserts an *interpositus* **n** in the *recensio* of the **δ** family. According to Monfasani, all the witnesses of **δ** family rely on **n**; but then he says that « **n**, in turns, derives from **β** » (p. 417). Is this a case of *contaminatio*? Or are **n** and its *descripti* dependent on the **β** family? Any of these alternatives should be proved in the *recensio* and portrayed in the *stemma*.

Secondly, Monfasani states that the four branches of the *stemma* correspond to as many 'redactional stages' of the text, in which Trebizond personally intervened to amend his working copies (p. 391, p. 404, p. 413). However, the evidence adduced in support of this *recensio* is not entirely conclusive. Monfasani (p. 391) supposes that the **α** family (**BEG**) derives from an *interpositus* **c**, that acted as a working copy for Trebizond. However, there is not enough evidence to establish that this *interpositus* (like the others, mentioned in the *stemma*) correspond to a working copy. Furthermore, the shared errors of **BEG** seem more likely to be the result of a bad copyist than the effect of authorial intervention. The same applies to the eleven variants listed by Monfasani in the **β** family (**TN**), all of which appear to be interpolative and polygenetic, rather than authorial (p. 404–405). For example, I have the impression that the oscillations *distinguantur/distinguuntur*, *earum/eorum*, *diligimus/delegimus* could be more likely explained as errors of the copyists. The only significant case of authorial intervention might be the insertion of a quotation from Aristotle's *Metaphysics* in the **δ** family (**V**).

A further interesting point of the philological introduction concerns the circulation of the text. Because five of the extant manuscripts were produced outside Italy (**NQVWX**), Monfasani states that the treatise was « more attractive to non-Italians than it did to Italians » (*Comparatio*, p. 425). It is true that **NQWY** are

all *codices descripti*, as they descend from **V**, copied outside Italy. However, **V** seems to descend form Matthias Corvinus' personal copy (*Comparatio*, p. 383), *scil.* the *interpositus* **n**. Corvinus was well known for being very close to many Italian humanists and for owning plenty of Italian manuscripts.[14] Therefore, it cannot be excluded that Corvino's copy came from Italy, and that the circulation of the text abroad was subsequent to an earlier Italian circulation.

The second aspect to consider is Trebizond's education in Italy. Trebizond had spent the 1420s in the Northern Italy, between Mantua and the university of Padua, where he had personal contacts with Vittorino da Feltre and Paul of Venice; in addition, it is not to be excluded that he had the chance to meet with Paolo della Pergola and Gaetano da Thiene, both working in Venice and Padua in those very years. This intellectual background is crucial to understanding the essence of the *Comparatio*, which is not only a work of comparison but also a work of theoretical discussion. At the core of book II, indeed, we find some typical issues of the scholastic natural debate, which were widely studied by Paduan (and European) professors of that age. John Monfasani states that « it is not unreasonable to suppose that he had read these authors », meaning Albert the Great, Giles of Rome, Walter Burley, Thomas Aquinas (*Comparatio*, p. 345). In fact, it is certain that Trebizond read some of them, and he made some arguments his own. Monfasani stresses that in many cases Trebizond seems to be in conflict with Aquinas and he wonders whether this may derive from the influence of Albert the Great or the Franciscan tradition. In this respect, the text offers some significant pieces of argumentation to establish that Trebizond was deeply influenced by Albert the Great, in particular concerning the constitution of the human soul and the so-called *inchoatio formarum* (as we shall see in the exposition of the contents).

The *Comparatio* comprises three books, each different in style and contents. While books 1 and 2 consist of a theoretical comparison between Plato and Aristotle arranged on a thematic basis, book 3 provides a harsh attack against Plato, entirely relying on arguments about Plato's morality. Going into detail, book 1 represents a sort of introduction to the general treatise. It presents all the questions that will be addressed in the following books, and it focuses on one particular aspect of the Plato-Aristotle polemic: namely, the philosophical methodology of enquiry carried out by Plato and Aristotle. While the former composed his works without following any standardised procedure of thought, the latter invented a standard structure of argumentation (which is informed by rhetoric and logic). Hence, Plato is portrayed as a naïf philosopher, who « thought without thinking » [*inconsiderata exercitatione*, in *Comparatio*, p. 781]. Aristotle, on

[14] Gianluca Masi, « Nuovi manoscritti corviniani a Firenze. Ancora su Mattia Corvino e gli archivi Fiorentini », in Christian Gastgeber et al. (eds.), *Matthias Corvinus und seine Zeit: Europa am Übergang vom Mittelalter zur Neuzeit zwischen Wien und Konstantinopel*, Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien 2011, p. 195–208 (Veröffentlichungen zur Byzanzforschung, 27).

the contrary, provided every field of human knowledge with a proper method of investigation and exposition of results. The benefits of this method are evident, he says, in natural philosophy (*Comparatio*, p. 493 ff.), the doctrine of the soul (*ibid.*, p. 503 ff.), mathematics (*ibid.*, p. 505 ff.), metaphysics (*ibid.*, p. 513 ff.), and ethics (*ibid.*, p. 541 ff.).

From a philosophical standpoint, book 2 of the *Comparatio* is the most original and interesting part of the treatise. Trebizond displays great philosophical erudition and, above all, an uncommon capacity to mix different ideas and interpretations to form new and original views – even though not always well supported by good arguments. The main assumption, which is enunciated at the beginning of the book, establishes that Aristotle is coherent with Christian theology, while Plato is not. With this aim, Trebizond presents a long sequence of questions on which he believes he can prove the concordance of Aristotle and Christianity. First of all, Aristotle had a correct intuition concerning the nature of divinity: God is one, is the cause of everything and must be considered separately from the creatures; but it is the sole cause of the entire Created universe. On the contrary, Plato and a certain Neoplatonic tradition linked to Areopagite and to *Liber de causis* had employed 'secondary gods' to explain contingent phenomena (*Comparatio*, p. 555).[15] In this respect, Trebizond never considers that the Aristotelian God likewise does not operate directly upon contingent phenomena, but indirectly through 'ministers' of its causal power, as Averroes clearly states in the commentary on *Physics* VIII, t.c. 15.

The second important issue concerns the causal power of God from the point of view of motion. Trebizond discusses the notion of *vigor Dei* in a way that is reminiscent of the Paduan debate that occupied some Aristotelian professors up to the early sixteenth century, and he seems to take a position close to that of Aquinas.[16] Those who know the different positions presented by the Paduan professors might find it surprising to see that Trebizond was one of the very few – together with the Scotist Gabriele Zerbi, some years later –[17] to attribute infinite power to God (*Comparatio*, p. 597).[18] Trebizond does not seem to be aware of the theoretical consequences of his position, which he never discusses in detail. He merely rejects the notion of instant infinite motion (*Comparatio*, p. 597, n. 196).

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15 Cf. Aquinas, *In De divinis nominibus*, cap. 11 l. 4; *De substantiis separatis*, cap. 1 co.; *De spiritualibus creaturis*, a. 1 ad 18.

16 Aquinas, *In Physic.*, lib. 8 l. 21 n. 9.

17 Gabrielis Zerbi *Quaestiones metaphysice*, per Iohannem de Nordlingen et per Henricum de Harlem, Bononie 1482, l. XII, q. 11 p. [ee]6v–ffv.

18 Pauli Veneti *Summa naturalium*, impensis Iohannis de Colonia et Iohannis de Manthen de Gherretzen, Venetiis 1476, p. II, cap. 10; Gaietani de Thienis *Recollecte super physicorum*, per Henricum de S. Urso, Vicentie 1487, l. II, q. 6. Cf. Antonino Poppi, *Causalità e infinità nella Scuola Padovana dal 1480 al 1513*, Antenore, Padova 1966, p. 124–129.

However, admitting an infinite power implies that God's power cannot have a temporal manifestation and is concentrated in an instant, hence making the description of the causal motion of the heavens even more difficult – as Jandun stated, efficiency and infinity seem to be incompatible from a physical point of view.[19] Moreover, the world is described as coeternal with movement (*Comparatio*, p. 651), and it is eternal only extensively (*Comparatio*, p. 655). Finally, God creates the world by an act of free will, in a process of continuous generation where the secondary causes act as instruments of God (*Comparatio*, p. 661, p. 673). Therefore, on closer inspection, Trebizond's positions seem to be mostly opposite to the Paduan Averroists (both on the efficiency and on the necessity of the First Principle).

Trebizond devotes a long section of book 2 to showing that Aristotle had some intuition of the Christian Trinity (*Comparatio*, p. 617). Indeed, the Greek philosopher based the composition of the bodies upon three aspects: height, length, and width. These geometrical dimensions correspond to the parts of the Trinity: the Father is the line, as it comes from nothing; the Son is height, as it comes from the line; the Holy Spirit is width, as it comes from both. Trinity is therefore considered as an essential sequence of numbered entities (*Comparatio*, p. 627), and it is applied both to the Divinity and to the human world as well. Some influences of this position about the Trinity might still be found in Nicholas of Cusa's *De ludo globi*, at the beginning of the 1460s.

At the core of book 2 we find the doctrine of the soul. According to Trebizond, Aristotle provided Christian theology with the strongest argument to establish the immortality of the soul with his enquiry into the faculties independent of the body (*Comparatio*, p. 681). Thus far, Trebizond's argument derives from the traditional scholastic position according to which intellect and will do not depend on the body and represent the immaterial part of the soul – thus proving its immortality.[20] What is characteristic of Trebizond's interpretation is rather his description of the constitution of the soul, which clearly reveals his debt to Albert the Great (*De Natura et origine animae*, I, 5). Indeed, Trebizond divides the development of the soul into steps, each of which is a sort of progression and 'perfection' of the previous one: from the vegetative to the sensitive soul; from the sensitive to the intellective one. Trebizond ignores – it is hard to say whether deliberately or not – Aquinas' criticism of this theory, which is commonly known as the *inchoatio formae*: namely, this constitution through steps calls for the positing of ever new substances within previous substances.[21] On the contrary, Trebizond says that the intellective soul

[19] Ioannis de Janduno *Super octo Physicorum*, apud haeredem Hieronymi Scoti, Venetiis 1586, p. 224; *In duodecim Metaphysicae*, apud haeredem Hieronymi Scoti, Venetiis 1586, p. 317.

[20] Cf. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 27 a. 5 co.

[21] On this, see Bruno Nardi, *Studi di filosofia medievale*, Edizioni di Storia e letteratura, Roma 1960, p. 96–105.

has a divine origin, and it arises from the development of the foetus, hence it might properly deserve the name of 'sperm' (*Comparatio*, p. 731). As is easily predictable, this view of the constitution and the nature of the souls was one of the points on which Bessarion harshly criticised Trebizond.[22]

The last significant issue of book 2 concerns providence and fate. Through the action and the movement of the spheres, the First Principle rules generation and corruption of every contingent being (*Comparatio*, p. 737). Following Boethius, Trebizond defines providence as « the simple, stable, and eternal plan of future things in the intellect of God ». Then he reduces all contingent phenomena, even the human acts of will, under the causal influence of divine providence (*Comparatio*, p. 743). In this respect, Trebizond states that God's providence « incites » [*incitat*] the behaviours of rational creatures towards good actions. However, human moral and material capabilities are not so powerful, and they don't always put into practice what they should morally do. Therefore, Trebizond admits a continuous, frequent intervention of God within nature in order to establish the harmony of the creation – thus becoming a sort of Hegelian *List der Vernunft* ante litteram. Finally, Trebizond rejects the Platonic opinion, according to which Aristotle had limited the influence of providence up to the sphere of the moon, as this providence reaches also the human world.

At the end of book 2, Trebizond believes he has gathered significant arguments to conclude that Aristotle deserved eternal salvation (*Comparatio*, p. 769). When Christ was crucified, he spent three days in Hell, and saved all those damned who manifested their conversion.[23] Trebizond concludes that Aristotle must have been one of them, due to his arguments in support of Christian theology. This conclusion permits us to link Trebizond to the broader medieval tradition discussing the salvation of Aristotle [*utrum Aristoteles fuerit salvatus*].[24]

With book 3 we observe a radical change of style and contents. The title is explicit: the author will no longer compare the two philosophers, but rather will praise one (Aristotle) and condemn the other (Plato). Despite being as long as book

[22] Sergei Mariev, *Bessarion's Treasure. Editing, Translating and Interpreting Bessarion's Literary Heritage*, De Gruyter, Berlin – Boston 2021 (Byzantinisches Archiv – Series Philosophica 3).

[23] Gregorii Nazianzeni *Oratio 40*, in *Patrologia Graeca* 40, 657a.

[24] Martin Grabman, « Aristoteles im Werturteil des Mittelalters », *Mittelalterliches Geistesleben: Abhandlungen zur Geschichte der Scholastik und Mystik*, vol. III, Hueber, München 1936, p. 63–102; Ruedi Imbach, « Aristoteles in der Hölle. Eine anonyme Questio 'Utrum Aristotiles sit salvatus' im Cod. Vat. Lat. 1012 (127ra–127va) zum Jenseitsschicksal des Stagiriten », in Andreas Kessler, Thomas Ricklin, Gregor Wurst (eds.), *Peregrina Curiositas: Eine Reise durch den orbis antiquus*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Freiburg (Schweiz) 1994, p. 297–318; Silvia Negri, « La *quaestio 'De salvatione Aristotelis*' del tomista Lamberto di Monte », in Alessandro Palazzo (ed.), *L'antichità classica nel pensiero medievale*, Brepols, Porto 2011, p. 413–440; William Duba, « Aristotle in Hell and Aquinas in Heaven: Hugo De Novocastro, Ofm, and Durandus De Aureliaco, Op », *Bulletin de Philosophie Médiévale*, 56 (2015), p. 183–193.

2, book 3 is almost devoid of significant demonstrative arguments. Argumentation takes a back seat while an enthusiastic, radical criticism of Plato's moral philosophy comes to the fore. This accusation is carried forward with impetus and often leads to exaggerated conclusions. Plato is portrayed as a corrupt man, who promotes a community of women and young students, as his old age does not allow him to practice sexual activities anymore (*Comparatio*, p. 851). One legend goes that also Aristotle, when old, had an affair with a slave (the so-called *Aristoteles cavalcatus*, often portrayed by medieval and Renaissance painters). However, according to Trebizond, Aristotle's affair was acceptable, because it was not against nature – rather, only against Aristotle's wife.

The consequences of Plato's moral corruption spread over the Greeks, then over the Byzantines, who are portrayed as addicted to luxury; and more recently over the Turks: even Mehmet – the 'third Plato', according to Trebizond – apparently followed Platonic and Epicurean teachings (*Comparatio*, p. 933–937). The last knight of this Platonic depravation is Pletho, who is accused by Trebizond of spreading pagan worships, subverting both Christ and Mehmet and theorizing a new religion of the Antichrist. The charge against Pletho is bound to some warnings to Western countries, such as Italy, not to follow such immoral teachings (*Comparatio*, p. 913).

There is one remarkable aspect of Trebizond's *Comparatio* of Plato and Aristotle, namely what he does not speak about. Indeed, a significant part of the fifteenth-century comparative debate was notoriously focused on topics in metaphysics. No matter how we consider the works of Nicholas of Cusa, or those of Ficino and Pico at the end of the century, metaphysics was the main field on which the two Greek philosophers were compared and discussed. The major issues under discussion regarded the convertibility of One and Being, the essence of numbers, the (proportional) analogy among beings, the hierarchy of emanation of created beings from the Principle, and – last but not least – the interpretation of Plato's *Parmenides* (famously epitomised by Pico's motto: *Plato ludit in Parmenide*, that scandalised Ficino). Nothing like this will be found in Trebizond's comparative works. In these treatises Platonic philosophy is concerned with topics in politics and ethics, and especially as regards how to rule the city and to organise the education of children. The few topics not regarding Plato's *Republic* are very close to the standard scholastic debates of the early fifteenth century, i.e. those Trebizond could have heard in Padua. Trebizond totally ignores Plato's *Parmenides* in the *Comparatio*, and he anticipates nothing of the ontological debates of the following years.

This aspect of Trebizond's works explains also the importance, the originality, and the interest of this philosopher. He stands in between two ages, which means that he conceived the topics and the methodologies of the philosophical debate in a twofold manner, sharing part of the medieval approach and part of the

humanistic one. His texts show much more medieval scholastic knowledge than humanistic culture; nonetheless, he translated texts for humanists, and he participated in their debates and community. In the work of George of Trebizond we can see the last scholastic tradition, passing the baton to a new age of philosophy.

Giovanni Pico and the Scholastics: A Note on *A Philosopher at the Crossroads*[*]

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I. *Overview*

Amos Edelheit's latest book, *A Philosopher at the Crossroads*, takes up Giovanni Pico della Mirandola – one of the best known and exemplary Renaissance philosophers, certainly in the Italian context – offering important and novel analyses of such well-known works as the *Oratio*, *Apology*, the *900 Theses*, as well as important considerations of, for example, his correspondence with Ermolao Barbaro, and the *Disputations Against Divinatory Astrology*, the latter taken up in the closing chapter that looks at Pietro Pomponazzi's *De incantationibus* in the section dedicated more broadly to Pico's reception among contemporaneous scholastic philosophers.[1] While the book is clearly dedicated to the figure of Giovanni Pico, in another, real sense, this book is dedicated more broadly to scholastic thought at the end of the fifteenth century in Italy. The author from time to time reminds the reader that we must return to Pico – having drifted away from a particular thesis of Pico under consideration – since the context just offered has taken up several, well-documented pages. Such attention to other, scholastic authors stems from Edelheit's desire to contextualize claims of Pico by either identifying – sometimes with certainty, other times plausibly – the sources Pico was relying upon, or by sketching a portrait of, for example, the *stilus Parisiensis*, the intellectual climate among the masters of Paris at the end of the fifteenth century in the third chapter

[*] An earlier version of this note was presented at a virtual event hosted by the Department of Philosophy of the National University of Ireland Maynooth in November 2022. I am grateful to Philipp W. Rosemann for the invitation, and to the many participants. My thanks goes also to Vivienne Anthony of the Emmanuel d'Alzon Library at Assumption University for her assistance, and to an anonymous reviewer for helpful comments.

[1] Amos Edelheit, *A Philosopher at the Crossroads: Giovanni Pico della Mirandola's Encounter with Scholastic Philosophy*, Brill, Leiden – Boston 2022 (Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, 338).

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of the book.[2] Thus, Pico serves as a kind of lens through which the variations of scholastic thought might be observed, or perhaps it might be better said to be a kind of prism and not simply a lens, because « Pico's reading and cognizance of the Latin scholastic tradition is thorough, competent, and creative », as Edelheit claims, and his « engagement with these sources is a fundamental component in his claim to originality as a philosopher » (p. 536). Edelheit repeats the main thesis of the book in his conclusion: « Pico's fundamental philosophical ideas, and important aspects of his theological allegiances cannot be understood in isolation of his engagement with the pluriform traditions of medieval and Renaissance scholasticism » (p. 539).

Edelheit contends that the intellectual context that is scholasticism has not received adequate attention by modern scholarship dedicated to Pico. But we should be careful here: the author warns against a uniform, monolithic conception of scholasticism, and often instead prefers to speak of « the pluriform tradition of medieval and Renaissance scholasticism » (p. 2), or rather Renaissance scholasticisms – in the plural. This appellation, *Renaissance scholasticism(s)*, ought even to replace *Renaissance Aristotelianism(s)*, a designation in the plural that has been common since Charles Schmitt.[3] Edelheit's treatment of Giovanni Pico, then, takes up a neglected aspect of his thought, but one that is « essential for understanding the works and the influence of Pico » (p. 2).[4] It should be noted that this emphasis upon the scholastic context is, for the author, corrective of an imbalance typical of the 'dominant trends' of contemporary scholarship on Pico – viz., studies dedicated to the influence of Kabbalah and Jewish mysticism upon the thought of Pico, beginning in the last century with Frances Yates and Chaim Wirszubski and exemplified most recently by Brian Copenhaver. Edelheit thus

[2] Thus, drawing to a close in chapter three: « The purpose of this chapter was not to discuss Parisian scholasticism as such, or to suggest any direct influence of it on Pico, but rather to provide a more concrete and solid account of the Parisian style of doing philosophy (the *stilus Parisiensis*) in the last decades of the fifteenth century, which goes beyond the previous scholarly discussions of Pico and the Parisian masters, while pointing out some obvious thematic and argumentative similarities, and also some similarities in philosophical temperament, between several masters and Pico in the context of the scholastic discourse of the Renaissance », p. 100.

[3] See, especially, the first chapter of Charles Schmitt, *Aristotle and the Renaissance*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA 1983: « My point is that the single rubric Aristotelianism is not adequate to describe the range of diverse assumptions, attitudes, approaches to knowledge, reliance on authority, utilization of sources, and methods of analysis to be found among the Renaissance followers of Aristotle », p. 10.

[4] One might also consult the recent: Brian Copenhaver, *Pico della Mirandola on Trial: Heresy, Freedom, and Philosophy*, Oxford UP, Oxford 2022. Copenhaver pays special attention to Pico's *Apology* and its particular academic, or scholastic character. Important sources and authorities in Copenhaver's analysis include Robert Holcot and John Capreolus (Jean Cabrol), among other major and minor figures. Also included are English translations of several Questions of the *Apology*.

announces in the opening pages of Part 1 that the Kabbalistic sources ought not be prioritized over any other intellectual tradition, and certainly not over the more immediate, « and probably more obvious » scholastic context of the fifteenth century. An examination of the scholastic sources thus begins with Eugenio Garin's 1937 monograph – whose treatment is, admittedly, all-too-brief and incomplete – and then more fully treated in a 1941 Harvard dissertation by Avery Dulles (p. 11–14). More recently, Edelheit joins Stefano Caroti in paying special attention to the scholastic sources.[5]

The book is divided into three parts: Part 1 is dedicated to Pico's scholastic formation and educational training in Italy and at Paris, divided into three chapters. The complexity of Pico's thought is at least partially the result of his formation in Renaissance scholasticisms. Edelheit insists that, given Pico's sincere interest in, and appreciation of, scholastic sources – something that has indeed already been recognized by scholars – it is certainly justified to pay additional, careful attention to his formation in scholastic philosophy. Edelheit's attempt to do this consists in a reconstruction of Pico's philosophical interests and the broader milieu, first at Padua and then at Paris. Concerning Padua, Elijah Delmedigo is essential; and it is nearly certain that Pico would have studied with Nicoletto Vernia. While it is unlikely that the Dominican, Francesco Securo da Nardo was one of Pico's teachers at Padua, Edelheit nonetheless maintains that it is possible that Pico would have been aware of his work and legacy. Antonio Trombetta, a Scotist, is another thinker who is identified as a possible teacher of Pico. It is such suggestions that afford Edelheit the opportunity to examine in some detail important aspects of their thought in order to paint the portrait of the intellectual climate there.[6] Other suggestions as possible teachers of Pico include two Dominicans, Lazzaro Gallineta da Padova and Andrea da Urbino. The context offered here is one in which Pico engaged with, or at least is exposed to, Aristotelian natural philosophy, Averroism, and a Scotist metaphysics that is in

[5] E.g., Stefano Caroti, « Note sulle fonti medievali di Pico della Mirandola », *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana*, 84 (2005), p. 60–92.

[6] The desire to sketch out a reconstruction of « Pico's philosophical interests during the time he spent in Padua » (p. 43) affords the author the opportunity to spend a bit of time with each of these thinkers. Thus, in chapter 2 we find several pages devoted to a presentation of two *Quaestiones* by Vernia – viz., [1] whether *ens mobile* is the subject of natural philosophy, and [2] whether the intellective soul, when united to the human body as a real substantial form, giving it a unique substantial existence, is eternal and one for all humans; see pp. 32–41. We then find a consideration of Delmedigo's *Quaestiones de unitate intellectus*, preserved today only in Hebrew translation; the author reports that a critical edition of this text is underway, by Michael Engel and Giovanni Licata; see p. 41–53. On Delmedigo, and this topic, one might consult Michael Engel, *Elijah Del Medigo and Paduan Aristotelianism: Investigating the Human Intellect*, Bloomsbury, London 2017. Concerning Trombetta, Edelheit offers a brief survey of his 1493 *Quaestiones metaphysicales*; see p. 55–63.

dialogue with Thomist positions. A reconstructed intellectual context of Paris is then offered in chapter three, and while we are less able to make concrete determinations regarding the direct influence of this or that master on Pico, Edelheit suggests that the climate at Paris might have contributed to Pico's « inclusive method ». Additionally, in this chapter, the author reminds readers that, from the contemporary perspective, we ought to be careful when we find terms such as 'ancient' or 'modern,' 'realist' or 'nominalist' in fifteenth-century texts, since such terms might not always represent a static concept; such terms must be read and understood in their particular contexts.[7]

Part 2 moves on to examine Pico's attitude toward the scholastic tradition. The author employs the term 'traces' for this part of the book: that is, the author hopes to « look for traces and influences of different scholastic philosophers found in the works of Pico, mainly in the *Oratio*, *Theses*, and *Apology* » (p. 6). Given the amount of documentation and evidence provided by the author, it seems as if there are more than simple traces of scholastic philosophy in Pico's works. Part 2 contains eight chapters, six of which are dedicated to the *900 Theses*, about which more will be said shortly.

Part 3 carries the title, « Scholastic Reactions to Pico and the Reception of His Thought and Method », and contains six chapters, dedicated respectively to Bernardo Torni, Galgani da Siena, Pedro Garsia, Giovanni Caroli, Antonio Cittadini di Faenza, and Pietro Pomponazzi, taking up matters of natural philosophy, theology, metaphysics, and astrology. Each one of these episodes sketched out offers an instance of the critical reception of Pico's ideas. These are rich studies that resist summary. In Chapter 13, « Galgani da Siena against a Thesis on the Nature of Sound », Edelheit points out a peculiar portrayal and characterization of Averroes by Galgani: because he had recourse only to unreliable translations of Aristotle, Averroes – 'the Commentator' – is in fact not so much a commentator, but rather an *inventor* and original philosopher. The author, perhaps characteristically, suggests likewise the plurality of Renaissance *Averroism(s)* as an avenue of further research (p. 398–399). Regarding Chapter 14, « Pedro Garsia against the *Apology* », Edelheit cites from the Rome 1489 edition of the *Determinationes magistrales contra conclusiones apologeticas Joannis Pici Mirandulani concordie comitis*; to an otherwise comprehensive bibliography should be added the text of Jérôme Rousse-Lacordaire, which offers a Latin-French edition of the *Determinationes magistrales*.[8]

[7] Later, in the eighth chapter – in brief reference to the Dominican, Paolo Barbo Soncino – Edelheit warns also of such generalizations as 'Thomist' or 'Scotist,' emphasizing that when such labels are found, they ought to be construed according to a specific thinker (p. 284, fn. 48).

[8] Jérôme Rousse-Lacordaire, *Une controverse sur la magie et la kabbale à la Renaissance*, Droz, Genève 2010; on this, see the note by Stéphane Toussaint, « Pic et le Magister », *Bruniana & Campanelliana*, 16 (2010), p. 647–651. One wonders whether the corrective approach of the present study to the

II. *The 900 Theses:* Conclusiones secundum doctrinam latinorum philosophorum et theologorum

In Part 2, dedicated to « Scholastic Traces and Influences », the six chapters (ch. 6–11) that up the *900 Theses* are truly compelling from a methodological perspective. The first 115 of those theses are dedicated to the Latins, viz., to six scholastic masters: Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Francis of Mayronnes, John Duns Scotus, Henry of Ghent, and Giles of Rome. Edelheit thus takes up each set of respective theses across six chapters: beyond tracking down the sources for each thesis (this itself is formidable), Edelheit attempts a serious reconstruction of the dialectical context for each individual thesis, in order to determine better Pico's thought.

Perhaps just a few general words are in order concerning the *900 Theses*, so that we might elaborate better upon Edelheit's contribution.[9] When Giovanni Pico was a ripe twenty-three years old, he planned to organize – and to finance – a grand philosophical disputation in Rome: Pico sought to defend 900 theses that would represent all learning available to him. Such theses were to represent the conclusions of, in descending quantitative order, Latin scholastics, Greek Platonists, Arabic Aristotelians, Greek Aristotelians, Pythagoras, Cabalists, Hermes Trismegistus, and Chaldean theologians – 402 theses in total. The remaining 498 theses represent Pico's « own opinions », taking up matters of theology, metaphysics, mathematics, and magic. The famous *Oratio* – for which Giovanni Pico is best remembered – was intended to be an introductory prelude to the disputation of the *Theses*.[10] Papal intervention delayed the public disputation,

'dominant fashion' might account for this omission. Since Origen is not irrelevant in this context, we add one further study to the bibliography of secondary sources: Pasquale Terracciano, *Omnia in Figura: L'impronta di Origene tra '400 e '500*, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, Roma 2012; see esp. p. 74–101, « Le *Tesi* di Pico ».

9 One might consult, for an overview, Stéphane Toussaint, « Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494): The Synthetic Reconciliation of All Philosophies », in Paul Richard Blum (ed.), *Philosophers of the Renaissance*, Catholic University of America Press, Washington D.C. 2010, p. 69–81, esp. 74–76. Still invaluable is Steve A. Farmer, *Syncretism in the West: Pico's 900 Theses (1486): The Evolution of Traditional Religious and Philosophical Systems*, Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, Tempe 1998, which includes the Latin text, English translation, as well as the ample introductory monograph. Edelheit utilizes Farmer's edition, and signals in the footnotes relevant observations or references given by Farmer throughout.

10 The *Oratio* has long been known by its 'new' title, *Oration on the Dignity of Man* (*Oratio de hominis dignitate*). On this, see Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Life of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Oration*, ed. and trans. Brian Copenhaver, Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA – London 2022 (I Tatti Renaissance Library, 93), p. xxxiii–xliv. One must additionally mention the following recent, extensive study: Brian P. Copenhaver, *Magic and the Dignity of Man: Pico della Mirandola and His* Oration *in Modern Memory*, Belknap – Harvard University Press, Cambridge MA – London 2019; for a critical discussion, see Luca Burzelli, « Specters of Pico:

concerned about the extravagance of the intended event as well as the heterodoxy of some of the theses, but the *900 Theses* themselves were nonetheless printed. It thus represents a curious work, since it was not really meant to be read as a self-standing text and is, in a sense, incomplete: there is no explicit argumentation in the work, only the conclusions that Pico intended to defend at a public event that never took place.[11] « The nine hundred theses are », in Farmer's words, « loaded with ambiguities that Pico meant to resolve in the course of his debate ».[12] Edelheit thus takes up the first group of 115 theses, dedicated to the *doctrinam latinorum philosophorum et theologorum*. Edelheit points out that Pico, in the *Oratio*, refers to this group of scholastics as « our philosophers » – *atque ut a nostris, ad quod postremo philosophia pervenit, nunc exordiar* – representing « the period of the philosophical tradition which was closest to Pico's own time and culture », though professing not to swear by one master or school (p. 141). Edelheit aims to « sketch as fully as possible » the dialectical context of these theses « in order to somehow 'fill the gaps' which Pico leaves in his bare elaboration of the *900 Theses* » (p. 186).

And so Edelheit works patiently, in a sober manner, through each of those theses dedicated to the six Latin masters, taking as his starting point the 1936 monograph by Pearl Kibre[13] – though, never simply with the aim to find the textual *locus* of the thesis, but rather to scrutinize and sketch out the possible dialectical context in light of other possible textual references. This proves to be a difficult task. Through such a scrutiny, we discover that Pico's account of theses according to the teaching of Albert the Great (sixteen in all), for example, are not simply reiterations or presentations of Albert's own views, but rather signify a kind of thinking through the matter at hand via a particular position of Albert – Pico might offer a different emphasis in his articulation of the thesis, when compared to its textual context, however certainly indicates not only real familiarity with Albert's text, but also, more importantly, Pico's own understanding of Albert's ideas. Similarly, in the forty-five conclusions attributed to Thomas Aquinas, many theses are accurate when located and examined in their context; however, one does find that Pico often tends to offer slight variations in his chosen terminology, representing, again, not simply a transmission of unexamined conclusions, but rather a sort of re-working of those arguments in order to arrive at a better understanding of the matter at hand. Pico, after all, envisions the proper task of the philosopher – as opposed to the orator or the

A Note Concerning a Recent Book on the *Oratio de dignitate hominis* », *Mediterranea: International Journal on the Transfer of Knowledge*, 7 (2022), p. 391–422.

11 Edelheit calls the *900 Theses* « a frozen and somewhat silent monument to an ambitious project which was never realized », p. 149.

12 Farmer, *Syncretism in the West*, p. 97.

13 Pearl Kibre, *The Library of Pico della Mirandola*, Columbia University Press, New York 1936.

politician, for example – to be a sort of relentless pursuit of the truth.[14] Such a pursuit, again, proceeds without any sworn allegiance to a particular master or 'school' of thought. While the competent philosopher ought to remove ambiguities in order to arrive at the truth, suggests Pico, the *900 Theses* are full of ambiguities since they are fragmentary, and so Edelheit's attempt at reconstruction offers persuasive accounts of the possible ways in which Pico might have dissolved difficulties had the public disputation taken place. There are certainly times in which Edelheit determines that Thomas' own discussions are not in complete accordance with what Pico offers, and so Pico's view represents an interpretation and working through of a particular view.

Let us look at one example. Thesis 39 offers the following: « the phantasm is the secondary and instrumental agent in the production of an intelligible species ».[15] The relevant *dictum* in the background, stemming from the *De anima*, is of course that the soul never thinks without a phantasm. This claim is taken seriously throughout the commentary traditions, and certainly is taken seriously by Thomas Aquinas, who – not only in his *De anima* commentary, but also in Q. 84, a. 7 of the *Prima Pars* of the *Summa Theologiae* – insists that the intellect, in this present life when joined to the body, must of necessity turn towards phantasms in order to have actual intellective understanding of anything. Here, in the relevant thesis, Edelheit determines that Pico's motivation is « to increase the independence of the intelligible species over the level of images and sense perception » (p. 263–264). The author determines that we should look at Q. 76, a. 2 of the *Summae Theologiae*, which discusses specifically the relationship between phantasms and intelligible species, asking « whether the intellective principle is multiplied in accordance with the multiplication of bodies ». Thomas' specific concern in that article is to refute the Averroistic thesis of monopsychism. There, Thomas claims that it is not the phantasm that is the form of the possible intellect, but rather the intelligible species that is abstracted from phantasms – one intelligible species drawn from many phantasms. It is not the phantasms themselves that produce intelligible species, but rather an operation of the intellect. If there were but one intellect for all humans, « then the diversity between phantasms which exist in this or that individual would not be able to cause a diversity of intellectual operation of this or that man » (p. 264). Edelheit's point regarding thesis 39 – that the phantasm is a secondary and instrumental agent in the production of intelligible species – is that, properly speaking, the formulation is not found in Thomas as such, but is implied in Thomas' discussion

[14] Edelheit elaborates on this in a discussion of the correspondence between Pico and Ermolao Barbaro; see ch. 4, esp. 116–120.

[15] « Phantasma est agens secundarium et instrumentale in productione speciei intelligibilis », p. 263, fn. 184.

on this matter. Pico's own formulation thus represents not only a grasp of Thomas' point, but also a more specific, implied conclusion.

More generally, Edelheit finds that Pico's theses dedicated to Thomas are mostly accurate, though, especially by paying attention to specific terminological departures, indicate Pico's own specific interests and motivations. Edelheit suggests – and here signals an avenue of future research – that Pico's desire to push Thomas beyond what the context suggests may stem from a desire to refute some view of William of Ockham. Edelheit finds that Pico's presentation of Scotus is mostly accurate. Pico possesses strong familiarity with the Scotist school generally, as is evidenced by the theses dedicated to Francis of Mayronnes, though again with some terminological differences. He finds that those theses of Henry of Ghent include occasion for slight departure which indicates his own particular understanding of Henry.[16]

To offer a second, brief example, the tenth of the theses according to Henry of Ghent states simply: friendship is a virtue – *amicitia est virtus*. Again, on its own, we are left to wonder what Pico would have done with this thesis had the public disputation taken place. Edelheit looks at *Quodlibet* X, q. 12, where Henry does take up friendship, utilizing Aristotle and Cicero as authorities and arguing in fact that friendship is a virtue. In this question, Henry concludes that – Edelheit is offering a paraphrase of Henry here – « friendship should be regarded as an all-embracing virtue and as a principal part of general justice, since it gives each one what he deserves, and thus it fulfils the rule of nature: do not do to someone else what you would not wish for someone to do to you » (p. 329). Pico's thesis thus is but a bare conclusion, and on its own does not possess anything of Henry's more nuanced analysis. The background offered, thus, represents a possible reconstruction of Pico's argument.

Regarding Albert the Great, Pico's preferred texts were his commentaries on the *Physics* and on the *De Anima*, and so represents a variation of the intellectual heritage of Albert in the fifteenth century, where he is chiefly, for Pico, a representative and commentator regarding matters of natural philosophy. Concerning Aquinas, the *Summa Theologiae* turns out to be less important as a source for Thomas' thought as is, for Pico, Aquinas' commentary on the *Sentences*. This is seen not only in the relevant of the *900 Theses*, but also in Pico's *Apology*.[17] It

[16] Incidentally, the most cited scholastic masters in Pico's *Apology* are Robert Holcot, Durandus of Saint-Pourçain, and Henry of Ghent; see ch. 5, p. 185.

[17] Edelheit had already noted this in ch. 5: « Thomas' commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sentences* is one of Pico's main sources for the theses dedicated to the Angelic Doctor », p. 166. In this context, regarding the *Apology*, the author stresses « [i]t is clear that Thomas for Pico is not an authority but rather an author and one source among many », p. 168. In this chapter, while elaborating on the authority of Henry of Ghent in the *Apology*, the question regarding the adoration of the cross and images (*de adoratione crucis et imaginum*) arises along with Pico's presentation of Thomas'

should be noted that Pico's library contained many of Thomas' works – parts of the *Summa Theologiae*, the *Summa contra Gentiles*, many commentaries on Aristotle as well as disputed questions, and shorter works such as *De esse et essentia* and *Tractatus de principiis naturae*. Edelheit reports that Pico also « most probably » possessed Pietro da Bergamo's *Concordantiae conclusionum in quibus Thomas de Aquino videtur sibi contradicere*, though suggests in a footnote that this might be the concordance of Gerard de Monte (p. 214). Regarding the status of Thomas' commentary on the *Sentences* in Pico's writings, in light of the texts in his possession, such material evidence is indicative of certain textual topographies that exist at different stages of intellectual history, where particular texts are privileged at the expense of others.

Edelheit's study of this first group of theses – the Latin scholastics – thus represents a real contribution to the study of Pico's curious work. It should be noted that, in offering these reconstructions, the author provides heavy paraphrase of any given scholastic source; readers, however, have at their disposal ample footnotes that offer long passages of the Latin texts. At any rate, Edelheit, here and at other points in the book, signals particular avenues for future research. The general *desiderata* regarding the whole of the *900 Theses* would be similar kinds of attempted reconstruction for the other groups of conclusions and thinkers – a rather large undertaking, given the variety of source material.

III. *A New Status of Philosophy*

Early on in the introduction to the monograph, Edelheit announces very clearly that Giovanni Pico is not a scholastic and that the purpose of his book is not to show that Pico was a scholastic philosopher.[18] Edelheit repeats in his conclusion that Pico is not a scholastic – certainly not in the sense that he was committed to the thought of one master or was a member of one of the 'schools.' We of course should recall Pico's own words, from the *Oratio*, adopted from Horace: *Nullius addictus iurare in verba magistri* – I am not bound to swear by the words of any master. Edelheit's *A Philosopher at the Crossroads* offers careful analyses of Pico's

position (p. 162, 171–173); to this discussion should be added Stéphane Toussaint, « Il Cristo di Pico: Dalla Croce al Trigramma », in Antonella Del Prete, Saverio Ricci (eds.) *Cristo nella filosofia moderna*, Le Lettere, Firenze 2014, p. 77–96.

[18] Edelheit states: « The purpose of this book is not to show that one of the most prominent figures in the philosophy of the fifteenth century, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494), was a 'scholastic philosopher', at least as this term has been commonly understood », p. 1. This qualification, « as this term has been commonly understood », of course arouses the curiosity of the reader, and one now wonders whether this remains the case employing a new, *uncommon* understanding of the designation.

texts that are in close conversation with scholastic sources: it is clear that Pico is versed in those scholastic sources and is able to speak the language and employ the tools and methods of scholastic philosophy; it is clear that scholastic philosophy as a tradition of inquiry – in all of its varieties – is still alive and in fact dominant throughout Europe in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. What seems to exclude Pico from the ranks of the scholastic philosophers proper has to do with his *inclusive* approach to philosophy, the history of philosophy, and more generally to ideas and texts generally; this inclusive approach is distinct from the exclusive models that might characterize both the more typical humanist and scholastic perspectives. Pico thus represents, for Edelheit, a new approach and model to philosophy and the history of philosophy, and this is taken up in chapters four and five.

Edelheit suggests that Pico – alongside Poliziano, Barbaro, and Ficino – were constructing historical models that contrast greatly from the systematic approach of the scholastics. Angelo Poliziano (1454–1494) is presented as someone who is uniquely dedicated to philosophy, seeing the liberal arts generally not as tantamount to the philosophical project, but as a course of studies that opens the way and draws one closer to philosophy. Edelheit presents Poliziano's version of 'dialectic,' which goes beyond Aristotelian logic, emphasizing his elevation of ancient philosophy over that of the middle ages, and his approach to philosophy and the history of philosophy as one that is 'exclusive' – giving preference to Greek and Roman sources. Despite his estimation and praise of true philosophy (i.e., ancient philosophy) and his contempt for the 'barbarians' (i.e., scholastic philosophers), Edehelt draws attention to the fact that Poliziano stresses that this true philosophy ought to be defended with *ratione vel autoritate*, using reason and rational argument and relying on authority – these are precisely the practices employed by the scholastics. Edelheit comments that Poliziano's commitment to philosophy found in his *Praelectio de dialectica* perhaps does not square with standard conceptions of fifteenth-century humanism. Despite his commitments to philosophy and his elaboration of dialectic, Poliziano's model remains exclusive, and scholastic sources are dismissed (p. 108–115).

Pico, on the other hand, is not eager to distinguish sharply between classical Greek and Roman philosophers and the much nearer scholastic philosophers. Edelheit contends that Pico's approach to scholastic philosophy is a historical one, but perhaps not purely historical since scholastic philosophy still very much belongs to the present of Pico's day. Edelheit claims that « [w]e witness here what is probably the birth of the historical approach to philosophy in the early modern era » (p. 116). Pico's model was an inclusive one. His inclusive approach rejects the exclusive classicism favored by the 'humanists' and also exceeds the confines of the approach and methods of the scholastics. In articulating this, Edelheit employs language of anticipation: « there is something refreshing in this approach that

anticipated early modern conceptions of philosophy and science, which also accepted an essential separation between philosophy and rhetoric » (p. 117). The task and activity of philosophy is, ultimately, the examination of and search for truth, and the philosopher proceeds in this activity out of necessity. The philosopher is distinguished from both the orator and the politician, both in aim and in means. A new status thus must be given to the philosopher, and this seems to involve for Pico the employment of a specific and technical vocabulary and language that belongs to the philosopher: « while rejecting many aspects of the scholastic idiom, [Pico] is still wedded to the idea that a specialized vocabulary is needed in order to prosecute speculative debate » (p. 120, fn. 35). Refuting false arguments, upholding sound ones, clarifying ambiguities, removing doubts, and illluminating the obscure – these are the competencies of the scholastic masters which ought to be admired – all require precise language in order to reflect distinctions of nuance. The scholastic methodology and style, bland though it might be from the perspective of the classicism at the time, does not obstruct the ways to truth. Pico's project, however, and the range of sources he employs, does exceed the scope of mere scholastic discourse – however, those methods, though they already form a part of history, as such remain valid.

Pico also rejects a conception of philosophy as a discipline that is merely preparatory or propaedeutic for the higher disciplines of medicine, law, and theology; he rejects « the notion that the study of philosophy was an instrument for achieving something else which was more valuable, not an aim in itself » (p. 138). The study of philosophy, however, involves the consideration of any and all possible sources, and Pico again goes out of his way to vindicate and in fact elevate the scholastics by pointing out specifically their practice of public disputation (not only in philosophy but also theology). Such forms of public disputation belong essentially to the activity of philosophy and Pico associates such practices with none other than Plato and Aristotle and other prominent philosophers: « By maintaining that the very best Doctors (*doctores excellentissimi*) participated in these disputations, as had the best ancient philosophers, Pico created a philosophical continuity between classical and scholastic philosophy, rejecting any sharp distinction between these two traditions and any exclusive approach which prioritized the philosophical culture of classical antiquity over that of medieval scholasticism » (p. 139). Edelheit sees in Pico not simply a reader and conduit of scholastic trends of philosophy, but rather a distinctive philosophical voice who attempts to proceed in bold and independent ways; his engagement with the scholastic traditions *in particular*, however, are of special interest. On the one hand, Pico's « reading and consideration of the scholastic tradition affords us a unique insight into the ways in which philosophy, as it was practiced in the Italian peninsula and further conceived as an independent branch of intellectual enquiry, was in a state of profound transition at the end of the

fifteenth century » (p. 149). On the other, precisely because philosophy as it was practiced in the universities throughout Europe at this time – i.e., scholastic philosophy – was « more or less synonymous with 'philosophy' », and because the developments in philosophy during the seventeenth century identified their projects in clear opposition to this professional, scholastic philosophy, Edelheit sees the richness and tensions at work in Pico's engagement with the scholastics as a kind of « dialectic which is essential for the understanding of later stages of the history of philosophy and the sciences » (p. 117). Edelheit is careful. He does not call Pico a modern *avant la lettre*. Edelheit more generally warns against such rigid descriptors as reductive and at times historically misleading and problematic. But, as we have seen above, Edelheit does employ language of anticipation, and does see in Pico the 'birth' of a new kind of approach to philosophy that is akin to approaches of the centuries to follow. Philosophy must proceed using a careful vocabulary of a specialist, and must reckon with its own history, or histories. The suggestion in the text perhaps is that Pico is yearning for a philosophical method that can cut through the apparent incommensurability of the many and various sources at his disposal. The scholastic methods and practices themselves play an important part in this new conception, and yet Pico remains only at the threshold, or better, a crossroads. Whatever reservations one might have in seeing in Pico the origins of a new and modern philosophy (and it seems that Edelheit might be laying emphasis on this fertile context and intellectual milieu as transitional and, as a result of this, exceptionally rich), as well as those that might arise from the apparent rejection of a Kabbalistic Pico, what is incontestable is that a serious consideration of Pico's thought must take into account the scholastic heritage.[19] What is also clear – a much more ambitious *desideratum* – is that a new history of philosophy is needed, one that takes seriously the scholastic traditions and does not fall victim to common narratives concerning, on the one hand, the decline of the medieval inheritance, or, on the other, the origins of 'proper,' modern philosophy. That history of the enduring tradition of scholasticisms remains to be written, but the author makes the convincing case that Giovanni Pico della Mirandola – not incidentally, but significantly – ought very much to find a place in that history.

[19] Copenhaver likewise emphasizes that Pico's thought ought to be studied not only by students of the Renaissance, but also by specialists of medieval philosophy. See note 4, above.

A New Encompassing Theory of Science in Ibn Sīnā*

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Until recent times, the study of Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna) was mainly limited to metaphysics and psychology. Logic and epistemology, especially, received little to no attention. However, since the last decade of the previous century, the number of publications dealing with these topics has increased substantially.[1] In the West, the previous absence of interest in these domains was unmistakenly due to the lack of a medieval Latin translation of Ibn Sīnā's logical texts (with the exception of the *Isagoge* of the *Shifā'*), as well as the existence of a rather limited number of translations in contemporary Western languages, even if in the last decade (and especially the last five years) several translations of logical books of the *Shifā'* have been published.[2] Most surprisingly, as far as the *Posterior Analytics*, the *Kitāb al-*

* Riccardo Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science. Logic, Metaphysics, Epistemology*, University of California Press, Oakland (California) 2021. I would like to express my gratitude to the anonymous reviewer for their observations and to Brian Garcia for revising my English.

1 This increase is evidenced by the mention of less than fifty titles spanning twenty years of publications in this field, i.e. 1970–1989, to over two hundred in the next twenty years. On this, see my *An Annotated Bibliography on Ibn Sînâ (1970–1989). Including Arabic and Persian Publications, and Turkish and Russian References*, Leuven University Press, Leuven 1991 (Ancient and Medieval Philosophy. Series I, 13), p. 131–147; *An Annotated Bibliography on Ibn Sīnā: First Supplement (1990–1994)*, FIDEM, Louvain-la-Neuve 1999 (Textes et Études du Moyen Âge, 12), p. 63–75; and my *An Annotated Bibliography on Ibn Sīnā: Second Supplement (1995–2009)*, Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Tempe (Arizona) 2017 (Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 439), p. 187–243. In recent times, this increasing interest has been further evidenced by the publication of two monographs, i.e., Alexander Kalbarczyk, *Predication and Ontology. Studies and Texts on Avicennian and Post-Avicennian Readings of Aristotle's « Categories »,* De Gruyter, Berlin – Boston 2016 (Scientia Graeco-Arabica, 22) and Fedor Benevich, *Essentialität und Notwendigkeit. Avicenna und die aristotelische Tradition*, Brill, Leiden – Boston 2018 (Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science, 107).

2 English translations of the four complete books of the logical part of the *Shifā'* do exist: *Isagoge*, twice translated – namely Avicenna/Ibn Sīnā, *Al-Madkhal. Avicenna on the* Isagoge *of Porphyry*, trans. Allan Bäck, Philosophia Verlag, Münich 2019 (Analytica Liber Conversus), and Silvia Di Vincenzo, *Avicenna: The Healing, Logic: Isagoge*. A New Critical Edition, English Translation and Commentary

Mediterranea. International journal on the transfer of knowledge, 9 (2024), p. 361-376 ISSN: 2445-2378
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Burhān of the *Shifā'*, is concerned, one looks in vain for any translation of a substantial part of it.[3] This is all the more surprising insofar as Gundissalinus inserted the Latin translation of the seventh chapter of book two, entitled in the Arabic « *Fī ikhtilāf al-ʿulūm wa-ishtirākihā bi-qawl mufaṣṣal* (On the Difference and Similarity Between the Sciences by Means of a Detailed Account) », into his famous work, *De divisione philosophiae*. Already in 1984, Hugonnard-Roche stressed the importance of this translation, and its impact on Gundissalinus's own theory of science.[4] However, for a contemporary translation, one had to wait until 2010 –

of the *Kitāb al-Madḫal* of Avicenna's *Kitāb al-Shifā'*, De Gruyter, Berlin – Boston 2021 (Scientia Graeco-Arabica, 31); *Categories*, in Avicenna/Ibn Sīnā, *Al-Maqūlāt. Commentary on Aristotle's* Categories, trans. Allan Bäck, Philosophia Verlag, Münich 2016 (Analytica Liber Conversus); *On Interpretation*, in Avicenna/Ibn Sīnā, *Al-ʿIbārā. Avicenna's Commentary on Aristotle's* De Interpretatione. *Part One and Part Two*, trans. Allan Bäck, Philosophia Verlag, Münich 2013 (Analytica Liber Conversus); and *Poetics*, in Ismail M. Dahiyat, *Avicenna's Commentary on the* Poetics *of Aristotle*, Brill, Leiden 1974, p. 61–121. There exists also an English translation of a substantial part of the *Prior Analytics*, i.e. V–VII, VIII, 1–2 and IX, 1, in Nabil Shehaby, *The Propositional Logic of Avicenna. A Translation from* al-Shifâ': al-Qiyâs. D. Reidel, Dordrecht – Boston 1973 (Synthese Historical Library). Additionally, a French translation of Book I of the *Dialectics* should be noted, in Avicenne (Ibn Sīnā), *La Dialectique. Livre I du* Kitâb al-Ġadal, trans. Fouad Mlih, Vrin, Paris 2023 (Études Musulmanes, 56), as well as a German translation of Book I of the *Rhetoric* in Renate Würsch, *Avicennas Bearbeitungen der aristotelischen Rhetorik: ein Beitrag zum Fortleben antiken Bildungsgutes in der islamischen Welt*, Klaus Schwab Verlag, Berlin 1991 (Islamkundige Untersuchungen, 146), p. 140–174. Besides the *Shifā'*, the logical part of three of Ibn Sīnā's *Summae*, i.e. *al-Najāt*, *Daneshname-yeʿAla'i* and *al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*, has been translated in English and/or French: see, respectively, Asad Q. Ahmed, *Avicenna's* Delivrance: Logic, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2011 (Studies in Islamic Philosophy); Mohammad Achena, Henri Massé, *Avicenne: Le livre de science*, vol. I: *Logique, Métaphysique*; vol. II: *Science naturelle, Mathématiques*, ed. Mohammad Achena, Les Belles Lettres – UNESCO, Paris 1986 (Traductions de textes persans publiées sous le patronage de l'Association Budé), p. 65–130 [revised translation of the 1955–1958 edition]; Ibn Sīnā (Avicenne), *Livre des directives et des remarques* (*Kitāb al-Išārāt wa l-tanbīhāt*), trans. Anne-Marie Goichon, Commission internationale pour la traduction des chefs-d'oeuvre – Vrin, Beyrouth – Paris 1951 (Collection d'oeuvres arabes de l'Unesco), p. 81–245, and Ibn Sinā, *Remarks and Admonitions, Part One: Logic*, trans. Shams C. Inati, PIMS, Toronto (Ontario) 1984 (Mediaeval Sources in Translation, 28). As for the English translation of Farhangi Zabeeh, *Avicenna's Treatise on Logic. Part One of* Danesh-name alai [A Concise Philosophical Encyclopaedia] *and* Autobiography, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague 1971, p. 12–47, it is extremely weak, and of no real use.

[3] As far as I know, only four chapters (in full) have so far received an English translation – i.e. I, 6 in Michael E. Marmura, « Avicenna on Meno's Paradox: On 'Apprehending' Unknown Things Through Known Things », *Mediaeval Studies*, 71 (2009), p. 49–62; I, 9 and III, 5 in John McGinnis, David C. Reisman, *Classical Arabic Philosophy. An Anthology of Sources*, Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis – Cambridge 2007, p. 147–156; and II, 4 in Riccardo Strobino, « Avicenna on the Indemonstrability of Definition », *Documenti e studi sulla tradizione filosofica medievale*, 21 (2010), p. 113–163, especially p. 148–162.

[4] Henri Hugonnard-Roche, « La classification des sciences de Gundissalinus et l'influence d'Avicenne », in Jean Jolivet, Roshdi Rashed (eds.), *Études sur Avicenne*, Les Belles Lettres, Paris 1984 (Sciences et philosophies arabes. Études et reprises), p. 41–75.

this appeared appended to a paper where Strobino discussed in detail the structure and textual issues related to the Arabic text, but with a specific eye on Gundissalinus's translation.[5]

But, of course, this single chapter does not tell the whole story about Ibn Sīnā's theory of science. An encompassing study of many other parts of the *Kitāb al-Burhān* of the *Shifāʾ* is clearly required in order to grasp it in a more complete and serious way. Strobino was well aware of this and has taken it as the basis for his presentation.[6] But he did not simply limit himself to this sole book. He pays additional attention to significant passages in other logical books of the *Shifāʾ*, especially *al-Madkhal* (*Isagoge*), *al-Qiyās* (*Prior Analytics*) ad *al-Jadal* (*Topics*), as well as in the logical sections of three other of Ibn Sīnā's Summae, i.e. *al-Najāt*, *Daneshname-ye ʿAlaʾi*, and *al-Ishārāt wa-l-tanbīhāt*.[7] Moreover, given that Aristotle's ideal of demonstration poses a serious problem of applicability in practice, Strobino points out relevant passages in the natural and mathematical books of the *Shifāʾ*, above all, *al-Samāʿ aṭ-ṭabīʿī* (*Physics*) and *al-Handasa* (*Geometry*), in order to clarify this issue. Finally, in a more than incidental way, he quotes passages of its *Ilāhiyyāt* (*Metaphysics*) – he does this in order to show that Ibn Sīnā's theory of science is part of a coherent philosophical project. It is immediately obvious that this is a most encompassing and ambitious project, which, moreover, deserves the full label of a pioneering study.

Since it is impossible to discuss in detail all the ideas expressed in the book, I will limit myself to highlight a few of Strobino's major insights. Their particular significance for a good understanding of Ibn Sīnā's thought in general, and of his theory of scientific reasoning in particular, is beyond doubt. Nevertheless, some details of his interpretation are far from evident, or even disputable, and therefore in need of – at least – further investigation.

From a historical point of view, it is absolutely clear that Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* constitutes the ultimate source of inspiration for Ibn Sīnā's *Burhān*. But it is also evident that the latter contains many elements that are innovative compared to the former. In fact, Ibn Sīnā substantially recalibrates the model of Aristotle's work because he has as his aim the maximalisation of its applicability. In this sense, it comes somehow as a surprise that his requirements for scientific knowledge remain at least as strict as, and perhaps are even stricter than, those of

5 See *supra*, n. 4.

6 This is evidenced by the Indices on the lemmata (with a few exceptions all derived from the *Burhān*) and of Avicenna's works with passages cited (where those of the *Burhān* cover – more or less – half of all passages quoted), see Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 413–423.

7 It must be stressed that with regard to the *Daneshname-yeʿAlaʾi*, no textual passage is extensively quoted, but all references concern a general remark on either a basic idea or a technical term; moreover, they are always based on the French translation of 1955, as referred to in note 3 (hence, unfortunately lacking a reference to the 1986 revised edition).

Aristotle. I agree with Strobino that Ibn Sīnā is not particularly concerned about the problem of how a greater applicability can be combined with so strict criteria. But I wonder whether Strobino does not minimalize too much its problematic nature by invoking Ibn Sīnā's adherence to a « unwavering metaphysical essentialism and staunch epistemological optimism ».[8] One thing is to say that such adherence may have played a role in Ibn Sīnā's slight concern for solving the problem, another is to present it almost as an excuse, while claiming that

> in light of these two factors, the prospect that a suitable body of knowledge might satisfy the criteria of scientific knowledge and count as a science is much less unrealistic than may otherwise appear to the mind of the modern reader (or even any skeptics among Avicenna's immediate readers).[9]

This latter affirmation, as such, is true; however, « is much less unrealistic than may otherwise appear » does not mean « is fully realistic otherwise than may appear ». Moreover, its truth is based on the acceptance of the broader framework of Ibn Sīnā's thought, especially his metaphysical essentialism and epistemological optimism, which, in fact, is owed to Ibn Sīnā's metaphysical optimism.[10] But how rationally warranted are these two basic assumptions? Finally, one has the impression that in the background of this interpretation lies the idea of a great inner coherence within Ibn Sīnā's philosophical system. Even if I admit that Ibn Sīnā, as all other great thinkers, tries to remain as coherent as possible, and perhaps realises this in a better way than Aristotle had done before him, his system is not totally free from inner tensions. One example of this is present in his affirmation of a divine knowledge of particulars, which, even with the additional qualification of 'in a universal way', can hardly be combined in a logical coherent way with his defense of the strict unity of God. Moreover, Ibn Sīnā's system is not completely free from ambiguities – one illustration of which can be found in Ibn Sīnā's mention of a second kind of belief (*iʿtiqād*) related to an assertion (*taṣdīq*), namely whether it introduces a modal characterization of the first belief, or of its content.[11]

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8 Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 332.

9 Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 332.

10 The dependence of Ibn Sīnā's epistemological optimism on his metaphysical optimism is stressed by Strobino himself; see Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 306.

11 Regarding Ibn Sīnā's affirmation of God's knowledge of the particulars, there exist several publications, among which, from a logical point of view, the most significant are Peter Adamson, « On Knowledge of Particulars », *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, 105 (2005), p. 273–294; Amirhossein Zadyousefi, « On Knowledge of Particulars, Does God Know that *the Flower in My Hand is Red*? Avicenna and the Problem of God's Perceptual Knowledge », *Sophia*, 59 (2020), p. 657–693, and Jari Kaukua, « Future Contingency and God's Knowledge of Particulars », *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, published online 2022 (open access); regarding the issue of belief, see Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 41–44. Strobino rightly notes that the first hypothesis

Even if Ibn Sīnā is not the inventor of the distinction between *taṣawwur* (conception) and *taṣdīq* (assertion), his particular insistence on the existence of them as first principles turns out to be innovative. He thus expresses his profound adherence to foundationalism. However, Ibn Sīnā offers almost no details regarding the existence of primary notions, in spite of his having explicitly affirmed that such a foundationalist approach inevitably implies the need to have first principles of conception.[12] In his *Burhān*, one looks in vain for any concrete example. However, as Strobino notes, the remarks about « prior in nature » or « better known in nature » (present in the same work I.11), indicate that he had in mind notions of the highest generality, and of which Ibn Sīnā offers examples in the *Ilāhiyyāt* of the *Shifā'*, I, 5.[13] In view of this, the fact that Ibn Sīnā accepts the existence of primary notions is indeed beyond doubt. His admission of the existence of a close link between logic and metaphysics is also clear – and this is in line with the general basic insight, well argued for in Strobino's work, that logic is of utmost importance for a correct understanding of how Ibn Sīnā articulates the different disciplines included in his encompassing philosophical project. However, it should be stressed that, with regard to primary notions, the role of logic seems to be limited to express a basic need for them: given their being of the

would result in « the weaker claim that the certainty of demonstrative discourse concerns the *epistemic* necessity of certain sets of belief », while the second would seem to imply « the stronger claim that the certainty of demonstrative discourse concerns the *ontological* necessity of a privileged class of facts ». As to his preference of 'assertion' as translation for *taṣdīq*, see ibid., p. 13, n. 1, which, at least at first sight, seems convincing. Let us add that Strobino is (strongly) inclined to bridge the apparent gap between epistemic and ontological necessity by insisting that Ibn Sīnā leaves no space for contingent truths, but, with regard to necessary truths, « is willing to admit (...) not exclusively (...) eternal facts, but also facts that hold necessarily but for a limited amount of time ». This is an interesting remark, but is it based on an explicit affirmation of Ibn Sīnā, or a personal judgment, and, if so, on what precise basis?

12 Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā'*, *al-Manṭiq*, *al-Burhān* I.6, ed. Abū al-ʿAlā ʿAfīfī, Al-maṭbaʿa al-amīriyya, Cairo 1956, p. 77, 1–5; English translation Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 28, Text 1.7.

13 Strobino only presents the list of examples that is given at the beginning of the chapter, i.e. « 'existent', 'thing', 'necessary' », but it would have been good if he had added a –at least, small – reference as well to the second, slightly modified list of such examples, i.e. « 'existent', 'thing', 'one', and so on », which is mentioned somewhat later in the chapter (see Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā'*, *al-Ilāhiyyāt* (1) I.5, ed. Georges C. Anawati, Saʿīd Zayed, Al-Hay'a al-ʿāmma li-shu'ūn al-maṭābiʿ al-amīriyya, Cairo 1960, p. 30, 4 [reading *wa-l-shay' wa-l-wāḥid*, according to the list of corrections, present in Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā), *Libro della guarigione. Le cose divine*, ed. Amos Bertolacci, UTET, Torino 2007 (Classici del pensiero), p. 115]). Of course, the given reference suffices to show the acceptance of primary conception in Ibn Sīnā, but the non-absolute identity between the two lists indicates that he was hesitant to restrict them to a very precise number of a few given conceptions, even if it cannot be very high. Note, moreover, that in view of the doctrine of transcendentals in the Latin scholasticism, this double list is particularly interesting, see Jorge Uscatescu Barrón, *Der begriff des Guten – Eine historisch-systematische Untersuchung. Mittelalteriche Philosophie von Augustinus bis Suárez*, Verlag Karl Alber, Freiburg – München 2021 (Scientia & Religio, 16), p. 221–225.

highest generality, their identification and the explanation of their specific roles can only belong to the highest science, i.e. metaphysics. On the contrary, the elucidation of primary assertions is fully developed and illustrated in logic, but only vaguely referred to in metaphysics – mostly, limited to show a basic similarity in function between them and primary notions.[14] Unless I am mistaken, this shows that logic is, properly speaking, an instrumental science, which explores the methods for correct reasoning. But even then, it poses solid foundations for all the other sciences, including metaphysics. For example, in discussing the principles of the sciences, Ibn Sīnā, in his *Burhān*, distinguishes – besides two other ones (i.e. proper to each science or common to several sciences) – a mode common to all, being illustrated by: « Of everything either the affirmation or the negation is truthfully asserted ».[15] With explicit reference to the *Burhān*, Ibn Sīnā speaks anew about it in his *Ilāhiyyāt*, as follows:

> And the most primary of all true statements, to which everything in analysis reduces (so that it can be predicated either potentially or actually of all things demonstrated or made evident through it), is – as we have shown in the *Book of Demonstration* – [as follows]: 'There is no intermediary between affirmation and negation'.[16]

Through this wording, he approves on an ontological level the validity of the absolute primacy of the truth of the assertion of the absence of an intermediary between affirmation and negation, given its applicability to all things that it demonstrates.[17] This generality makes it understandable that for its ultimate ontological foundation, it receives acute attention in metaphysics, as the encompassing study of existence (or, being).[18]

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[14] See Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā'*, *al-Burhān* I.4, p. 64, 3–4, respectively Ibn Sinā, *al-Shifā'*, *al-Ilāhiyyāt* I.5, p. 29, 5–30, 2.

[15] Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā'*, *al-Burhān* II.6, p. 155, 10–14; English translation Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 88–89, Text 4.2.

[16] Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā'*, *al-Ilāhiyyāt* I.8, p. 48, 14–16; English translation Avicenna, *The Metaphysics of The Healing*, ed. and trans. Michael E. Marmura, Brigham Young University Press, Provo (Utah) 2005 (Islamic Translation Series), p. 39, 6–10 (very slightly modified).

[17] More specifically, it is one of the essential accidents of existent qua existent – I owe this observation to the anonymous reviewer.

[18] Even if *wujūd* is most commonly rendered by « existence » in contemporary Avicennian scholarship, I still remain hesitant about the validity of this translation in all cases where the former Arabic term appears. Certainly, I do not deny that in some cases this translation is correct, and indeed imposes itself, but in absence in Arabic of a verb that corresponds with the copula « to be », and in view, moreover, of the fact that Ibn Sīnā, in his *Daneshname-ye ʿAla'i*, seems to make a distinctive use between *vujud* and *hasti*, I have the impression that on some occasions the translation « being » looks doctrinally preferable – but this requires further investigation.

As to defining the internal structure of each science, as well as the specification of the interrelations between the different sciences, Ibn Sīnā, compared to Aristotle, is largely innovative. Regarding the issue of the internal structure of each science, one of his crucial innovations consists in the making an explicit distinction with regard to scientific questions, i.e. the propositions that a science aims to establish by demonstration, between simple categorical and compound hypothetical. Here, it is worthwhile to quote in full the following remark of Strobino:

> The philosophical significance of the distinction (...) cannot be overestimated. This is because it single-handedly broadens the set of fundamental expressions that may be used in scientific discourse, addressing a classical problem associated with the tradition of the two *Analytics*, namely the question of their expressive power and applicability to actual scientific theories. As noted, even in the putative form of a complete science in its final stage (and leaving aside the fact that the Aristotelian science actually exhibits this form, at least in his surviving works), it would be hard to see how far one could go, in any science, with the sole aid of categorical propositions and categorical syllogistic.[19]

One cannot but agree with him that the abandonment of a strict categorical approach helped to overcome the sometimes too harsh restrictions of Aristotle's theory of science. However, as judiciously noted by him, this « does not affect the pre-eminent role still played by categorical propositions in his [= Ibn Sīnā's] logic of scientific discourse ». Regarding Ibn Sīnā's detailed and systematic attempt to offer a logically coherent justification for a hierarchical order between the sciences, particular attention is owed to the case of subordination due to a foreign non-per se accident of a species of a different subject, illustrated by the subordination of music to arithmetic. A most telling passage is present at the beginning of the *Jawāmiʿ ʿilm al-Mūsīqā* of the *Shifā'*:

> The physical principles only occur in this science [i.e. music] insofar as its subject is physical; hence, if one wants to establish firmly the status of the subject of this science by means of admitted principles, (these latter) cannot be otherwise than natural. As to the numerical principles, they enter this science from the point of view of the form that follows (*talḥaqu*) the subject-matter (*mawdūʿ*) of this science, and consequently, the connection with them becomes the subject of this science as you have learnt in the *Book of Demonstration*. The predisposition of this form [reading *istiʿadāduhā* instead of *istiʿadāduhu*) is in view of a numerical proportion, by means

[19] Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 100.

> of which the [specific] subject of concordance or discordance happens to exist among particular (sounds).[20]

Most interestingly, Ibn Sīnā does not only remain in line with what he had said about this subordination in his *Burhān*, but he even adds an explicit reference to the latter. However, it is obvious that he is not really at ease with how to include music in a coherent manner in an encompassing framework of the subordination of all sciences. Although the composition of the *Jawāmiʿ ʿilm al-Mūsīqā* is, in all likelihood, later than most other parts of the *Shifāʾ*, Ibn Sīnā, in spite of his final qualification of the science of music as a mathematical science, still feels the need to explicitly note that it is based on principles that belong to the domain of natural science.[21] Most importantly, he, in the *Muqaddima* (*Preface*), stresses: « Before penetrating the proper core of this art (*ṣarīḥ hādhihi l-ṣināʿ*) we present a preamble that has no connection with mathematics, nor a strong analogy with all what we have said before about the principles of the sciences ».[22] As far as I know, this is the only text where Ibn Sīnā feels the need to add a kind of introduction that falls outside the proper subject of the science under investigation. In what follows, sound is presented as an external sensation that in principle is agreeable – as established in the study of the external sense of hearing (part of the study of the human soul, and hence having its place in the natural sciences). Furthermore, it is qualified as something necessary for both animals and man, namely with regard to the preservation, above all, of their species, and, to a lesser extant (especially in animals), of their personal life (expressing a teleology, which is an essential part of metaphysics).[23] In offering these specifications, Ibn Sīnā clarifies that he rejects the Pythagorean-Platonic view of the existence of a universal numeric harmony, which corresponds to that of music and which includes a substantial impact of music on the soul. For him, sound, even if it lies at the basis of musical harmony and rythm, is essentially a natural phenomenon, and, as such, its study can only figure inside the natural sciences. On the other hand, sound fulfills a crucial role

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[20] Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifāʾ*, *al-Riyādiyāt*, *Jawāmiʿ ʿilm al-Mūsīqā* I.1, ed. Zakariyā Yusūf, Al-Hayʾa al-miṣriyya al-ʿāmma li-l-kitāb, Cairo 1956, p. 10, 1–5.

[21] Regarding the *Jawāmiʿ* as one of the latest composed books of the *Shifāʾ*, see Dimitri Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition. Introduction to Reading Avicenna's Philosophical Works*. Second, Revised and Enlarged Edition, Including an Inventory of Avicenna's Authentic Works, Brill, Leiden – Boston 2014 (IPTS 89), p. 108. It is perhaps worthwhile to note that Ibn Sīnā, with the exception of the *Shifāʾ (*and, maybe, the *Najāt*), seems never have paid any attention to this science. Moreover, in the opening sentence of the *Jawāmiʿ*, he stresses that he limits himself to what is strictly essential to this science, see Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifāʾ*, *Jawāmiʿ ʿilm al-Mūsīqā*, Preface, p. 3, 7–8.

[22] Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifāʾ*, *Jawāmiʿ ʿilm al-Mūsīqā*, Preface, p. 4, 10–11.

[23] Concerning Ibn Sīnā's conception of teleology as underlying his expression of the survival of species, without excluding the welfare of the individual life (even in animals), see Bethany Somma, « Avicenna on Animal Goods », *Journal of Islamic Ethics*, 6 (2022), p. 19–53, especially p. 36–41.

in the 'emanative' providential order (where God functions as a remote cause of everything)[24] – namely, it contributes to the preservation of the species, and even, on occasion, the individual life of animals and man, but this has nothing to do with its musical understanding. In a final remark, Ibn Sīnā insists that the harmony of music can seduce us, and procure us a sense of pleasure, but this is not based on the mere notes, but rather on the way we experience them. In an undoubtedly Aristotelian inspired way, he therefore encloses the proper study of music in mathematics. Its status as a science is clearly quite unique, but does this mean that its subordination to arithmetic must be qualified as « awkward », as Strobino (p. 119) does? Would it not be more adequate to label it – more positively – « special »?

Of particular significance for Ibn Sīnā's theory of science is his essentialism. Hence, necessity becomes a crucial factor. However, necessity has many meanings for him. In his modal logic, Ibn Sīnā distinguishes between two modes of reading propositions in a necessary mode, i.e. *dhātī* and *waṣfī*, as they usually became called in the post-Avicennian tradition. If the translation « descriptional » for the latter of these two terms does not pose any serious problem, that of « referential », withheld by Strobino, with regard to the former, is not evident in the same way.[25] Unfortunately, he does not offer any explicit justification for his terminological choice, but it seems to be based on the – plausible, albeit not self-evident – view that for Ibn Sīnā « a *ḏātī* proposition may take an arbitrary term as its subject », hence does not require a substance term or an essence term.[26] The absence of any justification is, in all likelihood, largely due to the fact that the descriptional

[24] Regarding Ibn Sīnā's conception of providence, see my « What about Providence in the Best of All Possible Worlds? Avicenna and Leibniz », in Pieter d'Hoine, Gerd Van Riel (eds.), *Fate, Providence and Moral Responsibility in Ancient, Medieval and Early Modern Thought. Studies in Honour of Carlos Steel,* Leuven University Press, Leuven 2014 (Ancient and Medieval Philosophy. Series I, 49), p. 441–454.

[25] Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 144–145; however, when referring to both terms the very first time (ibid., p. 144), he leaves open the possibility that it be translated either as « referential » or « substantial » – Rahman and Zarepour prefer this latter translation, see Shahid Rahman, Mohammad Saleh Zarepour, « On Descriptional Propositions in Ibn Sīnā: Elements for a Logical Analysis », 2019, hal-02381959 (open acces – HAL open science), p. 1.

[26] One wonders why Strobino has not given – at least, in a footnote – a reference to his article on Ibn Sīnā's logic in the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*; see Riccardo Strobino, « Ibn Sina's Logic », in Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2018 Edition), URL = <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/ibn-sina-logic/>, especially note 3: « The term *ḏātī* may refer to the essence of the subject (as long as it exists), to the substance of the subject (as long as it exists) or, on a more deflationary reading, simply to the subject itself (as long as it exists). In the literature, various translations can be found corresponding to these readings. The interpretation turns on what constraints should be put on the kinds of terms that may count as subjects of a *ḏātī* proposition. In particular, the question is whether a *ḏātī* proposition may take an arbitrary term as its subject (in which case it would be just a "referential" proposition, i.e. one that merely fixes the referent, whatever the latter may be) or whether it requires a substance term or an essence term ».

reading clearly prevails in the context of scientific discourse, as Strobino convincingly shows on the basis of a few text-fragments of *Burhān*, II.1. Precisely thanks to his descriptional reading of universal propositions, Ibn Sīnā can understand the omnitemporality in them as related to « all the times at which they are described by the subject ».[27] He hereby opens the door for qualifying many more acts of knowledge as genuinely scientific than was the case with Aristotle and his followers. A further advantage of the descriptional reading – and this, in sharp contrast with the 'referential' reading' – is that it allows him to express adequately the intended meaning of negation in the case of universal scientific propositions.[28] But, above all, Ibn Sīnā expresses a major distinction between necessity in essence or nature and necessity in implication when discussing the critical role of modal concepts in the domain of demonstration. This distinction unmistakenly forms the basis for his revision of the concept *καθ' αὐτό*, « per se », as articulated in Aristotle's *Analytica Posteriora* A 4 – especially the case per se 1 and per se 2. Ibn Sīnā links the distinction between both with the distinction between containment (*taḍammun*) and necessary implication (*lāzim* or *iltizām*), where the former expresses a strong form of necessity (namely, one that typifies the relation between something and its intensional elements), and the latter only a weaker form of necessity (i.e., one that exists between two notions of which one is inseparable from the other). These distinctions, as Strobino justly notes,

> are further associated by Avicenna with another distinction, in this case between two types of inseparability, developed in the commentaries on the *Isagoge*. The first type is inseparability in conception (*taṣawwur*), and its counterparts are the notions of per se 1 and of containment; the second type is inseparability in imagination (*tawahhum*), and its counterparts are the notions of per se 2 and of necessary implication.[29]

In this framework, the fundamental revision that Ibn Sīnā makes regarding Aristotle's per se 2 is of the highest importance in view of his project to offer a more realistic, and, at once, adequate view of what makes scientific knowledge genuinely scientific, or to put it in Strobino's own words:

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27 Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 150.

28 Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 153. Strobino offers this insight, based on Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā'*, *al-Burhān* II.1, p. 123, 21 – 124, 2, translated as text 6.9 (ibid., p. 151–152) – the translation is not very literal, but still *ad sensum*. For example, « negating » renders twice the Arabic expression *khulūw ʿan*, « the being empty of », and near the end, « subject » corresponds to the Arabic word *waḍʿ*, « imposition », which however, as such, makes little sense, unless one understands it as an 'imposition of being with a subject'. Here, a note would have been highly welcomed, not at least, because we can imagine as well that Strobino has judged that a correction of *waḍʿ* into *mawḍūʿ* is on doctrinal grounds more natural, or even required.

29 Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 338.

> Avicenna uses a variety of terms ([...]). The important philosophical contribution of these distinctions is that ([...]) its overarching goal is to develop a mature theory of per se, one that is capable, at least in principle, of accounting for as many variations of predicates as are found in the sciences. Avicenna's account of per se 2 intentionality reflects this underlying complexity. ([...]). The central question of Avicenna's theory of per 2 can therefore be formulated as the problem of finding, for any given scientific proposition, the essential factor in virtue of which the predicate is a per se 2 attribute of the subject. Generally speaking, the essential factor is either the subject itself or something in the essence of the subject, that is to say, one of its constituents.[30]

The expression « essential factor » has no correspondence in Ibn Sīnā, but has been forged by Strobino for the sake of simplicity, because he is convinced that Ibn Sīnā tacitly worked with a kind of general notion of the same kind. But why did the latter never express it himself? In view of the postulate of Euclid's geometry that the crucial passages in *Burhān*, II, 2 – where Ibn Sīnā presents two lists of such per se 2 attributes – pose serious problems of interpretation, one can at best detect the general gist of his profound thought on this issue, as Strobino himself observes.[31] I wonder whether this lack of clarity is not due to the fact that Ibn Sīnā, at the time of the composition of the *Burhān*, was still struggling with elaborating a more viable interpretation of Aristotle's view on per se. I do not want to deny that Ibn Sīnā's logic is basically an essentialist logic, as is evidenced, *inter alia*, and, in my view, above all, by his distinction between constituent (*muqawwim*) and implicate (*lāzim*).[32] Rather, I want to underline that some of Ibn Sīnā's wordings are far from being as crystal-clear as one might expect. Strobino is aware of this, but perhaps overly relativises – unless I am mistaken – their impact in the name of an encompassing coherence, as already indicated before, or based on extrapolations, which may reveal in the final analysis to be correct but are clearly in need of a more in-depth justification.[33]

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30 Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 167–168.

31 Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 188–191. Cf. also Riccardo Strobino, « Per se, Inseparability, Containment, and Implication: Bridging the Gap Between Avicenna's Theory of Demonstration and Logic of Predicables », *Oriens*, 44 (2016), p. 181–266, and with regard to a detailed discussion of the two lists in *Burhān*, II, 2, ibid., p. 190–200 (and in addition ibid., p. 225, n. 78, where different possible interpretations of the example, which illustrates the second case of list one, are given – the last proposed one seems to be preferable, not at least because it implies an intimate connection with the Euclidian parallel postulate).

32 A constituent is a genuine essential attribute, whereas an implicate in any necessary attribute of something; see Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 185, who, at once, rightly stresses that Ibn Sīnā does not consider the distinction between inseparability in conception and inseparability in imagination to have a merely pyschological basis, and hence to be logically spurious.

33 See above, p. 00 [3–4 here], regarding the former, and p. 00 [8–9 here], regarding the latter.

The issue of causality is central to Ibn Sīnā's theory of science. It places a crucial role in his distinction between that-demonstration and why-demonstration, and their respective subdivisions. Of particular interest is Ibn Sīnā's « identification of different types of causal demonstrations based on their distinct explanatory roles ».[34] In the framework of highlighting the difference between both types of demonstration, Ibn Sīnā presents sign (*dalīl*) as a non-absolute that-demonstration, namely implying that the middle term is effect of the major term.[35] In the explanation of how there can be a demonstration in one science that is both a that-demonstration and a why-demonstration of one and the same thing, it functions as a that-demonstration. More precisely, it covers the case where in such a demonstration one of the two deductions fails to express a cause and, given the possibility of their conversion, the middle term of the first deduction is an effect of the middle term of the second deduction, as evidenced by two examples derived from Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics* A 13. However, Ibn Sīnā adds a third example, which concerns the halo, i.e. its steadiness (*thabāt*) as offering an indication that rain is pouring forth from the cloud in which the halo (comes about), and which is qualified by Strobino as « less straightforward ».[36] However, Ibn Sīnā clearly distinguishes this example from the two other examples, by qualifying it as an illustration of a case where the middle term of the first deduction is neither the cause nor the effect of the middle term of the second deduction. Based on what follows in the text, it seems to constitute a weaker form of « sign », for which Ibn Sīnā uses a specific and new technical term, i.e. *ʿalāma*, an indicative, non-necessary sign.[37] As to the distinction between that-demonstration and why-

[34] Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 221, where he, although with due prudence, also notes that Ibn Sīnā seems to be the first interpreter in the history of philosophy to have done this. Since he was clearly familiar with al-Fārābī's logical works, even with parts now lost (see e.g., Wilfrid Hodges, « Remarks on *al-Fārābī*'s Missing Modal Logic and its Effects on *Ibn Sīnā* », *Eshare. An Iranian Journal of Philosophy*, 1/3 (2019), p. 39–73, *passim*), one cannot totally exclude that he has been inspired in this respect by the (possibly having existed, but now lost) *Sharḥ al-burhān* of his famous predecessor – an indication for its existence seeming to be present in Albert the Great's Commentary on the *Posterior Analytics*, see my « Albert le Grand et sa connaissance des écrits logiques arabes: une réévaluation du dossier Grignaschi », in Julie Brumberg-Chaumont, *Ad notitiam ignoti. L'*Organon *dans la* translatio studiorum *à l'époque d'Albert le Grand*, Brepols, Turnhout 2013 (Studia Artistarum, 37), p. 225–57, especially p. 236–242.

[35] Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifāʾ*, *al-Burhān* I.7, p. 79, 19–20.

[36] Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 233. Unfortunately, in his presentation of Ibn Sīnā's argument, he omits at the beginning the crucial notion « steadiness », since it is not the halo as such, but the very phenomenon of its steadiness that indicates that rain is pouring forth from the cloud (*saḥar*) in which the halo comes about. The ultimate source for this idea is almost certainly Aristotle's *Metereology* III. 3, 372b20–24.

[37] Ibn Sīnā, both in the *Qiyās* (see Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifāʾ*, *al-Manṭiq*, *al-Qiyās*, IX.24, ed. Saʿīd Zayed, Al-Hay'a al-ʿāmma li-shu'ūn al-maṭābiʿ al-amīriyya, Cairo 1964, especially p. 575, 11–12) and the *Khiṭāba* of the *Shifāʾ* (see Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifāʾ*, *al-Manṭiq*, *al-Khiṭāba*, I.6, ed. Muḥammad S. Sālim, Al-Maṭbaʿa al-

demonstration in different sciences, it is based on whether a science gives the proximate (why) or the remote (that) cause of the nexus between subject and predicate. It forms the basis for the subordination of the sciences in terms of their explanatory power. In *Burhān* III, 3, Ibn Sīnā distinguishes between three types of subordination: complete, partial, and relative to an individual question. Earlier (namely in II, 9) he had made a three-fold distinction as well, which has in common with the former the first and the last type. However, instead of partial subordination it mentions the case where the principle of a higher science is proved in a lower science – this case is explicitly qualified as the « less frequent ». Strobino explains well how Ibn Sīnā was aware of the risk of circularity and succeeded in circumventing it.[38] Before offering the just mentioned distinction in II, 9, Ibn Sīnā, in II, 8, had dealt with examining how an explanatory premise or term from one science may be passed on to another science, a process that he designates by the terminus technicus *naql al-burhān*, « transfer of demonstration ». Ibn Sīnā specifies two fundamental modes of transfer, i.e. (1) how the conclusion of a demonstration in a science becomes the premise of another demonstration in another science, and (2) how the conclusion of a demonstration in a science is proven by means of a middle term taken from another science.[39] Immediately hereafter, he identifies two fundamental manners of taking the terms of demonstration, based on the per se relations holding between them.[40] Here one detects in a particular manner how crucial Ibn Sīnā's proper doctrine of per se is for his view on the way in which sciences are related to and can interact with one another.

amīriyya, Cairo 1964, especially p. 43–45) presents as a weaker form of sign. However, it must be examined in detail whether this may be also the case in his *Burhān*.

38 Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 255–257. In this context, he refers also to Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā'*, *al-Ilāhiyyāt* I.3, p. 19, 10 – 20, 11. However, the last case in the *Burhān*, which mentions the use of principles assumed from the lower science is only allowed when they are proved by means of principles that are evident by themselves, by sensation (*ḥiss*), or 'experience' (*tajriba*), seems to have been reformulated in the *Ilāhiyyāt*, insofar as « evident by themselves » in this latter becomes a separate case, and a third case is mentioned, i.e. the calling principle of a science a principle that does not explain the cause (and, as such, not truly a principle), as, for example calling sensation a principle, namely in the sense that it, inasmuch as it is a sensation, becomes a principle that bestows only knowledge of existence. This reformulation has, in all likelihood, been inspired by a will to highlight the specific baure of metaphysics as the highes science, and therefore the only science that never gives a that, while expecting the answer to the why from a higher science.

39 Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā'*, *al-Burhān*, II, 8, p. 169, 4–15; English translation (and explanation) Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 259–260, Texts 10.6–7.

40 Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā'*, *al-Burhān*, p. 169, 16 – 170, 6; English translation Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 259, Text 10.8 – at lines 10–11 of the translation, one reads: « either in [at least] one of the [two sciences] or », but, as far as I can see, nothing corresponds in the Arabic text to these words, or even would suggest that they have been omitted there accidentally (e.g., due to a copyist's error at an early moment of the transmission of the text).

Finally, the centrality of the four (Aristotelian) causes for Ibn Sīnā's theory of science is beyond doubt. In the *Burhān*, he not only offers no less than three different classifications, but he also refines substantially Aristotle's account by linking with each of them a set of distinctions, as e.g., essential/accidental, universal/particular, and so on. They find applications in both the domains of demonstration and definition. An interesting illustration here forms the requirement that a complete definition must include all the essential causes that are relevant to the definiendum. However, « essential » is here potentially ambivalent. As Strobino judiciously notes, it « may be taken, in this context, either in a narrow sense, as equivalent to formal, or in a broader sense, to include all four kinds of causes as long as they are causal factors in an essential rather than accidental manner ».[41] With regard to definition, it is worthwhile to note that, for Ibn Sīnā, it is a vehicle of science through conception. In *Burhān* I, 1, he articulates what distinguishes a definition from a description, but he signals for both the existence of a complete and an incomplete type.[42] Most interestingly, with respect to complete definition, he makes a sharp distinction between his understanding, qualified as representing the understanding of those who determine the validity (of what has been said about it) (*al-muḥassilūn*), and the understanding of the literalists (*al-ẓāhiriyyūn*).[43] Contrary to the latter, who identify the complete definition with a complete description, he insists that if it is expressed by means of essential notions, a complete definition requires that all essential notions are contained in it in such a way that nothing is left aside. An important innovation is also present in Ibn Sīnā's explanation of the acquisition of a definition. It consists in a combination of two methods, i.e. of composition and of division. Ibn Sīnā reduces the role of the latter, which was the traditional method, to a kind of supplement to the former. He specifies the composition method as a bottom up process, while he gives two accounts of it.[44] However, one wonders why he, in his first account, does not give any instructions about how to determine whether a predicate is a quiddity. According to Strobino, Ibn Sīnā does not see it as a problem because for him the constituents of the quiddity are ultimately self-evident.[45] But if this is the very reason, why does Ibn Sīnā, in his second account, point out certain topical principles as helpful for such a determination? Could it not be the

41 Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 271.

42 Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā'*, *al-Burhān*, I, 1, p. 52, 3–20; English translation Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 289–290, Text 12.1.

43 Regarding the meaning of « literalists » in this context, see Gutas, *Avicenna and the Aristotelian Tradition*, p. 14, n. 14 and p. 15, n. 16 (Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 290, n. 7, refers to the 1988 edition, but note that the reference to [p. 26,] n. 16 must be corrected in 'n. 15'). According to Ibn Sīnā, the literalists are guilty of a superficial reading of the traditional philosophical works, particularly in logic.

44 For a detailed outline, see Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 314–321.

45 Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 317.

case that an extensive discussion of such topical principles was in his eyes inappropriate inside a book on demonstration? I must confess that this is an open question. A final remark concerning Ibn Sīnā's theory of definition acquisiton concerns its underlying epistemological optimism, the presence of which can indeed hardly be denied in the *Burhān* of the *Shifā'*. But, as Strobino observes, albeit in a note, it « appears, on occasion, to run counter to some of Avicenna's own measured statements ».[46] He illustrates this « on occasion » by referring to two passages in Ibn Sīnā's *Kitāb al-Ḥudūd*, *Book of Definitions*. Undoubtedly, this non-negligible difference between both works deserves a separate, in-depth investigation. A possible explanation for the difference, which I, however, present with due prudence, could come from identifying the *Hudūd* as a relatively early work. Most interestingly, in the *Ilāhiyyāt* of the *Shifā'*, V, 7, a similar kind of scepticism is expressed.[47]

As indicated at the beginning, what I have discussed so far gives, at best, a very partial idea of the rich content of Strobino's book.[48] Nevertheless, I hope that my interrogations and critical remarks may constitute a modest contribution to a further exploration of Ibn Sīnā's theory of science. It is complex and difficult, and I therefore am convinced that the scholarly community will be grateful to Strobino for having written this pioneering study, which undoubtedly will form a serious point of departure for many further studies. In his final conclusion, Strobino himself indicates a major topic in this respect, i.e. the relation between Ibn Sīnā's logic of scientific reasoning and his account of the ultimate goal of human life, as being identified with the experience of purely intellectual pleasure in the afterlife. This identification is indeed true for the elite. But Ibn Sīnā seems to accept for the

46 Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 314, n. 13.

47 See Ibn Sīnā, *al-Shifā'*, *al-Ilāhiyyāt* V.7, especially p. 237, 15–238, 3; English translation Strobino, *Avicenna's Theory of Science*, p. 165, n. 2 (note, however, that Strobino quotes the passage in the context of his discussion of per se 1 attributes, not of definition). The anonymous reviewer kindly drew my attention to this important fact. However, determining the precise degree of similarity between this passage in the *Ilāhiyyāt* of the *Shifā'* and what Ibn Sīnā affirms in the *Ḥudūd* requires a detailed comparison of the wording in both works. This clearly exceeds the scope of the present review article.

48 Let me stress that appendices A (Conditions of Certainty) and B (The Logic of Scientific Reasoning) constitute a worthy supplement to the ideas expressed before. As to Appendix C (A Map of *Kitāb al-Burhān* [Book of Demonstration]), it is generally helpful, but is in my view at times open to minor improvements, as e.g. I.8 (Ibid., p. 359), where I believe that it would be better to limit the first thematic issue distinguished to « causal and non-causal certainty », and, hereafter, to articulate a second thematic issue under the heading « demonstration and certainty » (including subdivisions [largely corresponding to 2–4 of the actual presentation] which cover the rest of the chapter). Most useful are the English-Arabic Glossary presented in appendix D (even if one may somewhat regret the absence of its Arabic-English counterpart), the extant bibliography, as well as the indices of subjects (lacking, regrettably, an index of names), quoted lemmata and referenced passages.

masses a kind of « imaginal » resurrection, as Michot has labelled it.[49] As usual, things turn out to be complicated in Ibn Sīnā's thought, but Strobino suggests a most interesting topic for further research.

[49] Jean (y.) R Michot, *La destinée de l'homme selon Avicenne. Le retour à Dieu (ma'ād) et l'imagination*. Peeters, Leuven 1986 (Académie Royale de Belgique. Classe des Lettres. Fondation René Draguet, 5), *passim*, but especially chapters 1 and 5.

NOTES

Ficino, Lucretius and « semen »*

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In the perspective of a critical edition of Ficino's *De amore*, an unexpected question is the origin of Ficino's extravagant *lectio* of one verse of Lucretius. In his *De amore* VII, 11 Ficino[1] quotes *De rerum natura* IV, 1066 as follows: « Nec retinere semen » meaning « Do not withhold your sperm ».

Indeed premodern as well as modern editions of Lucretius always give the following hemistich: « Nec retinere semel » meaning « Do not withhold once », in other words, do not « reserve » yourself exclusively for one single unhappy love, while you could purge your soul from amorous despair with somebody else.

This particular rendering has gone unspotted so far, for in reading « semen » and not « semel » Ficino altered the Lucretian verse. The question is: was the alteration deliberate or accidental? Moreover it has gone unnoticed how such particular might be essential, since so much has been written about Ficino, love and Lucretius, without a more precise assessment of how Ficino transcribed *De rerum natura* IV, 1066.

In fact, both modern editions of Ficino's *De amore* in the Latin version, the one by Raymond Marcel and the other by Pierre Laurens, equally ignore the reading « semen », which neither appears in the critical apparatus nor in the text reproducing the adverb « semel » as usual.[2] This singular omission depends on

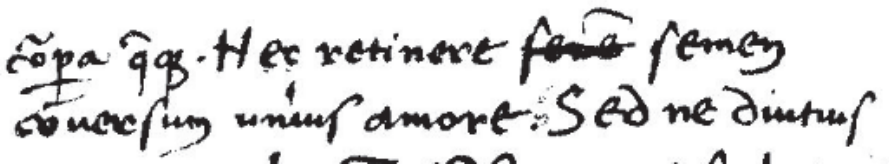
* *Nuptialia* for Ellen De Doncker and Andrea Aldo Robiglio.

1 Ficino's *De amore* is edited in Marsile Ficin, *Commentaire sur le* Banquet *de Platon*, ed. Raymond Marcel, Les Belles Lettres, Paris 1956; Marsile Ficin, *Commentaire sur le Banquet de Platon, Commentarium in Convivium Platonis*, ed. Pierre Laurens, Les Belles Lettres, Paris 2002. Hereafter, I examine the possible reasons why the editors did not acknowledge Ficino's transcription of « semen » rather than « semel ». I wish to thank the anonymous referees who discussed and corrected my text.

2 Marsile Ficin, *Commentaire sur le* Banquet, ed. Marcel, p. 256; Marsile Ficin, *Commentaire sur le Banquet*, ed. Laurens, p. 237. As a reminder, in their edition Marcel and successively Laurens transcribed the text only from MS Vat. Lat. 7705. Considering the extant twenty manuscripts of the *De amore*, we still need a true critical edition based on more than a single codex, see Sebastiano Gentile, « Per la storia del testo del *Commentarium in Convivium* di Marsilio Ficino », *Rinascimento*, n.s. 21 (1981), p. 3–27; Id., « *Commentarium in Convivium de amore* / *El libro dell'Amore* di Marsilio

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Marcel's inadvertance in reviewing the text on folio 119v of the codex Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 7705, entirely autograph, where Ficino wrote obviously « nec retinere semen » after a deleted word, perhaps « senem » as if it happened by *lapsus calami*.



MS Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 7705, fol. 119v

Should we jump to the hazardous conclusion that we find here some strange spelling error corrected by Ficino in his own handwriting, yet with another new error?

The only serious philological hypothesis leads us to suppose that Ficino wrote intentionally « semen » and not « semel ». To put it differently, he certainly made a seemingly spelling error (« senê ») but unmistakably corrected it into «semen». The study of his autograph tells probably the truth.

Interestingly, the vernacular version and self-translation of Ficino's *De amore* under the title *El libro dello amore*, confirms this view, since it repeats: « in nessun modo ritenere el *seme* ».[3] Yet here again the publisher, who refers correctly to the Lucretian source *De rerum natura* IV 1063–1066 albeit without quoting it, did not notice Ficino's intervention, so that the anomalous « seme » for *semen* got once more unmentioned. As a matter of fact, in no way the modern reader of the *De amore* who relies exclusively on those editions, can guess Ficino's peculiar mode of quoting Lucretius.

But « semen » also occurs in other codices of the *De amore* checked for the purpose of this note, first and foremost the MS Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 82.06, fol. 296r, which is well known to be the official and highly reliable codex prepared for Lorenzo il Magnifico.

In brief, the variant « semen » in the MS Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Lat. 7705 reflects the will to boldly elucidate a suggestive Lucretian verse that Ficino found probably insufficiently clear for his own philosophical purpose. In truth, at this stage, it is impossible to say whether Marsilio believed he was returning to the authentic meaning or was simply playing on the signification

Ficino, in Alberto Asor Rosa (ed.), *Letteratura italiana. Le opere,* vol. I: *Dalle origini al Cinquecento*, Einaudi, Torino 1992, p. 743–767.

[3] Marsilio Ficino, *El libro dell'Amore*, ed. Sandra Niccoli, Leo S. Olschki, Firenze 1987 (INSR Studi e Testi, 16), p. 209.

of the verse in one of the so-called manuscripts « Itali » of Lucretius at his disposal.[4]

In the future one should check if all the manuscripts of the *De amore* bear similitude on this variant. Interestingly enough, I have found two other telling samples among the codices of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana: MS Plut. 35.32, fol. 88r, by an anonymous editor defined as *doctus* by Bandini, and Plut. 35.28, fol. 85v, the latter bearing a red *n* above the *l* of « semel », as to suggest Ficino's alternative option. At least one element militates in favour of the above hypothesis concerning MS Plut. 35.28, for it was penned by Bartolomeo Fonzio, a skillful humanist and Ficino's friend. Fonzio's codex also shows in the margin an explanatory note *Remedia contra amorem* appearing very close to *Modus solvendi ab amore*, which is the title of chapter VII, 11 in *De amore*. It also recalls the alternative *Curatio amoris* in the aforementioned MS Plut. 82.06 dedicated to the Magnifico, fol. 95v. Meanwhile the other codex Plut. 35.32, in a sixteenth-century handwriting, suggests some link with Poliziano's milieu and the *Miscellanea*. We remain in the Ficinian circle.

One has to wonder why the slight but significant change introduced by Ficino was overlooked by scholars. I presume that few of them could imagine the reputedly prudish Ficino otherwise than troubled by the avowedly sexual

[4] In 1417 Poggio Bracciolini sent to Niccolò Niccoli his apograph of a now lost antique codex from Murbach or Fulda. After Bracciolini's apograph, other copies were made during the Quattrocento, see at least Michael D. Reeve, « The Italian Tradition of Lucretius », *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 23 (1980), p. 27–48; Id., « The Italian Tradition of Lucretius Revisited », *Aevum* 79 (2005), p. 115–164. We do not know which copy of Lucretius was perused by Ficino, but on Ficino and Lucretius see: Giuseppina Boccuto, « La presenza di Lucrezio negli scritti filosofici di Marsilio Ficino », *Atene e Roma* 32 (1987), p. 152–166; James G. Snyder, « Marsilio Ficino's Critique of the Lucretian Alternative », *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 72 (2011), p. 165–181; Sebastiano Gentile, « Ficino, Epicuro e Lucrezio », in James Hankins, Fabrizio Meroi (eds.), *Rebirth of Platonic Theology*, Leo S. Olschki, Firenze 2013 (INSR Atti di convegni, 27), p. 119–135: 122 on Ficino and « il poema di Lucrezio »; James Hankins, « Ficino's Critique of Lucretius », in Hankins, Meroi (eds.), *Rebirth of Platonic Theology*, p. 137–154; Laurence Boulègue, « *Voluptas* et *beatitudo* chez Marsile Ficin et Agostino Nifo. Théories du plaisir et détours du discours », in Laurence Boulègue, Carlos Lévy (eds.), *Hédonismes. Penser et dire le plaisir dans l'Antiquité et à la Renaissance*, Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, Villeneuve d'Ascq 2007, p. 233–253; Thomas Leinkauf, « Die voluptas-Ethik », in Id., *Grundriss Philosophie des Humanismus und der Renaissance (1350–1600)*, Meiner, Hamburg 2017, vol. I, p. 706–724; Valentina Prosperi, *« Di soave liquore gli orli del vaso ». La fortuna di Lucrezio dall'Umanesimo alla Controriforma*, Nino Aragno, Torino 2004, p. 159–165 e 169–170; Gerard Passannante, « Burning Lucretius: On Ficino's Lost Commentary », *Studies in Philology* 115/2 (2018), p. 267–285; Elena Nicoli, « Ficino, Lucretius and Atomism », *Early Science and Medicine* 23 (2018), p. 330–361; Raphael Ebgi, *Voluptas. La filosofia del piacere nel giovane Marsilio Ficino (1457–1969)*, Edizioni della Normale, Pisa 2019; Id., « I filosofi della *voluptas*. Riflessioni sul pensiero del primo Marsilio Ficino », *Rinascimento*, n.s. 62 (2022), p. 203–222.

arguments of *De rerum natura* IV.[5] Rather a better look at the manuscripts leads me to concord with Armando Maggi about the bold physical quality and the « esplicita sensualità » of Marsilio's platonism: « si dovrà ricordare come il rapporto tra corpo e anima sia trattato nel commento ficiniano al *Banchetto*, con una franchezza ed apertura pressoché sconcertanti [...] ».[6] The whole question is reexamined here.

Whether some precedent of « semen » is present or not in the medieval tradition of *De rerum natura* prior to Ficino, is another intriguing query. According to the eminent editor of Lucretius in the Teubner series of classics, Marcus Deufert, whom I thank for his highly valuable information,[7] the medieval manuscripts fully ignore the variant introduced by Ficino in 1469, which by no means seems a lapsus. That being so, I suppose Marsilio decided to change *this* precise word on the ground of quite good reasons.

On one side, the Lucretian passage in Book IV verges on lovesickness and its remedies, among which therapeutic intercourse was usually prescribed against addictive but unhappy love. On the other side, from Rufus of Ephesus (b. 70 AD) to al-Rāzī (b. 865 AD), al-Majūsi (b. 930 AD) and Avicenna (b. 980 AD), then to Constantinus Africanus (b. 1220 AD) and the Latin medieval physicians like Arnaldo de Villanova, coitus came to be considered an adequate remedy for the dangerous melancholy of love called *'ishq* in Arabic and *illisci* or *amor hereos* in Latin.[8] But what had struck Ficino was the following more explicit than priggish recommendation: « Lucretius also highly recommends frequent carnal union as a

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5 For instance: « Nell'affrontare le parti più esplicite del IV libro Ficino mostra imbarrazzo... » in Prosperi, *Di soave liquore gli orli del vaso*, p. 159–165 and 169–170 on Ficino.

6 Armando Maggi, « L'immagine del concetto d'amore: una lettura del frammento michelangiolesco "Ben fu, temprando il ciel tuo vivo raggio" », *Revue d'Études Italiennes* 46/3–4 (2000), p. 259–268: 260.

7 In his mail dated 07/07/2023 Prof. Dr. Deufert courteously answered my query: « Die mittelalterlichen Handschriften haben keine Variante 'semen' zu dieser Stelle, und aus der Spätantike sind keine erhalten ».

8 There is a vast bibliography on this topic, which I shall not discuss here but in my forthcoming italian edition of Ficino's *De amore* for Giunti – Bompiani. On the arabic sources *de coitu* see at least Danielle Jacquart, Claude Thomasset, *Sexualité et savoir médical au Moyen Age*, Puf, Paris 1985, passim [English edition: *Sexuality and Medecine in the Middle Ages*, trans. Matthew Adamson, Polity Press, Oxford 1988]. About therapeutic intercourse and on *amor hereos*, see at least Mary F. Wack, *Lovesickness in the Middle Ages. The* Viaticum *and Its Commentaries*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia 1990, p. 10–12, 66–70; Michael W. Dols, *Majnūn: The Madman in Medieval Islamic Society*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1992, p. 69, 85, 90; Massimo Ciavolella, « Eros and the Phantasm of Heroes », in Massimo Ciavolella, Donald Beecher (eds.), *Eros and Anteros. The Medical Tradition of Love in the Renaissance*, Dovehouse, Ottawa 1992, p. 75–85; Lanz Eukene Lacarra, « El "amor que dicen hereos" o *aegritudo amoris* », *Cahiers d'études hispaniques médiévales* 38 (2015), p. 34–41. See also Arnaldi de Villanova *Opera Medica Omnia*, vol. III: *Tractatus de Amore Heroico* [...], ed. Michael R. McVaugh, Publicacions i Edicions de la Universitat de Barcelona, Barcelona 1985, p. 53: « ... quantum est ex arte coitus », and Jacquart, Thomasset (eds.), *Sexualité et savoir médical,* p. 117.

remedy for love ».[9] In other words, perfectly well trained in medicine as he was through al-Rāzī, Avicenna, Constantinus, Arnaldo and their teaching *de coitu*, Marsilio Ficino thought that Lucretius had anticipated the whole Arabic tradition of various types of books on coitus or *Kitāb al-bāh*.[10] This is why in his *De amore* VI, 9 just after the evocation of Lucretius and his unfortunate love, Ficino quotes al-Rāzi *de coitu* recommending intercourse as a universal therapy.[11]

Coitus therapy has been known for a long time, yet Ficino was among the first authors to consider it in the perspective of Lucretius and thus of Epicurus. On this very point and unlike modern critics, Ficino does evidently not distinguish between Epicurean philosophy and Arabic medicine: therefore in his mind Lucretius interacts with al-Rāzī, al-Majūsi and Avicenna. The eroticism of the antique goddess Venus meets the sexology of medieval physicians, as far as melancholy is concerned. Most of the admonitions to chastity that Ficino lavishes in his *De vita sana* and earlier his *De amore* are preferably addressed to elderly scholars, whose intellectual energy must be preserved, rather than to young people tormented by lovesickness.

After all Ficino corrected *ope ingenii* a Latin syntagma to which he conferred a meaning closely aligned with his own view. If Lucretius wrote « Et iacere humorem coniectum in corpora quaque / Nec retinere semel conversum unius amore » i.e. «You must spread your accumulated humor in any body / and not retain it for a single moment for a single love», then Ficino rewrote « Nec retinere semen conversum unius amore » i.e. « Do not retain the spoilt seed for a single love », where « conversum » conveys a quite different meaning. Thus what did exactly change? Nothing in the overall Lucretian idea that exclusive love could produce lethal consequences and should be contrasted by any means, including sexual pleasure with prostitutes. Yet introducing explicitly the physiological « semen »

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[9] Marsilio Ficino, *El libro dell'Amore*, p. 209: « Ancora el coito universale accade nella cura d'amore, al quale remedio molto acconsentì Lucretio ». On this particular quotation of the *De amore* see Prosperi, *Di soave liquore gli orli del vaso*, p. 164.

[10] For sex and Venus in *De rerum natura*, IV, 1030–1287 see: Robert D. Brown, *Lucretius on Love and Sex. A Commentary on* De rerum natura *IV, 1030–1287*, Brill, Leiden 1987. On arabic medecine and sex: Giuseppe Celentano, *Due scritti medici di Al-Kindī*, Supplemento n. 18 agli *Annali* 39/1, Istituto Orientale di Napoli, Napoli 1979, p. 1–75: 11–36; Ayman Murad, « Le mal d'amour dans la médecine arabomusulmane », *Annales Médico-psychologiques, revue psychiatrique*, 159 (2001), p. 511–514; Mary F. Wack, « Alī ibn al-'Abbās al-Maǧūsī and Constantine on Love, and the Evolution of the *Practica Pantegni* », in Charles Burnett, Danielle Jacquart (eds.), *Constantine the African and 'Alī ibn al-'Abbās al-Maǧūsī: The 'Pantegni' and Related Texts*, Brill, Leiden 1994, p. 161–202.

[11] Marsilio Ficino, *El libro dell'Amore*, p. 137: « ...l'amore essere una spetie d'omore malinconico e di pazzia, e Rasis medico comandò che e' si curassi pe 'l coito, digiuno, ebrietà e exercitio ». This specific quotation is actually found in *Divisiones* IX, « De amore. Cura eius est assiduatio coytus et ieiunium et deambulatio et ebrietas plurima assidue» , in *Divisiones Rasis filii Zacharie. Viaticum Constantini monachi*, here quoted in the translation of Gerardo da Cremona edited in Lyon, Gilbert Villiers, 1510, fol. VIv.

Ficino transformed also the meaning of « conversum » which always represented a philological *crux* as evidenced later by Denis Lambin, the sixteenth-century editor of Lucretius read by Montaigne.[12] In the first case the participle *conversum* was to be understood as « directed towards the one beloved woman », in the second case Ficino read « altered only by (or for) the love of a single one » since *unius* matched equally the two solutions. In fact, *convertere* fits with the first meaning, i.e. *directed toward*, as well as with the second one, i.e. *altered by* or *spoilt*.

How was it that intercourse could cure lethal lovesickness? The answer lies in the morbid passion called by Marsilio « amor simplex » or unanswered eros. According to Ficino, loving without being loved in return meant annihilating oneself and losing all hope of revival. If he was not re-loved back then the lover could deperish in his isolation, became ill, went mad and most often died as Ficino explained in his *De amore*.

Of course, Ficino had not invented lovesickness and before him the madness of love leading to death was a stereotype in much of the Hippocratic or Pseudo-Hippocratic literature conveyed through the Arabs in Latin medieval medicine. For instance, in a late antique text from the 6th century AD called *Perdica*, a young prince punished by Venus is consumed by a guilty and secret passion for his own mother. Only Hippocrates understands the incurable disease by examining the pulse of the poor boy who dies however from starvation and melancholy. In another well known story of the Arabic lore, *Majnūn and Laylā*, the unfortunate lover suffers infinite pain and severe madness before dying on the tomb of his beloved.[13]

Physically speaking, the humoral harm caused by corrupted seed, genital vapours and excessive fire, is at the core of Ficino's sexology. For most of the Galenic tradition inherited by Arabic medicine, the fiery sperm originated from blood and proceeded from the marrow and the brain.[14] Because of its excessive warmth, the spermatic superfluity could unbalance the mind. Hence insanity was naturally and mutually connected with love. As a keen reader of love poetry, Ficino knew too well the diagnosis of fantasmatic deception provoked by excessive desire, quite common among medieval poets and physicians from Dante and Cavalcanti to Dino del Garbo. We should remember here the sarcastical diagnosis addressed by Dante da Maiano to Alighieri, the author of the *Vita Nova*. Da Maiano coarsely advised the poet to cool his « coglia » or testicles in order to extinguish

[12] T. Lucretii Cari *De rerum natura libri VI*, Jean Bienné, Lutetiae 1570, p. 387 on variants like: *conceptum, congestum, concertum, consertum.*

[13] Dols, *Majnūn,* p. 320–328.

[14] Wack, *Lovesickness in the Midlle Ages*, p. 94–97; Jacquart, Thomasset, *Sexualité et savoir médical*, p. 73–78.

in cold water their genital warmth and hot vapours[15] responsible for his erotic hallucinatory verses on Beatrice.

Now, as bloodletting was currently practised for the purgation of black and thick blood, in case of superfluous or corrupted sperm the coitus with the so-called vulgar Venus obviated further poisoning. A notorious case in Ficino's time was that of the humanist Ugolino Verino's son, the adolescent Michele Verino, born in 1469 exactly when the *De amore* was composed. In 1487 Michele died a virgin at the age of eighteen. Victim of a testicular trauma, the young man had been prescribed therapeutic coitus, the *venereus coitus*, by some Florentine physicians. One would be tempted to include Ficino in the lot. Anyway, because of his inveterate chastity, Michele Verino coyly refused the sexual cure, whereupon he expired deploring that « the physicians promise me health thanks to coitus... ».[16]

The *philosophical* influence of Lucretius on Ficino has been a long-running debate among scholars since Raymond Marcel, James Hankins, Sebastiano Gentile until James Snyder and Raphael Ebgi more recently. Actually, the *medical* influence of Lucretius might well be much more decisive than expected. A key topic like spermatic purgation through *venereus coitus* did not escape to Ficino's attention and if anything of the Lucretian Venus lingered in the *De amore*, it was above all the therapeutic function of the *Venus medica* applied to the lovesick. Through Ficino's legacy Lucretius was seen as a physician of love throughout the Renaissance and Valentina Prosperi correctly observed that thanks to Marsilio's mediation the sexual realism of Lucretius was paradoxically becoming quite influent.[17]

Therefore, my conclusion must be slightly at variance with most of the unsuspecting critics who have over-idealized Ficinian *castitas* linked to the disembodied Venus. In real life when sanity was endangered by the obscure power of love, Platonic chastity suffered a macroscopic exception perhaps not intended fot the rare *studiosi* but for the common lovers. Far from being autocontradictory the Platonist Ficino did fully agree with the Lucretian Ficino according to whom eros was a tremendous dual force leading to the best of *voluptas* or to the worst of *melancholia*, in which extreme case the *Venus vulgaris* might reveal as helpful as the *Venus celestis* was praiseful, despite the preference granted to celestial love.

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15 I am alluding to Dante da Maiano's infamous reply to Dante's sonnet *A ciascun' alma presa e gentil core*: « [...] se san ti truovi e fermo de la mente / che lavi la tua coglia largamente / a ciò che stinga e passi lo vapore / lo qual ti fa favoleggiar loquendo [...] », see Bruno Nardi, « L'amore e i medici medievali », in *Saggi e note di critica dantesca,* Ricciardi, Milano – Napoli 1966, p. 238–267. On the « calefactio spirituum » due to sexual arousement see Arnaldi de Villanova *Opera Medica Omnia*, vol. III: *Tractatus de Amore Heroico* [...], p. 49–51.

16 Alfonso Lazzari, *Ugolino e Michele Verino: studi biografici e critici*, Libreria C. Clausen, Torino 1897, p. 117

17 Prosperi, *Di soave liquore gli orli del vaso*, p. 170: « Tuttavia, grazie alla mediazione di Ficino, la meccanica sessuale illustrata da Lucrezio ebbe ampio corso anche nel Cinquecento ».

The Elementary Particles:
A Computational Stylometric Inquiry into the Mediaeval Greek-Latin Aristotle*

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I. *Introduction*

The research presented in this article results from a pleasant and fruitful collaboration, for which Pieter Beullens provided the research question and the background knowledge about mediaeval Greek-Latin translation of Aristotle and other ancient authors, and Wouter Haverals and Ben Nagy developed, tested, and described the approach from computational stylometry. Our research started from the question of how computational stylistic analysis can help to identify Latin translators of ancient Greek texts and corroborate or contest previous attributions. While computational approaches to style have reached impressive results in the field of authorship recognition, the identification of translators faces the challenge that it must cleanly distinguish between the characteristics of the (Latin) translator and the features of the underlying (Greek) author. To corroborate the method's validity, a first case study focuses on the two preserved

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13th-century Greek-Latin versions of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*.[1] Since the translations were based on the same source text, they form an ideal litmus test to demonstrate the usefulness of the method to distinguish between translators rather than to identify the author. The attribution of one translation to William of Moerbeke is generally accepted, while the suggestion to ascribe the other on philological grounds to Bartholomew of Messina has led to mixed conclusions.

We first illustrate that the traditional stylistic approach to Aristoteles Latinus translations, as initiated and developed by Lorenzo Minio-Paluello and Fernand Bossier, shows an unacknowledged close connection with contemporary practices in authorship attribution studies – the work produced by those precursors was an invaluable basis for the design of our own computational method. After justifying the criteria governing the compilation of our corpus, and the origin and processing of the source texts, we explain the technical background of our stylometric methodology. Finally, the results of our investigation reveal some limitations and difficulties that will need further research and refinement.

II. Rhetorica: *State of the Art* [2]

In the later Middle Ages, two Greek-Latin translations of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* circulated. William of Moerbeke's translation of the *Rhetoric* was the prevailing one, evidenced by its preservation in over one hundred manuscripts.[3] Yet, the existence of a second, anonymous Greek-Latin version was already known to Amable Jourdain who quotes the opening paragraph from a Sorbonne manuscript.[4] While the attribution to Moerbeke has never been challenged, the identity of the other translator is still undecided. Pieter Beullens, one of the authors of the present study, has previously argued for an attribution to Bartholomew of Messina. In this section, the existing debate on this topic is outlined.

Bernd Schneider's doctoral dissertation offered a comprehensive study of the anonymous translation, drawing upon the Sorbonne manuscript, a second

1 We use *Rhetoric* when referring to Aristotle's work in general, but in line with the other cited titles we designate the translations of that text with the Latin form *Rhetorica*.

2 This section was adapted from Pieter Beullens, « A Methodological Approach to Anonymously Transmitted Medieval Translations of Philosophical and Scientific Texts. The Case of Bartholomew of Messina », Ph.D. Diss., KU Leuven 2020.

3 Rita Copeland, *Emotion and the History of Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2021, p. 185, n. 90.

4 Amable Jourdain, *Recherches critiques sur l'âge et l'origine des traductions latines d'Aristote et sur des commentaires grecs ou arabes employés par les docteurs scolastiques*, Nouvelle édition, ed. Charles Jourdain, Fantin, Paris 1843, p. 444. Now MS Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 16673.

complete version from Toledo,[5] and two fragmentary copies. The study eventually resulted in the critical edition for the Aristoteles Latinus series in 1978.[6] Schneider's detailed analysis of the text led him to conclude that its translator was not very competent in the Greek language (« interpres anonymus graeci sermonis non apprime sciens fuisse... videtur »).[7] The same can be said about his knowledge of Greek cultural heritage: the translator often misses proper names, which produce mix-ups and adventurous translations (« Verwechslungen und abenteuerliche Übersetzungen ») or are left out leaving open spaces in the text. Quotations from Greek poetry met the same fate.[8] Still, our man is not entirely uncultivated. He demonstrates decent familiarity with prosody and scansion when he replaces Greek examples for metrical schemes with Latin illustrations where the mere translation of the words would have led to confusion and utter meaninglessness. With a similar feeling for cultural transposition, the opening verses from Homer's epic poems are rendered with lines from the *Ilias Latina* and Horace's *Ars poetica*.[9]

The suggestion to identify the anonymous translator of the *Rhetoric* as Bartholomew of Messina was first launched by Leonard Spengel in 1867, although he readily admitted that he had never seen the text for himself (« mihi numquam visa »).[10] Spengel's attribution was briskly and without even an attempt at substantiation dismissed by Martin Grabmann, stating that « there are no positive leads for this » (« Indessen fehlen hierfür die positiven Anhaltspunkte »).[11]

Schneider echoes Grabmann's view that Spengel's assumption cannot be justified by anything (« daß sich Spengels Annahme durch nichts rechtfertigen läßt »).[12] Unfortunately, Schneider's statement is poorly supported by limited evidence, consigned to a mere footnote (admittedly of Germanic size, taking up more than half a page). It can be split into three different focusses: (1) function words, (2) content words, and (3) syntax.

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5 MS Toledo, Biblioteca capitular, 47.15. The final chapters of book III (from 1368a8 onward) are missing in both the Toledo and the Sorbonne manuscripts although the latter has an *explicit* stating: *Completus est*. Therefore, it seems logical to assume that the shared model, or even the autograph, was incomplete.

6 Bernd Schneider, *Die mittelalterlichen griechisch-lateinischen Übersetzungen der aristotelischen Rhetorik,* de Gruyter, Berlin – New York 1971, and Id., *Rhetorica. Translatio anonyma sive Vetus et Translatio Guillelmi de Moerbeka*, Brill, Leiden 1978 (Aristoteles Latinus, 31/1–2).

7 Schneider, *Rhetorica*, p. xvi.

8 Schneider, *Die mittelalterlichen griechisch-lateinischen Übersetzungen*, p. 27–28.

9 Schneider, *Die mittelalterlichen griechisch-lateinischen Übersetzungen*, p. 28.

10 Leonardus Spengel, *Aristotelis Ars Rhetorica*, vol. I, Teubner, Lipsiae 1867, p. 117 and n. 2.

11 Martin Grabmann, *Forschungen über die lateinischen Aristoteles-Übersetzungen des XIII. Jahrhunderts,* Aschendorff, Münster 1916, p. 243.

12 Schneider, *Die mittelalterlichen griechisch-lateinischen Übersetzungen*, p. 4 and n. 14.

(1) As far as function words are concerned, Schneider refers to three articles by Minio-Paluello and to Lorimer and Minio-Paluello's critical edition of *De mundo*.[13] Schneider concludes that the comparison does not warrant confirmation of Spengel's intuitive attribution of the *Rhetorica anonyma* to Bartholomew.

(2) For the study of lexical choices, Schneider compares a very eclectic selection of seven terms from the *Rhetorica*, viz. ἀκμάζω, ἀκμή, ἁρμόττω, ἀσπίς, δικαστήριον, κεφαλαιωδῶς, and σεμνός, with their equivalents in *De mundo*, the only translation by Bartholomew for which he had a critical edition available at the time. Schneider does not provide his rationale for deeming these specific words as significant and conclusive evidence. Given that these words are translated differently in the two works, Schneider seems to imply that their translators cannot be identical.

There is little need to emphasise the restricted value of this very small sample and the lack of clarification as to why precisely these words are expected to represent Bartholomew's characteristic vocabulary. Beyond the small number of items and their seemingly arbitrary selection, an additional methodological issue is Schneider's choice of comparative material. It consists of only one text, *De mundo*, and to make matters worse, four of the selected terms appear just once in this text. Moreover, as opposed to the other translations by Bartholomew that we use in this article, *De mundo* is not attributed to him in any manuscript. Its acceptance as a translation by Bartholomew of Messina solely relies on the stylistic analysis by Minio-Paluello.

It is safe to assume from these observations that Schneider takes an overambitious leap by inferring from single occurrences in one particular work that this terminology reliably reflects Bartholomew's preferences, while at the same time overlooking potential alternative explanations. Implicitly, Schneider's approach relies on the shaky assumption that translators chose a specific Latin term for each Greek word at the start of their careers and consistently stuck to it, thereby disregarding the possibility that they could gain fresh or deeper insights, or even forget whatever bit of knowledge they earlier had.

It should therefore come as no surprise that Schneider's evidence does not stand the test of a more thorough comparison. Expanding the analysis to encompass more of Bartholomew's translations yields greater diversity in typical renderings and evidence of an evolving understanding. Let us return to what

[13] Lorenzo Minio-Paluello « Guglielmo di Moerbeke, traduttore della 'Poetica' di Aristotele (1278) », *Rivista di Filosofia Neo-Scolastica*, 39 (1947), p. 1–17; Id., « Henri Aristippe, Guillaume de Moerbeke et les traductions latines médiévales des 'Météorologiques' et de 'De generatione et corruptione' d'Aristote », *Revue Philosophique de Louvain*, 45 (1947), p. 206–235; Id., « Boezio, Giacomo Veneto, Guglielmo di Moerbeke, Jacques Lefèvre d'Etaples e gli *Elenchi Sofistici* », *Rivista di filosofia neo-scolastica*, 44 (1952), p. 398–411; Willelmus L. Lorimer, Laurentius Minio-Paluello, *De mundo. Translationes Bartholomaei et Nicholai. Editio altera*, Desclée De Brouwer, Bruges – Paris 1965 (Aristoteles Latinus, 11/1–2); the three articles were reprinted in Lorenzo Minio-Paluello, *Opuscula. The Latin Aristotle*, Hakkert, Amsterdam 1972, p. 40–56; 57–86; 164–177.

Schneider labels as typical translations from the anonymous *Rhetorica*. He probably considered the translations for ἀκμή ('augmastica'), ἀκμάζω ('augmasticum fio'), and κεφαλαιωδῶς ('in specie capitis') clumsy in comparison with 'augmentum', 'augeor'/'cresco', and 'capitulatim' that he read in *De mundo*. However, interesting parallels can be found in Bartholomew's other translations to which Schneider had no access.

Schneider criticised the rendering of κεφαλαιωδῶς as *in specie capitis*, for which 'capitulatim' in *De mundo* (397b9) looks more appropriate. Yet in Hippocrates' *De natura pueri* (12.5 168.12), Bartholomew employs the same building scheme to latinize an adjective ending in -ειδής ('in specie panniculi' – ὑμενοειδής). Bartholomew's translation of δικαστήριον as 'curia' is consistent with its usage in the *Problemata* (950b5) and in the *Magna moralia* (1202a24), while 'iudicium' as found in *De mundo* (400b17, comparable with 'iudiciale' in the *Rhetorica*, 1416a32)[14] also occurs in the *Problemata* (951a15), alongside 'pretorium' (952b36). A similar terminological wavering can be observed for ἀσπίς. Schneider contrasts Bartholomew's 'clipeus' from *De mundo* (399b3;35) with 'telum' in the anonymous *Rhetorica*, while he overlooks that his own critical edition of the latter records instances for 'clipeus', 'telum', 'scutum', and 'lancea' as renderings of ἀσπίς. In one passage (1413a5) the manuscripts document 'telum scutum' as a probable double reading from the translator's autograph.

There lies little weight in the distinction that Schneider makes between 'congruo' (allegedly Bartholomew's favourite) and 'convenio' (*Rhetorica*) as the Latin equivalents for ἁρμόττω. While 'congruo' is confirmed as Bartholomew's choice in the *Magna moralia* (1188a25; 1191a11), 'convenio' is found in *De mirabilibus auscultationibus* (837a33) and the *Problemata* (905b14; 922b24; 927a17; 933a21).[15] Moreover, mirroring the oversight with the previous term, Schneider neglects to mention that the translation 'convenio' for ἁρμόττω is equally attested in the *Rhetorica*. His incomplete, or even incorrect reports of the translations for ἀσπίς and ἁρμόττω all but nullify the value of these particular content words as evidence.

As for the final example σεμνός, Schneider considers its translations 'humilis' and 'parvus' as indicative of the translator's poor knowledge of Greek, and contrasts them with Bartholomew's rendering as 'venerabilis' in *De mundo* (408b6).[16] He could have added that the same Latin word is found in Bartholomew's version of Theophrastus' *De principiis*, ch. 1, for which Kley's edition was available.[17]

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[14] Mistakenly 1416b32 in Schneider's index.

[15] Alongside single occurrences of 'pervenio' (928b14) and 'concordo' (919b8).

[16] Schneider, *Die mittelalterlichen griechisch-lateinischen Übersetzungen*, p. 19, n. 21.

[17] Walter Kley, *Theophrasts Metaphysisches Bruchstück und die Schrift περὶ σημείων in der lateinischen Übersetzung des Bartholomaeus von Messina*, Triltsch, Würzburg 1936.

In any case, Schneider argues that Bartholomew's understanding of the word was too sophisticated to reconcile with such an imprecise translation in the *Rhetorica*.

Nevertheless, Bartholomew's grasp of the term σεμνός is more complex than initially evident. In the *Magna moralia*, the adjective and its corresponding noun are transliterated as 'semnos' (1192b36) and 'semnotes' (1192b30), although the verb σεμνύνω consistently becomes 'venero' (1195b19;22²;23). This fluctuation in translation choices may be indicative of a growing insight into the failure of previous attempts to adequately cover the original's semantic range.

(3) In his final argument, Schneider relies on syntax, referencing Dittmeyer's observation that Bartholomew was well aware of the exact meaning of the superlative preceded by ὅτι or ὡς, which he translated correctly in the *Problemata* (865b22: ὡς τάχιστα – 'quam velocissime').[18] However, the identical expression is less expertly latinized as 'velocissime' (884a30) and 'cito' (966a17) elsewhere in the same work, while ὡς μάλιστα becomes 'ut maxime' (866a15). In the Hippocratic *De humana natura* 168.3, ὅτι ἐγγύτατα is latinized as 'adhuc proxima'.[19] While Dittmeyer's claim of Bartholomew's syntactical proficiency may hold, Schneider's conclusion that the *Rhetoric*'s inconsistent translations definitively argue against Bartholomew's translatorship is an overreach.

Overall, Schneider's footnote-long dismissal of Spengel's intuitive hypothesis relies on an eclectic range of function words, complemented by seven terms that he claims are uniquely translated, yet his reporting of these is notably incomplete. Moreover, these specific terms are contrasted with a single text, *De mundo*, attributed to Bartholomew solely on stylistic grounds. Finally, Schneider's analysis hinges on a single case of a correctly rendered syntactical concept, yet overlooks other dubious or blatantly incorrect interpretations of the same phenomenon. Schneider's inaccurately, or at least incompletely presented arguments are by no means sufficient to warrant the firm conclusions that the German scholar draws concerning Bartholomew's (lack of) involvement with the *Rhetorica*; neither is Pieter De Leemans's confirmation that Schneider has « convincingly refuted » Spengel's thesis.[20] Despite De Leemans's support for Schneider's view, Lisa Devriese, who edited Bartholomew's translation of the *Physiognomonica*, seems favourable to the contrary hypothesis without substantiating her claim: « It must

[18] Leonhard Dittmeyer, « Hat Bartholomaeus von Messina die *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* übersetzt? », *Philologische Wochenschrift*, 58 (1938), p. 252–256 and 285–288, in particular p. 287.

[19] Possibly as the result of a misreading as ἔτι ἐγγύτατα.

[20] Pieter De Leemans, *Translating at the Court. Bartholomew of Messina and Cultural Life at the Court of Manfred, King of Sicily*, Leuven University Press, Leuven 2014, p. xxi, n. 23, but the author changed his opinion in the 2016 version of the *Aristoteles Latinus Database*, where he writes about the *translatio vetus* of the *Rhetoric*: « it seems, however, that its author belonged to the circle of Bartholomew of Messina ».

be noted that the anonymous translation bears many similarities to Bartholomew's idiom ».[21]

If Schneider was convinced that the use of identical or similar content words as equivalents for Greek words is significant to attribute a Latin version to a known translator, he could have provided additional evidence of Bartholomew's fingerprints in the anonymous *Rhetorica*.

The adverb ἁπλῶς is predominantly and expectedly translated as 'simpliciter' in the *Rhetorica*, yet in four instances, 'universaliter' is preferred (1357a12;35; 1375b19; 1402a23), and in one other case both Latin equivalents appear together (1393a16). This particular equivalence of ἁπλῶς – 'universaliter' is also found in Bartholomew's translations of the *Magna moralia* (1193b5; 1199b32), and of the *Problemata* (882b6).

There is a notable tendency to translate ψηφίζομαι as 'numero', 'to count', which finds confirmations in the *Problemata* (950b6; and 951b1-4 where the verbs for 'to condemn' and 'to acquit' – καταψηφίζομαι and ἀποψηφίζομαι – are rendered as 'connumero' and 'enumero')[22] and in the *Magna moralia* (ἀποψηφίζω – 'supernumero' 1206b21; σύμψηφος – 'connumeratus' 1203b27, 'connumerator' 1206b25), is echoed in the *Rhetorica* ('numero' 1384b35) and in 'numerus' as the rendering for ψήφισμα (1411a10).

Also in the *Rhetorica*, the translation that divides the compound Greek ἀκρόπολις into its etymological components as 'extremum urbis' (1400a33) is mirrored in *De mundo*, where 'extremum urbis' (399b33) occurs alongside the variant reading 'castrum' (the latter also in *De mirabilibus auscultationibus* 846a18). By contrast, in Moerbeke's version of the *Rhetorica*, the same word is rendered as 'extremum civitatis'. The peculiar translation for δρόμος as 'via', which is documented in the *Problemata* (945a24), gets two further confirmations in the anonymous *Rhetorica* (1361b9; 1406a23).

Even if Bartholomew of Messina were not to be identified as the translator of the anonymous *Rhetorica*, a few lexical choices strongly imply a Southern Italian or Sicilian origin of the translation. Consider the translation of σπένδομαι, meaning 'to make peace' (1411a10), rendered as 'facio treug(u)am' (the two main manuscripts of the text have different spellings). Although the noun apparently derives from a Germanic etymology and has left its traces in several languages (e.g. 'trève' in French, 'truce' in English), this particular form points to Italian or Spanish influence. A stronger indication is found in the use of the term 'cabellotus' for τελώνης (1397a25; cf. 'cabella' for τέλος in the same context, 1397a26), which refers to a tax collector. The word is documented in the provisions made by

[21] Lisa Devriese, *Physiognomonica. Translatio Bartholomaei de Messana*, Brepols, Turnhout 2019 (Aristoteles Latinus, 19), p. liii, n. 46.

[22] Possibly an illustration of how the lack of knowledge about the cultural setting of the Athenian courts of law puzzled the translator and drove his attempt at equivalence to incomprehensibility.

emperor Frederick II of Sicily concerning this subject and it is used in similar legislation for Charles of Anjou as king of Sicily in 1277.[23] Although the term later became more widely spread, it was well enough established in 13th-century Sicily and South Italy to make it spring to mind when a local translator looked for a suitable Latin equivalent. In contrast, William of Moerbeke, lacking this geographical context, initially chose what looks like a transliteration 'telonearius', which he replaced by the periphrastic 'qui tributa colligit' when he revised the first version of his *Rhetorica* translation (see Schneider's apparatus ad loc.).

From this summary, it should be clear that there are many evidentiary considerations that must be balanced and assessed. For the present, we set aside the historical context, and the style of translation in general, and focus on the new evidence arising from our stylometric study.

III. *Stylometric Analysis*

III.1. Historical Approaches to Stylometry

In the realm of literary studies, the quest for uncovering authorship and translator identity has long been guided by the nuanced observation of stylistic elements. While a comprehensive history of the stylistic method's evolution falls beyond the scope of this article, it is pertinent to explore the intersections between traditional stylistic analysis and its modern counterpart which we will pursue in the following section: a stylometric computational approach. Stylometry represents a significant evolution in computer-aided textual analysis, offering a systematic approach to the analysis of textual styles. This evolution mirrors a broader shift in the humanities, where digital methods have started to augment traditional scholarship.

Tracing back to the 1940s, the scholarly endeavours of Lorenzo Minio-Paluello, and later Fernand Bossier in the 1990s, shed light on the intricacies of translating specific Greek words into Latin, particularly noting their frequencies as used by various translators.[24] Although rudimentary by today's standards, their approach was groundbreaking in classical studies, demonstrating that straightforward counts of frequently used words could yield significant insights into

[23] *Fridericus II. Constitutiones pro Sicilia*, ed. Wolfgang Stürner, cited in *Brepolis Cross Database Searchtool*, and the electronic version of Du Cange's *Glossarium* (http://ducange.enc.sorbonne.fr/cabellotus – access 20 April 2020).

[24] See esp. Minio-Paluello, « Guglielmo di Moerbeke », p. 1–17; Id., « Henri Aristippe »; Fernand Bossier, « L'élaboration du vocabulaire philosophique chez Burgundio de Pise », in Jacqueline Hamesse (ed.), *Aux origines du lexique philosophique européen. L'influence de la Latinitas*, Fédération internationale des Instituts d'études médiévales, Louvain-la-Neuve 1997, p. 81–116.

translatorship. The pioneering methodology employed by Minio-Paluello bears a striking resemblance to modern-day stylometry, even though he did not explicitly refer to his method as stylometric.

Stylometry, as we understand it today, can be defined as the quantitative study of writing style through the analysis of linguistic patterns, structures, and word distributions within texts. This method has become an indispensable tool in various domains, from determining the authorship of disputed documents to unravelling the subtleties of translatorship and identifying distinctive features of textual genres. The concept of a 'stylistic DNA' or 'stylome', a term coined by Van Halteren et al., captures the essence of stylometry effectively.[25] Much like biological DNA that uniquely identifies individuals, a stylome encompasses the unique linguistic fingerprint of an author or translator.

The significance of stylometry was profoundly demonstrated by the landmark research of Mosteller and Wallace in 1964.[26] Their seminal work on the *Federalist Papers*, a collection of 85 political essays to promote the United States Constitution, represents an important moment in non-traditional authorship studies. By employing Bayesian statistical methods to analyse these 18th-century essays, which were published under the pseudonym 'Publius', Mosteller and Wallace sought to resolve the long-standing ambiguity surrounding the authorship of 12 of these essays. Focusing primarily on the frequency of function words – highly frequent words like articles, prepositions, and conjunctions – their analysis pointed convincingly towards James Madison as the author of the disputed essays. The study of translation style is a less crowded domain than the study of authorial style. For context, readers might refer to Jan Rybicki's 2012 article « The great mystery of the (almost) invisible translator » with references.[27] Rybicki's findings have important methodological implications for this study, but at this point we will simply note that it led us to examine (only) closed-class function words, as opposed to 'most frequent words' which are more commonly used in modern authorship attribution research.

The utility of function words in stylometric analysis is anchored in several key characteristics:[28] (1) High frequency: function words appear frequently, providing

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[25] Hans van Halteren, Harald Baayen, Fiona Tweedie, Marco Haverkort, Anneke Neijt, « New Machine Learning Methods Demonstrate the Existence of a Human Stylome », *Journal of Quantitative Linguistics*, 12/1 (2005), p. 65–77.

[26] Frederick Mosteller, David Wallace, *Inference and Disputed Authorship: The Federalist Papers*, Springer, New York 1964.

[27] Jan Rybicki, « The Great Mystery of the (Almost) Invisible Translator. Stylometry in Translation », in Michael P. Oakes, Meng Ji (eds.), *Quantitative Methods in Corpus-Based Translation Studies. A Practical Guide to Descriptive Translation Research*, John Benjamins, Amsterdam – Philadelphia 1996, p. 231–248.

[28] José Nilo G. Binongo, « Who Wrote the 15th Book of Oz? An Application of Multivariate Analysis to Authorship Attribution», *Chance*, 16 (2003), p. 9–17; Mike Kestemont, « Function Words in

a rich dataset for analysis. (2) Closed set: the set of function words is relatively fixed and limited, allowing for a focused and comprehensive study. (3) Content-independence: their usage is largely independent of the text's subject matter or genre, offering insights that transcend specific themes. (4) Unconscious use: authors and translators use function words more or less unconsciously during the writing process, thus reflecting intrinsic patterns of language usage. The methodology employed by Minio-Paluello and Bossier aligns closely with these principles.

A prime example of Minio-Paluello's stylometric method *avant la lettre* is evident in his analysis of the highly frequent word 'autem' in the Latin translation of Aristotle's *Poetica*, found in MS Toledo, Biblioteca capitular, 47.10, and Eton College Library 129. He noted that William of Moerbeke uniquely used 'autem' to translate the Greek δέ. In contrast, Moerbeke's contemporaries varied between 'vero' or omitted the conjunction altogether.[29] Such detailed observations act as signposts in attributing translations, showcasing Minio-Paluello's intuitive sense for these linguistic frequencies. However, a notable distinction remains between his approach and modern computational stylometry, particularly in the methodological framework and the interpretative process. Minio-Paluello and Bossier's analyses, pioneering as they were, depend significantly on their *Gelehrtenintuition*, involving subjective decisions about which linguistic features to include in their analysis. In contrast, computational stylometry offers a more systematic approach, reducing the reliance on individual preferences. Despite this, Minio-Paluello's work profoundly embodies the spirit of the stylometric method, prefiguring the data-driven analysis of modern computational approaches, which is precisely the focus of the following section.

III.2. Context and Aims

In this section, we examine two translations of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* with respect to the style of the translators, based on their use of Latin function words. The texts are examined in the context of a larger corpus of mediaeval Latin translations, both to validate the methods as well as to better understand and contextualise the results as they apply to the uncertainly-attributed *Rhetorica*. The key objective of the stylometric investigation is to interrogate the attribution of the uncertain *Rhetorica* to Bartholomew of Messina. For the purposes of this section, it is putatively assigned to Bartholomew in the sigla, although as we will see, that attribution is not supported by the methods we applied.

Authorship Attribution. From Black Magic to Theory? », in *Proceedings of the 3rd Workshop on Computational Linguistics for Literature (CLFL)*, Association for Computational Linguistics, Gothenburg 2014, p. 59–66.

[29] Minio-Paluello, « Guglielmo di Moerbeke », p. 8.

III.3. Corpus

As we delineate the corpus for our investigation, it is worthwhile to reflect on the early wisdom of Minio-Paluello, who astutely recognized the importance of a well-chosen comparative base in stylistic analysis:

> The linguistic-stylistic proof of authorship for an anonymous translation demands a comparison with other undeniably attributed translations by the presumed author. This comparison should reveal a sufficient degree of similarity in consistent and frequently occurring characteristics between the anonymous version and those that are verified. Furthermore, it necessitates a comparison with the largest possible number of other translations to ascertain that these characteristics are specific to the author in question, and not common to other authors.[30]

The reference corpus for our investigation consists of works by six translators to whom some Latin versions are firmly attributed. The attributions rely on explicit mentions in titles or colophons in manuscripts that transmit the translations, on the contexts and manuscripts in which the translations were transmitted, or on scholarly consensus based on traditional stylistic analysis. From the 12th century, we included James of Venice, Burgundio of Pisa, Henry Aristippus, and the anonymous translator of the *Physica Vaticana* and the *Metaphysica media*. The 13th century is represented by William of Moerbeke and Bartholomew of Messina. All translators in our investigation translated at least one (pseudo-)Aristotelian treatise, yet in order to widen the sample of translated texts as much as possible and to avoid possible interference caused by the use of similar source texts, treatises by other authors from philosophy, theology, and medicine were also selected. The corpus also includes two unattributed translations of treatises of the ancient Pyrrhonist Sextus Empiricus that were previously examined by the authors. The results of this investigation will be published in a separate article. The complete corpus is detailed in Appendix B.

It is appropriate to also mention what we deliberately did not include in the corpus. We did not consider any translations of logic, which were likely heavily tinged by the strong impact of Boethius' translations and commentaries on the Latin culture and vocabulary of education. Also omitted are Latin versions that

[30] Minio-Paluello, « Guglielmo di Moerbeke », p. 3: « La prova linguistico-stilistica della paternità d'una traduzione anonima richiede un confronto con altre traduzioni indubbie del supposto autore, confronto che mostri un grado sufficiente di identità in caratteristiche costanti e frequenti tra la versione anonima e quelle sicure; ed oltre a questo, richiede un secondo confronto con il massimo numero possibile di altre traduzioni, da cui risulti che tali caratteristiche sono particolari all'autore in questione, e non ad altri autori ».

originated from the revision of previously existing translations since it would be difficult to adequately distinguish the input of the revising translator from the vocabulary of his older colleague. For the same reason, translations by Robert Grosseteste were ignored. There is insufficient evidence about his use of work done by predecessors, and even for some of the translations that were certainly made from scratch, it is debated how the workload was divided between him and his assistants.

III.4. General Methodology

Although this is not the right venue for a detailed discussion of the technical methods, it is important to note that the analysis process was designed to be as open and reproducible as possible. Due to copyright restrictions, we are unable to provide open-access copies of the raw corpus text. However, the processed data is available immediately after pre-processing and feature extraction (function word frequencies). Our analysis was performed using the Python programming language, scikit-learn, and subsidiary packages like UMAP.[31] Data visualisations were created with the R language and ggplot2.[32] Some analysis code was implemented from scratch as part of this project, and this is also made available under open licences. We have created a dedicated repository for the code and replication material for this article, which is freely accessible, and allows all figures and results to be precisely reproduced, or for the results to be further investigated.[33]

The transformation of the corpus was relatively simple. After basic data-cleaning and character-set normalisation, every text was broken into sequential chunks of 1000 words, from which we extracted the function word frequencies. The chosen function words are presented in Appendix A. These words were selected based on domain expertise;[34] in some cases, they represent function

[31] Most of the basic statistical analysis, scaling, feature extraction was performed using Scikit-learn: Fabian Pedregosa et al., « Machine Learning in Python », *Journal of Machine Learning Research*, 12 (2011), p. 2825–2830. Unsupervised clustering is based on UMAP: Leland McInnes, John Healy, Nathaniel Saul, Lukas Großberger, « UMAP: Uniform Manifold Approximation and Projection », *Journal of Open Source Software*, 3/29 (2018), p. 861, https://doi.org/10.21105/joss.00861 (accessed 27 March 2024).

[32] Hadley Wickham, *ggplot2: Elegant Graphics for Data Analysis*, Springer, New York 2016.

[33] https://github.com/PieterBeullens/medtrans_stylo (accessed 24 March 2024).

[34] This is the point where we ought to clarify what might seem like a methodological anomaly. Modern authorship stylometry commonly employs analysis based on the frequencies of some number of most frequent words (anywhere from 100 to 5000), using distance measures based on Burrow's Delta (with assorted improvements). As Rybicki notes in his 2012 article, these approaches appear to submerge the style of the translator, and detect mainly authorial signal. By restricting the domain of analysis even more to expertly selected function words, much as Minio-Paluello and others have done with traditional methods, we hoped to suppress the

words where the mediaeval translators are known to differ, in others they are words that offer a choice to the translator in terms of the way Greek idiom is rendered in Latin. It is by these translator choices that the translator's individual stylistic fingerprints are revealed – it should be evident that when there is only one possible way to translate an expression then there is no room for individual style. In addition to the words listed in Appendix A, mediaeval orthographic variations were normalised, consolidating case-insensitive frequencies under the same headword – so 'multotiens', for example, encompasses the combined frequencies for 'multotiens', 'multoties', and the uppercase V/U spellings 'MVLTOTIENS', and 'MVLTOTIES'.

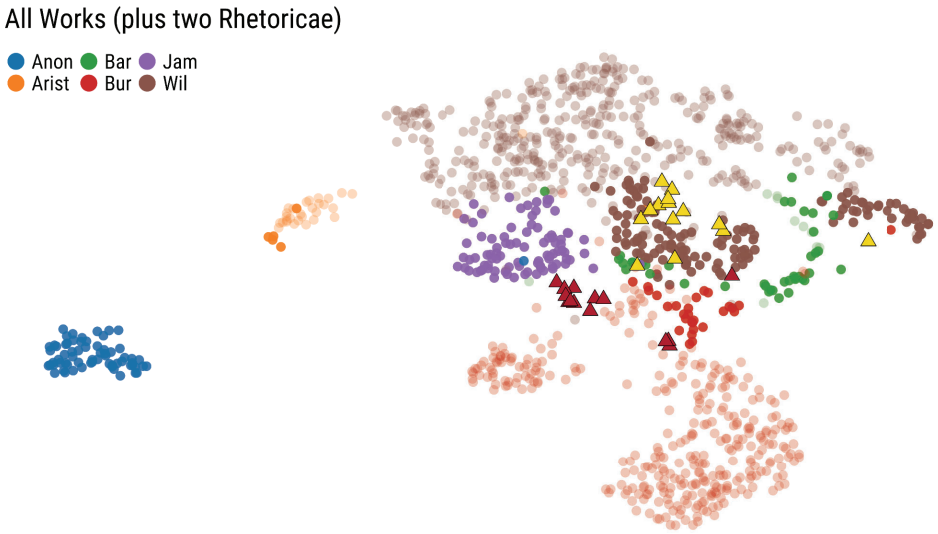


Fig. 1. UMAP cluster of the corpus. Colours indicate the translator (ground truth), with strong colours being the Aristotelian works. The two *Rhetorica* translations are emphasised as triangles, yellow for Moerbeke's *Rhetorica* (Wil-Rhet) and red for the anonymous Latin translation (Bar?-Rhet). For the sigla used here and in the following figures, see Appendix B.

III.5. Unsupervised Cluster Analysis

To begin, we performed a qualitative investigation of the stylometric properties of the various translations using unsupervised clustering methods. 'Unsupervised' in this sense is contrasted with 'trained' machine-learning methods in which an

authorial signal even more, to try and discern the very tenuous signal from the translator – and based on the results it seems that the method was effective.

algorithm learns the propensities of each translator from a training corpus and then provides an opinion on some unseen samples. Unsupervised methods simply arrange the data by self-similarity; thus, data points lying closer to each other are more similar. The class categories (the colours in the figures) are added post-analysis, based on empirical truth (which is never known to the algorithm). In preparing the corpus for this kind of clustering, some standard mathematical transformations are applied (*z*-scaling, normalisation), before passing the data to the algorithm. Recall that works are broken into 1000-word chunks to avoid distorting the statistics, and so one work of translation can appear in the figures as many individual points, depending on its size.

From the analysis of the overall corpus (Fig. 1), two things are clear: first, that translator style is certainly discernible by their use of function words; and second, that Aristotelian works (shown in stronger colours) generally cluster together, indicating that there is also an (unwanted, in this case) authorial signal. We can see from Fig. 1, however, that some translators have such an idiomatic style that their work does not group with the rest of the Aristotelian cluster – this is true particularly of Aristippus and the anonymous translator of the *Metaphysica Anonyma* and the *Physica Vaticana*.

With respect to the question at hand, we can see that the *Rhetorica* attributed to William of Moerbeke does indeed group with William's translations of Aristotle; this relationship can be seen in more detail in Fig. 2, in which we restricted the clustering to the various works of William. The stylistic pattern of the other *Rhetorica*, however, appears more isolated. If the case were to be made that the translation is by Bartholomew, it is not, *prima facie*, a strong one according to the cluster output, although two things must be noted: first, that we do not have a very large comparison corpus of Bartholomew's translations (and even of the ones we have, in the case of *De mundo* the attribution is not completely secure); and second, that Bartholomew's style appears to be considerably more varied compared to that of the other translators. Looking more closely at Bartholomew's cluster (Fig. 3), we can see distinct subclusters forming for e.g., the *Magna moralia* and the sample from the *Problemata*. This makes the distance of the *Rhetorica* from his other translations less compelling as negative evidence. Once again, we emphasise that unsupervised cluster visualisations are a qualitative technique; they give an excellent impression of the relationships in the data, but they cannot be interpreted in terms of concrete likelihoods. To look more closely at the claim that the second *Rhetorica* was translated by Bartholomew of Messina, we must turn to a different kind of statistical analysis.

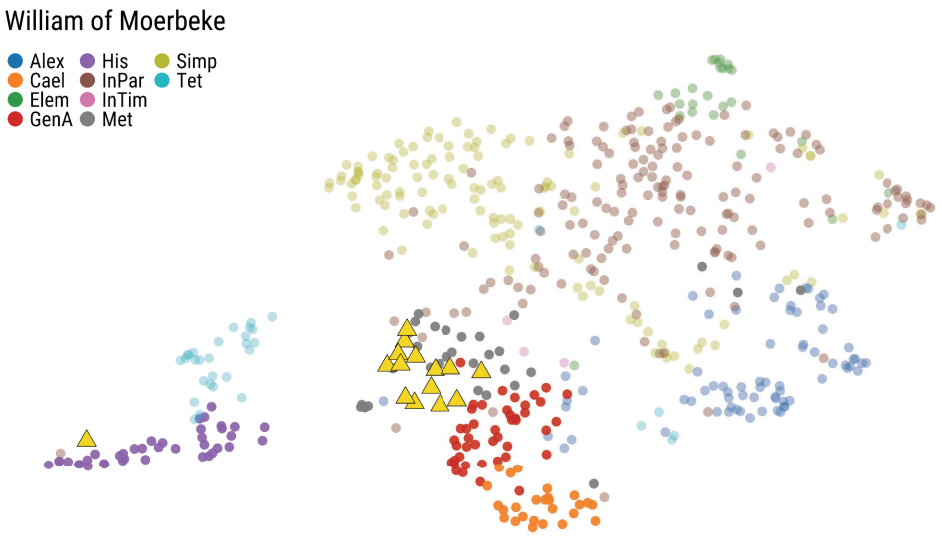


Fig. 2. UMAP cluster of William of Moerbeke's translations. Colours indicate works (see sigla in Appendix B), with strong colours being the Aristotelian works. Wil-Rhet is emphasised as yellow triangles.

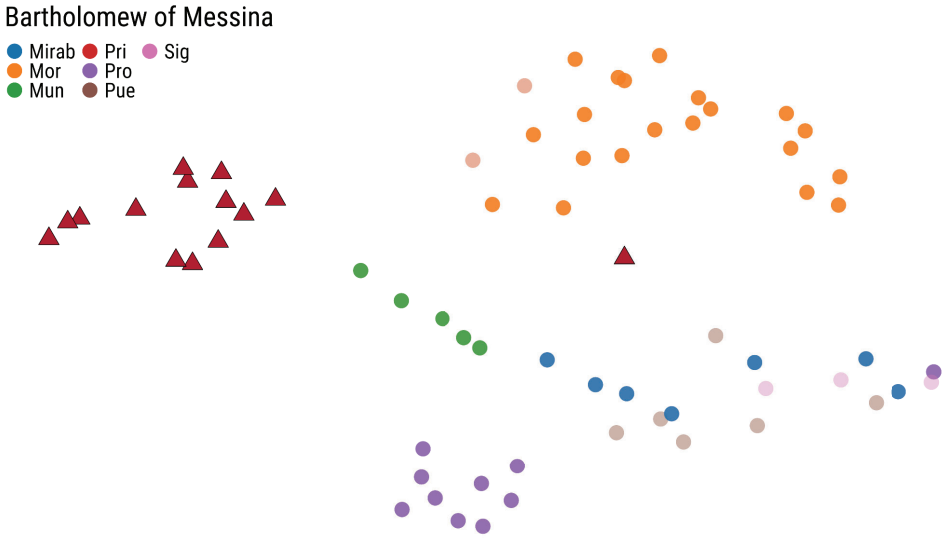


Fig. 3. UMAP cluster of Bartholomew of Messina's translations. Colours indicate works (see sigla in Appendix B), with strong colours being the Aristotelian works. Bar?-Rhet is emphasised as red triangles.

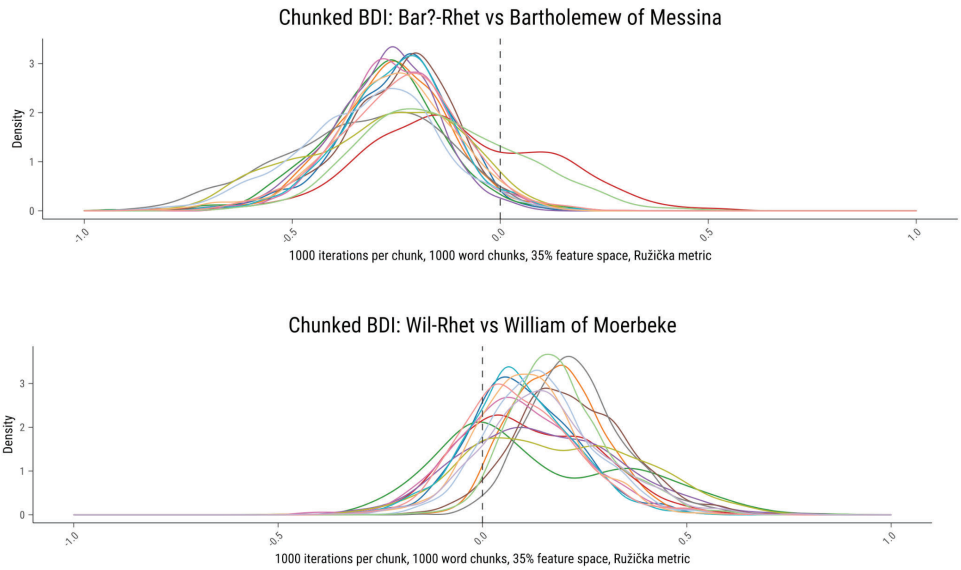


Fig. 4. Bootstrap Distance Imposters results for the two *Rhetorica* translations. Each line is the distribution of differences-in-distance for one chunk. Positive differences indicate a result closer to the candidate, negative distances a result closer to one of the imposters.

III.6. Bootstrap Distance Imposters

The statistical practice of bootstrapping is an important tool in modern descriptive (as opposed to inferential) statistics – in other words statistics that aims to quantify the typicality of an observation, as opposed to identifying or describing causes and effects. In this domain, bootstrap statistics are contrasted with distributional statistics, which apply specific mathematical models to observational data based on various assumptions (for example assuming the data is 'normally distributed', 'homoscedastic', 'independent', and so forth). Bootstrap statistics belong to the 'parameter-free' family of techniques that make no assumptions about the data, they instead use repeated random sampling to collect observations and measure typicality by empirical means. To (over)simplify, these techniques trade some precision for robustness. The style of bootstrapping applied here is a 'regularising' method that considers many observations where each observation is made on a random subset of the available features – we are measuring the frequency of 54 different function words, but each iteration considers only 20 of them. The effect is to reduce the influence of function words that might bias the outcome by being accidentally over-represented in the sample; this avoids 'overfitting', but again reduces accuracy. Bootstrap methods provide quantitative statistical results which tend to be conservative (so strong results are

usually reliable).

For this part of the analysis, we adapted and expanded work by Kestemont et al. on a method that is gaining acceptance as a 'standard technique' in computational stylometry, called 'General Imposters'.[35] General Imposters is a quantitative method that works by comparing a question text to a set of candidate texts (texts by the proposed author) and a set of imposter texts (texts with similar characteristics, but not by the proposed author). Through bootstrapping, this method assesses whether the question text is statistically more similar to the candidate author than to the imposters. If the question text is, in fact, by a completely different author (neither the proposed candidate nor any of the imposters) then there would be no significant statistical difference observed in the analysis. The modifications to the method allow us to visualise the distribution of these differences, instead of recording a single summary statistic. These visualisations retain (and indeed highlight) the statistical uncertainty of the determinations, which can be concealed by other methods.

In the first place, we considered the issue at hand, comparing the attribution of William's *Rhetorica* to the one with debated attribution to Bartholomew. The results can be seen in Fig. 4. The way the figure works is this: each *Rhetorica* is made up of 14–15 1000-word chunks. For each of those chunks, the bootstrap test is performed 1000 times, and the distribution of those results is shown. In each case, recall precisely what is being measured – the stylistic distance (i.e., difference) between the best matching chunks by the candidate author, and the best matching chunks by any 'imposter' author. If the distance is positive this means that the candidate is a better match; if negative, an imposter. In the case of William's *Rhetorica*, the attribution to William seems fairly clear. In the bulk of cases, and for every chunk, the style is more like William than someone else. Regarding the text with uncertain attribution, the stylistic match with Bartholomew is very poor. In fact, the distances indicate that it is a better stylometric match to several of the 'imposter' authors than to Bartholomew. The results for each chunk can be summarised by the mass of the distribution that lies above 0 (the strength of the positive match). The summary chunk results can themselves be summarised by their median, although this reductive approach suppresses a great deal of the

[35] Mike Kestemont, Justin Stover, Moshe Koppel, Folgert Karsdorp, Walter Daelemans, « Authenticating the Writings of Julius Caesar », *Expert Systems with Applications,* 63 (2016), p. 86–96. The new methods implemented for this article include the 'ranking' improvement introduced in Nektaria Potha, Efstathios Stamatatos, « An Improved Impostors Method for Authorship Verification », in Gareth J. F. Jones, Séamus Lawless, Julio Gonzalo, Liadh Kelly, Lorraine Goeuriot, Thomas Mandl, Linda Cappellato, Nicola Ferro (eds.), *Experimental IR Meets Multilinguality, Multimodality, and Interaction: 8th International Conference of the CLEF Association, CLEF 2017, Dublin, Ireland, September 11–14, 2017, Proceedings*, Springer, Cham 2017, 138–144.

variation that is evident. In those terms, the attribution of William's *Rhetorica* to him is strong at around 79.4%. The attribution of the other *Rhetorica* to Bartholomew of Messina is around 3.3%. It was mentioned above that it is a better match to other candidates – for example 17.5% to William of Moerbeke, 15.7% to James of Venice and 33.2% to Burgundio of Pisa. It is important to note, though, that none of these figures should be construed as suggesting a possible attribution. Rather, they demonstrate how poorly the work matches our other examples of Bartholomew's style in terms of function words.[36]

It is important to contextualise and interpret these results. To that end, we performed attributions across the entire corpus to determine the degree of certainty with which the methods attributed each work to its (assumed) translator. Those results are visible in Fig. 5. In each case, the distribution of chunk results is shown, summarised as above by the percentile above zero (the circular points show the precise values, the distribution curve is estimated), along with the median value (the central line in the distribution). From this we can see that match strength is quite variable, with some unquestioned translations displaying rather poor scores. This can be for many reasons – the work being translated might be in a genre with repetitive phrasing, the translator may have translated works from very different times, or the authors themselves might have very different styles in Greek, which naturally leads to variation in the translation. We can see that it is not simply that translators for whom we have more text are more easily attributed – the attributions to Henry Aristippus and the *Physica Vaticana* to Anonymous are strong; this occurs because the works by those translators are self-similar. Burgundio of Pisa, for whom we have a great deal of text, does not always attribute strongly, probably because of this internal stylistic variation. William of Moerbeke is both strongly self-similar as well as abundant. Which brings us to the perplexing results from Bartholomew's corpus. Not only is the *Rhetorica* a poor match, but so are other works generally considered to be his – in particular the *Magna moralia* and *De mundo*. Of course, the results from the *Rhetorica* are markedly worse as matches, so this does not give us cause to immediately assume misattribution in the case of the other two works, but it must be noted that the attribution of *De mundo* to Bartholomew is not iron-clad, as discussed above. What we must certainly accept, however, is that Bartholomew's style, as was already seen in the

[36] We did not include Burgundio as a potential translator of the *Rhetorica anonyma* in this study because he has not been suggested in existing scholarship and some of his stylistic trademarks, in particular his use of two or three alternative equivalents for difficult Greek terminology, are missing from this translation. It is true that the unsupervised clustering (Fig. 1) places the work near Burgundio's general cloud, and that the bootstrap match suggests a faint feasibility, but in our view this is simply because there is so much text from Burgundio in the corpus and his style of translation varies so widely (see Fig. 5).

clustering results, is much less self-similar than that of the other translators. But, to restate the obvious, the stylometric results *only include information drawn from the use of function words*. Function words as features are clearly effective (at least for the other translators) but there remain significant aspects of style which are completely ignored by these methods. This highlights both the value of quantitative stylometric approaches (in that they provide unbiased and reliable evidence based on, but extending, the techniques pioneered years ago by experts like Minio-Paluello and Bossier), but also the urgent need to contextualise the results and harmonise them with traditional philology.

III.7. Results and Challenges

Based on the results of our stylometric investigation, we continue to believe strongly that the use of function words is an effective means of identifying Greek-Latin translator style in general. In terms of overall performance, we have shown in previous work that machine-learning classifiers are able to correctly predict the translator of 1000-word chunks from our corpus with more than 90% accuracy.[37] This impressive performance, however, is no guarantee of accuracy when the methods are applied to an individual work – the performance varies both by translator and by work, with some cases being much more difficult and uncertain than others. In the case at hand, the *interpretation* of the analysis is reasonably clear; the stylometry suggests that the unattributed *Rhetorica* does not match the style of Bartholomew of Messina, *contra* our initial hypothesis. However, as mentioned above, the analysis is limited in scope (it only considered function words) and the translation style of Bartholomew is, according to all the evidence, more variable than that of the other translators in our corpus.

At this point, then, what we have is presumptively a negative result, but we argue that it should not be regarded as conclusive. Editors of the text, as well as editors of other translations by Bartholomew share an intuition that the work 'feels' like his style, and these scholarly intuitions are not to be set aside on the basis of a single computational study. There is considerable future work that is required before our rejection of the attribution to Bartholomew should be considered confirmed. The first task is to better understand the concrete differences in the use of function words, drawing upon the features of the text itself and comparing it to the authorial style of other Aristotelian translations from Bartholomew to see if the differences can be explained by the Greek originals. Failing this, the obvious next step would be to create an unbiased computational

[37] Pieter Beullens, Wouter Haverals, Ben Nagy, « The Translators' Touch. A Computational Stylometric Inquiry into Medieval Greek-Latin Translations » Long paper presented at *DH Benelux 2023*, Brussels.

methodology that could test the style in terms of key content words, operationalising the philological approach pursued by both Schneider and Beullens (who reached different conclusions based on the same text) that was discussed above.

Finally, though, we must also consider the historical landscape in the event that the translation is determined not to be by Bartholomew. In light of this result, and considering also our earlier suspicion, based on stylometric evidence, that the translations of Sextus Empiricus are neither by Bartholomew nor (probably) both by the same translator, we face the unsettling possibility that there is not just one more anonymous translator from Greek into Latin in the Italian thirteenth century, but perhaps at least three. This cannot help but reshape our understanding of the breadth of scholarship in late mediaeval Europe.

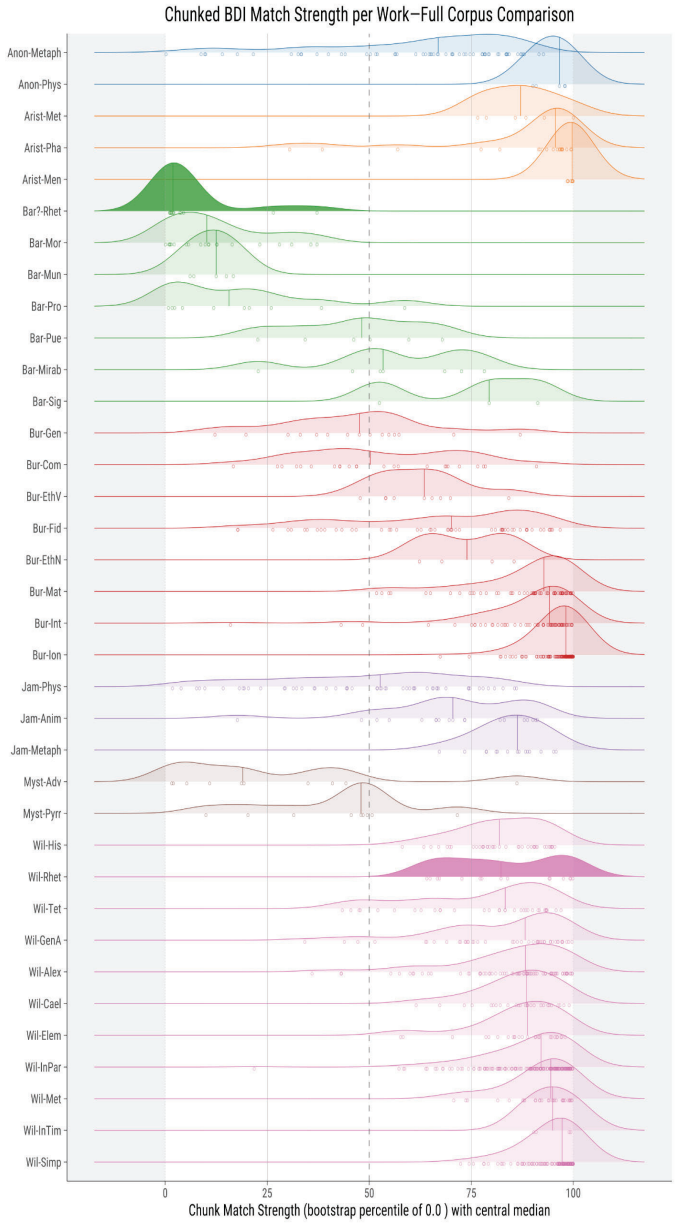


Fig. 5. Bootstrap Distance Imposters results for each work in the corpus when attributed to its own translator. 1000 iterations per chunk, bootstrapped at 35%, Ružička metric. Each chunk is shown as a circle in the rug plot, with an estimated distribution marked with the median. The 'confidence' score is the mean of the bootstrap confidence percentiles (percentage of distribution mass above 0). Higher numbers are more confident attributions.

Appendix A

Function Words Used

As described above, these are the 54 function words that were selected as a basis for the analysis:

atqui	ideo	quoniam
aut	igitur	quoque
autem	ita	precipue
certe	itaque	rursum
ceu	iterum	rursus
confestim	mox	sane
cum	multotiens	scilicet
dehinc	nam	sepe
deinceps	namque	sic
demum	nempe	sicut
denique	nimirum	siquidem
enim	puta	tamquam
ergo	quando	ut
etiam	quemadmodum	utique
exinde	quia	velut
forsan	quidem	veluti
forsitan	quippe	vero
fortassis	quod	videlicet

Appendix B

Corpus of Texts

Except for those stated below, all text files were kindly made available for the sole purpose of this investigation by Brepols Publishers and its Centre Traditio Litterarum Occidentalium from their databases Library of Latin Texts and Aristoteles Latinus Database, where the relevant bibliographical references can be accessed. The authors particularly acknowledge the help of Eddy Gouder, Tim Denecker, and Bart Janssens.

The following texts were acquired from other sources:

- Henricus Aristippus, *Meno*: Victor Kordeuter, Carlotta Labowsky, *Meno. Interprete Henrico Aristippo*. Plato Latinus, vol. I, Warburg, London 1940, reprint Kraus, Nendeln 1973.

- Henricus Aristippus, *Phaedo*: LAURENTIUS MINIO-PALUELLO, H.J. DROSSAART LULOFS, *Phaedo. Interprete Henrico Aristippo*. Plato Latinus, vol. II, Warburg, London 1950, reprint Kraus, Nendeln 1973.
- Bartholomew of Messina, *De natura pueri*: unpublished edition by Pieter Beullens.
- Burgundio of Pisa, *De complexionibus*: RICHARD J. DURLING, *Burgundio of Pisa's Translation of Galen's ΠΕΡΙ ΚΡΑΣΕΩΝ «De complexionibus»*, de Gruyter, Berlin-New York 1976.
- Burgundio of Pisa, *De interioribus*: RICHARD J. DURLING, *Burgundio of Pisa's Translation of Galen's ΠΕΡΙ ΤΩΝ ΠΕΠΟΝΘΟΤΩΝ ΤΟΠΩΝ «De interioribus»*, 2 vols, Steiner, Wiesbaden 1992.
- Johannes Chrysostomus, *In Iohannem*: text from his projected edition, kindly made available by professor Chris Nighman (clioproject.net).
- Johannes Chrysostomus, *In Matthaeum*: text from his projected edition, kindly made available by professor Chris Nighman (climo-project.wlu.ca).
- Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus Mathematicos*: unpublished edition by Pieter Beullens.
- Sextus Empiricus, *Pyrrhoniarum informationum libri*: sample from his projected edition kindly made available by Dr Roland Wittwer.

The following table lists the texts used in the analysis, the short sigla used to refer to them in the reproduction code and Figures in this paper, and the size of the texts in words:

Translator	Siglum	Author	Text	Words
Anonymous	Anon-Metaph	Aristoteles	*Metaphysica Anonyma*	61295
	Anon-Phys	Aristoteles	*Physica Vaticana* (fragm.)	5850
Henricus Aristippus	Arist-Men	Plato	*Meno*	9469
	Arist-Met	Aristoteles	*Meteorologica* IV	6812
	Arist-Pha	Plato	*Phaedo*	20941
Bartholomew of Messina	Bar-Mir	Aristoteles	*De mirabilibus auscultationibus*	7306
	Bar-Mor	Aristoteles	*Magna moralia*	20739
	Bar-Mun	Aristoteles	*De mundo*	5640
	Bar-Pri	Theophrastus	*De principiis*	2914
	Bar-Pro	Aristoteles	*Problemata* 1, 11, 34–37	10324
	Bar-Pue	Hippocrates	*De natura pueri*	6149
	Bar?-Rhet	Aristoteles	*Rhetorica* I	14409
	Bar-Sig	Theophrastus	*De signis*	3386

Burgundio of Pisa	Bur-Com	Galenus	*De complexionibus*	24901
	Bur-EthN	Aristoteles	*Ethica Nova* (fragm.)	5066
	Bur-EthV	Aristoteles	*Ethica Vetus* (fragm.)	9697
	Bur-Fid	Johannes Damascenus	*De fide orthodoxa*	53755
	Bur-Gen	Aristoteles	*De generatione et corruptione*	14993
	Bur-Int	Galenus	*De interioribus* I	64149
	Bur-Ion	Johannes Chrysostomus	*In Iohannem* (33–88)	133001
	Bur-Mat	Johannes Chrysostomus	*In Matthaeum* (1–17)	66626
James of Venice	Jam-Anim	Aristoteles	*De anima*	19834
	Jam-Metaph	Aristoteles	*Metaphysica Vetustissima* (fragm.)	15961
	Jam-Phys	Aristoteles	*Physica Vetus*	53042
Unknown	Myst-Adv	Sextus Empiricus	*Adversus mathematicos* (fragm.)	10095
	Myst-Pyrr	Sextus Empiricus	*Pyrrhoniarum informationum libri* (sample)	9994
William of Moerbeke	Wil-Alex	Alexander of Aphrodisias	*In Meteorologica*	71996
	Wil-Cael	Aristoteles	*De caelo*	26961
	Wil-Elem	Proclus	*Elementatio theologica*	25782
	Wil-GenA	Aristoteles	*De generatione animalium*	44160
	Wil-His	Aristoteles	*De historia animalium* I–V	40000
	Wil-InPar	Proclus	*In Parmenidem Platonis*	161594
	Wil-InTim	Proclus	*In Timaeum Platonis* (fragm.)	4775
	Wil-Met	Aristoteles	*Meteorologica*	30176
	Wil-Rhet	Aristoteles	*Rhetorica* I	15010
	Wil-Simp	Simplicius	*In De caelo* I	120399
	Wil-Tet	Ptolemaeus	*Tetrabiblos*	33712

Provare per credere:
Lo sguardo di Agostino sul rapporto tra esegesi e 'scienza'*

Proofing is Believing: Augustine's Gaze on the Relationship between Exegesis and 'Science'

Enrico Moro
Università degli Studi di Padova



[...] weil jeder einem Faktum, welches nur hinreichend bewährt ist, ebensogut als einer mathematischen Demonstration glauben müssen, er mag wollen oder nicht.**

La « conversazione »[1] con Agostino intrattenuta da Marcello Pera nella sua recente monografia, intitolata *Lo sguardo della caduta. Agostino e la superbia del secolarismo*, è degna di attenzione tanto per l'ambizione perseguita quanto per le conclusioni raggiunte. A guidare lo studio di Pera è una convinzione precisa: Agostino, vissuto in un'epoca per molti tratti simile a quella presente,[2] avrebbe

* Questo testo costituisce la versione accresciuta di un intervento pronunciato in occasione della presentazione del volume di Marcello Pera (cf. *infra*, n. 1), tenutasi presso il Centro Universitario di Padova, in data 13 aprile 2023 (Responsabile scientifico: prof. Giovanni Catapano).

** Immanuel Kant, « Was heißt: sich im Denken orientieren? », in Id., *Was ist Aufklärung? Ausgewählte kleine Schriften,* Herausgegeben von H.D. Brandt. Mit einem Text zur Einführung von E. Cassirer, Felix Meiner Verlag, Hamburg 1999 (Philosophische Bibliothek Band, 512), p. 45–61: 60.

1 Cf. Marcello Pera, *Lo sguardo della caduta. Agostino e la superbia del secolarismo*, Morcelliana, Brescia 2022 (Filosofia, 121), p. 9, 66, 69, 76, 85, 87, 112, 145, 149, 153.

2 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 9: « E, primo fra tutti [*scil.* i temi e problemi cruciali per Agostino come per noi], la funzione della fede in un mondo secolarizzato – quello di ieri perché pagano, quello di oggi perché *anticristiano* – che proclama la sua autosufficienza » [corsivo mio].

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saputo contrastare il « relativismo » del proprio tempo con strategie e argomenti utili per avversare, e auspicabilmente superare, anche quello contemporaneo.[3] Una « conversazione », quindi, non « un lavoro di storia della filosofia in senso tecnico »; anzi, più propriamente, « fatta salva la correttezza dei riferimenti storici, [...] un *saggio*, nel significato ordinario di prova, esame, esperimento », rivolto al pensiero agostiniano « per trarne (saggiare o sperimentare, appunto) soluzioni ».[4] L'intento di Pera, in ultima analisi, è dunque quello di *ricavare* soluzioni: le soluzioni « *di* Agostino »,[5] o perlomeno quelle che, identificabili nei suoi testi, ne restituiscono lo « sguardo ».[6]

Anche queste pagine nascono da una convinzione precisa: come tra verità *de facto* e verità *de fide*,[7] così tra ricostruzione storico-filosofica e riflessione filosofica non può darsi relazione feconda che sia dell'ordine della mera irrilevanza. Da qui, il proposito di meditare con attenzione le argomentazioni proposte da Pera, saggiandone la conformità rispetto alla riflessione agostiniana. In tal senso, l'obiettivo non vuole essere quello di valutare un 'saggio' filosofico a partire da una prospettiva rigidamente filologica, che esso non rivendica primariamente come propria; piuttosto, si tratta di testare l'intrinseca pretesa di un lavoro che fonda la propria proposta teorica nel recupero e nella restituzione di uno 'sguardo di'.

Nel dettaglio, mi limiterò a prendere in esame il contenuto del quarto capitolo de *Lo sguardo della caduta*,[8] dedicato da Pera allo studio della concezione agostiniana relativa al rapporto tra scienza della natura ed esegesi scritturistica. Dapprima, illustrerò gli elementi a mio giudizio più rilevanti nell'economia della proposta interpretativa di Pera, rivolgendomi successivamente ai testi di Agostino per interrogarne i *contenuti* e, per quanto possibile, le *intenzioni* di pensiero.[9]

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3 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 8: « E questa è la nascita della tesi dell'equivalenza di ogni verità. Babilonia!, commentava Agostino; relativismo etico, diciamo noi oggi. Riflettendo su queste somiglianze fra situazioni di ieri e di oggi e con l'intenzione di comprendere le sue proposte per uscirne, ho letto Agostino ».

4 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 9.

5 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 9: « La domanda che sollevo a me e a chi ha le mie stesse preoccupazioni è: le soluzioni *di Agostino* sono ancora utili per noi? Ci offrono una guida affidabile per uscire da una crisi della nostra civiltà occidentale non meno grave di quella romana di cui Agostino fu spettatore e interprete? Ci aiutano a colmare le nostre manchevolezze? Ci promettono qualche soluzione? » [corsivo mio].

6 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 9: « Non sono dunque alla ricerca del "vero" Agostino. Dopotutto, qual è? Agostino è spesso "eretico" e in bilico. [...] E però, fra tante divergenze degli interpreti, *lo sguardo di Agostino è pur sempre identificabile*, temibile e ineludibile, rassicurante e impietoso, e con esso possiamo e dobbiamo misurarci » [corsivo mio].

7 Cf. *infra*, nota 29.

8 Il quarto capitolo (p. 113–144) è intitolato: « Scienza e Scrittura. Ragione e fede ».

9 Sul binomio 'contenuto' – 'intenzione', cf. *infra*, n. 26–27.

I. *Agostino e il 'liberalismo scientifico': l'interpretazione di Pera*

La tesi sostenuta da Pera nel quarto capitolo del suo studio è dichiarata con chiarezza fin dalla conclusione del capitolo precedente. Per Agostino, la scienza – non diversamente dall'attività politica, che può rivendicare una libertà legittima solamente in quanto « compatibile con quei vincoli religiosi sui quali essa stessa si basa » – soggiacerebbe a un « vincolo di compatibilità ». Anche per la scienza, cioè, varrebbe « un obbligo di congruenza da rispettare fra l'ordine che l'uomo *crede* di scoprire con le proprie ricerche e quello che Dio ha costruito con la sua volontà ».[10] Di contro alla tesi peculiare dell'« agostinismo scientifico liberale », riassumibile nell'affermazione incondizionata di una « autonomia dello spazio della scienza » dalla religione, occorrerebbe dunque mostrare, con Agostino, non solo che il cristianesimo non è di ostacolo a un ordinato esercizio e sviluppo della conoscenza scientifica, ma anche « che la Scrittura, che non erra, può ben essere letta, compresa e apprezzata anche da chi ha conoscenze positive diverse acquisite indipendentemente ».[11]

In tal senso, osserva Pera, è particolarmente rilevante la riflessione di natura ermeneutico-pastorale che il vescovo di Ippona affida agli scritti di commento ai primi capitoli del *Genesi*, con la preoccupazione, da un lato, di chiarire che « il racconto della Scrittura ha un senso letterale e non è messo a rischio da *opinioni* o *teorie scientifiche* diverse », e, dall'altro, di « difendere il valore salvifico della Scrittura ».[12] Le ragioni fondamentali di quella che Pera interpreta come una « diffidenza » da parte di Agostino nei confronti della conoscenza scientifica sono tre:

i. la convinzione della non rilevanza della scienza ai fini della salvezza;
ii. la preoccupazione che una sua deriva autoreferenziale possa ostacolare la retta comprensione della Scrittura;
iii. il pericolo che essa assuma la forma degradata di una conoscenza dispersiva e futile (l'agostiniana *curiositas*).[13]

Agostino, continua Pera, non manca tuttavia di cogliere come la scienza sia « una conoscenza di tipo particolare, certamente più utile e assai ben più fondata della curiosità, perché [...] frutto di esperienze e ragionamenti »;[14] e di riconoscere, quindi, come essa « (in particolare l'astronomia dei matematici) <abbia> valore di verità » in virtù dei suoi risultati, « pubblici, ripetibili, controllabili », al punto

10 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 112 [corsivo mio].
11 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 114.
12 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 115 [corsivo mio].
13 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 115–117.
14 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 117.

tale da poter essere ritenuti « incontrovertibili ».[15] È precisamente a questa altezza, dunque, che sorge una questione decisiva nell'economia del rapporto « *della* conoscenza scientifica *con* la fede cristiana »:[16] « La scienza ha valore di verità e la Scrittura è vera. Collimano e si combinano tra loro? E se non concordano, come si regola la divergenza? ».[17]

Una questione che sarebbe divenuta tormentata e pressante a partire dal Seicento, ma alla quale Agostino, secondo Pera, pone mente « senza tormento e sempre con lo sguardo e l'interesse fisso altrove », convinto che a essere « importante non <sia> la scienza, ma che la parola di Dio sia intesa in modo corretto *anche dalla scienza* »[18]. Da qui, tre « raccomandazioni di principio », esposte con chiarezza da Agostino nel *De Genesi ad litteram*, relative all'esegesi di passi scritturistici che trattano delle realtà naturali:

a. Evitare di esprimere prima, e di difendere ostinatamente poi, interpretazioni temerarie e presuntuose, falsificabili sulla base di conoscenze scientifiche certe.[19]
b. « Non respingere *tesi provate* riguardanti cose naturali [...], bensì *accomodarle con la Scrittura* », non mancando invece di respingere « *tesi* ovunque *avanzate* che siano contrarie alla fede ».[20]
c. Tenere a mente che la Scrittura non ha come proprio scopo realtà « penultime », quali le conoscenze scientifiche, ma « ultime », come la salvezza.[21]

Tali raccomandazioni, precisa Pera, non implicano però né la piena *autonomia* né la totale *libertà* della ricerca scientifica dalla fede religiosa, come sostenuto e rivendicato, invece, dal liberalismo scientifico moderno;[22] l'alfiere e il capostipite del quale, Galileo Galilei, avrebbe preteso di legittimare la propria posizione facendo leva (*in primis* nella celebre *Lettera a Madama Cristina*, del 1615) proprio sui passaggi del commentario agostiniano sopra menzionati.

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15 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 119. Ciò non implica, osserva Pera, che quelle scientifiche siano « verità sempre incontrastabili »: al contrario, « Agostino si trova immerso in una situazione che, seguendo Thomas Kuhn, possiamo definire *pre-paradigmatica*, quella per cui ipotesi, teorie, scuole si confrontano con controversie infinite senza che vi sia una soluzione comunemente accettata e unificante ».

16 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 122 [corsivo mio].

17 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 122.

18 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 122 [corsivo mio].

19 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 123–125.

20 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 125 [corsivo mio].

21 Cf. Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 127.

22 Cf. Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 127–128.

Galileo, nota Pera, rammenta e fa proprie le raccomandazioni di Agostino a:

a. Non interpretare avventatamente il testo biblico, correndo il rischio di essere smentiti.
b. Mostrare l'accordo tra contenuto della Scrittura e verità inconfutabilmente dimostrate dalla scienza.
c. Rammentare che lo scopo proprio degli scrittori sacri non fu quello di offrire ammaestramenti intorno al mondo naturale (finalità da cui anzi si astennero).[23]

Ciò, tuttavia, non avrebbe impedito allo scienziato di giungere a conclusioni ampiamente divergenti da quelle del vescovo,[24] come emerge, pur a fronte di « affinità [...] strette e notevoli »,[25] considerando non solo isolatamente il piano del *contenuto*, ma anche contestualmente quello delle *intenzioni* di pensiero.[26] Muovendo dalla *littera* agostiniana, ma forzandone lo spirito,[27] Galileo (e dopo di lui l'intera scienza moderna) pretenderebbe infatti di legittimare:

1. La *libertà* (e inesauribilità) della ricerca scientifica.[28]
2. L'*autonomia* della scienza.[29]
3. L'*irrilevanza* della Scrittura per la conoscenza razionale.[30]
4. La *non-interferenza* tra dati di fede e dati di scienza.[31]

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23 Cf. Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 128–129.

24 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 128–129: « E non c'è dubbio che sul terreno del significato contestuale delle raccomandazioni, nonostante le "anticipazioni" apparenti, le divergenze tra Agostino e Galileo sono notevoli ».

25 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 130.

26 Cf. Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 131.

27 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 133: « Queste conclusioni di Galileo *sembrano* (a lui come a noi) derivazioni intuitive e immediate delle raccomandazioni ermeneutiche di Agostino. Ma non è propriamente così. Anche quando *dicono* la stessa cosa, non *intendono* la stessa cosa ».

28 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 131: « Se le proposizioni naturali dimostrate consentono di interpretare meglio il senso della Scrittura, non c'è ragione di bloccarle ove, *prima facie*, questa sembri dire il contrario ».

29 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 132: « Nella Scrittura si distinguono le proposizioni *de fide* da quelle *de facto*. Lo dice lo stesso Agostino all'inizio del *De Genesi ad litteram* (I, 1.1). Le questioni di fatto si trattano con metodo diverso da quello di fede e con scopo diverso. Quando sono provate, sono irrefutabili e non possono essere poste in dubbio. La ricerca deve perciò proseguire con il suo proprio metodo indipendentemente dalle Scritture. Se arrivasse a una conclusione apparentemente contraria a esse [...], allora questa conclusione non deve essere respinta, a meno che non si provi che è falsa. [...] Se i tentativi di confutazione delle dimostrazioni non hanno successo, e la proposizione in questione è confermata, lo scandolo delle divergenze si può risolvere reinterpretando la Scrittura ».

30 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 133: « Perché la Scrittura sia da mettersi nell'ultimo luogo in materia di conoscenza scientifica è presto detto: la conoscenza scientifica dimostrata non è rivedibile, mentre la Scrittura è reinterpretabile. [...] È invece in potestà dei professori delle scienze teologiche correggere le loro precedenti interpretazioni ».

A giudizio di Pera, tuttavia, per Agostino:

1. La conoscenza scientifica del mondo naturale è inesauribile non perché *estensivamente* interminabile per una ragione *quantitativamente* limitata, ma perché *intensivamente* irrealizzabile per una ragione *qualitativamente* decaduta.[32]
2. Una proposizione naturale 'dimostrata' non solo non può costituire un criterio assoluto di verità, ma – perlomeno in alcuni casi – può essere suscettibile di revisione (l'onere di 'accomodare' entro di sé le proposizioni scientifiche vere, conseguentemente, spetta alla Scrittura e non alla scienza).[33]
3. La Scrittura, in quanto latrice a pieno titolo di conoscenze *de facto*,[34] non può essere considerata irrilevante per la scienza.
4. La fede è intangibile non perché trascurata dalla scienza, ma in quanto detentrice di una primalità in rapporto alla conoscenza del mondo naturale.[35]

La distanza tra i due pensatori, prosegue Pera, non dipende da un « errore di interpretazione » o da un « deliberato fraintendimento » dei passi agostiniani da parte di Galileo, ma dal fatto, ben più rilevante, che « i rispettivi sistemi concettuali puntano a scopi diversi ».[36] Da un lato, lo scopo di Galileo: « difendere

[31] Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 133: « Essendo le proposizioni di fede riferite a un dominio diverso da quello delle conoscenze naturali – hanno riguardo alla salvezza e non alla conoscenza naturale –, la scienza non entra nel loro merito, è indipendente e non interferisce ».

[32] Cf. Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 134 (di cui mi permetto di sintetizzare in questi termini il secondo capoverso).

[33] Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 134: « Per Agostino, una proposizione naturale provata è *solo* un *elemento razionale* per ripensare, discutere e, se del caso, rivedere le interpretazioni scorrette della Scrittura (perché affrettate, o perché non critiche, non competenti, non informate, ecc.). Per Galileo, una proposizione naturale provata è assai di più: è un *banco di prova* di *ogni* asserzione di fatto contenuta nella Scrittura. L'uno sottintende, e comunque non esclude, che anche le proposizioni provate *possano essere rivedute*; l'altro le considera intangibili » [corsivo mio].

[34] Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 135: « La Scrittura non può essere irrilevante per la scienza. Poiché descrive l'ordine, la successione, la struttura del mondo così come Dio l'ha creato, la Scrittura è *anche* scienza. È sapere e sapienza. Conoscenza *de facto* che dà senso alla conoscenza *de fide*. Quegli scienziati che la deridono piuttosto che *ripensare le proprie affermazioni* pongono una cesura tra fatto e fede ed innalzano uno steccato che è insostenibile. Malati di superbia, trascurano la pietà. Convinti di possedere il metodo per l'accertamento del vero, finiscono col rendere fallibile o incerta o indeterminata la parola di Dio » [corsivo mio].

[35] Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 135: « La fede è salva non perché la scienza, che tratta solo questioni *de facto*, non se ne cura, ma perché *la fede è necessaria anche per trattare le questioni naturali*. Per arrivare a concludere che qualcosa è così e così, *bisogna credere* che così e così sia ciò che Dio ha disposto per la nostra salvezza e comunicato nella Scrittura. Questo credo sta al primo posto, anche se le nostre *interpretazioni* del così e così possono risultare scorrette perché precipitose o insufficienti » [corsivo mio].

[36] Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 135.

la scienza dalle interferenze degli interpreti della Scrittura, i quali sovente sbagliano perché precipitosi o poco informati », nell'assoluta convinzione che « sulle questioni *de facto*, la circospezione può [...] essere sciolta *a favore della scienza* ».[37] Dal lato opposto, lo scopo di Agostino: « difendere la fede dalle possibili interferenze della scienza o [...] della pseudo-scienza », nel fermo convincimento che « la circospezione nell'interpretazione delle Scritture deve [...] essere sciolta *sempre a favore della fede* ».[38] Uno scarto, questo, che, lungi dall'essere circoscritto a « questioni di ermeneutica biblica e [...] raccomandazioni di prudenza », costituisce « una biforcazione storica di enorme dimensione », nel cui intervallo si compie « la enorme, doppia rivoluzione, scientifica e religiosa, di Galileo ».[39]

Dall'analisi svolta, infine, Pera ritiene di poter ricavare alcune importanti conseguenze. Se è vero che, al giorno d'oggi, tanto gli scienziati quanto la Chiesa cattolica[40] « apprezzano in particolare il criterio *di Agostino*, e di Galileo, secondo cui, quando provate, le asserzioni naturali devono essere accolte e ai teologi spetta di mostrare che non sono contrarie alla Scrittura »,[41] è purtuttavia lecito dubitare che un simile 'accomodamento' possa risolvere in modo soddisfacente « il *problema del conflitto* tra la scienza moderna e il cristianesimo ».[42] Tale 'soluzione', infatti, da una parte presenta una visione riduttiva della Scrittura, considerata « non [...] un manuale scientifico, ma salvifico », e, dall'altra, assume come suo 'presupposto' il principio di « bipartizione esaustiva delle questioni »,[43] stando al quale alcune questioni, *de facto*, sarebbero di competenza dello scienziato, mentre altre, *de fide*, risulterebbero di pertinenza del teologo. Ora, nota Pera, un simile presupposto è altamente « disputabile », nella misura in cui postula, erroneamente, un rapporto tra i due ambiti all'insegna della netta separazione e dell'indifferente compatibilità.[44] La loro effettiva permeabilità, al contrario, disinnesca il paradigma della mutua irrilevanza,[45] al quale dunque non

37 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 136.

38 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 137.

39 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 137.

40 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 152: « [...] la Chiesa cattolica, prima così ostile e poi non poco indulgente con la secolarizzazione, forse disponibile a secolarizzarsi essa stessa per essere "aggiornata" allo "spirito dei tempi" [...] ».

41 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 138 [corsivo mio].

42 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 139 [corsivo mio].

43 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 139.

44 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 140: « Ma la bipartizione, con la conseguente divisione del lavoro, è disputabile. Perché esistono asserzioni *de facto* che sono *anche* asserzioni *de fide* o che sono *essenziali* per le asserzioni *de fide*. Di più. Esistono certe asserzioni *de fide* che devono essere tenute ferme anche se escludono certe asserzioni *de facto*, nel senso che, affinché le une possano essere credute come vere, le altre devono essere respinte come *false* ».

45 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 140: « Ve ne sono altri [casi] in cui l'irrilevanza è disputabile e di fatto disputata. Per fare qualche esempio, se Cristo è figlio di Dio, allora è escluso che la ricerca

è possibile ricorrere, neppure ridefinendo lo statuto epistemico delle tesi di volta in volta in questione, per invocare l'impossibilità di diritto del conflitto.[46] Di qui, sulle orme di Agostino, il monito conclusivo a un 'uso' della ricerca scientifica legittimo, cioè non pienamente autonomo dalla fede[47] né orgogliosamente indipendente dalla rivelazione.[48]

II. *Esegesi e 'scienza' nel* De Genesi ad litteram

Tenendo a mente gli stimoli e le sottolineature offerte dal saggio di Pera, tento ora di ripercorrere i tratti essenziali della riflessione agostiniana sul rapporto tra esegesi biblica e scienza della natura, con particolare riferimento ai libri iniziali del *De Genesi ad litteram.*[49] In primo luogo, occorre sottolineare come molte delle considerazioni che affiorano nelle pagine agostiniane trovino una precedente, diffusa e più ampia espressione nella tradizione patristica anteriore. Agostino, ad

storica possa provare che Cristo sia stato solo un predicatore o un profeta. Se l'anima è spirituale e immortale, allora è escluso che la ricerca biologica possa accogliere il monismo. Se l'uomo è immagine di Dio, allora è escluso che la ricerca possa sostenere che l'uomo emerga dal nulla, o si riduca alla, storia animale. Se Dio ha comandato: *crescite et multiplicamini* allora è escluso che l'uomo possa essere considerato come ospite da rendere compatibile con l'equilibrio naturale. E così via. Per questo, *i credenti cristiani* si trovano a *diffidare* e *contrastare* teorie come la sociobiologia, la psicoanalisi, l'evoluzionismo, l'identità mente-corpo, l'ecologismo, eccetera » [corsivo mio].

46 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 140: « Si può obiettare che, propriamente, queste non sono teorie scientifiche ma o interpretazioni filosofiche di teorie scientifiche [...] o presupposti di indagini scientifiche [...]. L'obiezione è corretta ma non risolve il problema del conflitto, perché in nome dell'autonomia della ricerca lo scienziato si appellerà alla propria libertà di perseguire indagini in modo conforme a tali programmi di ricerca *ancorché inaccettabili per la fede cristiana.* E così *può* rinascere un caso Galileo » [corsivo mio].

47 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 142: « L'autonomia metodologica non implica l'autonomia ontologica, che è quella che, in nome della libertà di ricerca, chiede lo scienziato quando pone la Scrittura "all'ultimo luogo" delle sue indagini ».

48 Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 150–151: « La scienza. [...] La si coltivi, perché, se non degenera in curiosità, è sapere autentico. Ma non solo si deve usarla e non goderne, *dobbiamo anche rendere compatibili le sue scoperte provate con le affermazioni della fede*. Ciò è necessario perché il Dio cristiano si è rivelato e ha rivelato come ha fatto il mondo. Egli è perciò fonte di sapienza (salvezza) e conoscenza (scienza). Pensare che la scienza possa essere perseguita per sé, in completa autonomia, a parte della rivelazione, è una delle tante forme di superbia. Così come è superbo ritenere che ciò che è provato scientificamente conti più di tutto » [corsivo mio].

49 Il *De Genesi ad litteram* (d'ora in poi *Gn. litt.*) fu composto da Agostino tra il 403–404 e il 415. Per la traduzione si veda Agostino, *Commenti alla Genesi*, Prefazione e note al testo latino a cura di Giovanni Catapano, Introduzione ai singoli commenti, traduzione, note e apparati a cura di Enrico Moro, Bompiani – Giunti, Milano – Firenze 2018). Tra parentesi, per ogni citazione sarà riporto il numero di pagina della corrispondente edizione critica: ed. Zycha, 1894 (CSEL 28), p. 1–435.

esempio, nota come le realtà naturali – *in primis* quelle celesti o la cui conoscenza sia difficile da conseguire – siano state oggetto di molte discussioni da parte di molti; e come di esse, tuttavia, gli autori cristiani, che pur le conobbero, secondo la volontà dello Spirito abbiano omesso saggiamente di parlare, consci che l'esame di tali questioni non solo non giova al conseguimento della vita eterna, ma occupa anche spazi di tempo preziosi, da dedicare più convenientemente alla ricerca della salvezza.[50] Per essere conosciute adeguatamente, infatti, tali realtà richiedono di « essere esaminate con calcoli molto accurati e complessi » (*multum subtilibus et laboriosis rationibus* [...] *perquiri*), per intraprendere e svolgere i quali, osserva Agostino, « non ho più tempo, né debbono averlo » (*nec mihi iam tempus est nec illis esse debet*) quanti (i fedeli non eruditi) è bene siano istruiti per la salvezza, a beneficio loro e dell'intera Chiesa.[51]

Posto dinnanzi al cosmo, nota ancora Agostino, l'uomo è chiamato a riconoscere come Dio sia « l'autore e il fondatore » di tutte le nature;[52] e dunque come, in quanto tale, Egli non solo non sia vincolato a rispettarne le leggi ordinarie,[53] ma ne possieda anche una conoscenza preclusa, o solo parzialmente accessibile, agli esseri umani: in breve, « per Lui» , e solo per Lui, « la natura è ciò che Egli stesso ha fatto ».[54] Conseguentemente, considerare il mondo naturale

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50 Aug., *Gn. litt.*, II, 9, 20 [CSEL 28, p. 45]: « In molti, infatti, molto discutono riguardo a quelle cose che più saggiamente i nostri autori omisero di dire, nella misura in cui non avrebbero giovato a chi le apprende per il conseguimento della vita eterna, e, ciò che è peggio, nella misura in cui occupano spazi di tempo molto preziosi che devono essere dedicati alle questioni che concernono la salvezza ». Cf. Bas., *In hex.*, I, 8.1; IX, 1.6; Ambr., *Exaem.*, I, 6.20; VI, 2.8.

51 Aug., *Gn. litt.*, II, 10, 23. Poco dopo, Agostino fa riferimento in termini analoghi alle scoperte di quanti indagarono le realtà celesti « con somma accuratezza e tutta calma » (*curiosissime et otiosissime*). In III, 3, 4, ancora, il riferimento è a coloro che indagarono le questioni connesse alla trasformazione degli elementi « a lungo e con cura (*otiosa cura*) ».

52 Cf. es. Aug., *Gn. litt.*, II, 15, 30 [CSEL 28, p. 56]: « Molti spendono lunghe chiacchiere nell'indagare anche in quale fase sia stata fatta la luna. E magari chiacchierassero come uomini intenti a indagare, e non piuttosto che tentano di insegnare! [...] Da parte mia, mi colloco a metà strada tra costoro, senza quindi asserire né l'una né l'altra tesi, ma dicendo chiaramente che, sia che l'abbia fatta al novilunio sia che l'abbia fatta piena, Dio fece la luna perfetta. Dio, infatti, è l'Autore e il Fondatore delle nature stesse ».

53 Cf. es. Aug., *Gn. litt.*, VI, 13, 24 [CSEL 28, p. 188]: « Forse che per questo il Signore ebbe bisogno di una vite o di terra o di questi periodi di tempo, quando con mirabile rapidità trasformò l'acqua in vino, e in un vino tale da ricevere le lodi anche del commensale più ebbro? Ebbe forse bisogno dell'ausilio del tempo il fondatore del tempo? ». Cf. Bas., *In hex.*, IV, 2, 6–7; Ambr., *Exaem.*, II, 2.4; 3.10; III, 2.8; 6.26; IV, 3.11.

54 Aug., *Gn. litt.*, VI, 13, 24 [CSEL 28, p. 188]: « Quando si verificano questi eventi, non si verificano contro natura, se non per noi, a cui il corso della natura è divenuto noto in modo diverso; non per Dio però, per cui la natura è ciò che <Egli stesso> ha fatto ». Per una più approfondita discussione di questo punto, e più in generale della riflessione agostiniana sul rapporto tra eventi miracolosi e leggi di natura, si veda Enrico Moro, « Miracolo, natura e *rationes causales*. Il libro III del *De trinitate* e i libri VI e IX del *De Genesi ad litteram* », *Medioevo. Rivista di storia della filosofia medievale*, 37 (2012), p. 27–56.

come una totalità conchiusa e indipendente, erigendolo a oggetto esclusivo o termine ultimo di conoscenza, produrrà una depravazione, una stortura del sapere, che nella scrittura agostiniana prende il nome di *curiositas*.[55]

L'opera di Agostino, per altri versi, presenta elementi di riflessione peculiari e significativi, in quanto tali assenti o non ugualmente rintracciabili negli scritti di commento dei predecessori. Il primo dei quali, in ordine di importanza e, per così dire, di derivazione, può essere individuato nel modo di concepire la natura della verità comunicata dal testo sacro. Una verità pensata per un verso come *unitaria*, cioè coerente e concorde, e per altro verso – soprattutto in relazione alle realtà per noi oscure e difficilmente esperibili[56] – *non univoca*, cioè non individualmente padroneggiabile ed esegeticamente restituibile solo a più voci. Coerentemente con tale concezione della verità del testo sacro, Agostino individua:

1. I criteri di definizione del perimetro di legittimità ermeneutica.
2. I princìpi metodologici della corretta pratica esegetica.
3. I potenziali fattori di fallimento interpretativo.

In estrema sintesi:

1. Ogni interpretazione di un'espressione o passaggio del testo sacro che ambisca a essere corretta, e dunque vera, dovrà soddisfare almeno il primo, e auspicabilmente tutti, i criteri elencati di seguito in ordine progressivo di specificità: conformità al *depositum fidei*, conformità al contesto scritturistico (remoto e prossimo), conformità all'intenzione dell'autore.[57]

2. L'esercizio di una corretta pratica esegetica, conseguentemente, risulterà tanto migliore quanto più saprà realizzare la considerazione congiunta delle sole *e* di quante più interpretazioni del testo riescano a soddisfare in maniera coerente i criteri precedentemente menzionati.[58]

3. I potenziali fattori di fallimento interpretativo, infine, sono molteplici. Tra questi, tuttavia, ve n'è uno particolarmente rischioso, risultante dalla combinazione di una duplice indebita pretesa: da un lato, la pretesa di ricondurre in maniera esclusiva a una sola interpretazione la natura sempre eccedente della

[55] La tradizione patristica aveva abbondantemente stigmatizzato la vanità della conoscenza scientifica, dipingendo quest'ultima come vuotezza dispendiosa e priva di fine, sapienza folle, ammasso di opinioni conflittuali e instabili, coro di voci mutuamente falsificabili e perciò risibili, luogo di insegnamento inconsistente e presuntuoso; come la vista della civetta si acuisce nella notte, ma al risplendere del sole si offusca, così la mente di quanti si dedicano alla vanità della scienza, pur sottilissima nelle speculazioni, non potrebbe evitare di ottundersi nella conoscenza della vera luce. Cf. Bas., *In hex.*, I, 2.1; 3.3; III, 3.3; VIII, 7.6; IX, 1.6; Ambr., *Exaem.*, VI, 2.7–8.

[56] Cf. es. Aug, *Gn. litt.*, I, 18, 37 [CSEL 28, p. 27]: « Quanto poi alle realtà oscure ed estremamente distanti dai nostri occhi (*et in rebus obscuris atque a nostris oculis remotissimis*) [...] ».

[57] Cf. Aug, *Gn. litt.*, I, 21, 41.

[58] Cf. Aug, *Gn. litt.*, I, 19, 38.

verità comunicata dal testo[59] e, dall'altro, quella di ricavare da quest'ultimo affermazioni definitivamente certe senza averne adeguatamente vagliato l'attendibilità.[60] Un simile atteggiamento, come detto, è rischioso, e lo è precisamente nella misura in cui può facilmente esporre le Scritture cristiane, e le verità più profonde da esse tramesse, tanto al dileggio dei sapienti quanto alla disaffezione dei credenti.

Si avvererebbero queste conseguenze se, ad esempio, un esegeta cristiano ricavasse dalla Scrittura, persuasivamente ma indebitamente, indicazioni scorrette sul mondo naturale; e se, a ruota, un sapiente pagano, non trattenuto dall'autorità del testo sacro e ignorandone il senso autentico, dimostrasse sulla base di prove inoppugnabili, accuratamente ricavate per via di ragionamento o di esperienza, la falsità di quelle.[61] Ecco che, agli occhi dei fedeli meno eruditi (e dunque incapaci di operare le necessarie distinzioni), non solo l'opinione personale di quell'esegeta, ma anche la stessa rivelazione cristiana – e perdipiù nel suo complesso! – finirebbe sì incolpevolmente, e pure inevitabilmente, per essere screditata.[62]

Dinnanzi a un rischio tanto elevato, accresciuto ulteriormente dall'eventuale ostinazione dell'interprete fallace,[63] è bene tenere saldo un principio. Poiché non

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59 Cf. Aug, *Gn. litt.*, I, 20, 40.

60 Cf. Aug, *Gn. litt.*, II, 18, 38 [CSEL 28, p. 62]: « Ora, però, sempre mantenendo la moderazione propria di una seria devozione, riguardo a una questione così oscura non dobbiamo credere nulla in maniera avventata (*temere*), per evitare che ciò che la verità abbia in seguito reso manifesto (*quod postea veritas patefecerit*), quantunque non possa in alcun modo essere in contrasto con i libri santi (*quamvis libris sanctis* [...] *novi nullo modo esse possit adversum*), [...] per amore del nostro errore, tuttavia, ci capiti di odiarlo ».

61 Cf. es. Aug, *Gn. litt.*, I, 19, 39 [CSEL 28, p. 28–29]: « Assai spesso, infatti, capita che anche un non cristiano vanti una qualche conoscenza circa la terra, il cielo, [...] <una conoscenza> che egli detiene in virtù di una ragione certissima o sulla base dell'esperienza (*certissima ratione vel experientia*). Ora, è assai vergognoso e dannoso, e massimamente da evitare, che <questi> oda un cristiano che, parlando di questi argomenti come se <lo facesse> secondo le Scritture cristiane, vaneggi a tal punto che, vedendolo errare, come si suol dire, *toto caelo*, a stento possa trattenere una risata ».

62 Aug, *Gn. litt.*, I, 19, 39 [CSEL 28, p. 29]: « E spiacevole non è tanto il fatto che un uomo che sbaglia sia deriso, ma che coloro che sono fuori credano che i nostri autori abbiano sostenuto tali <opinioni> e, con gran rovina di coloro della cui salvezza noi ci curiamo, <questi autori> vengano biasimati e disdegnati come fossero ignoranti. Avendo inteso infatti qualcuno del novero dei cristiani errare riguardo all'argomento che conoscono alla perfezione e desumere la propria tesi infondata dai nostri libri, come potranno prestar fede a questi stessi libri per ciò che riguarda la risurrezione dei morti e la speranza nella vita eterna e nel regno dei cieli, quando si siano fatti l'idea che nelle loro pagine si trovano errori concernenti queste cose, che già hanno potuto sperimentare o apprendere in base a calcoli indubitabili (*quas iam experiri vel indubitatis numeris percipere potuerunt*)? ». Cf. II, 9, 20.

63 Aug, *Gn. litt.*, I, 19, 39 [CSEL 28, p. 29]: « Non si può esprimere a sufficienza qual dispiacere e tristezza questi cristiani temerari e presuntuosi arrechino ai loro fratelli più assennati quando, trovandosi a esser criticati e confutati a motivo dell'assurdità e della falsità della loro credenza

si può dubitare dell'infallibile veridicità delle Scritture cristiane,[64] da esse non può essere legittimamente ricavata alcuna affermazione razionalmente o empiricamente 'falsificabile'. E dunque, per converso: da un lato ogni affermazione che *davvero* sia risultata razionalmente o empiricamente provata[65] dovrà essere, dall'esegeta cristiano,[66] non solo recepita estrinsecamente come vera, ma anche dimostrata intrinsecamente conforme al vero significato del testo sacro; dall'altro, ogni affermazione che metta in discussione o contrasti il vero significato della Scrittura – affermazione che, coerentemente con quanto detto precedentemente, sarà di fatto esprimibile, ma di diritto mai verificabile – dovrà essere apertamente respinta[67] e smascherata nella sua fallacia.[68] Con una premura

da coloro che non sono vincolati dall'autorità dei nostri libri, per difendere ciò che con insensata temerità ed evidentissima falsità hanno detto, tentano di chiamare in causa gli stessi libri santi per desumerne delle prove [...] ».

64 Sul principio dell'assoluta veridicità delle Scritture, si possono utilmente consultare le puntuali osservazioni di: Tarmo Toom, « Augustine on Scripture », in Chad C. Pecknold, Tarmo Toom (eds.), *T&T Clark Companion to Augustine and Modern Theology*, Bloomsbury, T&T Clark, New York 2013, p. 75–90: 78–79.

65 Cf. Aug., *Gn. litt.*, II, 9, 21 [CSEL 28, p. 46–47]: « Sia pure contrario, se ciò che dicono è falso! Vero, infatti, è piuttosto ciò che dice l'autorità divina, e non ciò che suppone la debolezza umana. Se però costoro, per caso, potessero provare quest'affermazione con argomenti tali che non se ne debba dubitare (*sed si forte illud talibus illi documentis probare potuerint, ut dubitari inde non debeat*), bisognerebbe dimostrare che quanto è stato detto nei nostri scritti riguardo alla pelle non è contrario alla verità di quelle evidenze razionali (*demonstrandum est hoc* [...] *veris illis rationibus non esse contrarium*); [...] E se bisogna – come <in effetti> bisogna – (*quodsi oportet, sicut oportet*) comprendere queste due affermazioni in maniera da trovare che entrambe concordano e non si contrappongono l'un l'altra, allo stesso modo bisogna (*sic oportet*) anche che nessuna di esse contrasti con quelle discussioni, qualora una ragione certa abbia manifestato la verità delle dimostrazioni (*si eas forte veras certa ratio declaraverit*) con cui si insegna che il cielo, dotato di figura sferica, è convesso in ogni sua parte – ammesso tuttavia che ciò venga provato (*si tamen probatur*) ». È possibile, ma non accertabile e a mio giudizio neppure verosimile, che l'espressione con cui si chiude il testo denoti una qualche ironia e tradisca una certa sfiducia, perlomeno nel caso in questione, verso la capacità dimostrativa della scienza.

66 Cf. Aug, *Gn. litt.*, I, 21, 41 [CSEL 28, p. 30–31]: « A costui, rispondo di essere giunto con piacere a questo cibo stesso, con cui ho imparato che l'uomo non incontra difficoltà quando, conformemente alla fede, risponde ciò che bisogna rispondere agli uomini che smaniano di criticare ingiustamente i libri della nostra salvezza, sicché, qualsiasi affermazione essi abbiano potuto dimostrare con prove veritiere circa la natura delle cose, dobbiamo mostrare che non è contraria ai nostri scritti (*quidquid ipsi de natura rerum veracibus documentis demonstrare potuerint, ostendamus nostris litteris non esse contrarium*) ».

67 Aug, *Gn. litt.*, I, 21, 41 [CSEL 28, p. 31]: « Qualsiasi affermazione contraria a questi nostri scritti, cioè alla fede cattolica, essi abbiano addotto da qualunque dei loro volumi (*quidquid autem de quibuslibet suis voluminibus his nostris litteris, id est catholicae fidei contrarium protulerint*), dobbiamo mostrare (*ostendamus*) con una certa abilità, o almeno credere senz'alcun dubbio, che è assolutamente falsa ».

68 Fallacia riconducibile, in ultima analisi, ai limiti dell'intelletto umano: cf. es. Aug, *Gn. litt.*, II, 5, 9 [CSEL 28, p. 39]: « In qualunque modo esistano e qualunque sia la natura delle acque che si trovano lassù, che si trovino lassù non dobbiamo però affatto metterlo in dubbio; più grande,

supplementare: sarà bene guardarsi dall'opporre alle teorie scientifiche, talora brandite insidiosamente nel vano tentativo di invalidare il dato scritturistico, un ricorso sbrigativo alla pur innegabile onnipotenza divina![69]

III. *Lo sguardo di Agostino? Alcune brevi osservazioni*

Lo studio condotto da Marcello Pera nel quarto capitolo de *Lo sguardo della caduta* ha numerosi pregi. Apprezzabile, innanzitutto, è l'intento di mostrare come, rispetto alla questione cruciale del rapporto tra esegesi biblica e conoscenza naturale, la riflessione agostiniana conservi elementi di potenziale interesse *anche* in relazione al contesto odierno. È in tal senso opportuno il tentativo di problematizzare la comprensione di alcuni noti testi di Agostino, imponendo agli specialisti del suo pensiero di riconsiderarne con attenzione tanto la portata teorica, quanto le forme di ricezione storica.

Alcuni dei principali rilievi metodologici e interpretativi su cui poggia la lettura di Pera, inoltre, sono ampiamente condivisi. Su tutti, quelli riguardanti: l'opportunità di leggere i testi agostiniani combinando fedeltà alla lettera *e* all'intenzione; la necessità di valutare le singole affermazioni di Agostino a partire dai presupposti generali (teologici, antropologici, esegetici ed epistemologici) della sua riflessione; l'utilità di non trascurare le significative differenze tra le finalità che animano, da un lato, le posizioni dell'Ipponense e, dall'altro, la loro ripresa in epoca moderna.[70]

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infatti, è l'autorità di questo testo della Scrittura di quanto non sia la capacità di qualsivoglia ingegno umano (*maior est quippe scripturae huius auctoritas quam omnis humani ingenii capacitas*) ».

[69] Aug, *Gn. litt.*, II, 1, 2 [CSEL 28, p. 32–33]: « Nessuno deve confutare costoro dicendo che, in considerazione dell'onnipotenza di Dio, al quale tutte le cose sono possibili, è per noi doveroso credere che delle acque, seppur del medesimo peso di quelle che conosciamo e di cui abbiamo esperienza, furono riversate al di sopra del corpo celeste in cui si trovano gli astri. [...] Non che infatti, qualora Dio volesse che l'olio rimanesse talvolta al di sotto dell'acqua, ciò non accadrebbe; non per questo, tuttavia, la natura dell'olio ci rimarrebbe sconosciuta [...] ». Per il ricorso all'argomento *de omnipotentia*, invece, cf. es. Bas., *In hex.*, VI, 3.1–2.

[70] Su questo punto, l'accordo degli studiosi è ampiamente condiviso. Cf. es. Eileen Reeves, « Augustine and Galileo on Reading the Heavens », *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 52/4 (1991), p. 563–579; Pietro Redondi, « From Galileo to Augustine », in Peter Machamer (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Galileo*, Cambridge U.P., Cambridge 1998, p. 175–210; Ernan McMullKin, « Galileo on Science and Scripture », in Machamer (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion*, p. 271–347; Id., « From Augustine to Galileo », *The Modern Schoolman*, 76 (1999), p. 169–194; Gregory W. Dawes, « Could There Be Another Galileo Case? Galileo, Augustine and Vatican II », *Journal of Religion and Society*, 4 (2002), p. 1–18; Marco Lamanna, Paolo Ponzio, « Bent Perera e Galileo Galilei sull'unità del vero », *Freiburger Zeitschrift für Philosophie und Theologie*, 64/2 (2017), p. 301–322; Hart J. Weed, « *De Genesi ad litteram* and the Galileo Case », in Stanley D. Walters (ed.), *Go Figure! Figuration in Biblical Interpretation*, Pickwick Publications, Eugene, OR 2008, p. 148–160.

È pienamente convincente, infine, il modo in cui Pera evidenzia le difficoltà intrinseche a ogni lettura che pretenda di rintracciare negli scritti di Agostino la teorizzazione consapevole e compiuta di princìpi quali: l'autonomia illimitata della ricerca scientifica, la distinzione rigorosa tra verità *de fide* e *de facto*, la fiducia incondizionata nelle capacità della razionalità umana, il primato della parola scientifica su quella scritturale per quanto attiene alla descrizione del cosmo.[71]

Per altri versi, la restituzione dello sguardo di Agostino proposta da Pera risulta invece meno persuasiva e fondata. Con le osservazioni che seguono, dunque, vorrei richiamare l'attenzione su alcuni aspetti della riflessione agostiniana che, a mio giudizio, ammettono e talora suggeriscono un'interpretazione differente.

1. Un'osservazione preliminare: come molti studiosi hanno notato, la restituzione dello 'sguardo' di Agostino sul rapporto tra fede e scienza è problematica su un duplice piano.

In primo luogo, sul piano della *sistematicità*. Il *De Genesi ad litteram*, infatti, è primariamente un commentario esegetico, e non un trattato di teoria o di metodologia ermeneutica. Questo, certo, non impedisce di trarne indicazioni coerenti sulla questione in esame, e tuttavia impone di farlo attraverso la selezione e la combinazione di luoghi testuali non organizzati nella cornice di una trattazione pienamente unitaria e necessariamente organica.[72]

In secondo luogo, sul piano della *trasposizione* del contenuto. La difficoltà maggiore rispetto alla possibilità di riprendere e utilizzare le indicazioni di Agostino all'interno del dibattito odierno, in tal senso, deriva dall'evoluzione delle pratiche, dei metodi, e dei paradigmi di scientificità.[73] Alla luce di tale

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[71] Meritano dunque cautela affermazioni quali: « C'est pourquoi, avec une prudence toute moderne, Augustin se montre particulièrement réservé par rapport aux interprétations de l'Écriture qui empiéteraient sur le domaine scientifique : la Bible n'est pour lui un livre de science naturelles » (Saint Augustin, *La Genèse au sens littéral en douze livres*, De Genesi ad litteram libri duodecim, vol. I, Traduction, introduction et notes par Paul Agaësse et Aime Solignac, Desclée De Brouwer, Paris 1972 [Bibliothèque Augustinienne 48], 577); « Dalle indicazioni fornite da Agostino – di cui si ricorderà secoli più tardi Galileo nel carteggio con Cristina di Lorena (1615) – emerge una concezione ermeneutica sorprendentemente moderna [...] » (Agostino, *Commenti alla Genesi*, p. 355).

[72] Cf. es. McMullin, « Galileo on Science », p. 291: « In this work [*scil. De Genesi ad litteram*], Augustine goes through the creation narrative systematically, treating problems as they come up. He makes no attempt to give a general account of the principles that guide his exegetical practice. It is, however, possible to reconstruct what this account might look like by examining his frequent asides on how to deal with specific instances of apparent conflict between Scripture and natural knowledge ».

[73] Cf. *supra*, n. 15; Gerald Boersma, « *De Genesi ad litteram* 2: The Second, Third and Fourth Days of Creation », in Johannes Brachtendorf, Volker H. Drecoll (eds.), *Augustinus*, De Genesi ad litteram.

consapevolezza, dunque, occorrerà valutare accuratamente se, in che misura e quali tra le considerazioni e i rilievi critici rivolti da Agostino alla conoscenza naturale del proprio tempo possano essere estesi, in quanto tali e fedelmente all'intenzione dell'autore, a quella del nostro.

2. Sono numerosi i luoghi in cui Agostino individua nella ricerca smodata di conoscenza del mondo naturale una stortura del sapere, connotandone il desiderio e il guadagno, rispettivamente, in termini di *curiositas* e di *vanitas.* È tuttavia importante comprendere adeguatamente il senso di questa duplice valutazione negativa. Da un lato, ciò che nella 'curiosità' di sapere risulta vizioso o difettivo non dipende dall'inesattezza della scienza conseguita, ma dall'autoreferenzialità della postura conoscitiva assunta;[74] la ricerca curiosa del sapere, in altri termini, è potenzialmente corretta nel risultato, ma necessariamente scorretta nell'orientamento. D'altro lato, e in parallelo, la 'vanità' di tale sapere si misura esclusivamente in rapporto alla nullità del progresso salvifico che esso di per sé consente,[75] senza comportare alcun

Ein kooperativer Kommentar, Brill, Paderborn 2021, p. 101–120: 104, n. 11: « In using the term "natural science", we must remember that Augustine, of course, operates with a pre-modern conception of science. Post-Baconian science is reductive, limiting its scope of investigation to efficient causality. Augustine, by contrast, retains a richly textured metaphysical and teleological substructure in his account of nature, attending both formal and final causality ». Paul Harrison, « Is Science-Religion Conflict Always a Bad Thing? Augustinian Reflections on Christianity and Evolution », in William T. Cavanaugh, James K.A. Smith (eds.), *Evolution and the Fall*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI. 2017, p. 204–226: 218: « Part of the complexity of the historical relations between science and religion lies in the fact that what we counted as "science" in the distant past does not map directly onto our present conceptions of science. So it is important to note that before the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century what we would call "scientific orthodoxy" usually consisted in adherence to the natural philosophy of Aristotle ».

74 Sotto questo aspetto, la *curiositas* può forse essere considerata il correlato conoscitivo del peccato di *superbia*. Il tratto comune dell'autoreferenzialità, che si traduce in una relazione di godimento appropriativo alle cose del mondo, consente infatti di scorgere un'analogia tra due termini che, nella lettura di Pera, vengono per altre ragioni contrapposti: « La curiosità è il vizio opposto alla superbia. [...] Mentre la superbia innalza l'anima fino a far sentire l'uomo come Dio, la curiosità disperde e abbassa l'interesse dell'anima fissandola sulle cose temporali effimere o contrarie alla salvezza » (Pera, *Lo sguardo*, p. 116). Sulla *curiositas* in Agostino, cf. Andreas Labhardt, « Curiositas» , in Cornelius P.M. Mayer (ed.), *Augustinus-Lexikon*, vol. II, fasc. 1/2, Schwabe, Basel 1996, p. 188–195; Harrison, « Is Science-Religion », p. 214, n. 30 (e l'ampia bibliografia citata in questi studi).

75 Il sapere curioso, dunque, è nocivo o vano in quanto 'curioso', non in quanto 'sapere': cf. Aug., *De utilitate credendi*, 11, 25 [ed. Zycha, CSEL 25/1, p. 31–32]: « Difatti, comprendere ciò che è grande e nobile, o persino ciò che è divino, è il culmine della felicità. Comprendere ciò che è superfluo, poi, non nuoce affatto, ma forse nuoce apprenderlo, perché sottrae tempo a ciò che è necessario. Anche rispetto alle cose dannose, sventurato non è comprenderle, ma farle o subirle » (trad. mia). Alla luce di queste righe, sarebbe peraltro interessate riflettere sul passaggio, che si osserva nel testo di *Gn. litt.*, II, 10, 23 (*supra*, n. 51), dal piano della costatazione

aprioristico giudizio di valore sulla effettiva o mancata correttezza dei risultati dimostrativi raggiunti.[76]

3. La riflessione di Agostino sul rapporto tra esegesi biblica e conoscenze naturali muove dalla constatazione della difficoltà di conoscere alcune realtà fisiche (primariamente in ambito cosmologico) perché oscure e remote dai sensi:[77] quanto più le realtà da conoscere risultano tali, tanto più incerta sarà la conoscenza che le riguarda. A tal proposito, è opportuno notare come *oscurità* e *non-osservabilità* siano caratteristiche attribuibili alle realtà fisiche in termini unicamente *relativi* e *prospettici*.

Da un lato, infatti, le proprietà delle realtà naturali sono *in sé* intelligibili e sperimentabili,[78] benché non sempre e non da subito esse vengano chiaramente comprese dall'uomo. I confini della loro oscurità, dunque, sono potenzialmente mobili, in quanto suscettibili di ridursi in proporzione all'eventuale progresso delle facoltà o delle conoscenze razionali acquisite dall'uomo.[79] In tal senso, è rilevante come, trattando delle materie cosmologiche più impervie – in ordine progressivo di difficoltà: la determinazione della forma del cielo,[80] la presenza di acque superiori al firmamento,[81] l'esistenza di una luce *pre-* o *sovra*-celeste![82] –,

a quello della prescrizione: i fedeli non eruditi non *devono avere* tempo per le indagini naturali, l'erudito e vescovo Agostino non ne *ha* più.

76 Cf. Roberto A.M. Bertacchini, « Anticipi di modernità nella *scientia* di Agostino », in *La cultura scientifico-naturalista nei Padri della Chiesa (I–V sec.): 35. Incontro di Studiosi dell'Antichità Cristiana, 4–6 maggio 2006*, Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum, Roma 2007, p. 401–417: 403, n. 5: « Chi ha attaccato Agostino non si è accorto di confondere il piano ascetico con quello antropologico. In ascetica egli si trattiene dalla dispersione [...], ma in antropologia la musica è ben diversa ». Bertacchini mostra poi opportunamente come, in diversi luoghi (cf. es. *supra*, n. 70), Agostino attribuisca alla curiosità una valenza positiva e necessaria rispetto alla buona riuscita della pratica scientifica. Dello stesso autore, cf. *Agostino: la* scientia, Editrice Domenicana Italiana, Napoli 2013.

77 Cf. *supra*, n. 56.

78 Cf. es. Aug., *Gn. litt.*, IV, 4, 8 [CSEL 28, p. 100]: « Misura, numero e peso, infatti, si possono osservare e concepire (*animadverti et cogitari potest*) non soltanto nelle pietre e negli alberi, e in masse corporee del medesimo genere, di qualunque grandezza esse siano, siano esse terrestri o celesti. [...] ».

79 Ciò non implica, evidentemente, né che la capacità della ragione umana possa esaurire l'intima natura delle cose (per Agostino, una tale facoltà potrebbe darsi solo a partire dalla contemplazione del paradigma eterno delle realtà create: cf. *infra*, n. 83), né dunque che l'uomo possa raggiungere una conoscenza delle singole realtà naturali *intensivamente* equiparabile a quella divina. Cf. *supra*, n. 54.

80 Cf. *supra*, n. 65.

81 Aug., *Gn. litt.*, II, 4, 8 [CSEL 28, p. 37]: « Muovendo dall'esempio dell'aria [...] egli volle dunque mostrare che il cielo è posto tra acqua e acqua. Quest'accurata osservazione, dunque, la giudico massimamente degna di lode. Ciò che egli ha detto, infatti, non contraddice la fede e può essere creduto sulla base di una dimostrazione di comprovata evidenza (*in promtu posito documento credi potest*) ».

Agostino non escluda mai che quanto oggi è oscuro, non chiaramente *compreso*, non razionalmente *provato*, domani possa non essere tale (stando agli esempi sopra menzionati, perlomeno per quanto concerne l'esistenza e la conformazione delle realtà in questione).[83]

D'altro lato, una realtà corporea, *in sé*, è per natura visibile, benché sia possibile che essa non risulti tale a motivo di cause esterne, quali l'interposizione di un qualche ostacolo o la distanza eccessiva dal luogo di osservazione[84]. Quest'ultima condizione, in particolare, non costituisce un fattore di impedimento *essenziale* e rigidamente determinato rispetto all'osservabilità di un fenomeno: nulla vieta, ad esempio, che il possesso di una capacità visiva superiore, a partire dal medesimo luogo di osservazione, permetta l'accesso dello sguardo a realtà remote, altrimenti parzialmente o totalmente impercettibili (se ne può trovare conferma, ad esempio, nelle considerazioni di Agostino sulla *acrimonia cernendi* demonica).[85] Non sembrano esserci ragioni *di principio*, d'altra parte, per negare o limitare la possibilità di un accrescimento dello spettro visuale umano, nel caso in cui esso fosse ottenuto, ad esempio, tramite un eventuale potenziamento tecnico degli strumenti di osservazione.

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82 Aug., *Gn. litt.*, I, 19, 38 [CSEL 28, p. 27–28]: « Che invece vi sia una luce corporea celeste, o anche al di sopra del cielo o prima del cielo, a cui sia potuta succedere la notte, <ciò> non è contrario alla nostra fede, fintantoché non venga smentito da una verità certissima (*donec veritate certissima refellatur*). [...]. Se invece una ragione certa dovesse dimostrare che ciò è vero (*si autem hoc verum esse certa ratio demonstraverit*), non sarà ancora certo se lo scrittore abbia voluto che il senso di quelle parole dei libri santi fosse questo oppure un altro non meno vero ».

83 La ragione umana, nella condizione post-lapsaria, non è quindi inadatta a cogliere le realtà corporee *in quanto tali* e nel loro *essere fattuale*; piuttosto, essa è inidonea a coglierle *in Dio*, cioè a contemplare le loro ragioni eterne e, per così dire, il loro *dover essere*. Cf. Aug., *Gn. litt.*, V, 16, 34 [CSEL 28, p. 159]: « La maggior parte di queste cose, invece, sono remote dalla nostra mente per la dissomiglianza del loro genere, giacché sono corporee, e la nostra stessa mente non è idonea a vederle presso Dio, nelle ragioni stesse in virtù di cui furono fatte, in modo tale che mediante ciò noi sappiamo quante siano, quanto siano grandi e che qualità abbiano, anche se non le vediamo attraverso i sensi del corpo (*etiamsi non ea videamus per corporis sensus*) ». Per un inquadramento puntuale del contenuto dottrinale di questo testo, cf. Giovanni Catapano, « Inidonei a vedere il futuro in Dio. La critica di Agostino ai filosofi nel libro IV del *De trinitate* », *Medioevo*, 41 (2016), p. 171–185.

84 Cf. es. Aug., *Gn. litt.*, V, 16, 34 [CSEL 28, p. 159–160]: « Difatti, sono remote dai sensi del nostro corpo, giacché sono collocate in lontananza o separate dal nostro sguardo e dalla nostra azione da altri oggetti, che sono frapposti o posti dinnanzi a esse »; 18, 36 [CSEL 28, p. 161]: « Di tutta questa creazione di Dio non conosciamo molte cose, che o si trovano troppo in alto nei cieli perché il nostro senso possa raggiungerle, o sono poste in regioni della terra forse inabitabili, o sono nascoste in basso, nella profondità dell'abisso o nelle occulte insenature della terra ».

85 Cf. Aug., *Gn. litt.*, XII, 17, 34 [CSEL 28, p. 403]: « Per il resto, non deve sorprendere che essi [*scil.* i dèmoni] annuncino eventi già verificatisi in luoghi lontani, che dopo qualche giorno si confermano esser veri. Sono in grado di far ciò, infatti, non solo in virtù dell'acume della vista, anche per quanto attiene alle realtà corporee incomparabilmente superiore al nostro, ma anche in virtù della mirabile velocità dei loro corpi, certo di gran lunga più sottili dei nostri ».

Se tali considerazioni sono corrette, ci si potrà allora chiedere se non sia perlomeno lecito ricercare nella riflessione agostiniana i presupposti per l'ammissione – non necessariamente da intendersi nell'ordine dell'approvazione o della promozione – di un significativo *progresso* delle conoscenze relative al mondo naturale.[86] Nello specifico, di conoscenze criticabili non tanto perché impossibilitate a cogliere l'esistenza di realtà fisiche intrinsecamente non accertabili o di diritto inaccessibili per l'uomo, quanto piuttosto nella misura in cui eventualmente viziate da un difetto interno al metodo di ricerca o ai procedimenti di dimostrazione; detto altrimenti, di conoscenze il cui contenuto sarà messo correttamente in discussione solo se sprovvisto di *evidenza*, perché non adeguatamente supportato dal rigore e dall'esattezza del calcolo razionale, o dall'efficacia e dall'attendibilità delle tecniche di osservazione. Rispondere positivamente a tale interrogativo non sarà forse un azzardo, tanto più che nei testi di Agostino non compaiono indicazioni tali da indurre a negare o mettere in dubbio la possibilità, per la conoscenza umana esercitata entro i limiti di indagine commisurati alla sua effettiva capacità conoscitiva (razionale ed empirica), di ambire all'*evidenza* dei propri risultati.[87]

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[86] Il riconoscimento del progresso scientifico ha un ruolo fondativo in rapporto alla teorizzazione agostiniana del 'principio di prudenza', così denominato e formulato da McMullin, « Galileo on Science », p. 292: « *Principle of Prudence* [*PP*]: When trying to discern the meaning of a difficult Scriptural passage, one should keep in mind that different interpretations of the text may be possible, and that, in consequence one should not rush into premature commitment to one of these, especially since further progress in the search for truth may later undermine this interpretation» . In proposito, Harrison, « Is Science-Religion », p. 217–218 osserva: « Here Augustine offers another relevant observation about scientific claims: they change over time. Less pejoratively, we might say that science makes progress (even if, as theoretical physicist Max Planck wryly observed, it advances one funeral at a time). Granting this, it is important not to be too committed to prevailing scientific speculations since these may later change. Indeed, overcommitment to the status quo by the scientific community constitutes a scientific barrier to the uptake of new scientific theories ». La sottolineatura del carattere non definitivo, e perciò non vincolante, delle *speculazioni* e delle *teorie* è coerente con la pozione di Agostino, verosimilmente disposto ad ammettere che la validità del principio di prudenza debba essere estesa anche all'ambito pre-dimostrativo (cf. *infra*, n. 103) della conoscenza 'scientifica'. Distante dal pensiero di Agostino, invece, è la conseguente enunciazione del 'principio della natura mutevole dell'ortodossia scientifica': « But his [*scil*. Paolo Foscarini's] position about changing scientific claims is quite close to what contemporary philosophers of science refer to as "pessimistic meta-induction". This is the idea that what we learn from the history of science is that *no scientific theory ever prevails for long term*. From historical examples we make an inductive generalization that leads us to be pessimistic about the truth-claims of current science. It follows that it would be reasonable to expect present scientific theories to be replaced in time ». Tale affermazione, infatti, presuppone una definizione di 'scienza' notevolmente differente da quella di Agostino (cf. *infra*, n. 103).

[87] Cf., in proposito: McMullin, « Galileo on Science », p. 294: « Augustine accepts the ability of our God-given powers of sense and reason to arrive at truth in our accounts of the natural world »; Weed, « *De Genesi* », p. 160: « However, no one should prevent human reasoning from attempting

4. È riduttivo, e quindi inesatto, affermare che *lo* scopo di Agostino consista nel difendere la fede dalle possibili interferenze della scienza, e nell'affermare conseguentemente la necessità che le controversie intorno all'interpretazione della Scrittura siano determinate a favore della prima. Agostino, infatti, non appare preoccupato che *la* scienza della natura, correttamente esercitata, possa interferire o collidere con *la* fede, correttamente intesa. Se non altro perché, come credo si possa evincere facilmente dai suoi testi, egli giudica in via di principio impossibile sia che tra scienza e fede, *in quanto tali*, sorga dissidio, sia che, conseguentemente, si producano tra loro controversie effettive (cioè reali) da sciogliere in favore di uno dei due contendenti.[88] Del 'conflitto' tra scienza e cristianesimo,[89] per Agostino, è problematica la posizione più che la soluzione.

5. Ciò non significa, di contro, che Agostino neghi o sottovaluti l'insorgenza di contrasti tra *indagine* naturale e *interpretazione* della fede in rapporto all'aspetto e all'assetto del mondo naturale.[90] Tali contrasti, infatti, possono accadere, e di fatto accadono, qualora i risultati dell'indagine naturale si determinino nella forma di *una* congettura fallace, e dunque non opportunamente verificata, e/o la comprensione soggettiva della fede trovi espressione in *una* interpretazione scritturistica oggettivamente erronea, e dunque arbitrariamente ricavata.

Si comprende dunque perché, nelle pagine del suo commentario, Agostino consideri due opposte situazioni: [91] da un lato [*a.*] il conflitto tra

to discover things about God's creation or to attempt to reach the threshold of his rational ability. As a general principle, this is something that Augustine would have endorsed [...] ».

88 Cf. *supra*, n. 60.

89 Cf. *supra*, n. 42.

90 Recuperando la distinzione proposta da Harrison, « Is Science-Religion », p. 206–208 tra « *hard* irenic position » (= « the conflict between science and religion is, in principle, not possible ») e « *soft* irenic position » (= « concord between science and religion is much more a matter of historical contingency »), si può dunque dire che l'assunzione della prima posizione non è totalmente incompatibile con quella della seconda. Un 'irenismo forte', infatti, non implica necessariamente un concordismo ingenuo e dogmatico tra fede e scienza, né obbliga a misconoscere la possibilità di situazioni particolari e contingenti di conflitto; viceversa, proprio a partire dalla constatazione fattuale del conflitto, interpretata alla luce della convinzione del suo carattere apparente, esso *può* prevedere strategie di risoluzione accurate, non dogmaticamente orientate o predeterminate, ma fondate su procedimenti di verifica sorvegliati e rigorosi (Harrison esprime preoccupazioni in tal senso a p. 225: « My other worry is that hard irenicism might be more a function of the present high epistemic status of scientific claims than a careful scrutiny of these claims and their implications »). La possibilità, ventilata da Harrison, di ricondurre Agostino nell'alveo di un 'irenismo moderato', a mio parere, si dà unicamente a fronte della negazione di ogni effettiva facoltà 'dimostrativa' della conoscenza scientifica: il paradigma di sapere scientifico così adottato, ancora una volta, non pare però compatibile con quello operativo nel discorso agostiniano (cf. *infra*, n. 103).

91 Non si dà infatti interferenza effettiva (cioè in termini veritativi) tra esegesi biblica e conoscenza scientifica qualora risultino entrambe corrette o scorrette.

un'interpretazione *corretta* della Scrittura e una comprensione *scorretta* della realtà naturale, dall'altro [*b.*] il conflitto tra un'interpretazione *scorretta* della Scrittura e una comprensione *corretta* della realtà naturale (dove 'correttezza', tanto sul piano esegetico quanto su quello scientifico, significa 'conformità': in un caso al dato di fede, nell'altro allo stato di cose del mondo).

Rispetto a entrambe le situazioni, Agostino si dimostra interessato a determinare quale sia il corretto *modus operandi* dell'esegeta cristiano, senza mai rivolgere o estendere le proprie indicazioni normative allo scienziato della natura.

a. Rispetto alla prima situazione (esegesi *corretta* vs teoria *scorretta*), Agostino si esprime in modo netto: l'esegeta dovrà, se ne è in grado, *provare*[92] o, *faute de mieux*, *credere* fermamente che la formulazione 'scientifica' in questione, contraria alla fede e conseguentemente alla Scrittura,[93] è totalmente falsa. Tale indicazione, dunque, ha lo scopo di difendere la credibilità della fede e della Scrittura dalle interferenze della *pseudo-scienza*. Nulla, come detto, è precisato rispetto all'atteggiamento dello scienziato. Si può tuttavia supporre che questi, se posto di fronte a una dimostrazione cogente, sarà 'deontologicamente' tenuto a rivedere e ritrattare la propria formulazione, e che in caso contrario, mancando (ancora) una tale dimostrazione e non riconoscendo egli l'autorità della Scrittura,[94] si sentirà invece autorizzato a permanere nella propria convinzione.

b. Agostino si esprime con chiarezza anche in rapporto alla seconda situazione (esegesi *scorretta* vs teoria *corretta*): qualora un'interpretazione del testo sacro appaia contraddetta da un'affermazione scientifica inequivocabilmente provata, e unicamente a questa condizione,[95] l'esegeta *sarà tenuto* non solo a rivedere e

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92 Cf. *supra*, n. 67 (non sembra tenere sufficientemente conto di questo passaggio, così come del 'principio di prudenza' [cf. *supra*, n. 86], Weed, « *De Genesi* », p. 154, quando scrive: « Galileo would argue that the Church was obliged to falsify Copernicanism before she condemned it, not the heliocentrism. Augustine would have argued that the Church was permitted to regard heliocentrism as false since it lacked demonstration and since it appeared to conflict with the established interpretation of particular Scriptural passages »); 69 (con la raccomandazione da parte di Agostino di non eludere la necessità dimostrativa mediante un richiamo fideistico e frettoloso all'onnipotenza divina).

93 Cf. *supra*, n. 67.

94 Cf. Aug., *Gn. litt.*, II, 1, 4 [CSEL 28, p. 34]: « Essi, infatti, non essendo trattenuti dall'autorità dei nostri scritti e ignorando in quale senso ciò sia stato detto [...] »; cf. *supra*, n. 63.

95 Cf. *supra*, n. 65. A rigor di termini, ciò esonera l'esegeta dall'*obbligo* di ritrattare la propria *interpretazione* fintantoché la *teoria* avversa non risulti positivamente *provata* in via definitiva e irrefutabile (criterio, evidentemente, tanto meno soddisfabile, o perlomeno tanto meno determinabile in modo netto, quanto più aumenta la complessità o la non osservabilità delle realtà naturali in esame). Tale considerazione, che forse non apparirà risolutiva rispetto alle sfide poste dalla Modernità (cf. *supra*, n. 45), mi pare tuttavia conforme all'intenzione di Agostino. A partire da qui, si potrebbe discutere – cosa che Agostino, però, non fa – sul fatto che, in una fase preliminare a quella appena descritta (laddove cioè vi sia assenza di una dimostrazione ritenuta definitiva, ma presenza di numerosi e concordi dati in suo favore), intervengano o possano intervenire ragioni di *opportunità* a guidare il comportamento

ritrattare la propria comprensione, ma anche a farsi carico di mostrare la coerenza tra l'intenzione della Scrittura e l'affermazione in questione.[96] Tale indicazione, dunque, ha lo scopo di difendere la credibilità della fede e della Scrittura dalle interferenze della *pseudo-esegesi*. Benché, ancora una volta, ciò non sia precisato, si può evincere senza difficoltà che nessun obbligo né convenienza di revisione si imporrà in tal caso allo scienziato.

6. L'impossibilità di un conflitto effettivo tra determinazioni *vere* della fede e dimostrazioni *vere* della scienza per Agostino è motivata non tanto dalla teorizzazione di una netta separazione dei rispettivi ambiti di riferimento,[97] quanto piuttosto dall'esclusione dell'esistenza di due ordini di verità, mutuamente distinti e indifferenti, [98] o tali per cui un contenuto inconfutabilmente vero all'interno dell'uno possa risultare falso, dubitabile o revocabile all'interno dell'altro. L'assunzione di un paradigma veritativo marcatamente unitario, conseguentemente, non consente di ammettere nemmeno una forma di subordinazione delle espressioni *vere* della scienza rispetto a quelle *vere* della fede. Agostino, certo, ritiene che l'intelletto umano non sia capace di conoscere, e dunque di dimostrare o confutare, *tutte* le verità sul mondo naturale rivelate dalla Scrittura, e ciò nella misura in cui la sua capacità di comprendere è inferiore all'autorità di quest'ultima.[99] Ciò non implica,

dell'esegeta (Harrison, « Is Science-Religion », p. 224–225: « That said, some historical claims reach such a degree of probability that it would be irrational to deny them »).

96 Cf. *supra*, n. 66.

97 Cf. *supra*, n. 45–47.

98 I testi di Agostino non forniscono indicazioni a sostegno della indipendenza (cf. Marcello Pera, « The God of Theologians and the God of Astronomers: An Apology to Bellarmine », in Machamer (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion*, p. 367–387: 367: « In his theological writings, Galileo maintained what might be called the "independence principle" – science and religion belong to, and are competent on, two distinct and different domains: the factual domain of natural phenomena and the domain of faith of supernatural phenomena »), indifferenza, non sovrapponibilità (cf. Stephen J. Gould, *Rocks of Ages: Science and Religion in the Fullness of Life*, Ballentine, New York 1999, p. 6: « non-overlapping magisteria ») o limitazione reciproca (cf. es. McMullin, « From Augustine », p. 181: « This [of Galileo] is the Principle of Limitation [PL] in the strongest possible form. The Scriptures are limited to doctrines that bear on human salvation; the sciences of nature lie outside their scope ») tra gli ambiti della fede e della scienza. Per Agostino, infatti, entrambe si esprimono in rapporto all'ambito naturale in termini veritativi, per quanto con obiettivi, e conseguentemente con livelli di precisione, differenti: cf. es. Dawes, *Could There Be*, p. 7: « In any case, a close examination of *De Genesi ad litteram* suggests that Augustine's position is not accurately described as a "principle of limitation," in any sense of those words. Unlike Galileo, Augustine is not interested in limiting the authority of the biblical writings. He therefore holds to an entirely different principle, with a rather different set of implications. Augustine's hermeneutical principle in the matter of what we would call science and religion is better described as a "principle of differing purpose" ».

99 Cf. *supra*, n. 68.

tuttavia, né che, rispetto a quanto è in grado di *dimostrare*, la razionalità scientifica necessiti della fede,[100] né che tutto ciò che la scienza umana sia stata capace di *dimostrare* (combinando attestazione empirica e calcolo razionale) si differenzi, foss'anche per il grado di attendibilità, da quanto è noto per fede. Se 'dimostrati', infatti, i risultati della conoscenza naturale accedono a pieno titolo alla dimensione della certezza[101] e, dunque, dell'indubitabilità.[102]

Se dunque con 'dimostrazione' o 'prova' si intende il procedimento (o l'esito del procedimento) che, in virtù dell'ostensione dell'evidenza intelligibile o empirica di un determinato contenuto, ne garantisce la comprensione definitivamente certa[103] – e dunque, a rigor di termini, la 'scienza'[104] –, ecco che

100 Cf. *supra*, n. 35.

101 Cf. *supra*, n. 61, 65, 82.

102 Cf. *supra*, n. 62.

103 Cf. es. Aug., *Contra Academicos*, I, 7, 19. In proposito, cf. McMullin, « Galileo on Science », p. 294: « *Principle of Priority of Demonstration* (*PPD*): When there is a conflict between a proven truth about nature and a particular reading of Scripture, an alternative reading must be sought. I am using the term "demonstration" here in a broad sense to include any form of convincing proof and not just deductive proof from principles grasped as true in their own right (the technical Aristotelian sense of the term, to which Augustine does not confine himself). Augustine's emphasis is on the certainty that is needed for the claim to natural knowledge to count as a challenge to a Scripture reading »; Harrison, « Is Science-Religion », p. 216: « The vocabulary of "proof" and "demonstration" that Augustine relies upon here derives from Aristotle's influential understanding of the nature of science [...], set out in the *Posterior Analytics*. [...] The certainty of this knowledge arises out of the fact that it is the end product of logical deduction. [...] Given this, it is not surprising that Augustine enunciates the principle of the priority of demonstrated truths, since to oppose such truths would be tantamount to defying logic »; Weed, « *De Genesi* », p. 152–153: « [...] Augustine distinguishes between scientific demonstration and scientific theory [...]. A demonstration would involve a proof [...]. In a syllogism, if the form is valid and the premises are true, and the conclusion follows form the premises, then the conclusion *must* be true. So a demonstration would amount to a convincing argument as to the truth of a particular claim. Under the category of demonstration, Augustine would also include proofs derived from the experience of the natural world. [...] In contrast, a theory or hypothesis would be so-called because it lacks demonstration or proof ».

104 Con Harrison, « Is Science-Religion », p. 216, ci si potrà certo chiedere « whether scientific knowledge ever satisfies these strict criteria », giungendo a una risposta radicalmente negativa sulla base dell'assunzione di un paradigma 'lockiano di conoscenza scientifica: cf. es. Ibid., p. 217: « For Locke, experimental science (in our sense) may offer us conveniences, but it does not give us any certainties. [...] If Locke's understanding of experimental science is correct, then strict application of the Augustinian Principle of Priority of Demonstration would mean that no science would carry sufficient weight to displace a literal scriptural claim, since no science ever meets the strict criterion of demonstrative certainty »; p. 224: « To return to the general point, if we consider again Augustine's principle, the priority of demonstration, there will turn out to be no instances in which scripture need yield to demonstrative science in the way Augustine envisaged, because no science is demonstrative ». Rimane altamente disputabile, tuttavia, l'eventuale retroproiezione di un tale modello sul pensiero di Agostino (non si può, in particolare, interpretare l'"agostiniano' principio di priorità della dimostrazione assumendo al contempo la definizione lockiana di 'scienza': cf. Harrison, « Is Science-Religion », p. 217–218).

non sembra possibile esigere la sua 'rivedibilità'.[105] Ammettere la rivedibilità (qualunque sia il grado di alterazione supposto) di una 'prova' (nel senso appena precisato) non sembra possibile: ciò, infatti, richiederebbe la pensabilità in atto della falsità di un elemento compreso come vero sulla base di un'evidenza certa.[106] Parimenti, ipotizzare che Agostino abbia o avrebbe ammesso una tale possibilità non sembra giustificato: il modello della rivedibilità, infatti, è incompatibile con lo statuto attributo da Agostino non solo al comprendere, ma anche, e forse ancor prima, al credere.[107]

Benché non sempre risulti tale *per* noi, dunque, è *in sé* evidente che ciò che la fede prescrive, la ragione lo insegna;[108] e che, ai fini della certezza, l'*autorità* della parola divina non esclude né preclude, e anzi ammette e implica la congruenza con l'*autorità* della ragione manifesta.[109] Esegesi biblica e scienza della natura, in tal senso, sono chiamate a esercitare una funzione congiunta, che consiste nel preservare il vero da una duplice, ma speculare, forma di errore, derivante, da un lato, « dall'eloquenza della falsa filosofia » e, dall'altro, « dalla superstizione della falsa religione ».[110]

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105 Cf. *supra*, n. 33.

106 Cf. Aug., *c. Acad.*, III, 3, 5 [ed. Fuhrer, B.S.G.R. Teubneriana, p. 50]: « In qualsiasi modo la [*scil.* la sapienza] definisca, [...] tutti concordano sul fatto che non vi possa essere scienza di cose false (*illud omnibus placuit scientiam falsarum rerum esse non posse*) » (trad. mia).

107 Cf. es. Aug., *util. cred.*, 11, 25 [CSEL 25.1, p. 33]: « Chi, infatti, non crede ciò che prova? (*Quis enim quod probat non credit?*) ». Il comprendere, specularmente, implica il credere: Ibid. [CSEL 25.1, p. 32] « Ciò che comprendiamo, dunque, lo dobbiamo alla ragione; ciò che crediamo all'autorità; ciò che opiniamo all'errore. Ma chiunque comprende, crede anche (*sed intellegens omnis etiam credit*) »; cf. *supra*, n. 81. Recuperando indirettamente il riferimento al 'caso Galileo', si potrebbe osservare come la fede di Agostino (necessariamente preliminare e strutturalmente finalizzata alla comprensione) non sia dunque la fede di Bellarmino, se è vero che « according to <him>, certain factual statements contained in the Scriptures are necessary for their salvation value and, therefore, cannot be revised in the light of any contrary scientific theories. This has the consequence that, if such theories are advanced, they cannot be held to be true and, at the most, have to be treated as "hypotheses", in the technical sense of devices for calculating or systematizing phenomena, deprived of truth and epistemic value » (Pera, « The God of Theologians », p. 367).

108 Aug., *Gn. litt.*, I, 14, 28 [CSEL 28, p. 20]: « [...] e allo stesso tempo la fede cattolica stabilisce e la ragione più certa insegna » (il riferimento, nello specifico, è alla creazione dal nulla della materia).

109 Aug., *Gn. litt.*, X, 3, 6 [CSEL 28, p. 300]: « Se quindi qualcuno è già certo di possedere la giusta soluzione, si degni di istruirmi; se però a renderlo certo non era stata l'autorità né della parola divina né di una ragione manifesta, ma la sua presunzione, non disdegni di dubitare insieme a me ». Cf. anche: ibid., VII, 1, 1 [CSEL 28, p. 201]: « Ebbene, "rettamente" significa in modo veritiero e adeguato, [...] affermando invece senza esitazione ciò che può essere insegnato sia in base a un'evidentissima conoscenza razionale delle cose sia in base alla certissima autorità delle Scritture ».

110 Aug., *Gn. litt.*, I, 21, 41 [CSEL 28, p. 31]: « [...] così da non essere sedotti dall'eloquenza della falsa filosofia né terrorizzati dalla superstizione della falsa religione (*ut neque falsae philosophiae*

Come paventato da più parti,[111] un 'caso Galileo' può forse ripetersi. Difficilmente, tuttavia, una simile eventualità potrebbe essere scongiurata assumendo, comunque lo si interpreti,[112] lo 'sguardo' di Agostino. I pronunciamenti agostiniani, infatti, non hanno e non possono avere l'ambizione di rispondere alla complessità delle sfide che le acquisizioni della moderna razionalità scientifica pongono alla comprensione della fede ricavabile attraverso l'esegesi letterale della Scrittura. Qualcuno ha scritto che « tra religione e scienza c'è piuttosto antipatia sentimentale che opposizione logica »,[113] e forse ad Agostino ciò non sarebbe dispiaciuto. A patto di aggiungere, però, una significativa precisazione: esegesi e scienza, ciascuna a proprio modo, nascono da una radicale forma di limitazione e sottomissione, che per entrambe, tuttavia, deve essere sempre intelligente, e dunque mai dell'intelligenza.

loquacitate seducamur neque falsae religionis superstitione terreamur) ». *Confessiones*, VI, 5, 7 (ed. Verheijen, CCL 27, p. 77–78): « Da questo momento, tuttavia, accordai la preferenza alla dottrina cattolica, rendendomi conto che essa, con maggior moderazione e senza il minimo inganno, comandava di credere ciò che non era dimostrato – che una dimostrazione vi fosse, ma forse inaccessibile a qualcuno, o che non vi fosse –; presso di loro (*scil.* i manichei), invece, con temerarie pretese di scienza, si irrideva la credulità, salvo poi imporre di credere a una gran quantità di cose totalmente favolose e assurde, proprio perché non le si poteva dimostrare ». Cf. Giovanni Catapano, « Philosophia », in *Augustinus-Lexikon*, vol. IV, fasc. 5/6, Schwabe, Basel 2016, p. 719–742: 728–731.

111 Cf. es. Richard J. Blackwell, « Could there be Another Galileo Case? », in Machamer (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion*, p. 348–366; Dawes, « Could there be? »; Pera, « The God of Theologians »; Id., *Lo sguardo*, in part. p. 140.

112 È 'curioso' come, in merito, le posizioni degli studiosi divergano. Se per Pera, come si è detto, la reiterazione di un 'caso Galileo' andrebbe prevenuta recuperando lo 'sguardo di Agostino', per altri la sua stessa possibilità risiede precisamente nell'adozione di questo stesso sguardo da parte della Chiesa cattolica: « The Roman Catholic Church has rejected Galileo's principle, opting rather for Augustine's, leaving open the possibility of future conflicts between scientists and Church authority » (Dawes, « Could there be? », p. 1). Altri, ancora, rintracciano le ragioni del 'caso Galileo' nella mancata assunzione da parte della Chiesa cattolica dello sguardo 'moderno' di Agostino: « Contrariamente a quanto molti si ostinano a pensare e a scrivere ancora oggi, la condanna dello scienziato pisano da parte dell'Inquisizione non è affatto una prova di insanabile disaccordo tra la Scrittura cristiana e la scienza, ma solo del prevalere nella Chiesa in un modo sbagliato di leggere i Libri sacri, dovuto alla cultura del tempo. In anticipo di molti secoli S. Agostino aveva indicato i giusti criteri ermeneutici, che, se seguiti, avrebbero potuto evitare nell'epoca moderna lacerazioni e discredito duri a morire » (Nello Cipriani, « Lo studio della natura e il lavoro umano in S. Agostino », in *La cultura scientifico-naturalistica*, p. 373–384: 380).

113 Nicholas Gómez Dávila, *Tra poche parole* [1996], ed. it. a cura di Franco Volpi, Adelphi, Milano 2007, p. 94.

Democrazia e *Basileia* a Locri Epizefiri tra il IV e il III secolo a.C.* **

Democracy and *Basileia* in Locri Epizefiri between the Fourth and the Third Centuries BCE

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I. *La* βωλά *e il* δᾶμος *nelle tabelle: continuità e discontinuità con le strutture aristocratiche*

Fra il dicembre del 1958 e il gennaio del 1959 in una proprietà privata dell'antica Locri venne rinvenuta per caso una teca lapidea che conteneva delle tabelle e delle monete d'oro e d'argento: la fortunata scoperta suscitò fin da subito uno straordinario interesse da parte di storici, epigrafisti e numismatici e diede un importante contributo alla conoscenza della storia e delle istituzioni di Locri Epizefiri.[1]

* Questo saggio nasce come approfondimento di una sezione della tesi dottorale in Storia del Pensiero e delle Istituzioni Giuridiche Romane, dal titolo *La costituzione di Locri Epizefirii tra eunomia, inalterabilità e innovazione*, discussa il 21 marzo 2014 presso l'Università Mediterranea di Reggio Calabria, relatore prof. Felice Costabile.

** *Cui dono hoc libellum? Lionella magistra tibi namque tu solebas meas esse aliquid putare 'historias'.*

1 Le tabelle locresi rappresentano un *unicum* nel panorama epigrafico dell'antichità. Il primo ad occuparsi dell'archivio dell'*Olympieion* fu Alfonso De Franciscis. Cf. Alfonso De Franciscis, « L'archivio del tempio di Zeus a Locri », *Klearchos*, 3 (1961), p. 17–41; Id., « L'archivio del tempio di Zeus a Locri », *Klearchos*, 4 (1962), p. 66–83; Id., « L'archivio del tempio di Zeus a Locri »,

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Le tabelle locresi, infatti, testimoniano un evidente cambiamento nella costituzione di Locri Epizefiri rispetto al precedente assetto aristocratico, di cui mi sono occupato in un precedente lavoro:[2] l'elemento nuovo è, indubbiamente, rappresentato dalla presenza di una *βωλά* e di un *δᾶμος*, che rappresentano i

Klearchos, 6 (1964), p. 73–95; Id., « L'archivio del tempio di Zeus a Locri », *Klearchos*, 7 (1965), p. 21–36; Id., *Stato e società in Locri Epizefiri*, Libreria Scientifica, Napoli 1972. Il dibattito è stato poi alimentato dai tre convegni di Taranto del 1976, di Napoli del 1977, di Catanzaro, Locri e Reggio Calabria del 1984: *Locri Epizefirii. Atti del XVI convegno di studi sulla Magna Grecia, Taranto 3–8 ottobre 1976*, Arte Tipografica, Napoli 1977; Domenico Musti (ed.), *Le Tavole di Locri. Atti del colloquio sugli aspetti politici, economici, cultuali e linguistici dei testi dell'archivio locrese (Napoli 26–27 aprile 1977)*, Edizioni dell'Ateneo & Bizzarri, Roma 1979. Del seminario organizzato nel 1984 da Felice Costabile esiste l'edizione fuori commercio delle relazioni: Relata, *I testi dell'archivio locrese*. Copie del fascicolo si trovano a Roma presso l'Istituto Archeologico Germanico, L'École Française e la Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana; Marcello Gigante, *Coronide in una tavola di Locri*, in Sandro Filippo Bondì et al., *Studi in onore di Edda Bresciani*, Giardini Editori, Pisa 1985, p. 245–247; Franco Mosino, « Immagine di un pithos in una tabella di Locri Epizefiri », *Parola del Passato*, 41 (1986), p. 57–58; René Van Compernolle, *Agathoklès de Syracuse et Locres Epizéphyrienne*, in Cecilia Saerens, Rudolf De Smet, Henri Melaerts (eds.), *Studia Varia Bruxellensia ad orbem Graeco-Latinum pertinentia*, Peeters, Leuven 1987, p. 103–109; Léopold Migeotte, *Sur les rapports financiers entre le sanctuaire et la cité de Locres*, in Denis Knœpfler (ed.), *Comptes et inventaires dans la cité grecque, Actes du colloque tenu à Neuchâtel en l'honneur de Jacques Tréheux*, Droz, Genève 1988, p. 191–203; Felice Costabile, *Finanze pubbliche. L'amministrazione finanziaria templare*, in Giovanni Pugliese Carratelli (ed.), *Magna Grecia. Lo sviluppo politico sociale ed economico*, Electa, Milano 1987, p. 103–114; Felice Costabile, *Πολιτέια ed οἰκονομία a Locri Epizefiri*, in Giuseppe Nenci, Gerhard Thür (eds.), *Symposion 1988, Vorträge zur griechischen und hellenistischen Rechtsgeschichte (Siena - Pisa, 6.-8. Juni 1988)*, Böhlau Verlag, Köln 1990, p. 193–200; Felice Costabile (ed.), *Polis ed Olympieion a Locri Epizefiri. Costituzione economia e finanze di una città della Magna Grecia. Editio altera e traduzione delle tabelle locresi*, Rubbettino, Soveria Mannelli 1992; Claudia Antonetti, « Le tavole di Locri: Nuovi contributi al dibattito storico », *Ostraka*, 4/2 (1995), p. 351–363; Lavinio Del Monaco, « Le tavole di Locri sono 37. Un nuovo attacco tra le tabb. 35, 36, 37 », *Rivista di Filologia e di Istruzione Classica*, 125 (1997), p. 129–149; Franco Ghinatti, « Cronologia e rotazione dei fatarchi nelle tabelle di Locri Epizefiri », *Minima Epigraphica et Papyrologica*, 1/1 (1998), p. 55–77; Ignazio D'Angelo, « Le tavolette di Locri e il regnum di Dionigi II », *Aevum*, 75 (2001), p. 9–24; Andrea Filocamo, « Il basileus delle tavole di Locri. Le contraddizioni dell'ipotesi Dionisio II », *Minima Epigraphica et Papyrologica*, 9/11 (2006), p. 67–74; Felice Costabile, *L'archivio finanziario di Locri Epizefiri ed il Basileus*, in *Enigmi delle civiltà antiche dal Mediterraneo al Nilo*, I, Iiriti Editore, Reggio Calabria 2007, p. 251–307; Andrea Filocamo, « Locri Epizefiri. L'archivio di Zeus e la monetazione », *Minima Epigraphica et Papyrologica*, 12/14–15/17, (2009–2012), p. 123–164; Lavinio Del Monaco, *Riflessioni in margine all'organizzazione civica di Locri Epizefirii*, in Claudia Antonetti (ed.), *Lo spazio ionico e le comunità della Grecia nord-occidentale. Territorio, società, istituzioni. Atti del Convegno Internazionale (Venezia, 7–9 gennaio 2010)*, Edizioni ETS, Pisa 2010, p. 461–475; Lavinio Del Monaco, *Iscrizioni greche d'Italia*, Edizioni Quasar, Roma 2013; Andrea Filocamo, Daniele Castrizio, « Agatocle e l'archivio locrese di Zeus Olimpio. Un approccio numismatico », *Revue belge de numismatique et de sigillographie*, 160 (2014), p. 217–278; Lavinio Del Monaco, « Organizzazione civica a Locri Epizefirii », *Mediterraneo antico*, 21/1–2 (2018), p. 71–84.

[2] Cf. Ignazio D'Angelo, « La costituzione aristocratica di Locri Epizefirii tra eunomia, inalterabilità e innovazione », *Aiônos. Miscellanea di studi storici dell'Università della Calabria di Cosenza*, 21 (2017), p. 39–77.

massimi organi legislativi e normativi e che deliberano in modo congiunto i vari decreti.[3]

In diverse tavolette troviamo le espressioni *ἔδοξε τᾶι βωλᾶι καὶ τῶι δάμωι* (4; 5; 32) e *δόγματι βωλᾶς καὶ δάμω* (2; 3; 6; 8; 9; 10; 11; 14; 16; 18; 19; 22; 24; 25; 29; 38; 39) che sono proprie di una costituzione democratica.

La *βωλά* potrebbe essere l'evoluzione di quella che un tempo era la *gherusia*[4] della costituzione aristocratica, mentre il *δᾶμος* troverebbe un precedente nell'assemblea dei Mille,[5] testimoniata da Polibio a XII 16.

Già l'*editor princeps*[6] aveva notato che nelle tabb. 1 e 21 è presente solo la *βωλά*, nelle tabb. 13, 27, 28 e 30 entrambe le assemblee sono assenti, alcune tabelle della cosiddetta *συντέλεια* (tabb. 1–34)[7] non presentano la formula *δόγματι βωλᾶς καὶ δάμω,* ma solo *δόγματι βωλᾶς*: il De Franciscis spiegava questa anomalia con la presenza in città del re dell'Epiro, Pirro, che *potrebbe avere soppresso o almeno fatto tacere in tutto o in parte gli organi assembleari.*

La presenza della sola *βωλά* in alcune tavolette ha portato qualche studioso a vedere in ciò un mutamento del regime costituzionale in senso oligarchico,[8] tuttavia la variazione di una formula non implica necessariamente un cambiamento politico-istituzionale.[9]

In particolare, il Manni,[10] intervenendo al famoso convegno di Napoli del 1977 su *Le Tavole di Locri* a cura di Domenico Musti, in relazione al quadro istituzionale che si evincerebbe dalle tavolette, aveva attribuito ad un momento non democratico la tab. 1 che reca l'indicazione *ἐν τὰν συντέλειαν βασιλεῖ* con la sola presenza di *δόγματι βωλᾶς*, che sembrerebbe escludere il *δᾶμος*.

In realtà è importante sottolineare che la maggior parte delle tabelle del tempio di Zeus non sono decreti originali, ma riassunti ed estratti di atti

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3 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 134; Giorgio Camassa, « La codificazione delle leggi e le istituzioni politiche delle città greche della Calabria in età arcaica e classica », in Salvatore Settis (ed.), *Storia della Calabria antica*, Gangemi, Roma – Reggio Calabria 1987, p. 613–656, in part. p. 632.

4 Cf. Dicaearch. Fr. 34 Wehrli.

5 Cf. De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 134.

6 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 134.

7 La *συντέλεια* è una contribuzione che la città prende dal dio nella forma di prestito e che viene corrisposta ad un anonimo *βασιλεύς*. Cf. Felice Costabile, « La 'contribuzione al re': ruolo finanziario e cronologia dei magistrati locresi », in *Polis ed Olympieion*, p. 139–150; Costabile, *L'archivio finanziario*, p. 277–279.

8 Cf. Rita Panuccio, « Per una nuova collocazione cronologica di alcune delle tavolette bronzee di Locri Epizefiri », *Rivista dell'Istituto Lombardo*, 108 (1974), p. 105–120.

9 Domenico Musti, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 68; Felice Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », in *Polis ed Olympieion*, p. 210–227, in part. p. 214; Del Monaco, « Le tavole di Locri sono 37 », p. 140. n. 4.

10 Eugenio Manni, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 236–238.

ufficiali,[11] eseguiti dal creditore, cioè dal santuario,[12] e solo in tre casi sono una trascrizione fedele dei decreti della città[13]: infatti le tabelle 4, 5 e 32 presentano il formulario dei decreti veri e propri con l'espressione *ἔδοξε τᾶι βωλᾶι καὶ τῶι δάμωι*.[14]

Nel momento in cui la città contraeva il debito, sia i decreti sia gli estratti erano trascritti prima su tavolette lignee e successivamente nel bronzo, una volta che il debito fosse stato pagato tutto o in parte.[15]

Attraverso queste deliberazioni, la *polis* prendeva in prestito alcune somme di denaro o prodotti in natura, che i magistrati prelevavano dal tesoro del dio per diverse finalità quali la fortificazione della città, i lavori alle torri, l'acquisto di armi, la contribuzione finanziaria ad un anonimo *basileus*, l'esecuzione di ritratti, l'importazione di cereali:[16] le operazioni di prestito e di restituzione venivano gestite dagli organi costituzionali e dai magistrati civici, in particolare dagli *hieromnamones*.

Nelle tavolette è indicato anche l'impegno della città alla restituzione secondo quanto verrà stabilito dalla *βωλά* e dal *δᾶμος*: per quanto riguarda i modi e i tempi della restituzione, nelle tabelle ricorre con qualche variante la formula « come e quando voglia la città »,[17] dove il « come » farebbe riferimento alla possibilità di restituire il prestito anche sotto forma di oggetti o opere per il santuario.[18]

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11 Per quanto riguarda il valore giuridico degli estratti da decreto, l'Antonetti ha pensato di equiparare questi documenti ai *symbola*, al contrario il Costabile ha evidenziato che, rispetto ai *symbola* che regolano i prestiti fra *poleis*, a Locri il rapporto tra la città e il santuario è di tipo riflessivo, intrinseco all'amministrazione della *polis*. Cf. Antonetti, « Le tavole di Locri », p. 358–361; Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 274–276. Sulla natura dei *symbola* cf. Giovanna Daverio Rocchi, *Città-stato e stati federali della Grecia classica*, Edizioni Universitarie di Lettere Economia Diritto, Milano 1993, p. 203–204.

12 Cf. Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 273.

13 Cf. De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 67; Costabile, « Finanze pubbliche », p. 104; Felice Costabile, « L'archivio e la sua funzione nell'amministrazione finanziaria locrese », in *Polis e Olympieion*, p. 105–123, in part. p. 114–116; Franco Ghinatti, *Assemblee greche d'occidente*, Società Editrice Internazionale, Torino 1996, p. 92; Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 252–253.

14 A proposito delle tavolette 4, 5 e 32, Marcello Gigante ha parlato di « contesto stilisticamente qualificato » in un noto contributo in cui l'autore tenta di descrivere la fisionomia letteraria di colui che redasse le tavole di Locri. Cf. Marcello Gigante, « Le tavole di Locri », *Parola del Passato*, 17/1 (1976), p. 417–432, in part. p. 427.

15 Cf. Costabile, « L'archivio e la sua funzione », p. 117; Ghinatti, « Assemblee greche », p. 92; Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 269.

16 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 69.

17 Tab. 7: « ἀποδόμεν τῶι θεῶι ὅπω κα δοκεῖ τᾶι βωλᾶι καὶ τῶι δάμωι καὶ ὁπόκα κα [δοκεῖ] »; tab. 8: « ἀποδόμεν δὲ ὁπανίκα κα τᾶι βωλᾶι καὶ τῶι δάμωι δοκεῖ »; tab. 22: « ἀποδόμεν δὲ ὅπω κα δοκεῖ καὶ ὁπόκα κα δοκε[ῖ] ». Per quanto riguarda i testi delle tabelle ho seguito l'*editio altera* contenuta in *Polis e Olympieion*, a c. di Felice Costabile, p. 229–307.

18 Domenico Musti, « Strutture cittadine e funzioni del santuario », in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 209–228, in part. p. 218–219.

La formula *δόγματι βωλᾶς καὶ δάμω* è preceduta dalla data, espressa con il nome dell'eponimo, di cui però non viene indicata la carica: all'indicazione dell'eponimo seguono le altre cariche magistratuali e i nomi di quelle persone che le rivestivano in quell'anno. Ogni nome è preceduto da una sigla di tre lettere, che probabilmente fa riferimento al demo o alla fratria, di cui fa parte il magistrato.

La prosopografia che emerge dalle tavolette evidenzia che le cariche pubbliche non erano concentrate nelle mani di poche famiglie, ma erano distribuite fra la popolazione, effetto questo dell'avvento del nuovo assetto democratico.[19]

È chiaro che una tale distribuzione di cariche magistratuali presuppone un ampliamento della cittadinanza attraverso l'inserimento di nuovi cittadini nel corpo civico,[20] come per esempio avvenne anche ad Argo dopo la battaglia di Sepia (494 a.C.) in cui gli Argivi vennero sconfitti dagli Spartani: dopo Sepia, infatti, gli Argivi avrebbero accolto dei *perieci* nel loro corpo civico e successivamente avrebbero introdotto una quarta tribù rispetto alle tre tradizionali tribù doriche.[21]

Ma in quale rapporto sta la democrazia, che emerge dalle tabelle, con il sistema oligarchico della precedente costituzione?

Una risposta a questa domanda potrebbe scaturire dal ruolo che svolgono i *φάταρχοι*, i rappresentanti delle antiche strutture genetiche delle fratrie.

I *φάταρχοι* erano i capi delle fratrie che duravano in carica un anno e che costituivano un collegio a capo del quale vi era un presidente, il *προστὰτας τῶν δυώδεκα*, che ricopriva tale carica per un mese all'anno.[22]

Le fratrie, istituto di origine gentilizia,[23] dovevano far parte del precedente ordinamento aristocratico, ma sopravvissero anche dopo la svolta democratica della costituzione locrese: [24] esse si configurano come ripartizioni della cittadinanza.[25]

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19 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 107.

20 Del Monaco, « Riflessioni in margine », p. 470; Del Monaco, « Organizzazione civica », p. 76–77.

21 Cf. Cinzia Bearzot, « I douloi / perioikoi di Argo: per una riconsiderazione della tradizione letteraria », *Incidenza dell'antico. Dialoghi di storia greca*, 3 (2005), p. 61–82; Paolo A. Tuci, « Il regime politico di Argo e le sue istituzioni tra fine VI e fine V secolo a.C.: verso un'instabile democrazia », in Cinzia Bearzot, Franca Landucci (eds.), *Argo: una democrazia diversa*, Vita e Pensiero, Milano 2006, p. 209–271.

22 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 160; Costabile, *La costituzione democratica*, p. 210; Del Monaco, « Iscrizioni greche », p. 28.

23 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 159; Domenico Musti, « Problemi della storia di Locri Epizefirii », in *Locri Epizefirii,* p. 23–146, in part. p. 125.

24 Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 210.

25 Musti, « Problemi della storia », p. 120–121.

Quante erano le fratrie a Locri? Il De Franciscis aveva pensato che la fratria fosse una sola,[26] ma che le fratrie fossero 12 e non una lo rivelano diversi elementi: innanzitutto la circostanza che i *φάταρχοι* sono 12[27] e poi il fatto che le somme che i *φάταρχοι* riscuotono sono divisibili per dodici (il numero delle fratrie);[28] nella tavoletta 8 per esempio i 240 decacorinzi prelevati dal fatarco, divisi per 12, danno 20 decacorinzi a fratria.[29]

Le funzioni dei fatarchi sono essenzialmente militari e finanziarie: nella tab. 8 il fatarco riscuote una somma di denaro destinata all'esecuzione di ritratti (*τὰς εἰκόνας*); nella tab. 16 la fratria esegue delle collette di denaro che, depositate nel *φατάρχιον*, sono destinate alla *πυργοποιία*; nella tab. 14 la sede dei fatarchi è depositaria di un prestito, e nelle tabb. 22 e 34 fatarchi diversi ricevono varie somme di denaro, che la città ha preso in prestito dal santuario e poi ha versato alla fratria;[30] nella tab. 23 la città prende in prestito dal dio delle somme, che si configurano come tributi riscossi dai fatarchi e dai *tamiai*.[31]

Pur tenendo presenti queste prerogative dei fatarchi, le funzioni delle fratrie sembrano essere più complesse in riferimento al rapporto costituzionale tra fatarchi e città: è chiaro infatti che i fatarchi rappresentano la città,[32] visto che proprio loro riscuotono le somme che il santuario concede alla *polis*; inoltre il *φατάρχιον* funziona come cassa della *polis*,[33] oltre che come luogo di riunione dei fatarchi.[34]

È interessante sottolineare che i soggetti che ricoprono la carica di fatarco non rivestono altre magistrature nella costituzione locrese: la fatarchia, magistratura aristocratica basata sulla ricchezza, era probabilmente incompatibile con le altre magistrature democratiche.[35]

Un altro elemento della costituzione oligarchica, che permane anche dopo la riforma democratica, è rappresentato dalle tre tribù in cui era divisa la popolazione locrese: l'esistenza delle tribù si evince dalla presenza di collegi magistratuali su base ternaria.

L'origine dorica delle tribù di Locri sembrerebbe confermata dal nome 'Lak', uno dei demi (o fratrie) locresi, che evoca la parola 'Lakonia':[36] a questo punto è

[26] De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 159.
[27] Musti, « Problemi della storia », p. 120.
[28] Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 211.
[29] Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 211.
[30] De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 160.
[31] Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 294.
[32] Musti, « Problemi della storia », p. 123; Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 212.
[33] Musti, « Problemi della storia », p. 122; Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 211; Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 294.
[34] Musti, « Problemi della storia », p. 121.
[35] Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 212.
[36] Cf. De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 101; Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 212.

chiaro che il confronto più prossimo è quello con le tre tribù di Sparta, con cui Locri ebbe stretti rapporti di cooperazione.[37]

Ognuna delle tribù era suddivisa in 11 o 12 demi oppure fratrie,[38] che costituivano le ripartizioni civiche in cui i cittadini erano registrati: tali demi o fratrie sono indicati con delle sigle,[39] che sono poste prima del nome e del patronimico del magistrato.

I demi (o fratrie) locresi, in cui si suddivideva la cittadinanza, ruotavano nella carica della presidenza dei fatarchi, ogni mese nell'arco di tre anni: in particolare, il Fuda ha ricostruito le sequenze di rotazione del presidente dei fatarchi ed è giunto alla conclusione che ognuna delle tre tribù rivestiva la carica della prostasia dei fatarchi per 12 mesi durante un triennio.[40]

In via del tutto problematica vorrei comunque evidenziare in questa sede che l'opzione di individuare in tali sigle delle fratrie o dei demi costituisce un fattore importante per determinare la natura delle istituzioni democratiche locresi,

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[37] Oltre alle note vicende relative alle spedizioni ateniesi del 427–424 a.C. e del 415–413 che vedono Locri a fianco di Sparta, la cooperazione tra Locresi e Spartani è adombrata nella leggenda dell'intervento dei Dioscuri nella battaglia della Sagra a fianco dei Locresi. Questa leggenda fu il riadattamento di una versione più antica (quella crotoniate) dove al posto dei Dioscuri c'era Aiace Oileo: il riadattamento fu una manovra politica spartana per mostrare che, già al tempo della Sagra, Locri doveva la sua salvezza a Sparta. Sulla battaglia della Sagra, cf. René Van Compernolle, « Ajax et les Dioscures au secours des Locriens sur les rives de la Sagra (ca. 575–565 av. notre ère) », in Jacqueline Bibauw, Marcel Renard (eds.), *Hommages à Marcel Renard*, II, Latomus, Bruxelles 1969, p. 733–766; Marta Sordi, « La leggenda dei Dioscuri nella battaglia della Sagra e di Lago Regillo », *Contributi dell'Istituto di Storia Antica*, 1 (1972), p. 47–70; René Van Compernolle, « Le tradizioni sulla fondazione e sulla storia arcaica di Locri Epizefirî e la propaganda politica alla fine del V secolo av. Cr. », *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, classe di lettere e filosofia*, 6 (1976), p. 329–400, in part. p. 387 ss.; Luisa Moscati Castelnuovo, « Sparta e le tradizioni crotoniate e locresi sulla battaglia della Sagra », *Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica*, n.s. 51 (1995) p. 141–163; Alessandro Sgobbi, « Stesicoro, Falaride e la battaglia della Sagra », *Acme*, 56/3 (2003), p. 3–38.

[38] Alcuni studiosi ritengono che le sigle stiano ad indicare i demi, altri hanno ipotizzato la possibilità che le sigle facciano riferimento alle fratrie. Cf. Margherita Guarducci, *Epigrafia greca*, vol. II, Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, Roma 1969, p. 285; De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 97–107; 171–177; Claude Vatin, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 242–244; Musti, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 298–304; René Van Compernolle, « Le sigle delle tabelle ed i 'demi' locresi: 33 o 36 », in *Polis ed Olympieion*, p. 209–210; Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 212–213; Antonetti, « Le tavole di Locri », p. 351–363; Ghinatti, « Cronologia e rotazione », p. 75; Del Monaco, « Iscrizioni greche », p. 30.

[39] Sigle di questo genere premesse ai nomi dei magistrati ricorrono in altri luoghi della Magna Grecia, come per esempio ad Eraclea dove nel 1732 furono scoperte due tavolette risalenti al periodo compreso tra la fine del IV e l'inizio del III secolo a.C., relative a terreni appartenenti ai santuari di Dioniso e di Atena Polias e occupati abusivamente da privati. Cf. Guarducci, *Epigrafia greca*, vol. II, p. 277–284.

[40] Cf. Roberto Fuda, « La rotazione tribale delle cariche magistratuali », in *Polis ed Olympieion*, p. 203–208; Ghinatti, « Assemblee greche », p. 99; Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 213; Ghinatti, « Cronologia e rotazione », p. 75.

testimoniate dalle tabelle: qualora le sigle venissero ad essere identificate con i demi, ci troveremmo di fronte ad una accentuazione del carattere democratico di questa costituzione; se invece il corpo civico fosse ripartito in fratrie, allora proprio queste strutture gentilizie, che attraverso i fatarchi svolgono una funzione finanziaria di spessore, tornerebbero a costituire una componente di notevole rilievo nell'ambito del nuovo assetto democratico locrese, rivelando così il ruolo avuto dalla componente aristocratica nella nuova costituzione di stampo democratico[41], anche se tanti elementi ci sfuggono e necessitano di ulteriori approfondimenti e studi anche comparativi con altre esperienze istituzionali.

A questo proposito è interessante sottolineare come ad Argo, (l''autre Démocratie', come venne espressamente indicata in un celebre articolo da Marcel Piérart),[42] intorno al V secolo a.C. sia attestata la presenza di dodici fratrie per ciascuna delle quattro tribù e di una magistratura collegiale di *δυώδεκα*.

Nello specifico si tratta di due iscrizioni: la prima è una placca di bronzo,[43] che riguarda una somma di denaro, divisa all'interno di una tribù, e che contiene l'elenco di 12 gruppi, ciascuno con il proprio nome e con l'indicazione della cifra versata; è presente inoltre il riferimento alla magistratura dei dodici (*τοὶ δυόδεκα*, l. 1), al suo presidente (indicato con il termine *ἀϝρέτευε*, l. 17) oltre ad altri magistrati.

La seconda iscrizione,[44] scoperta presso l'Heraion di Argo, contiene una lista di 4 ieromnemoni e attesta i nomi delle 4 tribù in cui era suddivisa la comunità civica degli Argivi: Dinami, Ilei, Irnati e Panfili.[45]

Inoltre altri testi epigrafici, scoperti ad Argo, documentano dei prestiti che il tempio di Atena ha dato alla città per svolgere determinate attività: come a Locri, dunque, anche ad Argo la *polis* attingeva al fondo di un tempio in tempi di crisi.

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41 In un precedente saggio ho avanzato l'ipotesi che proprio la politica antiaristocratica di Dionigi II durante il suo soggiorno locrese abbia fatto vacillare l'equilibrio socio-politico di Locri e abbia dato un forte impulso all'evoluzione della costituzione oligarchica proiettandola verso la democrazia. Cf. D'Angelo, « La costituzione aristocratica di Locri Epizefirii », p. 56–67.

42 Marcel Piérart, « Argos. Une autre démocratie », in Pernille Flensted-Jensen, Thomas Heine Nielsen, Lene Rubinstein (eds.), *Polis and Politics. Studies in Ancient Greek History. Presented to Mogens Herman Hansen on his Sixtieth Birthday, August 20, 2000*, Museum Tusculanum Press, Copenhagen 2000, p. 297–314.

43 Henri Van Effenterre, Françoise Ruzé, *Nomima. Recueil d'inscriptions politiques et juridiques de l'archaisme Grec*, I, École française de Rome, Roma 1994, n° 65, p. 272–274 (cf. SEG, 41 [1994], p. 284).

44 Henri Van Effenterre, Françoise Ruzé, *Nomima*, n° 86, p. 318–319 (cf. IG IV 517); Rita Sassu, *Hiera chremata. Il ruolo del santuario nell'economia della polis*, Sapienza Università Editrice, Roma 2014, p. 295–305.

45 Cf. Charalampos Kritzas, « Aspects de la vie politique et économique d'Argos au V^e^ siècle avant J.-C. », in Marcel Piérart (ed.), *Polydipsion Argos. Argos de la fin des palais mycéniens à la constitution de l'État classique. Fribourg (Suisse) 7–9 mai 1987*, École française d'Athènes, Paris 1992, p. 231–240; Tuci, « Il regime politico di Argo », p. 225–226.

È merito di Ch. Kritzas aver instaurato un primo confronto tra i testi argivi e i testi locresi.[46]

Il confronto con Argo confermerebbe una divisione del corpo civico locrese in fratrie, fra l'altro supportata per quanto riguarda le tabelle locresi dall'identità fra il supposto numero di fratrie per ogni tribù, cioè 12, e il numero dei fatarchi, che sono pure 12: la conclusione è che a Locri probabilmente tutto il corpo cittadino doveva essere diviso in 36 fratrie.

I tribù	II tribù	III tribù
12 fratrie	12 fratrie	12 fratrie

Anche l'onomastica dei magistrati rivela un ruolo importante svolto dalla compagine aristocratica della città nella nuova costituzione democratica: sono in tutto 9 i nomi composti con il suffisso *-ιππος* che rimanderebbe ad una componente aristocratica[47] (*Aristippos, Archippos, Damasippos, Kallippos, Kratippos, Nikippos, Sosippos, Philippos, Charippos*) e diversi sono i nomi formati con il prefisso Ἀριστο- (*Aristarchos, Aristodamos, Aristoklês, Aristokrates, Aristokritos, Aristophanes, Ariston, Aristomachos*).[48]

Sulla base di queste considerazioni, si potrebbe affermare che la costituzione democratica probabilmente fu il risultato di un compromesso fra la fazione democratica e quella oligarchica della popolazione di Locri Epizefiri.[49]

II. *Le magistrature delle tabelle: caratteri generali e loro funzioni*

Le tabelle permettono di conoscere solo in parte i tratti e i criteri generali che stanno alla base del complesso sistema delle cariche magistratuali e nello stesso tempo le funzioni svolte dai magistrati.

Le magistrature locresi erano annuali e collegiali: ogni magistrato durava in carica un anno[50] ed era inserito all'interno di una terna,[51] fatta eccezione per l'eponimo, il *theukólos* e il *basileus*, che erano magistrature monocratiche.

[46] CHARALAMBOS KRITZAS, « Aspects de la vie politique », p. 235–238; CHARALAMBOS KRITZAS, « Nouvelles inscriptions d'Argos: les archives des comptes du trésor sacré (IV s. av. J.-C.) », *Comptes Rendus de l'Academie des Inscriptions,* 150 (2006), p. 397–434, in part. p. 406, dove lo studioso si esprime in questi termini « Mais le parallèle réel le plus proche de nos cuves est la caisse (teca) bien connue du sanctuaire de Zeus Olympien à Locres, avec ses 39 plaques de bronze de caractère financier ».

[47] Aristotele (*Pol.* 1289 b) dice che nei tempi antichi erano governate da regimi oligarchici quelle città la cui forza risiedeva nei cavalli (*ἐν τοῖς ἵπποις*).

[48] Cf. COSTABILE, « La costituzione democratica », p. 213–214.

[49] Cf. MUSTI, « Problemi della storia », p. 104.

La struttura ternaria dei magistrati derivava dalla composizione stessa della popolazione, che era suddivisa in tre tribù, ognuna delle quali si suddivideva probabilmente in fratrie, indicate con una sigla di tre lettere.[52]

Le tabelle non documentano un solo caso di iterazione e ciò probabilmente significa che la costituzione locrese non prevedeva l'iterabilità delle magistrature: il materiale epigrafico e l'assenza di fonti letterarie non ci permettono di avanzare ipotesi per quanto riguarda l'intervallo fra una magistratura e un'altra.[53]

Un'altra questione dibattuta fra i moderni è quella relativa all'esistenza di un *cursus honorum* delle cariche magistratuali: secondo il Lewis[54] dalle tabelle si ricaverebbe una progressione di carriera dal livello più basso, rappresentato dagli *ἱερομνάμονες*, a quello dei *πρόδικοι* fino ad arrivare al livello dei *πρόβωλοι*; per il Musti[55] la progressione ascendente sembrerebbe confermata solo dal livello degli *ἱερομνάμονες* a quello dei *πρόβωλοι* e dei *πρόδικοι*, posti però su uno stesso livello; il Costabile[56] ha aggiunto l'altro livello rappresentato dall'eponimo, che si troverebbe all'apice dell'ordinamento costituzionale di Locri.

Le tabelle menzionano diversi magistrati: l'*eponimo* (presente in tutte le tabelle), i *próboloi proárchontes* (tab. 3; 4; 5; 7; 8; 9; 12; 13; 14; 15; 16; 17; 18; 21; 22; 23; 24; 25; 26; 27; 28; 30; 31; 32; 33; 34; 36; 37; 38; 39), i *próboloi* (tab. 2; 6; 10; 11; 19; 20; 21; 29), i *polemarchi* (tab. 20; 21), i *phátarchoi* (tab. 8; 14; 16; 20; 22; 23; 34), i *logistêres* (tab. 32), gli *episkeuastéres* (tab. 21), i *pródikoi* (tab. 2; 3; 4; 6; 7; 8; 9; 10; 11; 12; 13; 14; 15; 16; 17; 19; 20; 21; 22; 23; 24; 25; 26; 27; 28; 29; 30; 31; 32; 33; 34; 36; 38; 39), i *toichiopoioí* (tab. 3), un *theukólos* (tab. 21) gli *epistátai* (tab. 3), i *tamiai* (tab. 23), gli *ieromnemoni* (tab. 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 10; 11; 12; 13; 14; 15; 16; 17; 18; 19; 20; 22; 23; 24; 25; 26; 27; 28; 29; 30; 31; 32; 33; 35; 36; 38; 39), gli *árchontes* (tab. 4; 33) e il *basileus* (tab. 1; 13; 23; 25; 30; 31).

L'**eponimo**, privo della carica magistratuale, dava il nome all'anno ed è presente in tutte le tabelle:[57] è stata avanzata l'ipotesi che questo magistrato

[50] Le tabelle 4 e 33 nominano in modo generico gli *ἄρχοντες* in un contesto che avvalora l'ipotesi che le magistrature fossero di durata annuale. Cf. De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 135.

[51] De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 141. La base ternaria delle magistrature locresi potrebbe trovare una ulteriore conferma in una dedica votiva di tre magistrati locresi, oggetto di un recente studio. Cf. Jessica Piccinini, « Dedica di tre magistrati locresi », *Axon*, 3/1 (2019), p. 63–70.

[52] Cf. Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 214.

[53] Cf. Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 215; De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 141.

[54] David Malcolm Lewis, « Preliminary notes on the Locrian archive », *Klio*, 52 (1970), p. 247–253.

[55] Musti, interv. in « Le Tavole di Locri », p. 119–120.

[56] Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 214–215.

[57] Sulla connessione tra la rotazione dell'eponimia e quella della prostasia cf. Fuda, « La rotazione tribale », in *Polis e Olympieion*, p. 203–208.

possa identificarsi o con il *κοσμόπολις*[58] della precedente costituzione oligarchica o con il *βασιλεύς*[59] che compare nelle tabb. 1–13–23–25–30–31.

Il ritrovamento di un bollo figulino locrese con legenda '*ἄρχ(οντος) Εὐθύμου*', databile intorno al III–II sec. a.C., avvalora la tesi che l'eponimo di Locri fosse un arconte (ἄρχων).[60]

Riguardo alle sue funzioni non siamo in grado di stabilire in quali ambiti si esplicasse il suo potere: il confronto più immediato è con l'arconte eponimo ateniese che, oltre a dare il nome all'anno, nominava i coreghi, organizzava i concorsi teatrali, le celebrazioni di alcune feste e le processioni, istruiva cause relative al maltrattamento degli orfani e alla tutela delle vedove e dei minori (Aristot. *Ath. Pol.* 56).[61]

I ***πρόβωλοι προάρχοντες***, indicati in altre tabelle con il solo titolo di *πρόβωλοι*,[62] erano così chiamati per lo stretto rapporto sia con la *βωλά* sia con i magistrati civici:[63] questa magistratura era presente in molte altre *poleis* greche come Corinto, Corcira, Delfi, Eretria, Atene con funzioni diverse, come sottolineava già l'*editor princeps*.[64]

È Aristotele che, in diversi passi della *Politica*, dà una serie di informazioni sulla funzione di questi magistrati: non c'è dubbio che lo Stagirita rappresenti una fonte autorevole per delineare le funzioni dei *probuli*, tuttavia i dati aristotelici devono essere confrontati con altri testi letterari ed epigrafici, come è stato giustamente osservato.[65]

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58 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 135; Id., interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 239–240.

59 Musti, « Strutture cittadine », p. 214.

60 Costabile, « La 'contribuzione al re' », p. 143–145; Felice Costabile, « Defixiones da Locri Epizefiri: nuovi dati sui culti, sulla storia e sulle istituzioni », *Minima Epigraphica et Papyrologica*, 2 (1999), p. 23–76, in part. p. 50; Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 215–216; Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 286–289. A proposito della legenda di questo bollo figulino locrese, alcuni studiosi (Sabbione, Monaco) hanno dato una lezione diversa rispetto a quella del Costabile. Cf. Claudio Sabbione, « Rilettura di un bollo laterizio locrese », in Marcella Barra Bagnasco, Maria Clara Conti (eds.), *Studi di archeologia classica dedicati a Giorgio Gullini per i quarant'anni di insegnamento*, Edizioni dell'Orso, Alessandria 1999, p. 165–174; Del Monaco, *Iscrizioni greche*, p. 163–164.

61 Cf. Daverio Rocchi, *Città-stato e stati federali*, p. 298.

62 Fra le due magistrature non sembra esserci alcuna differenza come rivela la tab. 21 dove le stesse persone vengono indicate con entrambi i titoli magistratuali. Cf. De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 136.

63 Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 216.

64 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 136. Per la presenza di questa magistratura in aree geografiche diverse e per una disamina delle funzioni dei *πρόβωλοι* nei vari ordinamenti costituzionali del mondo greco, si rimanda alla sintesi di Lazzaro Pietragnoli, « I probouloi nel pensiero politico e nella pratica istituzionale: un tentativo di sintesi », in Claudia Antonietti (ed.), *Lo spazio ionico e le comunità della Grecia nord-occidentale. Territorio, società, istituzioni,* Edizioni ETS, Pisa 2010, p. 245–256.

65 Cf. Pietragnoli, « I probouloi nel pensiero politico », p. 245 e ss.

Aristotele a IV 1298 b ricorda la presenza dei *probuli* nelle oligarchie con il compito di preparare le questioni su cui poi si deliberava; a IV 1299 b dice che questi magistrati non sono un'istituzione democratica, ma hanno un carattere oligarchico; infine a IV 1322 b precisa che i *probuli* costituiscono la massima autorità dell'ordinamento costituzionale e hanno il compito di preparare le delibere e aggiunge che, dove il popolo ha il potere, la magistratura dei *probuli* si chiama consiglio (*βουλή*).[66]

Per il De Franciscis essi potrebbero identificarsi con i *τῶν νόμων φύλακες*, di cui si parla nei Proemi delle leggi di Zaleuco di Stobeo (IV, 9 p. 126 Hense):[67] ciò potrebbe essere avvalorato dall'associazione che Aristotele fa tra le due magistrature (*Pol.* 1298 b).[68]

Confrontando i contenuti delle tabelle locresi con quanto dice Aristotele, possiamo dire che nella Locri democratica i *πρόβωλοι* costituivano una magistratura collegiale e annuale con il compito di presentare il *probouleuma*, destinato all'approvazione prima della *βωλά* poi del *δᾶμος*.

La loro azione si esplicava anche in altri ambiti: nella tab. 21 i *πρόβωλοι προάρχοντες* esercitano anche una funzione di controllo amministrativo,[69] visto che alla loro presenza avviene la restituzione dell'oro; inoltre sempre gli stessi *πρόβωλοι* ricevono dal santuario una mina euboica d'oro, che era dovuta alla città.[70]

I ***πρόδικοι*** compaiono nelle tabelle insieme ai *πρόβωλοι*: la loro presenza è documentata a Corcira sempre in relazione con i *πρόβωλοι*.[71]

Il nome di questi magistrati rimanda alla sfera giudiziaria[72] e in essi si potrebbero riconoscere quegli *ἄρχοντες*, di cui parla Polibio (XII 16) in occasione di un processo a Locri per il possesso di uno schiavo.[73]

Come è stato già messo in evidenza dal Musti, il termine *πρόδικος* può avere diversi significati: « colui il quale rappresenta in giudizio qualcuno », « colui che sta davanti a qualcuno in giudizio » e « colui che giudica prima ».

Interessante è il richiamo ad un arbitrato tra la *polis* di Eritre e quella di Ipata, dove troviamo il giudizio di *dikastaí*, preceduto da un giudizio dei *προδικεόντες*: questo potrebbe essere il significato da riferire ai *πρόδικοι* locresi, che forse svolgevano una funzione arbitrale.[74]

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66 Cf. Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 216.
67 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 137.
68 Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 216.
69 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 136; Camassa, « La codificazione », p. 632.
70 Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 216.
71 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 137; Musti, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 120.
72 Costabile, « Defixiones da Locri Epizefiri », p. 50.
73 Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 216.
74 Musti, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 299.

Gli ***ἱαρομνάμονες*** o ***ἱερομνάμονες***, che costituiscono il gradino più basso della carriera magistratuale,[75] non erano dei semplici sacerdoti, ma dei magistrati civici a cui spettava l'amministrazione del tempio:[76] il confronto più immediato è quello con gli *ieromnemoni* dell'anfizionia delfico-pilaica, che costituivano il sinedrio anfizionico,[77] un potente organismo panellenico, che in vari momenti della storia greca si presentò come la vera alternativa della *polis* alla guida della Grecia.

Un altro interessante confronto è quello con gli *ieromnemoni* di Argo: in una iscrizione,[78] trovata presso l'Heraion di Argo, sono indicati quattro *ieromnemoni* con funzioni religiose.[79]

Secondo Aristotele (Pol. VI 1321 b) gli *ieromnemoni* avevano la funzione di registrare i contratti e le sentenze dei tribunali e presso di loro venivano depositate le accuse e le denunce: i contenuti generali della testimonianza di Aristotele però non coincidono con le informazioni che riusciamo a ricavare dalle tabelle riguardo alla reale funzione di questi magistrati a Locri.

Innanzitutto anche questi magistrati risultano in terna[80] e si distinguono in due differenti collegi: gli *ieromnemoni ἐπὶ θησαυρῶι* e quelli *ἐπὶ τῶι σίτωι*.[81]

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75 Musti, « Strutture cittadine », p. 226; Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 214.

76 Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 214.

77 L'Anfizionia delfico-pilaica era costituita da 12 popoli (Tessali, Perrebi, Magneti, Achei Ftioti, Dolopi, Eniani, Mali-Etei, Locresi, Focesi, Beoti, Ioni e Dori), che inviavano ciascuno due delegati (ieromnemoni) alle riunioni del sinedrio anfizionico, che si tenevano in primavera e in autunno alle Termopili e a Delfi: questi popoli rappresentavano simbolicamente tutta la Grecia. Compiti dell'Anfizionia erano la manutenzione delle strade che conducevano a Delfi, la cura del territorio sacro, la gestione del santuario, la sorveglianza del tesoro del dio, la punizione di tutti coloro che contravvenivano alle norme dell'anfizionia attraverso multe, espulsioni e anche attraverso la cosiddetta guerra sacra. Cf. Marta Sordi, *La lega tessala fino ad Alessandro Magno*, Istituto Italiano per la Storia Antica, Roma 1958, p. 109–137; Bruno Helly, *L'état thessalien: Alevas le roux, les tétrades et les tagoi*, MOM Éditions, Lyon 1995; Marta Sordi, « La Grecia degli 'ethne': genti e regioni settentrionali e centrali » , in Salvatore Settis (ed.), *I Greci. Storia Cultura Arte Società*, vol. II**, Einaudi, Torino 1997, p. 87–108; Marta Sordi, « La dracma di Aleuas e l'origine di un tipo monetario di Alessandro Magno », in Ead., *Scritti di Storia greca*, Vita e Pensiero, Milano 2002, p. 159–173; Ead., « La Tessaglia nel periodo dell'indipendenza », in Ead., *Scritti di Storia greca*, Vita e Pensiero, Milano 2002, p. 445–462; Ead., « I tagoi tessali come suprema magistratura militare del koinon tessalico », in Ead., *Scritti di Storia greca*, Vita e Pensiero, Milano 2002, p. 559–566.

78 Cf. Henri. van Effenterre – Françoise Ruzé, *Nomima*, n° 86, p. 318–319 (cf. IG. IV 517).

79 Gli *ieromnemoni* compaiono in un'altra iscrizione argiva, che contiene un frammento di un decreto che comminava delle « sanzioni per chi avesse reso inefficaci le decisioni che il testo doveva comprendere [...] ma non è chiara la loro relazione con il contesto ». Cf. Tuci, « Il regime politico di Argo », p. 228.

80 Cf. De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 149.

81 Guarducci, *Epigrafia greca*, vol. II, p. 286; De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 150; Musti, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 69; Costabile, *L'archivio finanziario*, p. 262.

Le loro funzioni sembrano essere diverse: i primi tre gestivano il tesoro, gli altri i depositi cerealicoli:[82] di fatto questi magistrati erogano i prestiti del tempio di Zeus alla città, ricevono e versano al tesoro di Zeus le restituzioni e agiscono come suoi rappresentanti.[83]

Inoltre, in alcune tabelle l'operazione del prestito è eseguita dallo stesso santuario per l'esecuzione di alcuni lavori: gli *ieromnemoni* si presentano come autori del prelevamento ed operatori della spesa.[84]

La città ordina a loro di iscrivere nel bronzo i decreti, che essa promulga attraverso la *βωλά* e il *δᾶμος* per i prestiti che la *polis* contrae dal santuario di Zeus Olimpio:[85] è probabile dunque che essi svolgessero anche funzioni archivistiche e segretariali,[86] tenendo aggiornato l'archivio.[87]

Dalle nostre tabelle risulta che questi magistrati fossero addetti alla registrazione dei conti del santuario di Zeus in materia di prestiti, ma in linea di massima, come è stato osservato dal Costabile, si potrebbe ipotizzare che le loro competenze si estendessero anche alla registrazione di tutte le entrate tributarie del santuario.[88]

A questo proposito diventa importante lo scioglimento da parte del Ghinatti[89] della sigla *πρά(κ)τ(ορες)*, riferita agli *hiaromnamones* come controllori della contabilità nella tab. 15 e nella tab. 26.

Nella tab. 3 vengono nominati sia i ***τοιχιοποιοὶ*** sia gli ***ἐπιστάται***: i primi sono destinatari, insieme agli *ieromnemoni*, di un prestito di 1735 t., 5 st., 4 o. per i lavori alle torri; ai secondi vengono dati in prestito 255 t..

Tutti gli studiosi sono concordi nel ritenere che i tre *τοιχιοποιοὶ* abbiano competenze in materia edilizia, come è confermato anche da diverse testimonianze letterarie relative ad altre *poleis*:[90] il prestito di 1735 t., 5 st., 4 o., infatti, è per la *πυργοποίαν* ovvero per i lavori alle torri.

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82 Costabile, « L'archivio e la sua funzione », p. 110; Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 216–217. Dei depositi cerealicoli locresi si è occupata la Laurendi, che in un interessante articolo ha esaminato le tabelle locresi che riguardano le operazioni di prestito o di esazione tributaria di grano e di cereali. Cf. Rossella Laurendi, « Aspetti giuridici dell'approvvigionamento cerealicolo di alcune poleis in Grecia, Sicilia e Magna Grecia », *Studi Urbinati, A – Scienze giuridiche politiche ed economiche*, 71/1–2 (2020), p. 43–62, in part. p. 52–62.

83 Musti, « Strutture cittadine », p. 226; Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 216.

84 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 69, 70, 85.

85 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 149–150; Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 217.

86 Musti, « Strutture cittadine », p. 226.

87 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 86.

88 Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 217.

89 Ghinatti, « Cronologia e rotazione », p. 57.

90 Guarducci, *Epigrafia greca*, vol. II, p. 286; De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 139–140; Alfonso De Franciscis, « Le tavole di Locri negli studi dal 1972 ad oggi », in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 15–36, in part. p. 26; Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 218–219.

La presenza degli *ἐπιστάται* è attestata in altri luoghi della Grecia con funzioni diverse: Aristotele[91] ricorda ad Atene l'*epistates*, capo dei pritani, che ricopre questo ruolo per un solo giorno e per una sola notte e non è possibile una sua nomina per una seconda volta; conserva le chiavi dei templi dove si trovano il tesoro, gli archivi dello stato e il sigillo pubblico; quando i pritani riuniscono la *boulé* e il *demos*, egli tira a sorte nove proedri e tra questi un *epistates* e affida loro l'ordine del giorno.

A Gonnoi in Tessaglia sono attestati *ἐπιστάται*, a cui compete la tutela delle risorse e delle forme di sfruttamento del suolo;[92] nell'Artemision di Brauron in Attica, agli *ἐπιστάται* spetta il censimento dei beni che si trovano nel tempio; a Delos hanno varie funzioni in merito al contratto di appalto per i lavori di ultimazione del tempio di Apollo.[93]

Per quanto riguarda gli *ἐπιστάται* locresi, probabilmente in numero di tre, visto lo spazio vuoto tra il patronimico del primo e il nome del terzo,[94] l'omissione della causale del prestito ha determinato un dibattito fra gli studiosi moderni circa il loro specifico ruolo: il De Franciscis[95] ritiene che essi sovrintendano alla direzione e al controllo delle opere di difesa, il Costabile[96] pensa che le loro competenze siano inerenti alla gestione e alla custodia degli arredi e alla direzione di generali lavori edili.

Certo stupisce il fatto che questi magistrati (*τοιχιοποιοὶ* e *ἐπιστάται*) ricorrano solo nella tab. 3, mentre non sono nominati nelle altre tabelle: la brevità degli estratti da decreto potrebbe giustificare la loro omissione negli altri casi.[97]

Nelle tabb. 20 e 21 sono nominati i ***πολέμαρχοι***: essi sono presenti insieme ad altri magistrati in occasione della restituzione di 300 talenti d'argento (tab. 20) e dell'oro (tab. 21) che il santuario aveva prestato alla città.

Quando pensiamo alla magistratura polemarchica, siamo soliti pensare all'arconte polemarco ateniese che aveva il comando dell'esercito: in questo caso però ci troviamo di fronte ad una terna magistratuale, di cui però non conosciamo direttamente le funzioni.

Il De Franciscis[98] pensava ad una magistratura che era stata ridotta ad una carica civile, come era avvenuto per tante cariche militari durante l'età ellenistica: tuttavia non siamo costretti a pensare necessariamente ciò.

Aristotele (Pol. VI 1322 b), infatti, dice che agli strateghi e ai polemarchi erano affidati la vigilanza delle porte e delle mura della città, il controllo e

91 Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 44.
92 Helly, Gonnoi II, 93 (Gonnoi).
93 Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 218–219
94 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 140; Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 219.
95 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 140.
96 Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 219.
97 Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 219.
98 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 138.

l'inquadramento dei cittadini; Polibio (IV 18) ricorda che presso Cineta ai polemarchi era demandata la sorveglianza delle porte presso posti di guardia, la loro chiusura e la custodia delle chiavi fino alla loro riapertura.

È dunque possibile che anche a Locri questi magistrati svolgessero una funzione di controllo degli accessi alla città: anche per queste magistrature minori, come già detto per i *τοιχιοποιοὶ* e gli *ἐπιστάται*, probabilmente non vi era la necessità di indicarle in tutti gli estratti da decreto.[99]

La tab. 32 menziona i **λογιστῆρες** in numero di tre: essi sono presenti in un atto di restituzione di un prestito al tempio assieme ad altri magistrati.

Aristotele (Pol. IV 1322 b) ricorda i cosiddetti *λογισταί* tra quelle magistrature addette alla revisione dei conti: i *λογιστῆρες* locresi potrebbero svolgere una funzione di controllo contabile delle operazioni finanziarie e in particolare delle uscite della *polis*.[100]

I tre **ἐπισκευαστῆρες**, che compaiono nella tab. 21, pesano l'oro da restituire al santuario: la loro funzione potrebbe essere la stessa ricordata da Aristotele (Athen. *Polit*. 50,1) a proposito di Atene, dove erano nominati dieci uomini '*ἱερῶν ἐπισκευασταὶ*', addetti alla manutenzione ordinaria dei templi.[101]

Nella tab. 23 compaiono i **ταμίαι** che, insieme ai *phátarchoi*, hanno riscosso dei tributi che costituiscono una parte del prestito, che la città ha contratto con il santuario per la *συντέλεια* al *basileus*: gli studiosi hanno visto nei *ταμίαι*, ora addetti alla contabilità del santuario, ora veri e propri tesorieri della *polis*.[102]

Nella tab. 21, in relazione ad una attività di controllo del peso dell'oro che viene restituito dalla *polis* al tempio per confezionare uno scudo dell'*Olympieion*, compare il **θευκόλος**, un addetto al culto[103] o un sacerdote,[104] presente in altre realtà greche come il santuario di Olimpia e la Locride greca.[105]

Sul carattere monocratico o collegiale della *theokolia* gli studiosi non sono concordi: l'Antonetti,[106] precisando che « la theokolia non era una magistratura singola, bensì collegiale (ternaria) », ritiene che pure a Locri il *theukólos* « anche se appare in carica da solo, faceva probabilmente parte di un collegio, forse di una terna, [...] numero che calzerebbe appieno con le caratteristiche istituzionali locresi ».[107]

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99 Costabile, « La costituzione democratica », p. 220.

100 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 139; Costabile, « *La costituzione democratica* », p. 220.

101 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 139; Costabile, « *La costituzione democratica* », p. 220.

102 Cf. De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 150; Costabile, « La 'contribuzione al re' », p. 147; Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 295.

103 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 150.

104 Costabile, « La 'contribuzione al re' », p. 149; Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 299.

105 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 150–151. Sull'area di diffusione della *theokolia* cf. Antonetti, « Le tavole di Locri », p. 355–356.

106 Antonetti, « Le tavole di Locri », p. 355.

107 Cf. Antonetti, « Le tavole di Locri », p. 353–355.

Il Costabile, con buone argomentazioni, ha ribadito invece che, come il *basileus*, anche il *θευκόλος* è una carica monocratica, che si sottrae al criterio ternario della collegialità,[108] evidenziando che « se la theokolia fosse retta a Locri dal principio di collegialità, il theukólos locrese sarebbe nominato in tab. 21 insieme agli altri due colleghi (essendo intrinseca al principio di collegialità la responsabilità indivisibile e solidale). Perché mai il solo *theukólos* non avrebbe i due colleghi, se tutti gli altri magistrati [...] sono espressamente indicati in tab. 21 – regolarmente in terna – come 'presenti' alla pesatura dell'oro, per la quale sono evidentemente citati quali testimoni? ».[109]

III. *L'identità del* basileus*: un sovrano straniero o un magistrato cittadino?*

In sei tabelle (tabb. 1–13–23–25–30–31)[110] viene menzionato un *βασιλεύς* che percepisce una *συντέλεια* da parte della città di Locri Epizefiri.

N° 1:[111] ἐν τὰν συντέλειαμ βασιλεῖ;[112]

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108 Costabile, « La «contribuzione al re» », p. 149.

109 Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 299; 305 n. 98.

110 Nella citazione delle tavolette seguo la numerazione presente in Felice Costabile, « Editio altera e traduzione delle tabelle locresi», in *Polis ed Olympieion*, p. 229–307. Questa nuova edizione delle 39 tavolette, che riproduce quella fondamentale del De Franciscis del 1972 (tranne nei casi di letture differenti), è dotata di foto, del testo greco, della traduzione e di un apparato critico, che rappresentano un importante strumento per lo studio dei testi. L'opera raccoglie contributi di carattere storico, archeologico, numismatico, giuridico, epigrafico e architettonico che costituiscono materiale imprescindibile per una qualsiasi ricerca che intenda approfondire argomenti relativi alle tabelle.

111 La tab. 1 è alquanto problematica perché presenta due eponimi:
« Αστ - ἐπὶ Μενάλκεος ά πόλις ἐχρήσατο πὰρ τῶ θεῶ δόγματι βωλᾶς ἐν τὰν συντέλειαμ βασιλεῖ ἐκ τῶ ἐνιαυτῶ τῶ Θρα· ἐπὶ Ἡρακλήτω – 500 t. - ἄλλα τῶ ἐνιαυτῶ τῶ - Αστ - ἐπὶ Μενάλκεος μηνὸς Ἀπελλαίω – 95 t., 3 st., 16 l., 5 o.; ἄλλα τῶ Βουκατίω - 424 t. - ἄλλα τῶ Ἀθαναίω 405 t. - ἄλλα τῶ Διονυσίω 621 t., 2 st., 16 e ½ l., 3 o.; ἄλλα τῶ Δαμαρτίω – 571 t., 3 st., 3 l., 2 o., ἄλλα τῶ Πανάμω· 105 t., 3 st., 9 e ½ l., 3 o. – κεφ(άλωμα) - τὰς χρήστιος – 2685 t., 2 st., 1 l., 1 o. ».
« Sotto l'anno di Menalkes del demo (o della fratria) di Ast. la città prese in prestito dal dio con deliberazione del consiglio per la contribuzione al re dall'anno di Herakletos del demo (o della fratria) di Thra 500 talenti; nell'anno di Menalkes del demo (o della fratria) di Ast nel mese di Apellaios 95 t., 3 st., 16 l., 5 o.; nel mese di Boukatios 424 t., in quello di Athanaios 405 t., 5 l.; in quello di Dionysios 621 t., 2 st., 16 e ½ l., 3 o.; in quello di Damatrios 571 t., 3 st., 3 l., 2 o.; in quello di Panamos 105 t., 3 st., 9 e ½ l., 3 o. Tot(ale) del prestito 2685 t., 2 st, 1 l., 1 o. ». Sulla base dell'indicazione dei due eponimi indicati su questa tabella, per alcuni studiosi, dunque, gli anni del *βασιλεὺς* sarebbero sette e non sei dal momento che proprio la tab. 1 registra la contribuzione al re dall'anno precedente di *Herakletos* per una somma di 500 talenti e inoltre i prelievi mensili per l'anno in corso di *Menalkas*. Tra gli studiosi che ritengono che gli anni del *βασιλεὺς* siano sei cf. De Franciscis, « L'archivio », (1961), p. 31; Musti, « Strutture cittadine », p. 212. Tra quelli che, invece, pensano che siano sette cf. Renè Van Compernolle, « Agatocle, Pirro

N° 13: βασιλεῖ ἐν τὰν συντέλειαν;
N° 23: βασιλεῖ· ἐν τὰν συντέλε[ι]αν;[113]
N° 25: καὶ τῶ σίτω τὰς ἑνάτας τὰν ὁ βασιλεὺς ἔλαβε τιμαν Τ;
N° 30: βασιλεῖ ἐν τὰν συντέλειαν;
N° 31: βασιλεῖ ἐν τὰν συντ[έλειαν].[114]

Chi è questo *βασιλεύς*? È un re straniero[115] o un magistrato civico?[116] E in cosa consiste la *συντέλεια*?

Queste domande, insieme alla questione dell'anonimato, hanno suscitato un intenso dibattito fra gli studiosi moderni, che inevitabilmente hanno fatto riferimento ad altre realtà istituzionali del mondo greco per tentare di sciogliere questo enigma legato alla storia di Locri Epizefiri.

Il De Franciscis[117] spiega l'anonimato del *βασιλεύς* con la considerazione « che quegli fosse, per così dire, così intrinseco alla polis dei Locresi, da non sentirsi la necessità di meglio specificarlo in un atto pubblico, [...] doveva essere un re che in quel momento dominava addirittura la città ».

Lo studioso, dopo aver escluso per ragioni diverse Dionigi II, Agatocle, Archidamo e Alessandro il Molosso, si sofferma su Pirro, identificandolo con il *βασιλεύς* delle tabelle sulla base di alcune osservazioni quali l'assunzione da parte di Pirro del titolo ufficiale di *βασιλεύς*, e la corrispondenza tra i sei anni o poco più (281–275) di predominio locrese di Pirro e i sei eponimi in cui risultano

e Locri Epizefiri », in *Polis ed Olympieion*, p. 132–137, in part. p. 135; Costabile, « La 'contribuzione al re' », p. 142.

112 La tab. 1 che contiene la *συντέλεια* al *βασιλεὺς* ha in comune con la tab. 34 l'eponimo; inoltre essa è legata alla 34 e alla 35 perché secondo alcuni studiosi tutte e tre sembrerebbero scritte dalla stessa mano. Cf. De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 80; Van Compernolle, « Agatocle, Pirro », p. 137.

113 Nella tab. 23 è presente una coronide. Cf. Marcello Gigante, « Coronide in tab. 23 », in *Polis ed Olympieion*, p. 105; Costabile, « L'archivio e la sua funzione », p. 120; Antonetti, « Le Tavole di Locri », p. 361 n. 83.

114 La tab. 31 in cui compare la *συντέλεια* al *βασιλεὺς* è datata con lo stesso eponimo e gli stessi magistrati della tab. 8. Cf. Giuseppe Guzzetta, « Decacorinzi e pentacorinzi e la cronologia delle tabelle 8, 31, 35 », in *Polis ed Olympieion*, p. 137–138.

115 Cf. De Franciscis, « L'archivio », (1961), p. 28–32; Nicola Franco Parise, « Unità ponderali e monetarie nelle tavole di Locri », in Domenico Musti (ed.), *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 197–207, in part. p. 204; Eugenio Manni, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 236–238 (cf. p. 299); Van Compernolle, « Agatocle, Pirro, p. 135–137.

116 Cf. Giovanna Cimino, interv. in *La Magna Grecia nel mondo ellenistico. Atti del IX Convegno di studi sulla Magna Grecia, Taranto 1969*, L'arte tipografica, Napoli 1970, p. 110–111; Addolorata Landi, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 241–242; Felice Costabile, « Ἄρχοντες e βασιλεύς a Locri Epizefiri », *Parola del Passato*, 35 (1980), p. 104–122, in part. p. 121; Id., « La 'contribuzione al re' », p. 143–147.

117 De Franciscis, « L'archivio », (1961), p. 17–41, in part. p. 28; Id., « Stato e società », p. 75–76; Id., « Le tavole di Locri negli studi », in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 15–36, in part. p. 20–21.

versate le contribuzioni al re; la stessa *συντέλεια* viene interpretata dall'*editor princeps* come una contribuzione comune tra varie *poleis* a favore del *βασιλεύς*.

La Cimino,[118] contestando l'accettabilità dell'uso antonomastico di *βασιλεύς*, prospetta l'ipotesi di « un magistrato come relitto di antiche istituzioni ».

Il Parise[119] ha proposto di identificare l'anonimo *βασιλεύς* con il tiranno Agatocle: lo studioso, infatti, accettando la cronologia omogenea di un gruppo di tavolette (1, 8, 13, 23, 25, 30, 31, 34, 35) proposta dal Blomqvist,[120] ha sostenuto che i valori dei decacorinzi di tab. 8 e dei pentacorinzi di tab. 35[121] sono quelli della moneta siracusana dell'età di Agatocle; l'appartenenza di queste tavolette (la 8 e la 35) al gruppo di cui fanno parte quelle che citano il *βασιλεύς* ha portato il Parise a pensare ad Agatocle.

Per il Musti[122] l'uso anonimo di *βασιλεύς* come sovrano ellenistico « non è sconosciuto alle iscrizioni ellenistiche [...] » e nel caso di Locri « il non far nomi potrebbe persino salvaguardare meglio la dignità della città ». Lo studioso, tuttavia, non ritiene risolvibile la questione del *βασιλεύς* e riporta i diversi argomenti a sostegno delle tre possibilità interpretative di un'identificazione con Pirro, Agatocle e il magistrato cittadino: a favore di Pirro, ricorda la coincidenza tra gli anni del *βασιλεύς*, che sono sei, e la presenza dell'epirota in Italia dal 281 al 275; per Agatocle si sofferma sugli argomenti numismatici, già rilevati dal Parise, e sull'intervento di Agatocle in Italia meridionale con la conseguente conquista di Crotone e di Ipponio; per la tesi del magistrato cittadino, lo storico ha pensato ad un magistrato con funzioni finanziarie e, per superare la difficoltà dell'anonimato, ha sostenuto che il *βασιλεύς* possa essere l'eponimo nominato nel prescritto di ogni tabella; se infatti l'eponimo è ricordato sempre senza titolo, dall'altra parte il *βασιλεύς* è ricordato senza le sue generalità.[123]

Il Manni,[124] accogliendo la suddivisione cronologica delle tavolette in tre gruppi avanzata dal Blomqvist (K; E; P),[125] in base alla quale le tavolette del

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118 Cimino, interv. in *La Magna Grecia nel mondo ellenistico*, p. 110–111.

119 Nicola Franco Parise, interv. in *Locri Epizefirii*, p. 335–337, in part. p. 337; Parise, *Unità ponderali e monetarie*, p. 204.

120 Jerker Blomqvist, « The relative Chronology of the Locrian bronze tablets », in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 73–90, in part. p. 80–83.

121 Le tavolette 8 e 35 non menzionano la *συντέλεια* al *βασιλεύς*, ma la tab. 8 è datata con lo stesso eponimo e gli stessi magistrati della tab. 31; la 35 è legata alla 1 e alla 34 perché tutte e tre sembrano scritte dalla stessa mano; inoltre la 8 e la 35 hanno in comune la presenza di valuta corinzia. Secondo il Franciosi le tab. 8 e 35 sono state incise da persone diverse tra di loro, come si evince dall'esame paleografico. Cf. Carlo G. Franciosi, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 115–117, in part. p. 115.

122 Musti, « Strutture cittadine », p. 213–215.

123 Musti, « Strutture cittadine », p. 213–215; Del Monaco, *Iscrizioni greche*, p. 30.

124 Manni, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 236–238, in part. p. 236.

125 Le lettere K, E, P indicano rispettivamente i termini *king*, *Euphrainetos* (l'eponimo delle tabelle 4, 5, 22) e *Protogenes* (l'eponimo della tabella 6).

gruppo K (contenenti quelle in cui è menzionato il *βασιλεύς*) sono anteriori a quelle del gruppo P (dove compare, tra le destinazioni dei prestiti, la *πυργοποιία*, la costruzione delle torri, che secondo gli archeologi appartiene alla fine del IV secolo a.C.), arrivava ad escludere Pirro, il cui intervento in Italia appartiene al 281–275, e pensava di poter risalire più indietro nel tempo, proprio in base ai dati epigrafici, e di identificare il *βασιλεύς* con Agatocle o anche con Dionigi II.[126]

La Landi,[127] nell'ambito dell'ipotesi del magistrato cittadino, attribuisce al *βασιλεύς* funzioni sacrali e religiose che ne farebbero una sorta di *rex sacrorum*: facendo riferimento ad alcuni passi di Aristotele (*Pol.* III 1285 b 17; *Pol.* VI 1322 b 25–29), ad uno di Strabone (VIII 7, 2 C 384) e ad alcune iscrizioni di altre città greche (Atene, Coo, Priene) dove compare il titolo di *βασιλεύς* con competenze sacrali, ha avanzato l'ipotesi di un funzionario addetto alle cose sacre.

Il Van Compernolle,[128] accettando l'identificazione proposta dal De Franciscis, ha ricostruito la spedizione di Pirro in Italia meridionale collocando, negli anni di dominio dell'epirota su Locri, le contribuzioni della città: per lo studioso, come già il De Franciscis aveva sottolineato,[129] esiste « una concordanza perfetta fra gli anni passati da Pirro sul suolo italiota da una parte, e gli anni locresi per i quali le tavolette indicano una *synteleia* da versare ad un *basileus* dall'altra ».[130]

Il Costabile,[131] che è uno dei maggiori sostenitori della tesi *βασιλεύς* = magistrato cittadino, ritiene che l'anonimato del *βασιλεύς* non possa essere preso come prova per avvalorare la tesi del sovrano ellenistico perché si hanno altri

[126] L'ipotesi del Manni che aveva pensato di identificare il *βασιλεύς* con Dionigi II non ha avuto grande seguito fra gli studiosi, che hanno evidenziato i limiti di carattere cronologico, costituzionale e numismatico di questa tesi. Cf. De Franciscis, « L'archivio », p. 29; Id., « Stato e società», p. 76; Id., interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 240; Musti, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 298–304, in part. p. 299–300; Van Compernolle, « Agatocle, Pirro », p. 133; Federicomaria Muccioli, *Dionisio II. Storia e tradizione letteraria*, CLUEB, Bologna 1999, p. 346–347; Filocamo, « Il basileus delle tavole di Locri », p. 67–74.

[127] Landi, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 241–242.

[128] Van Compernolle, « Agatocle, Pirro », p. 132–137, in part. p. 135. Anche il Migeotte è propenso ad identificare nel *βασιλεύς*, Pirro, re dell'Epiro e a proposito della tab. 8, dove è attestato un prestito di 240 decacorinzi d'oro dal fondo delle *kotiai*, destinato *ποὶ τὰς εἰκόνας*, pensa a statue onorifiche di magistrati e, poiché la tab. 8 è contemporanea alla tab. 31, ritiene che si possa trattare di statue raffiguranti Pirro, i suoi familiari e i suoi generali. Cf. Lèopold Migeotte, « Le operazioni di credito fra il santuario e la città », in *Polis ed Olympieion*, p. 151–160, in part. p. 154. Tra gli altri studiosi che si orientano su Pirro cf. Pierre Lévêque, « Problèmes historiques de l'époque hellénistique en Grande-Grèce », in *La Magna Grecia nel mondo ellenistico*, p. 29–70, in part. p. 62; Maria Intrieri, « La lega italiota al tempo di Pirro », *Miscellanea di Studi Storici*, 6 (1987–1988), p. 25–37, in part. p. 32 n. 34; Franco Sartori, « Costituzioni italiote, italiche, etrusche », in Franco Sartori, *Dall'Italìa all'Italia*, Editoriale Programma, Padova 1993, p. 349–380, in part. p. 362 n. 61.

[129] De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 82.

[130] Van Compernolle, « Agatocle, Pirro », p. 136.

[131] Costabile, « La 'contribuzione al re' », p. 139–150, in part. p. 145.

esempi di iscrizioni greche « di cariche magistratuali prive dei nomi di chi le ricopriva ».

L'Antonetti[132] sostiene che « il problema è per ora irrisolvibile e che solo una forzatura interpretativa permette di vedervi un re ellenistico piuttosto che un magistrato civico e che entrambe le soluzioni presentano difficoltà ».

Nell'anno 2001 sono intervenuto in questo dibattito:[133] considerando la corrispondenza fra la durata dei sei anni del soggiorno locrese di Dionigi II (Iust. XXI 3, 9) e le sei tavolette locresi di sei anni diversi, dove sono riportate le contribuzioni versate al *βασιλεύς*, e la politica antiaristocratica, portata avanti dal tiranno a favore del *δᾶμος*, ho proposto di identificare il *βασιλεύς* con Dionigi II.

Al mio intervento è seguito quello del Filocamo,[134] che, confutando le argomentazioni da me proposte per l'identificazione del *basileus* con Dionigi II, ha ribadito che « per motivi storici, di ordinamento costituzionale e numismatici, in nessun caso Dionisio II possa essere il basileus delle tavolette ».

Il Costabile,[135] dopo aver passato in rassegna tutti i termini della questione relativa all'identità del *βασιλεύς*, ha riproposto l'ipotesi che il *βασιλεύς*, ricordato nelle tabelle, possa essere un magistrato cittadino, che i Locresi avrebbero istituito ispirandosi o ad una carica vitalizia vicina al modello spartano e tarantino o ad una magistratura annua riservata ad una o più famiglie aristocratiche.

Il problema è stato ripreso dal Filocamo[136] secondo il quale, sulla base di un'attenta disamina della monetazione locrese, almeno cinque delle sei tabelle, che nominano il *βασιλεύς*, cadrebbero in piena età agatoclea: infatti, tenendo presente la corrispondenza tra le sigle monetali e le sigle delle tabelle e considerando che le tabelle 8 (dello stesso anno della tab. 31 che menziona la *συντέλεια* al *βασιλεύς*) e 35 nominano rispettivamente decacorinzi e pentacorinzi, databili entro il IV sec. a.C., lo studioso ritiene pertanto che vada riconsiderata l'ipotesi che Agatocle possa essere il *βασιλεύς* ricordato nelle tabelle.

Sull'argomento è ritornato il Del Monaco[137] che, pur riconoscendo che allo stato attuale delle conoscenze le ipotesi 're straniero' e 'magistrato cittadino' restano aperte, tuttavia sembra propendere per la tesi del magistrato civico sulla base della testimonianza di Aristotele (Pol., III 1287 a 1–8) che ricorda *ἕνα κύριον τῆς διοικήσως* ad Opunte tra gli esempi di *κατὰ νόμον λεγόμενος βασιλεύς* e tenendo

132 Antonetti, « *Le Tavole di Locri* », p. 363.
133 D'Angelo, « Le tavolette di Locri », p. 19–20.
134 Filocamo, « Il basileus delle tavole di Locri », p. 67–74.
135 Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 298.
136 Filocamo, « Locri Epizefirii. L'archivio di Zeus », p. 140–153; Filocamo – Castrizio, « Agatocle e l'archivio locrese », p. 263.
137 Del Monaco, *Iscrizioni greche*, p. 29.

presente la possibilità che anche ad Argo l'eponimia fosse ricoperta da una magistratura basilica.[138]

I contributi apparsi successivamente alla mia pubblicazione del 2001[139] e le interessanti argomentazioni ivi contenute non potevano esimermi dall'intervenire ancora su questa *vexata quaestio*, anche alla luce delle nuove conoscenze acquisite attraverso lo studio di contributi scientifici di carattere numismatico, giuridico ed epigrafico.

L'anonimato del *βασιλεύς* è il primo punto da cui bisogna partire dal momento che nelle tabelle locresi le cariche dei magistrati sono quasi sempre accompagnate dai nomi di persona: così sappiamo che nella tab. 2 figura tra i *proboloi*, *Theron* figlio di *Arkesilas*, nella tab. 6 tra gli *hiaromnamones*, *Phaikion* figlio di *Charmondas*, ma nelle tabelle 1–13–23–25–30–31 il *βασιλεύς* è privo di nome proprio.

Il Costabile, obiettando al Musti[140] che aveva osservato che il *βασιλεύς* è l'unica magistratura importante a non essere ricordata con il nome personale di chi la rivestiva, ha evidenziato giustamente che nelle tabelle ci sono altri magistrati a non essere indicati con il nome personale, come per esempio gli *hiaromnamones* di tab. 4 e i *tamiai* e *phatarchoi* di tab. 23 e che vi sono anche iscrizioni di altre *poleis* che menzionano cariche magistratuali prive dei nomi di chi le aveva rivestite.[141]

Tuttavia l'osservazione del Musti deve essere tenuta in debita considerazione perché il *βασιλεύς* non è mai indicato con il nome personale in nessuna delle sei tabelle in cui compare.[142]

Quale motivo potevano avere i Locresi per non nominarlo in un atto ufficiale e amministrativo? È possibile, come diceva l'*editor princeps*,[143] che egli fosse « così intrinseco alla polis dei Locresi da non sentirsi la necessità di meglio specificarlo nella registrazione sommaria di un atto pubblico »? Forse l'identità del *βασιλεύς* doveva essere così nota che poteva apparire quasi pleonastica la specificazione con il nome proprio all'interno di estratti di atti ufficiali?

A mio avviso questa circostanza è veramente strana soprattutto se si considera l'importanza della carica di *βασιλεύς*, come si evince dalle cifre della *συντέλεια* che gli viene corrisposta.

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138 Cf. Robert K. Sherk, « The Eponymous Officials of Greek Cities V », *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, 96 (1993), p. 267–295, in part. p. 277.

139 Cf. D'Angelo, « Le tavolette di Locri », p. 9–24.

140 Musti, « Strutture cittadine », p. 213–214.

141 Costabile, « La 'contribuzione al re' », p. 145; Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 289–290.

142 Cf. Filocamo, *Il basileus delle tavole di Locri*, p. 69; Filocamo, « Locri Epizefirii. L'archivio di Zeus », p. 148 n. 164.

143 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 75.

La *συντέλεια* è una contribuzione nella forma di prestito che la città ha preso dal dio:[144] tab. 1 = 2685 t., 2 stat., 1 l., 1 o.; tab. 13 = 981 t., 18 l., 1 o.; tab. 23 = 2452 t., 3 stat., 1 l., 5 o.; tab. 25 = 1471 t.; 1 t. come valore della nona dei cereali; tab. 30 = 1424 t., 1 stat., 11 l., 5 o.; tab. 31 = 2035 t. 3 s., ½ l., 7 o.[145]

Il Manni[146] ha attribuito ad essa il significato di «cassa comune» dove confluirebbero i mezzi dei singoli alleati.

Il Costabile[147] ha dato al termine *συντέλεια* due possibili significati: quello di «contributo finanziario» e quello di « alleanza comportante il pagamento di un tributo » e la scelta di significato è, a parere dello studioso, « conseguenza e non presupposto dell'identità che si vorrà riconoscere al *βασιλεύς* ».

Il dibattito moderno sull'identificazione del *βασιλεύς* con un re straniero ruota attorno alle due figure di Agatocle[148] e Pirro, re dell'Epiro: a questo punto diventa importante ripercorrere le tappe principali degli interventi di Agatocle e di Pirro in Italia meridionale.

Dopo aver concluso la pace con i Cartaginesi (306 a.C.) e dopo aver ristabilito la sua autorità nella Sicilia greca, Agatocle assunse il titolo di *βασιλεύς* nel 304 e intervenne in diverse occasioni in Italia meridionale: aiutò i Tarantini a cacciare Cleonimo, inviato da Sparta su richiesta degli stessi Tarantini, attaccati dai Lucani, che erano sostenuti dai Romani; salvò l'isola di Corcira, assediata dal re dei Macedoni, Cassandro[149] (300 a.C.); conquistò la città di Crotone, governata dal tiranno Menedemo (296 a.C.); stipulò un'alleanza con Iapigi, Peucezi[150] e anche con Pirro, re dell'Epiro a cui diede in moglie la figlia Lanassa e come dote l'isola di Corcira[151] (295 a. C.); sconfisse i Bretti, impadronendosi di Hipponion (293 a.C.), e

144 Delle trentanove tavolette del tempio di Zeus, trentacinque attestano prestiti contratti dalla città presso il santuario. Sui prestiti attestati dalle tavolette locresi rimando al contributo del Migeotte, « Le operazioni di credito », p. 151–160.

145 Le cifre versate al *βασιλεύς* dalla città attraverso prestiti dal tempio di Zeus sono notevoli. Per dare un'idea dell'enorme quantità di denaro che Locri versò per la contribuzione al *βασιλεύς*, riporto i dati delle indennità di guerra pagate da città greche ad altre città: Diodoro a XVI 29 sotto il 355/4 ricorda la somma di 500 talenti, raddoppiati poi a 1000, che Sparta dovette pagare all'Anfizionia delfico-pilaica sotto il controllo tebano; sempre Diodoro a XVI 60 sotto il 346, nel riportare i termini della pace anfizionica, ricorda che i Focesi erano stati condannati al pagamento di 60 talenti ogni anno (questi pagamenti sono attestati epigraficamente dall'autunno del 343 all'autunno del 339). Cf. Marta Sordi, *Diodori Siculi Bibliothecae Liber XVI*, La Nuova Italia, Firenze 1969, p. 58, 106.

146 Manni, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 236–238.

147 Costabile, « La 'contribuzione al re' », p. 140; Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 277.

148 L'ipotesi Agatocle è stata ultimamente sostenuta dal Filocamo sulla base della documentazione numismatica che attesterebbe un legame saldo tra Siracusa e Locri durante l'età agatoclea. Cf. Filocamo, « Locri Epizefirii. L'archivio di Zeus », p. 147–153; Filocamo, Castrizio, « Agatocle e l'archivio locrese », p. 263.

149 Diod. XXI 2.

150 Diod. XXI 4.

151 Diod. XXI 4; Plut. *Pyr*. IX.

vi stabilì un presidio che venne poi cacciato dagli stessi Bretti che recuperarono la città;[152] nel 289 si diede ai preparativi per una grande guerra contro Cartagine.[153]

Dalle fonti letterarie, dunque, non emergono elementi di un rapporto diretto tra Agatocle e Locri.

Per quanto riguarda Pirro, re dell'Epiro, come è noto, la situazione è diversa in quanto le fonti letterarie attestano rapporti tra l'epirota e Locri Epizefiri[154] in occasione della spedizione pirrica in Magna Grecia: nel 281 Pirro accettò la proposta dei Tarantini che gli avevano chiesto aiuto contro i Romani e, sbarcato con le sue truppe in Italia, sconfisse ad Eraclea l'esercito guidato dal console P. Valerio Levino (280 a.C.); dopo Eraclea, i Locresi defezionarono da Roma, cacciando il presidio romano ed entrando nell'alleanza di Pirro;[155] nel 279 ad Asculum, l'epirota sconfisse le truppe romane guidate dai consoli Sulpicio e Decio; nel 278, dopo aver lasciato a Locri un presidio con a capo il figlio Alessandro, passò in Sicilia, chiamato in soccorso dai Siracusani,[156] e qui ottenne il titolo di *βασιλεύς*; in quell'anno s'impadronì dell'*epicrateia* cartaginese eccetto Lilibeo; intorno al 276, a causa delle rivolte delle città siceliote contro di lui per i pesanti tributi, Pirro abbandonò la Sicilia; durante la traversata dello stretto fu attaccato da una flotta cartaginese e perse molte navi; presso Malevento, i Romani, anche se non furono vincitori, costrinsero alla ritirata l'esercito di Pirro; nel 275 il re epirota decise di ritornare in Epiro, lasciando a Taranto un presidio militare, con a capo il figlio Eleno.[157]

L'identificazione del *βασιλεύς* con Agatocle si basa sulle considerazioni numismatiche del Parise riguardo ai decacorinzi e ai pentacorinzi presenti nelle tab. 8 e 35:[158] il Parise,[159] infatti, accettando la cronologia del Blomqvist,[160] che ha

[152] Diod. XXI 8.

[153] Diod. XXI 16. Su Agatocle cf. Eugenio Manni, « Agatocle e la politica estera di Siracusa », *Kokalos*, 12 (1966), p. 144–162; Sebastiana Nerina Consolo Langher, « Lo strategato di Agatocle e l'imperialismo siracusano sulla Sicilia greca nelle tradizioni diodorea e trogiana (316–310 a.C.) », *Kokalos*, 25 (1979), p. 117–187. Sugli interventi di Agatocle in Italia meridionale cf. da ultimo Filocamo, « Locri Epizefirii. L'archivio di Zeus », p. 147–153: qui si troverà una copiosa bibliografia aggiornata sull'argomento.

[154] A questo proposito il Van Compernolle, ricostruendo la spedizione di Pirro in Italia meridionale, ha individuato – secondo la sua tesi – una concordanza perfetta tra gli anni di permanenza dell'epirota in Magna Grecia e gli anni in cui risultano versate le contribuzioni al *βασιλεύς* da parte di Locri. Cf. Van Compernolle, « Agatocle, Pirro », p. 135–137.

[155] Iust. XVIII 1, 9

[156] Diod. XXII 8, 2; Iust. XVIII 2, 12.

[157] Su Pirro cf. Alfredo Passerini, « Sulle trattative dei Romani con Pirro », *Athenaeum*, 21 (1943), p. 92–112; Pierre Lévêque, *Pyrros*, Editions de Boccard, Paris 1957; Mario Lombardo, « La Magna Grecia dalla fine del V secolo alla conquista romana », in *Magna Grecia. Lo sviluppo politico*, p. 55–88, in part. p. 85–88; Intrieri, « La lega italiota », p. 25–37.

[158] I decacorinzi e i pentacorinzi delle tavolette 8 e 35 sono tratti dal cosiddetto fondo delle *kotiai*. Sul termine *κωτιᾶν* gli studiosi hanno proposto diverse interpretazioni. Il Musti ha visto nella

inserito le tabelle 8 e 35 nel gruppo K (quello in cui sono presenti anche le tavolette che nominano il *βασιλεύς*) e dando a decacorinzi e a pentacorinzi il senso di « statere corinzio », cioè di « aurei del valore di 10, 5 stateri corinzi (e quindi di 10, 5 didrammi attici) di argento », ritiene che questi valori siano quelli della moneta di Agatocle.

A proposito della denominazione di decacorinzi e pentacorinzi, lo Stazio[161] pensa che il « riferimento sia fatto a moneta corinzia in un periodo in cui la moneta corinzia era ufficialmente presente in Locri [...] » in un frangente in cui « le emissioni della città sono costituite da pegasi di tipo e peso corinzi e cioè il periodo che va da Timoleonte ad Agatocle ».[162]

Dei decacorinzi e dei pentacorinzi si è occupato in un saggio il Guzzetta:[163] anche secondo questo studioso i due termini si riferiscono a stateri corinzi di tipo e peso corinzio pieno, emessi da Locri entro la fine del IV secolo a.C. nell'arco di tempo compreso tra il 344 e il 304 a. C, ma a differenza del Parise non gli sembra opportuno assegnare agli anni di Agatocle i «decacorinzi» e i «pentacorinzi» perché sulla cronologia e sul valore ponderale delle monete di Agatocle gravano numerose incertezze.

Sulla questione relativa ai deca e pentacorinzi è intervenuto con due contributi il Filocamo: in un primo articolo,[164] lo studioso ha precisato che la presenza massiccia di valuta corinzia a Locri e in Magna Grecia appartiene all'età di Agatocle quando il tiranno siracusano avviò campagne militari contro i Bretti attraverso l'arruolamento e il mantenimento di mercenari.

κωτιᾶν uno dei poli finanziari della città, accanto al santuario di Zeus e al polo del *φατάρχιον*: in particolare ha pensato ad un deposito di monete auree destinate alla tesaurizzazione; il De Franciscis ha accostato tale termine a *κόης*, *κόιης*, *κώταρχος*, termini del vocabolario sacerdotale; il Gigante preferisce emendare in *κώμαν* pensando ad un fondo di *κώμαι*; anche il Torelli e il Van Compernolle, come già il Musti, vi hanno visto una cassa diversa da quella di Zeus. Cf. Musti, « Problemi della storia », p. 126–130; De Franciscis, « Le Tavole di Locri », p. 25; Marcello Gigante, « Le Tavole di Locri come testo storico », in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 37–59, in part. p. 54; D. Musti, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 65–70, in part. p. 66 n. 1; Mario Torelli, « Considerazioni sugli aspetti religiosi e cultuali », in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 91–112, in part. p. 107–111; Van Compernolle, « Agatocle, Pirro », p. 137. Sui *phatarchoi* e il *phatarchion* cf. Musti, « Problemi della storia », p. 120–126; Id., « Strutture cittadine », p. 209–228, in part. p. 210–211; Migeotte, « Le operazioni di credito », p. 155.

159 Parise, « Unità ponderali e monetarie », p. 203–204.

160 Blomqvist, « The relative Chronology », p. 80–83.

161 Attilio Stazio, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 230–233, in part. p. 233.

162 Nel datare la presenza a Locri dei « pegasi di tipo e peso corinzi » al periodo che va da Timoleonte ad Agatocle, lo Stazio concorda con la cronologia proposta dalla Pozzi Paolini. Cf. Enrica Pozzi Paolini, « La moneta a Locri », in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 129–178, in part. p. 137. La Pozzi riprende in questo articolo i risultati di un precedente contributo al Congresso di Taranto del 1976. Cf. Enrica Pozzi Paolini, « La monetazione », in *Locri Epizefirii*, p. 215–301.

163 Guzzetta, « Decacorinzi », p. 137–138.

164 Cf. Filocamo, « Il basileus delle tavole di Locri », p. 73–74.

Successivamente lo stesso Filocamo, [165] sostenendo con interessanti argomentazioni la tesi del Fuda,[166] che aveva messo in relazione i nessi monetali locresi con i magistrati citati nell'archivio, e tenendo presente la quasi contemporaneità tra i testi dell'archivio e le emissioni monetarie, entrambi databili tra la seconda metà del IV e la prima metà del III secolo a.C., ha preso una chiara posizione a favore dell'identificazione del *basileus* con Agatocle, tiranno di Siracusa, il cui stretto legame con Locri sarebbe documentato proprio dalla monetazione: a parere dello studioso « i ritrovamenti di tesoretti mostrano come i riferimenti a valuta corinzia siano ben giustificabili, almeno fino a tutta l'età agatoclea ».[167]

A questo punto è chiaro che l'inizio delle emissioni monetarie a Locri[168] e la corretta interpretazione dei termini decacorinzi e pentacorinzi sono aspetti di notevole importanza per tentare di aprire uno spiraglio nella complessa questione relativa all'identificazione del *βασιλεύς* perché, come abbiamo visto, la tab. 31, in cui compare la *συντέλεια* al *βασιλεύς*, è datata con lo stesso eponimo e gli stessi magistrati della 8; inoltre la tab. 35 è legata alla 8 per la presenza di valuta corinzia[169] ed è legata alle tab. 1 e 34 perché secondo alcuni studiosi tutte e tre (1–34–35) risultano scritte dalla stessa mano.[170]

Innanzitutto è bene precisare che tali problematiche costituiscono una situazione spinosa su cui non c'è concordia tra gli studiosi, in quanto mancano punti fermi oggettivi che possano indirizzare le nostre conoscenze in un senso o nell'altro.

Secondo la *communis opinio*, Locri rappresenta un fenomeno eccezionale per quanto riguarda la monetazione delle colonie greche dell'Occidente: mentre le

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165 Cf. Filocamo, « Locri Epizefirii. L'archivio di Zeus », p. 140–153.

166 Cf. Roberto Fuda, « Il problema delle sigle e dei nessi locresi », in *Polis ed Olympieion*, p. 208–209.

167 Cf. Filocamo, « Locri Epizefirii. L'archivio di Zeus », p. 149.

168 Nella teca lapidea erano probabilmente contenute delle monete, come ha dimostrato l'indagine condotta dal prof. Felice Costabile presso il tribunale di Locri sugli atti giudiziari del processo, svoltosi a carico dei trafugatori. Non c'è dubbio che il loro rinvenimento avrebbe potuto consentire agli studiosi ulteriori valutazioni al fine di datare con maggiore precisione l'epoca delle tabelle. Cf. De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 58; Carmen Alfaro Giner, « Ipotesi sul meccanismo di apertura della teca di Locri », in *Polis ed Olympieion*, p. 15–23, in part. p. 15; Costabile, « L'archivio e la sua funzione », p. 106, n. 5; Giuseppe Guzzetta, Ilde Lofaro, « Il tesoro di Zeus ed il tesoro di Persefone: rinvenimenti monetali dal santuario del vallone Mannella », in *Polis ed Olympieion*, p. 191–201, in part. p. 191; Del Monaco, « Le tavole di Locri sono 37 », p. 129 n. 2; Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 255–256.

169 La tabella 8 è accomunata alla tabella 35 perché entrambe menzionano le *kotiai* e la valuta corinzia (nella tab. 8 sono nominati i decacorinzi e nella tab. 35 i pentacorinzi). Gli attacchi fra le tabelle 35–36–37, operati dal Del Monaco, hanno evidenziato che le tre iscrizioni, ritenute un tempo tre epigrafi, in realtà costituiscono un'unica tabella. Cf. Del Monaco, « Le tavole di Locri sono 37 », p. 130, 140 n. 3.

170 Per questa discussione cf. Van Compernolle, « Agatocle, Pirro », p. 137; Del Monaco, « Le tavole di Locri sono 37 », p. 145.

altre città italiote e siceliote avevano dato inizio alla coniazione di monete già a partire dalla seconda metà del VI secolo a.C., al contrario Locri avrebbe iniziato a produrre monete solo durante il IV secolo.[171]

A questo proposito alcuni studiosi fissano gli inizi della monetazione locrese nei primi decenni del IV secolo,[172] mentre altri ritengono che essa appartenga al periodo successivo alla cacciata di Dionigi II da Locri nel 346 a.C., mettendola, dunque, in relazione con la rivoluzione democratica.[173]

Significativa la tesi del Filocamo [174] secondo il quale « l'inizio della monetazione locrese non fu semplicemente una conseguenza dell'introduzione della democrazia nella *polis*, che pure la agevolò abbattendo il regime oligarchico chiuso, vigente da secoli. Le prime emissioni furono dettate dall'esigenza di pagare i mercenari, probabilmente già con Dionisio II e in seguito all'epoca della campagna di Timoleonte ».

Inoltre non può ritenersi concluso il dibattito relativo al tetradrammo d'argento di peso euboico-attico, riferito a Locri Epizefirii sulla base delle due lettere ΛΟ, interpretate come l'iniziale dell'etnico Λοκρῶν: la moneta presenta al dritto una biga di mule guidata da un auriga incoronato da una Vittoria, mentre al rovescio è presente una lepre in corsa verso destra; oltre a queste immagini sono presenti i due simboli dell'aquila e del serpente.

Il Musti[175] ha messo in collegamento tale tetradrammo con il passo di Tucidide (V, 5), relativo all'invio di una *epoikia* da Locri a Messana nel 425 a.C., in occasione della spedizione ateniese in Sicilia del 427 a.C.: la moneta confermerebbe la notizia di Tucidide secondo cui Messana fu dei Locresi (ἐγένετο Μεσσήνη Λοκρῶν τινα χρόνον).

Al contrario la Pozzi[176] ritiene, sulla base di alcune considerazioni di carattere tecnico e tipologico, che la moneta sia un pezzo ritoccato e che, qualora ci si trovasse di fronte ad un pezzo autentico, in ogni caso è da escludere che questo tetradrammo sia stato coniato a Locri.

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171 Cf. Pozzi Paolini, « La monetazione », in *Locri Epizefirii*, p. 215–301, in part. p. 217–221.

172 Cf. Colin M. Kraay, Max Hirmer, *Greek Coins*, Harry N. Abrams, New York 1966, p. 313, n. 291; Colin M. Kraay, *Archaic and Classical Greek Coinage*, Methuen, London 1976, p. 197; N. Keith Rutter, *Greek coinages of Southern Italy and Sicily*, Spink & Son Ltd, London 1997, p. 96. In particolare il Kraay pensa agli anni immediatamente successivi alla vittoria di Dionigi I presso l'Elleporo (388 a.C.) contro la lega italiota. Il Rutter propone il periodo intorno al 375 a.C.

173 Enrica Pozzi Paolini, « La moneta a Locri », in *Le tavole di Locri*, p. 135; Parise, « Unità ponderali e monetarie », p. 201; Marina Taliercio Mensitieri, « Le emissioni monetarie della Calabria dall'età di Dionigi II a quella di Annibale », in Salvatore Settis (ed.), *Storia della Calabria antica*, vol. II, Gangemi, Roma 1994, p. 423–436, in part. p. 425.

174 Filocamo, « Locri Epizefirii. L'archivio di Zeus », p. 140.

175 Musti, « Problemi della storia », p. 90.

176 Pozzi Paolini, « La monetazione », in *Locri Epizefirii*, p. 219–220 n. 9.

Certo, se fosse dimostrabile l'ipotesi del Musti, ci troveremmo di fronte alla prima testimonianza monetale di Locri e di conseguenza andrebbe rivista la tesi di chi ritiene la monetazione una conseguenza dell'avvento della democrazia a Locri.

Riguardo ai pentacorinzi e ai decacorinzi,[177] l'unica certezza che si ha a proposito di queste monete[178] è che esse siano monete auree di valuta corinzia: dico questo non per eludere la questione ma perché il valore di queste monete è veramente controverso, [179] così come non è detto infatti che i termini pentacorinzi e decacorinzi facciano riferimento a moneta coniata a Locri; si potrebbe trattare di moneta straniera circolante nella città.[180]

Il problema che si pone, dunque, è quello di verificare l'epoca della circolazione della valuta corinzia a Locri.

Interessante a questo proposito la proposta dell'Anello che ritiene che i pegasi di Corinto circolassero in Sicilia già nei primi decenni del IV secolo a.C.: dopo la sconfitta di Atene nella guerra del Peloponneso (404 a.C.) ad opera di Sparta e dei suoi principali alleati (Corinto e Tebe), venne meno anche la sua presenza commerciale nel Mediterraneo provocando, da una parte, il crollo della moneta attica, dall'altra l'affermazione del pegaso corinzio al posto del tetradrammo attico; la presenza del pegaso corinzio in Sicilia[181] è ben attestata per l'epoca di Dionigi I, come mostrano i ripostigli scoperti in diverse località siciliane.[182]

La Langher ha sostenuto « che l'introduzione dei primi stateri corinzi in Sicilia possa riconnettersi alla politica di Dionisio I in Adriatico e che di conseguenza le

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177 Cf. Pozzi Paolini, « La monetazione », in *Locri Epizefirii*, p. 215–301, in part. p. 283–284; Guzzetta, « Decacorinzi », p. 137–138; Costabile, « La 'contribuzione al re' », p. 139–150, in part. p. 141; Filocamo – Castrizio, « Agatocle e l'archivio locrese », p. 260–264.

178 Le denominazioni monetarie di decacorinzi e pentacorinzi sono prive di altre attestazioni letterarie ed epigrafiche. Cf. Guzzetta, « Decacorinzi », p. 137–138.

179 Il Guzzetta fa notare, alla nota 15 dell'articolo citato, che di contro all'ipotesi di un rapporto tra oro e argento di 1:10 della moneta agatoclea (sostenuta da Parise, « Unità ponderali e monetarie », p. 197–207, in part. p. 203–204; Maria Cristina Molinari, « Relazioni fra metalli monetari nell'età di Agatocle », *Rivista Italiana di Numismatica*, 86 (1984), p. 9–16) vi è un'altra ipotesi secondo cui il rapporto fosse ancora nell'età di Agatocle di 1:12 (cf. Théodore Reinach, « Sur la valeur relative des mètaux monétaires dans la Sicile grecque », *Revue Numismatique*, 13 (1895), p. 1–23, in part. p. 13–15; Giacomo Manganaro, « Darici in Sicilia e le emissioni auree delle poleis siceliote e di Cartagine nel V–III secolo a.C. », *Revue des Études Anciennes*, 91 (1989), p. 299–317, in part. p. 311–312).

180 Cf. Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 281.

181 In generale sull'emissione dei pegasi cf. Renata Cantilena, « L'emissione dei 'pegasi' nelle zecche siciliane », in Attilio Stazio, Marina Taliercio Mensitieri, Rosa Vitale (eds.), *La monetazione corinzia in Occidente. Atti del IX Convegno del centro Internazionale di Studi Numismatici Napoli 1986*, Istituto Italiano di numismatica, Roma 1993, p. 61–85.

182 Pietrina Anello, « Sulla penetrazione dei 'pegasi' di Corinto in Sicilia », *Kokalos*, 20 (1974), p. 184–200. Rimando all'analisi dell'Anello per un quadro dettagliato entro il quale è inserito il fenomeno della penetrazione dei pegasi corinzi in Sicilia all'epoca di Dionigi I.

emissioni siracusane di tipi e peso corinzi si riferiscano alla politica monetaria dello stesso Dionisio ».[183]

Anche il Filocamo[184] è intervenuto sulla questione relativa alla circolazione di valuta corinzia in Sicilia, ritenendo che tale presenza sebbene significativa, non risulti massiccia dal momento che la valuta corinzia è stata verificata in 7 tesoretti su 32 durante l'epoca dionigiana, con percentuale di pegasi sotto il 10%,[185] mentre solo nella fase che va da Timoleonte ad Agatocle la presenza di pegasi è straordinaria, come rivela il fatto che pegasi corinzi sono stati riscontrati in 15 tesoretti su 22, con percentuali tra il 70 e il 100%.[186]

In realtà sebbene le argomentazioni del Filocamo siano ben motivate, tuttavia mi pare che esse sopravvalutino il contributo che viene fornito dai ripostigli: come è stato ben evidenziato dalla Anello,[187] è vero che, stando ai dati, i pegasi recuperati in Sicilia nei ripostigli dell'inizio del IV secolo a.C., sono pochi, ma questo potrebbe dipendere dal fatto che la loro tesaurizzazione fosse iniziata in una fase successiva alla loro introduzione nella circolazione monetaria della Sicilia per due ragioni.

Innanzitutto era più conveniente tesaurizzare valuta attica piuttosto che stateri corinzi, visto che dal punto di vista metrologico, il pegaso di circa 8, 70 grammi equivaleva alla metà del tetradrammo attico di grammi 17, 44; inoltre va tenuta in considerazione la diffidenza nei confronti dello statere corinzio rispetto alla moneta attica, presente nell'isola da almeno un secolo e di cui era stata sperimentata la tenuta nei mercati. A questo proposito diventa significativa la

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183 Sebastiana Nerina Consolo Langher, *Un imperialismo tra democrazia e tirannide. Siracusa nei secoli V e IV a.C.*, Giorgio Bretschneider Editore, Roma 1997, p. 129 n. 64. In generale sulla monetazione di Dionigi I cf. Aldina Cutroni Tusa, « La monetazione di Siracusa sotto Dionisio I », in *Philias Charin. Miscellanea di studi classici in onore di E. Manni,* Giorgio Bretschneider Editore, Roma 1979, p. 631–647; Maria Caccamo Caltabiano, « La monetazione di Dionisio I fra economia e propaganda », in Nicola Bonacasa, Lorenzo Braccesi, Ernesto De Miro (eds.), *La Sicilia dei due Dionisî. Atti della settimana di studio (Agrigento 24-28 Febbraio 1999)*, L'Erma di Bretschneider, Roma 2002, p. 33–45; Giovanni Gorini, « La monetazione dionigiana in Adriatico: sue sopravvivenze e implicazioni sociali », in *La Sicilia dei due Dionisî*, p. 203–216; Mariangela Puglisi, *La Sicilia da Dionisio I a Sesto Pompeo: circolazione e funzione della moneta*, Dipartimento di civiltà antiche e moderne, Università di Messina, Messina 2009; Benedetto Carroccio, « Spese belliche, finanza 'creativa' e tracolli monetari nell'Occidente antico: alcune evidenze monetali », *Miscellanea di Studi Storici*, 16 (2009–2010), p. 49–87, in part. p. 54–63; Daniele Castrizio, « Considerazioni sul pagamento del sîtos ai mercenari nella Sicilia tra Dionisio I e Timoleonte », *Polifemo*, *Rassegna bibliografica di storia delle religioni e storia antica*, 11 (2011), p. 209–232.

184 Filocamo, « Il basileus delle tavole di Locri », p. 73–74.

185 Cf. Marina Taliercio Mensitieri, « Presenza monetale di Corinto e colonie in Sicilia e in Magna Grecia nel IV e III secolo a.C. », in *La monetazione corinzia in Occidente*, in *Atti del IX Conv. CISN, Napoli 1986*, Istituto Italiano di numismatica, Roma 1993, p. 87–115, in part. p. 92; Daniele Castrizio, *Reggio ellenistica*, Gangemi, Roma 1995, p. 125–130.

186 Cf. Taliercio Mensitieri, « Presenza monetale », p. 95–96.

187 Anello, « Sulla penetrazione dei 'pegasi' », p. 188–193.

sorte delle civette ateniesi, giunte nell'isola nella seconda metà del V secolo a.C. e recuperate in tesoretti databili alla fine del V e per tutto il IV: la loro tesaurizzazione non coincide con il loro arrivo.[188]

Dagli studi dell'Anello e della Langher si evince, dunque, che la presenza di valuta corinzia in Sicilia (e, quindi, anche in alcune aree della Magna Grecia sotto l'influenza di Dionigi I) è attestata molti anni prima dell'arrivo di Timoleonte: il mio tentativo di stabilire un'analogia tra Sicilia e Magna Grecia, anche in ambito monetario[189]agli inizi del IV secolo a.C., parte dalla considerazione che, durante la tirannide di Dionigi I,[190] le cui mire espansionistiche si erano estese in Italia meridionale e verso l'Adriatico,[191] la Magna Grecia era diventata ormai parte

[188] Anello, « Sulla penetrazione dei 'pegasi' », p. 188–193.

[189] D'Angelo, « Le tavolette di Locri », p. 15–16. Al contrario il Filocamo ritiene che Sicilia e Magna Grecia non debbano essere considerate sullo stesso piano perché i dati di circolazione rivelano realtà differenti. Cf. Filocamo, « Il basileus delle tavole di Locri », p. 74.

[190] Sulla guerra tra Dionigi I e gli Italioti cf. Mario Lombardo, « La Magna Grecia dalla fine del V secolo a.C. alla conquista romana », in *Magna Grecia. Lo sviluppo politico*, p. 55–88, in part. p. 56–68; Chiara Sabattini, « Aspetti della politica di Dionisio I: note sul testo diodoreo », *Rivista Storica dell'Antichità*, 16 (1986), p. 31–48; Ead., « Turi, gli Italioti e la battaglia di Laos », *Rivista Storica dell'Antichità*, 17–18 (1987–1988), p. 8–37; Brian Caven, *Dionysius I*, Yale University Press, New Haven – London 1990 p. 124–153; Marta Sordi, « Dionigi e gli Italioti », in Marta Sordi (ed.), *La Dynasteia in occidente (Studi su Dionigi)*, Esedra, Padova, 1992 p. 51–71; Giovanna De Sensi Sestito, « I due Dionisii e la nascita della confederazione brettia » in Giovanna De Sensi Sestito (ed.), *I Bretti. Tomo I. Cultura, lingua e documentazione storico-archeologica. Atti del 1° corso seminariale-Rossano, 20–26 Febbraio*, Rubbettino, Catanzaro 1995, p. 33–71, in part. p. 35–43; Ead., *La Magna Grecia nell'età dei Dionisî*, in *La Sicilia dei due Dionisî*, p. 389–403; Lionel Jehuda Sanders, « The relations of Syracuse and Magna Grecia in the Era of the Dionysii », in *La Sicilia dei due Dionisî*, p. 473–492; Ignazio D'Angelo, « Locri Epizefirii e Dionigi I di Siracusa », *Aevum*, 84 (2010), p. 41–60; Giovanna De Sensi Sestito, « Cartagine e la Magna Grecia in età dionisiana. Il ruolo di Ipponio », in Maria Intrieri, Sergio Ribichini (eds.), *Fenici e Italici, Cartagine e la Magna Grecia. Popoli a contatto, culture a confronto, Atti del Convegno Internazionale, Cosenza, 27–28 maggio 2008*, Fabrizio Serra, Pisa – Roma 2011, p. 29–50.

[191] Sull'espansione dionigiana nell'Adriatico e nel Tirreno cf. Pietrina Anello, *Dionisio il Vecchio I. Politica adriatica e tirrenica*, Tipografia Boccone del Povero, Palermo 1980; Lorenzo Braccesi, *I tiranni di Sicilia*, Laterza, Bari 1998, p. 69–86; Marta Sordi, *Dionigi e il Tirreno*, in *La Sicilia dei due Dionisî*, p. 493–499; Lorenzo Braccesi, Giovanni Millino, *La Sicilia Greca*, Carocci, Roma 2000, p. 141–144. Sulla colonizzazione siracusana nell'Adriatico cf. Lorenzo Braccesi, *Grecità adriatica. Un capitolo della colonizzazione greca in occidente*, Patron, Bologna 1977, p. 185–246; Gabriella Vanotti, « Sulla cronologia della colonizzazione siracusana in Adriatico », *Hesperìa*, 2 (1991), p. 107–110; Pietrina Anello, « La colonizzazione siracusana in Adriatico », in Lorenzo Braccesi, Sante Graciotti (eds.), *La Dalmazia e l'altra sponda: problemi di archaiologhia adriatica*, Olschki, Firenze 1999, p. 115–139; Neritan Ceka, « I riflessi della politica di Dionisio il grande nel territorio dell'attuale Albania », in *La Sicilia dei due Dionisî*, p. 77–80; Mario Lombardo, « La colonizzazione adriatica in età dionigiana », in *La Sicilia dei due Dionisî*, p. 427–442; Teresa Alfieri Tonini, « Diodoro e la colonizzazione adriatica di Siracusa », *Hesperìa*, 15 (2002), p. 211–216.

integrante[192] della « *μεγίστην τῶν κατὰ τὴν Ερώπην δυναστείαν* »[193] non solo dal punto di vista politico ma anche da quello economico.

In particolare proprio Locri Epizefiri ebbe un ruolo importante nel progetto di Dionigi I di creare questa unità territoriale: il tiranno, infatti, dopo aver sposato Doride, figlia di Xeneto, il più illustre dei cittadini locresi,[194] donò i territori di Caulonia,[195] Ipponio[196] e Scillezio[197] a Locri, che divenne così la 'porta-bandiera' dell'impero siracusano in Italia meridionale.

La presenza nelle tab. 8 e 35 di decacorinzi e pentacorinzi non può dunque essere presa come prova, a mio avviso, per un'identificazione del *βασιλεύς* con Agatocle innanzitutto perché la valuta corinzia circolava nel Mediterraneo occidentale già al tempo di Dionigi I (406/5–367/6 a. C.),[198] il quale probabilmente dovette servirsi di monete auree per provvedere al pagamento dei mercenari impiegati su più fronti;[199] inoltre (e questo è l'ostacolo maggiore), non sono attestati dalle fonti letterarie rapporti diretti tra Agatocle e Locri.

Per quanto riguarda l'identificazione del *βασιλεύς* delle tavolette locresi con Pirro, re dell'Epiro, avanzata per primo dell'*editor princeps*[200] e successivamente sostenuta dal Van Compernolle[201] e dal Migeotte,[202] mi pare che, a sostegno di questa tesi, ci siano solo la corrispondenza tra le sei tavolette e i sei anni (281–275 a.C.) della sua presenza in Italia meridionale (non necessariamente a Locri), insieme all'attestazione da parte delle fonti letterarie di rapporti con la *polis epizefiria*, come la defezione di Locri dall'alleanza romana dopo la battaglia di

192 Sul matrimonio di Dionigi I con la locrese Doride e per un'analisi dei rapporti tra Siracusa e le città italiote durante la tirannide dionigiana cf. D'Angelo, « Locri Epizefirii », p. 41–60. In questo contributo si troverà ampia bibliografia sull'argomento.

193 Cf. Diod. XX 78,3. Per la paternità filistiana di questa affermazione cf. Marta Sordi, « Dionigi I, dinasta d'Europa », in *La Dynasteia in occidente*, p. 73–79.

194 Diod. XIV 44, 107; XVI 6; Plut. *Timol.* 6, 6–7; *Dion*. 3; Hael. *Var. Hist.* XIII 10; Plat. *Schol. Ep.* IV 320 A.

195 Diod. XIV 106.

196 Diod. XIV 107.

197 Strab. VI 1, 10, C 261.

198 I rapporti tra Dionigi I e Corinto erano molto stretti anche dal punto di vista politico-militare: durante la seconda guerra contro Cartagine, Dionigi I ricevette aiuti, oltre che dagli Spartani, anche dai Corinzi. Cf. Marta Sordi, « I rapporti fra Dionigi I e Cartagine fra la pace del 405/4 e quella del 392/1 » , in *La Dynasteia in occidente*, p. 33–49, in part. p. 40.

199 A questo proposito è importante sottolineare che Dionigi I si servì di mercenari gallici anche per gli attacchi contro i Romani. Cf. Marta Sordi, « I Galli in Apulia », in *La Dynasteia in occidente*, p. 133–139; Rita Lucca, *Dionigi II e il Lazio*, *Hesperìa*, 7 (1996), p. 91–98; Braccesi, *I tiranni di Sicilia*, p. 81–82; Marta Sordi, « Dionigi e il Tirreno », in *La Sicilia dei due Dionisî*, p. 493–499. Andrea Pierozzi, « Dionisio I, i Celti e il sacco di Roma. Alcune riflessioni sulla cronologia e sulla strategia delle operazioni militari siracusane tra l'Elleporo e Pyrgi », *Erga-Logoi*, 7/2 (2019), p. 45–82.

200 De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 78–82.

201 Van Compernolle, « Agatocle, Pirro », p. 132–133.

202 Migeotte, « Le operazioni di credito », p. 152–153.

Eraclea, il passaggio dei Locresi alla causa di Pirro (Iust. XVIII 1, 9), la presenza nella città di un presidio epirota con a capo il figlio di Pirro, Alessandro (278 a.C.).

Tuttavia alcuni elementi di carattere numismatico e storico sembrano ostacolare questa ipotesi.

Se la presenza di valuta corinzia può essere sostenuta già per l'epoca di Dionigi I, lo stesso non si può dire per l'epoca di Pirro (281–275 a.C.): secondo la Pozzi,[203] il termine basso delle emissioni locresi di pegasi di tipo e di peso corinzi può scendere al più tardi al 304 a.C.; per lo Stazio[204] al 310; infine il Guzzetta,[205] tenendo presente i diversi interventi sulla monetazione locrese fatti dalla Pozzi, ha sostenuto che « la cronologia delle tabelle 8 e 35 non potrà scendere di molto oltre la fine del IV secolo a.C. ».

Stando a questi dati, le tabelle 8 e 35 (ricordiamo ancora che la tab. 8 è datata con lo stesso eponimo e gli stessi magistrati della tab. 31 che menziona la *synteleia* al *basileus*) vanno datate al più tardi entro i primi anni del III sec. a.C.: ciò renderebbe problematica l'identificazione del *basileus* con Pirro.[206]

Per il Costabile[207] e per il Filocamo[208] l'ipotesi di un attardamento nella circolazione monetale (secondo quanto sostenuto dal Van Compernolle)[209] non sembra ammissibile: « un decacorinzio d'oro di 8,7 grammi, battuto sotto Agatocle quando il rapporto è 1:10 (e dunque pari a dieci stateri corinzi d'argento), nell'età di Pirro sarebbe pari a otto stateri corinzi d'argento, perché il rapporto è sceso a 1:8 ».[210]

La presenza di valuta corinzia nelle tavolette 8 e 35 (decacorinzi e pentacorinzi) porterebbe, dunque, ad escludere Pirro.[211]

Un altro elemento che va tenuto presente è la classificazione delle tavolette fatta dal Blomqvist.[212] Lo studioso, infatti, suddivide le tavolette in tre gruppi (K; E; P): in base all'analisi prosopografica, linguistica, stilistica e paleografica, ha indicato il gruppo K (quello in cui sono presenti anche le tavolette che citano il *βασιλεύς*) come il più antico. Nei gruppi E, P compare, tra le destinazioni dei prestiti, la *πυργοποιία* (= la costruzione delle torri): per *πυργοποιία* il Gullini

[203] Pozzi Paolini, « La monetazione », in *Locri Epizefirii*, p. 215–301, in part. p. 221–240.
[204] Stazio, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 230–233, in part. p. 233.
[205] Guzzetta, « Decacorinzi », p. 137–138.
[206] Cf. Costabile, « La 'contribuzione al re' », p. 141; Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 282; Filocamo, « Locri Epizefirii. L'archivio di Zeus », p. 147.
[207] Costabile, « La 'contribuzione al re' », p. 141–142; Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 282–284.
[208] Filocamo, « Locri Epizefirii. L'archivio di Zeus », p. 147–148.
[209] Van Compernolle, « Agatocle, Pirro », p. 136.
[210] Filocamo, « Locri Epizefirii. L'archivio di Zeus », p. 148.
[211] Cf. Stazio, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 230–233, in part. p. 233; Costabile, « La 'contribuzione al re' », p. 139–150, in part. p. 141.
[212] Blomqvist, « The relative Chronology », p. 73–90.

intende « il braccio di mura sul lato a mare che, per il materiale ceramico, deve essere appunto datato tra la fine del IV e il III secolo ».

Se il gruppo K è anteriore ai gruppi E, P[213] (dove compare la *πυργοποιία* che è un fatto di fine IV – inizio III secolo),[214] Pirro andrebbe escluso perché l'attività del *basileus* sembrerebbe collocarsi nel IV secolo.

In secondo luogo, va sottolineata l'assenza nelle fonti letterarie di provvedimenti fiscali da parte di Pirro nei confronti di Locri che possano confermare la *συντέλεια* delle sei tavolette locresi: dalle fonti è noto soltanto il saccheggio del tempio di Persefone a Locri da parte del re epirota.[215]

Il problema relativo all'identità del *basileus*, magistrato cittadino o sovrano straniero, impone cautela dal momento che le diverse soluzioni prospettate comportano difficoltà nell'attesa che nuovi elementi di carattere epigrafico, letterario e numismatico possano portare ad una maggiore chiarezza.

Uno sguardo di natura comparativa ad altre esperienze istituzionali greche potrebbe aprire uno spiraglio in questa complessa questione: per molti aspetti, come abbiamo visto a proposito delle fratrie, i tratti istituzionali di Locri Epizefiri presentano punti di contatto con la città di Argo,[216] sebbene non siano noti contatti tra le due *poleis*.

Alla metà del V secolo risalirebbe un trattato tra Cnosso e Tilisso con la mediazione di Argo: questo trattato è testimoniato da due iscrizioni, una rinvenuta a Tilisso, l'altra ad Argo.

Particolarmente importante è la parte finale dell'iscrizione ritrovata ad Argo: « questa stele è stata eretta quando Melantas era re (*ἐπί Μελάντα βασιλέος*)[217] e Licotadas della tribù degli Illei era presidente ».

Questo testo che fa parte di un decreto votato da una assemblea riguardante cose sacre (*ἀλιαίαι ἔδοξε τᾶι τôν ἰαρôν*) rivela che il *βασιλεύς* nella Argo

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213 Tra gli studiosi che hanno accettato nelle linee generali la tripartizione cronologica fatta dal Blomqvist cf. D. Musti, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 118–121, in part. p. 118; M. Torelli, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 126–127; Manni, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 236–238, in part. p. 236.

214 Per la datazione della *πυργοποιία* alla fine del IV – inizio III cf. G. Gullini, interv. in *Le Tavole di Locri*, p. 121–126; Liliana Costamagna, Claudio Sabbione, *Una città in Magna Grecia. Locri Epizefiri. Guida archeologica*, Laruffa, Reggio Calabria 1990, p. 49–52.

215 Diod. XXVII 4, 3; Dion. Hal. XX 9. A questo proposito va ricordata la tesi del De Franciscis, che vede nella *synteleia* al *basileus* « la testimonianza documentaria o l'aspetto ufficiale di quella che la successiva tradizione storiografica ed aneddotica presentava come una ruberia e depredazione sacrilega, eseguita da Pirro ai danni dei santuari locresi ». Cf. De Franciscis, « Stato e società », p. 80.

216 Per un quadro della bibliografia sulla storia istituzionale di Argo cf. Cinzia Bearzot, Franca Landucci (eds.), *Argo, Una democrazia diversa*, Vita e Pensiero, Milano 2006.

217 La presenza ad Argo di un *βασιλεύς* è testimoniata non solo per via epigrafica ma anche per via letteraria (Erodoto VII 149, 2). Inoltre sempre per Argo è attestata anche la presenza di un *προ-βασιλεύς* tra la fine del V e l'inizio del IV secolo. Cf. SEG, 29 (1979) p. 361; Pierre Carlier, *La roiauté en Grèce avant Alexandre*, AECR, Strasbourg 1984, p. 383–384.

democratica[218] aveva una funzione eponimica:[219] inoltre giova ricordare che la funzione eponimica del *βασιλεύς* è attestata anche in altri luoghi a Megara, a Calcedone e ad Egostena.[220]

Argo, infatti, non rappresenta la sola *polis* in cui è attestata la funzione eponimica del *βασιλεύς*: interessanti documenti epigrafici (IG VII. 1 e2), databili verso la fine del IV secolo a.C., testimoniano la presenza a Megara di un *βασιλεύς* eponimo: in queste epigrafi è presente la formula *ἐπὶ βασιλέος Ἀπολλοδώρου τοῦ Εὐφρονίου*.[221]

Dunque forse proprio il confronto con la città dorica di Argo potrebbe spiegare quella strana coincidenza già espressa da Musti[222] in occasione del convegno *Le Tavole di Locri*: « se da un lato abbiamo eponimi, di cui conosciamo il nome, ma non il titolo, e dall'altro un basileus, che conosciamo come titolo, ma senza il nome della persona, non potrebbe essere proprio basileus il titolo dell'eponimo, non potrebbe essere proprio l'eponimo il basileus? ».

L'osservazione del Musti era stata giudicata « molto acuta » da parte del Costabile,[223] che è il principale sostenitore dell'identificazione del *βασιλεύς* con un magistrato cittadino: è dunque possibile che il *βασιλεύς* possa essere l'eponimo nominato nel prescritto di ogni tabella e dunque un magistrato cittadino, di cui nelle tabelle (che giova ripetere non sono altro che riassunti ed estratti di atti ufficiali) non compare il nome proprio perché già indicato all'inizio del prescritto, e che oltre a svolgere funzione eponimica, evidentemente esercitava anche funzioni finanziarie in relazione alla riscossione della *συντέλεια* (tabb. 1–13–23–30–31) e della nona dei cereali (tab. 25).

A questo punto diventa significativa proprio la tab. 25 in cui il *βασιλεύς* locrese è impegnato nella riscossione della nona dei cereali per conto del tempio di Zeus, il quale a sua volta la destina come prestito insieme ai 1741 talenti alla città: come è stato giustamente osservato,[224] nel caso della nona dei cereali, il *βασιλεύς*

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218 La figura del *βασιλεύς* è ben attestata nella città di Argo anche nel VI secolo a.C. nell'ambito del regime monarchico. Cf. Tuci, « Il regime politico di Argo », p. 210–216.

219 Cf. Eric W. Robinson, *The First Democracies. Early Popular Government outside Athens*, Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart 1997, p. 83; Marcel Piérart, *Argos. Une autre démocratie*, in *Polis and Politics. Studies Hansen*, Museum Tusculanum, Copenhagen 2000, p. 305; Henri van Effenterre, Françoise Ruzé, *Nomima*, p. 232.

220 Cf. Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 297.

221 Per la presenza del *βασιλεύς* con funzione eponimica a Megara e nelle sue colonie cf. Ferdinando Ferraioli, « Il basileus eponimico a Megara e nelle colonie megaresi », *Rivista di diritto ellenico*, 1 (2011) p. 1–9; Federica Cordano, « Magistrature megaresi dalla Grecia al Mar Nero », *Rationes Rerum*, 1 (2013), p. 39–54.

222 Cf. Musti, « Strutture cittadine », p. 214.

223 Costabile, « La 'contribuzione al re' », p. 143; Costabile, « Defixiones da Locri Epizefiri », p. 49–51; Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 286.

224 Cf. Musti, « Strutture cittadine », p. 217; Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 292; Filocamo, « Locri Epizefirii », p. 152.

riscuote per il santuario, mentre nelle tabelle 1–13–23–30–31 è la città che prende in prestito delle somme di denaro dal santuario per destinarle alla *συντέλεια* del *βασιλεύς*.

La funzione svolta dal *βασιλεύς* ricorda molto da vicino quella dell'arconte eponimo ateniese[225] che, secondo la testimonianza di Aristotele, contenuta nell'*Athenaion Politeia* (LX 2–3), prelevava l'olio dai proprietari delle terre, in cui si trovavano gli olivi sacri, nella misura di tre mezzi cotili per pianta e lo consegnava ai tesorieri sull'acropoli.

Tale analogia tra il *βασιλεύς* locrese, che riscuote la nona dei cereali, e l'arconte eponimo ateniese, che preleva l'olio degli olivi sacri, sembrerebbe avvalorare la tesi del magistrato cittadino.[226]

Un altro problema è quello di capire quali siano stati il modello o i modelli costituzionali che potrebbero aver influenzato Locri Epizefiri nell'istituzione della magistratura basilica, che fra l'altro era molto diffusa sia in ambiente dorico sia in quello ionico.

Innanzitutto non si può escludere che sia un'eredità dell'antica costituzione oligarchica locrese,[227] sopravvissuta dopo la svolta democratica, così come avvenne ad Atene dopo la riforma clistenica del 508/7, quando l'arconte *basileus*, erede delle funzioni sacrali del re, acquisì nuove prerogative come *le competenze giurisdizionali nei reati di asebeia, nelle controversie tra sacerdoti, in reati di omicidio*.[228]

Quanto ai possibili riferimenti esterni alla *polis* locrese, è possibile anche che Locri avesse mutuato tale magistratura dai Lucani: i Locresi potevano ben conoscere le istituzioni lucane, visto che il loro alleato Dionigi I aveva stipulato con i Lucani un'alleanza in occasione della guerra contro gli Italioti[229] e lo stesso Dionigi II, che aveva ereditato una guerra con i Lucani, dopo alcuni successi militari, si era affrettato a concludere una pace con loro.[230]

Da Strabone (VI 1, 3, C 254–255) noi sappiamo che i Lucani che ordinariamente avevano una struttura democratica, in guerra eleggevano un *basileus*:

> [...] Τὸν μὲν οὖν ἄλλον χρόνον ἐδημοκρατοῦντο, ἐν δὲ τοῖς πολέμοις ᾑρεῖτο βασιλεὺς ὑπὸ τῶν νεμομένων ἀρχάς [...].
>
> [...] Mentre ordinariamente avevano istituzioni democratiche, in tempo di guerra era scelto un re dai magistrati in carica [...].

[225] Cf. Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 296.
[226] Musti, « Strutture cittadine », p. 217; Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 292–296.
[227] Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 298.
[228] Daverio Rocchi, *Città-stato e stati federali*, p. 298.
[229] Diod. XIV 100, 5; 102.
[230] Diod. XVI 5, 2.

Considerati i rapporti molto stretti tra Locri da una parte e Sparta e Taranto dall'altra, non è da escludere che i Locresi abbiano tratto ispirazione per questa nuova carica istituzionale proprio dal modello spartano o tarantino:[231] a Sparta, infatti, al vertice dell'ordinamento costituzionale si trovavano due *basileis*, così come nella stessa Taranto è attestata nel V secolo la presenza di un *basileus*.[232]

Infine, anche se non abbiamo prove di rapporti diretti tra Argo e Locri, testimoniati da fonti letterarie, la divisione del corpo civico in fratrie e la comune presenza di un *basileus* con funzione eponimica potrebbero essere le spie di antiche interazioni tra queste due *poleis* democratiche.

In conclusione possiamo riassumere i risultati di questa ricerca: il confronto tra le istituzioni di Argo, testimoniate da alcune iscrizioni, e le istituzioni di Locri Epizefiri, attestate dalle note tabelle, supportano l'ipotesi che nella Locri democratica la cittadinanza fosse divisa in 36 fratrie: ciò significa che l'avvento della democrazia a Locri non fu determinato solo dalla presa del potere del *δᾶμος*, ma anche da una compartecipazione di una parte degli aristocratici, che evidentemente ebbero un ruolo importante sia nell'evoluzione della costituzione locrese da oligarchica a democratica, sia nell'amministrazione della città, come rivelano le funzioni militari e finanziarie svolte dai capi delle fratrie, i fatarchi.

La tesi che il *basileus* delle tabelle locresi possa essere l'eponimo, il magistrato cittadino, nominato nel prescritto di ogni tabella e privo del titolo magistratuale, diventa più di una semplice possibilità, se si tiene presente che nella città di Argo il *basileus* aveva una funzione eponimica: nel caso di Locri il *basileus* svolgerebbe sia la funzione di eponimo, sia di magistrato addetto alla riscossione della *συντέλεια* e della nona dei cereali. L'anonimato del *basileus* si spiegherebbe alla luce delle caratteristiche formali delle tabelle che, giova ripeterlo, non sono decreti originali ma estratti di atti ufficiali: agli occhi del 'redattore' delle tabelle evidentemente doveva risultare superfluo riportare di nuovo il nome personale del *basileus eponimo*!

[231] Cf. Costabile, « L'archivio finanziario », p. 298.

[232] Cf. Herod. III 136. Il Wuilleumier e il Dunbabin ritengono che il *basileus* tarantino attestato da Erodoto sia una eredità spartana. Cf. Pierre Wuilleumier, *Tarente des origines a la conquête romaine*, Paris 1939, p. 176; Thomas James Dunbabin, *The Western Greeks*, Clarendon, Oxford 1948, p. 385.

La Méditerranée chez Paul Valéry: De l'épiphanie marine à l'humanisme méditerranéen

The Mediterranean in Paul Valéry: From Marine Epiphany to Mediterranean Humanism

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I. *Introduction*

La présente communication a pour objectif d'éclairer le concept de Méditerranée chez l'écrivain français Paul Valéry (1871–1945), qui, par ses origines mêmes, – né dans la ville occitane de Sète d'un père corse et d'une mère génoise –, est profondément ancré dans l'espace méditerranéen.[1] Ce n'est pas par hasard que le texte dans l'œuvre de Valéry qui permet de cerner le mieux son idée de Méditerranée décèle ouvertement un fond autobiographique. Évidemment, nous nous référons ici à l'essai « Inspirations méditerranéennes » (1933), dans lequel l'auteur, à partir de son vécu personnel au littoral, définit sa vision d'un humanisme méditerranéen. Valéry y expose la conception de ce qu'il a appelé « [s]on expérience méditerranéenne »[2] qui, en fin de compte, constitue la base de son approche philosophico-culturelle de la Méditerranée. Précisons aussi que l'univers marin est omniprésent dans l'œuvre intégrale de Valéry, mais que nous voudrions mettre le focus sur cette phase productive de l'entre-deux-guerres où une notion socioculturelle de la Méditerranée commence à se dénoter explicitement. En effet, selon Robinson-Valéry, les rapports de Valéry avec la

[1] Cf. à propos de rapports de Paul Valéry avec la Méditerranée, l'étude de Patricia Signorile (ed.), *Valéry et la Méditerranée*, ÉDISUD, Aix-en-Provence 2005. Dans son avant-propos, Signorile déduit de manière autobiographique la passion de l'auteur pour la mer.

[2] Paul Valery, « Inspirations méditerranéennes », in Id., *Œuvres*, t. II, éd. Michel Jarrety, Librairie Générale Française, Paris 2016, p. 437–453, ici 450.

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Méditerranée se traduisent par « trois points de vue différents: le sensuel, l'intellectuel et le socio-culturel », [3] qui, cependant, s'entremêlent. Les « Inspirations méditerranéennes » constituent sans aucun doute le texte dans l'œuvre de Valéry, dans lequel ce lien entre une vision sensuelle, voire sensorielle, intellectuelle et socioculturelle de la Méditerranée est élaborée de manière plus aboutie. Nous voudrons soutenir la thèse que l'origine de cette triade des dimensions expérientielles de la Méditerranée est à chercher dans la production littéraire du début des années 1920. Dans cette période sont publiés le poème « Cimetière marin » (1920), qui décrit un moment épiphanique au cimetière marin de la ville natale de Valéry à Sète, ainsi qu'un cycle de trois conférences (1919–1922) sur l'idée de l'identité européenne. Tandis que le « Cimetière marin » expose la dimension sensuelle, sensorielle et existentielle de l'expérience méditerranéenne, les trois conférences témoignent de l'idée intellectuelle et socioculturelle de la Méditerranée. Il s'agit donc de deux volets, l'un lyrique, l'autre de prose, d'un même diptyque qui rend compte de l'expérience méditerranéenne chez Valéry. En effet, la notion socioculturelle de la Méditerranée en tant que « dispositif [...] à faire de la civilisation »[4] se développe immédiatement après la Première Guerre mondiale et s'inscrit dans un discours plus vaste sur l'espace méditerranéen dans l'entre-deux-guerres dont nous allons retracer les axes principaux et les idées directrices. Valéry joua un rôle prépondérant dans le débat officiel sur la fonction de la Méditerranée pour la France et l'Europe ce qui se traduit par sa nomination au poste d'administrateur du nouveau *Centre Universitaire Méditerranéen* qui fut créé à Nice en 1933. C'est dans ce contexte que nous pouvons situer la rédaction d'un programme-manifeste du *Centre Universitaire Méditerranéen* ainsi que la rédaction de l'essai « Inspirations méditerranéennes » dans lequel confluent toutes les dimensions du concept valéryen de la Méditerranée.

Dans un premier temps, nous donnerons donc quelques approches théoriques et historiques pour caractériser le discours sur la Méditerranée dans l'entre-deux-guerres, afin de retracer, dans un deuxième temps, l'archéologie et le développement de la notion de la Méditerranée chez Valéry à partir de son cycle de trois conférences, écrit entre 1919 et 1922, sur l'idée de l'identité européenne jusqu'à l'essai « Inspirations méditerranéennes ». A travers cette observation sur la transformation et l'évolution de sa vision méditerranéenne nous tenteront de situer Valéry dans ce discours de l'entre-deux-guerres.

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[3] Judith Robinson-Valery, « La Méditerranée 'un dispositif à faire de la civilisation' », in Willy-Paul Romain (ed.), *Paul Valéry et la Méditerranée*, Fondation de Loumarin, Loumarin de Provence 1987, p. 5–9, ici 5.

[4] Paul Valery, « Le Centre Universitaire Méditerranéen », in Id., *Œuvres*, t. I, éd. Michel Jarrety, Librairie Générale Française, Paris 2016, p. 1624–1644, ici 1636.

II. *Approches théoriques et historiques sur l'espace méditerranéen de l'entre-deux-guerres*

Autant plus qu'un espace géo-historique, la Méditerranée peut être considérée comme un espace imaginaire, « un imaginaire qui s'est élaboré à travers un amoncellement d'écritures, où discours factuels et discours fictionnels sont inextricablement enchevêtrés »,[5] comme ont fait valoir Albera et al. Selon Jacques Huntzinger, la Méditerranée serait un imaginaire spécifiquement européen, voire un « mythe français fondateur ».[6] Aucune autre nation n'aurait forgé la vision identitaire d'un patrimoine méditerranéen avec une telle intensité et persévérance que la France. Comme nous allons démontrer, Paul Valéry appartient aux auteurs français qui ont contribué remarquablement à la construction de cet imaginaire national de la Méditerranée. Comme a démontré Thierry Fabre, une première vision stratégique de la Méditerranée se construit en France lors de l'expédition en Égypte de Napoléon à la charnière entre le XVIII[e] et le XIX[e] siècle, qui aurait eu « un effet déclencheur, catalyseur, sur les représentations françaises de la Méditerranée ».[7] Ce sera ensuite dans le contexte de l'expansionnisme colonial, depuis la conquête de l'Algérie en 1830 jusqu'à la première moitié du XX[e] siècle, que le discours sur la Méditerranée prend un nouvel essor. Dans ce contexte est générée par des auteurs nationalistes et conservateurs – en France notamment par Louis Bertrand (1866–1941) ainsi que les auteurs de l'*Action française*, en Italie par Gabriele D'Annunzio (1863–1938) – l'idée d'une Afrique romaine et d'une Méditerranée latine afin de légitimer la conquête des territoires d'outre-mer en recourant à l'héritage de l'empire romain et de la culture latine, perçue comme une communauté linguistique et biologique. Cette vision de la Méditerranée comme un lac romain s'intensifie dans le discours colonial lors de l'avènement du régime fasciste en Italie à partir des années 1920. Comme a remarqué Thierry Fabre: « Dans les années trente en effet, le débat politique, idéologique et culturel [sur la Méditerranée] tourne autour du fascisme et de l'anti-fascisme ».[8] C'est dans les années 1930 qu'un groupe d'auteurs français d'appartenance méditerranéenne forge l'image de la Méditerranée comme utopie transculturelle pour établir un contre-discours à l'interprétation nationaliste et fasciste de la Méditerranée. Selon Georges Fréris, on peut parler d'une école littéraire, à savoir l'"École d'Alger', ou d'un mouvement, le mouvement du

5 Dionigi Albera et al., « Introduction », in Id. (eds.), *Dictionnaire de la Méditerranée*, Actes Sud, Arles 2016, p. 9–23, ici 10.

6 Jacques Huntzinger, *Il était une fois la Méditerranée*, CNRS Éditions, Paris 2014, (Collection « Biblis »), p. 19.

7 Jean-Claude Izzo, Thierry Fabre, *La Méditerranée française*, Maisonneuve et Larose, Paris 2000, p. 28.

8 Izzo, Fabre, *La Méditerranée française*, p. 60.

'méditerranéisme'.[9] Ce 'cénacle littéraire' pour reprendre ici l'expression d'Émile Temime[10], constitué entre autres par les écrivains Gabriel Audisio, Albert Camus, Jean Grenier, Armand Guibert ainsi que l'éditeur Edmond Charlot, tous liés aux territoires coloniaux dans le Maghreb français, soutient l'idée d'une fraternité méditerranéenne qui rallie l'Occident et l'Orient. Citons comme exemple un extrait de la conférence que l'auteur français le plus connu de ce cénacle, c'est-à-dire Albert Camus, a écrit en 1937 à l'occasion de l'inauguration d'une Maison de la culture à Alger:

> Bassin international traversé par tous les courants, la Méditerranée est de tous les pays le seul peut-être qui rejoigne les grandes pensées orientales. Car elle n'est pas classique et ordonnée, elle est diffuse et turbulente, comme ces quartiers arabes ou ces ports de Gênes et de Tunisie. Ce goût triomphant de la vie, ce sens de l'écrasement et de l'ennui, les places désertes à midi en Espagne, la sieste, voilà la vraie Méditerranée et c'est de l'Orient qu'elle se rapproche. Non de l'Occident latin.[11]

Cette vision d'une ouverture transculturelle de la Méditerranée est propagée, en outre, à travers des revues, tels que les *Cahiers du Sud* de Jean Ballard à Marseille, les *Cahiers de la Barbarie* d'Armand Guibert et Jean Amrouche à Tunis et *Rivages* d'Edmond Charlot et Albert Camus à Alger.[12] Le discours sur la Méditerranée dans l'entre-deux-guerres se caractérise donc notamment par ces deux pôles, c'est-à-dire la conception d'une Méditerranée latine et l'idée de la Méditerranée comme espace transculturel, deux visions qui évidemment ont connu diverses facettes et variations selon les différents auteurs. Il faut aussi préciser que le ci-nommé cercle d'auteurs autour de l'éditeur Edmond Charlot n'a pas conçu *ex nihilo* leur utopie méditerranéenne, mais qu'ils se rattachent aux maîtres à penser de la génération précédente, tels que Montherlant, Gide ou Valéry qui incarnent déjà un certain idéal du monde méditerranéen.[13] L'influence de Paul Valéry sur certains d'entre eux est flagrant. Il suffit de citer le récit lyrique de voyage de Jean Grenier intitulé *Inspirations méditerranéennes*, écrit en 1937 et publié en 1940, qui reprend justement le titre de l'essai de Valéry, paru en 1933. Dans sa préface, Grenier souligne explicitement son admiration pour la pensée de Valéry en définissant le concept

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9 Cf. Georges Freris, « L'Algérianisme, le mouvement du Méditerranéismes et la suite… », *Travaux de la Maison de l'Orient*, 37 (2003), p. 43–51, ici 49.

10 Émile Temime, *Un rêve méditerranéen. Des saints-simoniens aux intellectuels des années trente (1832–1962)*, Actes Sud, Arles 2002, p. 105.

11 Albert Camus, « La culture indigène. La nouvelle culture méditerranéenne », in Id., *Conférences et discours. 1936–1958*, Gallimard, Paris 2017, p. 15–25, ici 21.

12 Cf. Christian Bromberger, « Utopie méditerranéenne », in Dionigi Albera, Maryline Crivello, Mohamed Tozy (eds.), *Dictionnaire de la Méditerranée*, Actes Sud, Arles 2016, p. 1503–1506, ici 1504.

13 Cf. Temime, *Un rêve méditerranéen*, p. 90.

d''inspiration méditerranéenne' comme une expérience de l'individu face au lieu de la Méditerranée qui le fascine et l'absorbe:

> Il existe pour chaque homme des lieux prédestinés au bonheur, des paysages où il peut s'épanouir et connaître, au-delà du simple plaisir de vivre, une joie qui ressemble à un ravissement [...]. La Méditerranée peut inspirer un tel état de l'âme. [...] Par les lignes et les formes qu'elle impose elle rend la vérité inséparable du bonheur; l'ivresse même de la lumière n'y fait qu'exalter l'esprit de contemplation. Ainsi peut-elle inspirer une métaphysique qui soit à égale distance du culte de l'Absolu et du culte de l'Action.[14]

Au fait, la citation de Grenier contient l'essence de la conception méditerranéenne de Valéry telle quelle est exposée surtout dans le « Inspirations méditerranéennes », comme on verra par la suite. Au travers de son contact avec la nature méditerranéenne, l'homme prend conscience de sa propre condition humaine. La Méditerranée est considérée comme une source d'inspiration agissant à la fois sur l'âme et l'esprit de l'homme. Les termes de « bonheur », « plaisir de vivre », « joie », « ravissement », « ivresse » sont juxtaposés à ceux de « vérité » et de « métaphysique » de manière à lier le « caractère concret et sensuel [et la] dimension spirituelle et intellectuelle » [15] de l'expérience méditerranéenne. Malgré les points de rattachement évidents avec les auteurs méditerranéistes des années trente qui font recours à Valéry en ce qui concerne la notion sensorielle et intellectuelle de la Méditerranée, il faut tout de même mettre au clair les différences considérables de leurs conceptions politiques et socioculturelles de la Méditerranée, pour revenir ici aux trois perspectives de la Méditerranée chez Valéry que Robinson-Valéry a délimitées, c'est-à-dire le sensuel, l'intellectuel et le socioculturel. [16] Cette différence devient autant plus évident, si on prend en compte un cycle de trois textes que Valéry rédigea après la Première Guerre mondiale entre 1919 et 1922, dont les deux premiers, intitulés « La crise de l'esprit » [« The Spiritual Crisis »] et « La crise de l'intellect » [« The Intellectual Crisis »], furent publiés par la revue anglaise *Athenaeum* en 1919, alors que le troisième constitue une conférence donnée à l'Université de Zurich en 1922. Valéry y expose déjà sa vision de la Méditerranée comme berceau de la civilisation européenne qui se caractérise pourtant par un eurocentrisme véhément. Selon Galibert, ces textes marquent une différence avec les auteurs méditerranéistes par leur adhésion au concept de latinité qui après la Première Guerre mondiale

[14] Jean Grenier, *Inspirations méditerranéennes*, Gallimard, Paris 2006, s.p.

[15] Elisabeth Howe, « Les faces changeantes de la mer », *Bulletin des Études Valéryennes*, 91, 30 (2002), p. 15–27, ici 16.

[16] Cf. Robinson-Valery, « La Méditerranée », p. 5.

représenterait, pour Valéry, « un modèle de stabilité »[17] contre le péril allemand, alors qu'à l'aube de la Deuxième Guerre mondiale il constituerait, pour Camus, un moment déstabilisateur étant « trop lié à l'*Action francaise* et au fascisme italien ».[18] Depuis le début des années 1920 jusqu'aux interventions de Valéry à l'occasion de la création du *Centre Universitaire Méditerranéen* en 1933, cette vision s'atténue sans disparaître pour autant. Une relecture et une recontextualisation de ces textes nous permettront de mieux insérer la conception de Valéry dans le débat officiel sur le Méditerranée de l'entre-deux-guerres.

III. *L'archéologie discursive de la conception socioculturelle d'une Méditerranée européenne chez Valéry*

Dans le premier article « La crise de l'esprit » de 1919, qui témoigne de la mémoire vive de la Première Guerre mondiale qui vient juste d'arriver au terme, il est question de la mortalité des civilisations:

> Nous autres, civilisations, nous savons maintenant que nous sommes mortelles. Nous avions entendu parler de mondes disparus tout entiers, d'empires coulés à pic avec tous les hommes et tous leurs engins; descendus au fond inexplorable des siècles avec leurs dieux et leurs lois, leurs académies et leurs sciences pures et appliquées [...].[19]

Les profondeurs de la mer constituent donc un vaste 'cimetière marin' – pour reprendre ici le titre du poème de Valéry composé en même temps, qui cependant n'expose pas cette dimension collective des civilisations naufragées. Bien que dans ce texte, la notion de Méditerranée n'apparaisse nulle part, l'image de la mer est ici associée au naufrage des civilisations et subit donc une temporalisation, voire une historisation. Les nations et civilisations disparues sont représentées comme des navires fantômes s'avançant au travers l'épaisseur, la brume, voire une fumée de mer, correspondant à l'histoire même:

> Nous apercevions à travers l'épaisseur de l'histoire, les fantômes d'immenses navires qui furent chargés de richesse et d'esprit. Nous ne pouvions pas les compter. Mais ces naufrages, après tout, n'étaient pas notre affaire. *Élam*, *Ninive*, *Babylone* étaient de beaux noms vagues, et la ruine totale de ces mondes avait aussi peu de

[17] Thierry Galibert, « De la Méditerranée de Valéry au Midi de Camus », in Patricia Signorile (ed.), *Valéry et la Méditerranée*, ÉDISUD, Aix-en-Provence 2005, p. 171–184, ici 172.

[18] Galibert, « De la Méditerranée de Valéry », p. 172.

[19] Paul Valery, « Première lettre », in Id., *Œuvres*, t. I, éd. Michel Jarrety, Librairie Générale Française, Paris 2016, p. 696–704, ici 696–697.

> signification pour nous que leur existence même. Mais *France*, *Angleterre*, *Russie*... ce seraient aussi de beaux noms. *Lusitania* aussi est un beau nom. Et nous voyons maintenant que l'abîme de l'histoire est assez grand pour tout le monde. Nous sentons qu'une civilisation a la même fragilité qu'une vie.[20]

La chute des empires pré-antiques, exprimée par le nom de navires *Élam*, *Ninive* et *Babylone*, sert comme miroir d'un possible évanouissement des nations européennes contemporaines. L'expérience de la guerre déclenche donc une prise de conscience de la propre fugacité qui se traduit par une crise intellectuelle, une crise de l'esprit européen. L'article témoigne de l'incertitude du devenir culturel et intellectuel dans la phase post-belliqueuse, comme Valéry exprime en recourant encore à l'image du navire: « L'oscillation du navire a été si forte que les lampes les mieux suspendues se sont à la fin renversées ».[21] Bien qu'il n'ait pas naufragé, le navire de la civilisation européenne a tout de même subit de bouleversements notables de sorte que ses lampes, c'est-à-dire son esprit, se soient renversées. En peu de mots, nous pouvons donc résumer que le terme de Méditerranée n'apparaît pas encore dans ce texte, mais que l'image de la mer comme espace de l'Histoire est véhiculée pour traduire l'idée d'une mortalité et d'une crise de la civilisation européenne à risque de naufrage.

Le deuxième article « La crise de l'intellect » de 1919 constitue la suite de « La crise de l'esprit » et renoue avec le questionnement sur l'état de l'esprit européen pendant la phase de transition entre guerre et paix à cette même époque. De manière beaucoup plus explicite, Valéry expose sa vision d'une suprématie européenne qui, pendant l'entre-deux-guerres, devient un *leitmotiv* dans sa production littéraire et critique. En effet, Valéry associe l'idée de culture même à celle de l'Europe: « L'idée de culture, d'intelligence, d'œuvres magistrales est pour nous dans une relation très ancienne [...] avec l'idée d'Europe ».[22] Tout en reconnaissant aussi les œuvres et performances d'autres civilisations, il attribue une précellence à l'Europe et questionne justement sa pérennité:

> [L]'Europe va-t-elle garder sa prééminence dans tous les genres? L'Europe deviendra-t-elle *ce qu'elle est en réalité*, c'est-à-dire: un petit cap du continent asiatique? Ou bien l'Europe restera-t-elle ce qu'elle paraît, c'est-à-dire: la partie précieuse de l'univers terrestre, la perle de la sphère, le cerveau d'un vaste corps?[23]

Ce passage évocateur associe la prééminence culturelle de l'Europe à sa position géostratégique hégémonique, ce qui est exprimé par le terme de « cap », qui a

[20] Valery, « Première lettre », p. 697.
[21] Valery, « Première lettre », p. 700.
[22] Paul Valery, « Deuxième lettre », in Id., *Œuvres*, t. I, éd. Michel Jarrety, Librairie Générale Française, Paris 2016, p. 704–710, ici 705.
[23] Valery, « Deuxième lettre », p. 705.

plusieurs significations: il signifie, premièrement, une « pointe de terre qui s'avance dans la mer »,[24] deuxièmement, la direction d'un navire, troisièmement, la partie corporelle de la tête à laquelle Valéry fait lui-même référence (« le cerveau d'un vaste corps »), et quatrièmement, l'idée d'une limite à dépasser. Comme Jarrety a fait remarquer dans ses notes au texte, l'image de l'Europe en tant que presqu'île de l'Asie est venue à Valéry à travers l'œuvre *Le Voyageur et son ombre* de Friedrich Nietzsche (1879). Le positionnement géoculturel de l'Europe en tant que cap ou tête du continent asiatique, que Valéry entreprend, inclut la Méditerranée comme le bassin dans lequel le génie européen est né et a pris de l'envergure. Après l'énumération de toute une série de caractéristiques, comme « l'avidité active, la curiosité ardente et désintéressée, un heureux mélange de l'imagination et de la rigueur logique, un certain scepticisme non pessimiste [et] un mysticisme non résigné »,[25] dont Valéry se sert pour brosser le portrait du génie européen, il donne au lecteur un exemple précis de l'esprit inventif des Européens, c'est-à-dire la géométrie grecque, voire euclidienne, qui est justement liée à la perception de l'espace physique et des proportions:

> Un seul exemple de cet esprit, mais un exemple de première classe, – et de toute première importance: la Grèce – car il faut placer dans l'Europe tout le littoral de la Méditerranée: Smyrne et Alexandrie sont d'Europe comme Athènes et Marseille, – la Grèce a fondé la géométrie.[26]

Par sa syntaxe, cette citation prend un double sens – la Grèce a fondu la discipline ou la science de la géométrie ainsi que la géométrie de la Méditerranée. Comparée ensuite à une « aventure » et une « conquête », l'invention de la géométrie est imaginée en analogie avec l'un des mythes les plus anciens de la navigation méditerranéenne, c'est-à-dire la quête de la Toison d'Or de Jason et des Argonautes. En soulignant que l'entreprise de l'invention de la géométrie a demandé le talent des soi-disant « argonautes de l'esprit »,[27] Valéry semble recourir à l'expression des « Argonautes de l'Idéal » que Nietzsche utilise dans le *Gai Savoir* (1882/1887) pour décrire l'éternelle recherche du nouveau et de l'inconnu, afin de dépasser ses propres limites:

> Celui dont l'âme est avide de faire le tour de toutes les valeurs qui ont eu cours et de tous les désirs qui ont été satisfaits jusqu'à présent, de visiter toutes les côtes de cette 'méditerranée' idéale, celui qui veut connaître, par les aventures de sa propre expérience, quels sont les sentiments d'un conquérant et d'un explorateur de l'idéal,

[24] « Cap », in *Le nouveau Petit Robert*, texte remanié et amplifié sous la direction de Josette Rey-Debove, Alain Rey, Dictionnaires le Robert, Paris 2006, p. 346.

[25] Valery, « Deuxième lettre », p. 706.

[26] Valery, « Deuxième lettre », p. 706–707.

[27] Valery, « Deuxième lettre », p. 707.

> et de même, quels sont les sentiments d'un artiste, d'un saint, d'un législateur, d'un sage, d'un savant [...]: celui-là aura avant tout besoin d'une chose, de la *grande santé* – d'une santé que non seulement on possède mais qu'il faut aussi conquérir sans cesse, puisque sans cesse il faut la sacrifier!... Et maintenant, après avoir été ainsi longtemps en chemin, nous, les Argonautes de l'Idéal, plus courageux peut-être que ne l'exigerait la prudence, souvent naufragés et endoloris, mais mieux portant toujours à nouveau – il nous semble avoir devant nous, comme récompense, un pays inconnu, dont personne encore n'a vu les frontières, un au-delà de tous les pays, de tous les recoins de l'idéal connu jusqu'à ce jour [...].[28]

Les « argonautes de l'idéal » de Nietzsche, liés, chez lui, à une Méditerranée idéale permettant d'expérimenter le nouveau, l'inconnu ainsi que le dépassement des propres limites, servent comme modèle de fond aux « argonautes de l'esprit », qui, pour Valéry, correspondent aux Européens, avides de savoir et d'inventer. Le navire, donc l'*Argo* européenne, est à la recherche de la science moderne et de la diffusion du savoir. En comparaison avec le premier texte sur « La crise de l'esprit », cette image des « argonautes de l'esprit » établit donc un contrepoids optimiste à l'image des navires fantômes des civilisations naufragées. C'est Valéry lui-même qui montre à l'*Argo* européenne dans quelle direction mettre le cap, en lui rappelant sa prétendue suprématie culturelle et spirituelle, sa réalité en tant que « petit cap du continent asiatique »[29] s'avançant dans la mer Méditerranée. C'est le philosophe d'origine algérienne Jacques Derrida, inventeur de la déconstruction, qui à partir de cette expression a rédigé en 1990 toute une conférence sur l'identité culturelle européenne, intitulée *L'autre cap*, dans laquelle il critique cette définition de l'Europe comme cap géographique, culturel et spirituel:

> C'est d'ailleurs ainsi que Valéry *décrivit et définissait* l'Europe: comme un cap; et, si cette *description* avait la forme d'une *définition*, c'est que le concept correspondait à la frontière. C'est toute l'histoire de cette géographie. Valéry observe, il regard, il *envisage* l'Europe, il y voit un visage, une *persona*, il la considère comme un chef, c'est-à-dire un cap. Cette tête a aussi des yeux, elle est tournée d'un certain côté, elle scrute l'horizon et veille dans une direction déterminée.[30]

Derrida rajoute donc ici à la définition valéryenne de l'Europe la quatrième signification du terme 'cap', qui est celle de frontière et limite pour souligner que cette conception a un caractère délimitant et unilatéral. Dans sa critique de Valéry, Derrida démasque, en outre, l'origine du poète, définit comme « Européen de la

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[28] Friedrich Nietzsche, *Le Gai Savoir*, éd. Giorgio Colli, Mazzino Montinari, trad. Pierre Klossowski, éd. rev. Marc B. de Launay, Gallimard, Paris 1982, p. 291–292.

[29] Valery, « Deuxième lettre », p. 705.

[30] Jacques Derrida, *L'autre cap suivi de La démocratie ajournée*, Les éditions de Minuit, Paris 1990, p. 25.

Méditerranée gréco-romaine »,[31] pour démarquer le clivage avec ses propres origines, venant lui-même, comme il précise, « de l'autre bord, sinon de l'autre cap (d'un bord qui n'est principalement ni français, ni européen, ni latin, ni chrétien) ».[32]

Alors que dans le premier texte « La crise de l'esprit », Valéry entreprend une temporalisation de la mer Méditerranée, dans le deuxième texte « La crise de l'intellect », il procède par sa spatialisation. Cependant, dans les deux textes, la fonction de la Méditerranée en tant que fondement spatio-temporel de l'hégémonie européenne reste seulement ébauchée. Il faudra attendre le troisième texte de ce cycle que l'auteur conçut en 1922 comme « Note » aux deux autres interventions et qui fut ensuite publié sous le titre « L'Européen » pour trouver l'évocation explicite de l'importance prédominante de la Méditerranée pour le développement de l'esprit européen. Dans ce texte, la Méditerranée constitue une composante primordiale dans la définition de l'Europe:

> Qu'est-ce que donc cette Europe? C'est une sorte de cap du vieux continent, un appendice occidental de l'Asie. Elle regarde naturellement vers l'Ouest. Au sud, elle borde une illustre mer dont le rôle, je devrais dire la fonction, a été merveilleusement efficace dans l'élaboration de cet esprit européen qui nous occupe.[33]

Valéry reprend donc ici la caractérisation de l'Europe comme cap du continent asiatique tout en soulignant l'identité entre l'Europe et l'Occident par la description de sa direction du regard vers l'Ouest. La Méditerranée est ici représentée comme la condition de l'élaboration de l'esprit européen. Par la suite, la mer intérieure est caractérisée comme un marché de l'échange culturel, comme un « marché méditerranéen »:[34]

> Tous les peuples qui vinrent sur ses bords ce sont pénétrés; ils ont échangé des marchandises et des coups; ils ont fondés des ports et des colonies où non seulement les objets du commerce, mais les croyances, les langages, les mœurs, les acquisitions techniques, étaient les éléments des trafics.[35]

Valéry décrit la Méditerranée non seulement comme un carrefour et lieu de circulation et d'échange, mais aussi comme source d'un tropisme qui attire, au cours des âges, « vers la splendeur du ciel, par la beauté et par l'intensité

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31 Derrida, *L'autre cap suivi de La démocratie ajournée*, p. 38.

32 Derrida, *L'autre cap suivi de La démocratie ajournée*, p. 38.

33 Paul Valery, « Note », in Id., *Œuvres*, t. I, éd. Michel Jarrety, Librairie Générale Française, Paris 2016, p. 711–726, ici 716.

34 Valery, « Note », p. 718.

35 Valery, « Note », p. 716.

particulière de la vie sous le ciel »[36] des flux de différents peuples. La Méditerranée est « l'objet du désir universel et le lieu de la plus grande activité humaine, [a]ctivité économique, activité intellectuelle, activité politique, activité religieuse [et] activité artistique ».[37]

Bien que, de prime abord, cette image de la Méditerranée comme un carrefour culturel semble s'approcher à une vision transculturelle, selon laquelle il y aurait un égal rapport entre les différentes cultures qui ont peuplé le bassin, c'est-à-dire les Égyptiens, les Phéniciens, les Grecs, les Romains, les Arabes, il reste tout de même, chez Valéry, une subordination à l'esprit européen qui est considéré comme un esprit occidental. Selon Valéry, l'Europe naît de l'échange des choses spirituelles et matérielles, et la Méditerranée est donc le marché et l'usine à créer cette civilisation européenne, mais dans sa définition de l'Européen il n'y a que trois influences culturelles qui comptent pour construire l'esprit européen: l'Empire romain, le christianisme et la discipline de l'Esprit de la Grèce. Comme Derrida a donc justement mis en relief, la Méditerranée de Valéry est imprégnée par la culture gréco-romaine. Valéry en vante, en outre, le rayonnement culturel, voire même les capacités de soumission:

> Partout où les noms de César, de Gaius, de Trajan et de Virgile, partout où les noms de Moïse et de saint Paul, partout où les noms d'Aristote, de Platon et d'Euclide ont eu une signification et une autorité simultanées, là est l'Europe. Toute race et toute terre qui a été successivement romanisé, christianisée et soumise, quant à l'esprit, à la discipline des Grecs, est absolument européenne.[38]

Par cette approche d'une civilisation européenne basée sur la romanité, la chrétienté et la grécité, Valéry créé un système dichotomique entre Occident et Orient qui perpétue tout un discours identitaire français sur l'Orient dont Edward Said a élucidé les traits principaux et le fonctionnement:

> Il y a donc quelque trait bien distinct de la race, de la langue même et de la nationalité qui unit et assimile les pays de l'Occident et du Centre de l'Europe. Le nombre des notions et des manières de penser qui leur sont communes, est bien plus grande que le nombre des notions que nous avons en commun avec un Arabe ou un Chinois...[39]

Bien qu'aperçue comme bassin d'échange culturel, la notion socioculturelle de la Méditerranée, telle qu'elle est exposée dans ces trois textes rédigés entre 1919 et 1922, reste associée à une dominance culturelle européenne ainsi qu'à un

[36] Valery, « Note », p. 716.
[37] Valery, « Note », p. 716.
[38] Valery, « Note », p. 726.
[39] Valery, « Note », p. 726.

processus d'altérisation (*othering*) qui se distingue du discours par exemple d'un Albert Camus célébrant la Méditerranée comme un pont entre Orient et Occident. Dans cette optique, la vision de Valéry reste plutôt conservatrice ou traditionaliste, quoique l'idée de l'Europe comme espace transnationale, et non transculturelle, surpasse tout de même les interprétations nationalistes d'une Méditerranée latine de l'époque. De ce fait, Valéry détient une position charnière entre la conception nationaliste d'une Méditerranée latine et une vision utopique de la Méditerranée comme espace transculturel, qui, elle aussi, se développe au fur et à mesure. Ainsi, existe-t-il, parmi les premiers écrits du jeune Albert Camus un poème de 1933 intitulé « Méditerranée », dans lequel la Méditerranée est méditée à travers des images d'une « vie latine »[40] et d'un cimetière marin[41] qui fait clairement référence à Valéry,[42] son poème éponyme étant sans aucun doute un des chefs-d'œuvre de la poésie moderne. De plus, en comparant les trois essais de Valéry en question avec le programme-manifeste fondateur du *Centre Universitaire Méditerranéen* à Nice ainsi que l'essai « Inspirations méditerranéennes » de 1933, on peut constater que sa définition de la Méditerranée évolue d'une approche euro-centriste vers un humanisme méditerranéen plus large. L'historien allemand Wolfgang Lepenies rapporte, en se référant aux souvenirs du fils François Valéry, que le Centre à Nice fut fondé en 1933 pour contrebalancer la politique culturelle de l'Italie fasciste.[43] Bien que Lepenies suggère une affinité avec ou du moins une

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40 Albert Camus, « [Méditerranée] », in Id., *Œuvres complètes*, t. I, 1931–1944, éd. Jacqueline Levi-Valensi, coll. Raymond Gay-Crosier et al., Gallimard, Paris 2006 (Bibliothèque de la Pléiade), p.976–978, ici 976.

41 Cf. Camus, « [Méditerranée] », p. 977: « Ainsi ces hommes rentreront en cette terre, sûrs d'être prolongés, / Épuisés plutôt que lassés du bonheur d'avoir su. / Aux cimetières marins il n'est qu'éternité ». Cf. à propos des accents valéryens du poème aussi Galibert, « De la Méditerranée de Valéry au Midi de Camus », p. 171.

42 La composition du « Cimetière marin » a été élaborée entre 1917 et 1920, année de sa première publication dans *La Nouvelle Revue Française*. Cf. Paul Pieltain, *Le Cimetière marin de Paul Valéry. Essai d'explication et commentaire. Structure, mouvement et moyens d'expression du poème. Critique des interprétations*, Palais des Académies, Bruxelles 1976, p. 18. Une note du biographe de Valéry, Alfred Jarrety, nous apprend que le tout premier titre du « Cimetière marin » était « Mare nostrum », ce qui est à lire en analgie avec notre développement du concept de Méditerranée chez Valéry. Cf. la note de Michel Jarrety au poème en prose de Valéry « Mare nostrum », in Paul Valery, « Mare nostrum », in Id., *Œuvres*, t. III, éd. Michel Jarrety, Librairie Générale Française, Paris 2016, p. 332–333. Sans que le lieu soit explicitement nommé dans le poème, Valéry lui-même a situé son poème au bord de la Méditerranée en le décrivant comme « un monologue de 'moi', dans lequel les thèmes les plus simples et les plus constants de ma vie affective et intellectuelle, tels qu'ils s'étaient imposés à mon adolescence et associés à la mer et à la lumière d'un certain lieu des bords de la Méditerranée, fussent appelés, tramés, opposés… »; Paul Valery, « Au sujet du *Cimetière marin* », in Id., *Œuvres*, t. II, éd. Michel Jarrety, Librairie Générale Française, Paris 2016, p. 277–289, ici 285.

43 Cf. Wolfgang Lepenies, *Die Macht am Mittelmeer. Französische Träume von einem anderen Europa,* Carl Hanser, Köln 2016, p. 279.

indifférence de Valéry face aux dictatures de l'entre-deux-guerres, les deux textes démontrent que la vision de la Méditerranée ne paraît plus unilatéralement eurocentriste, mais plus nuancée. C'est moins l'Européen que l'Homme qui est mis au centre de l'argumentaire. C'est dans la partie intitulée « Fonctions de la Méditerranée », insérée ensuite dans les « Inspirations méditerranéennes », que Valéry expose cette idée d'un humanisme méditerranéen. En renouant d'abord avec l'idée de la Méditerranée comme moteur de l'esprit et de la civilisation européens, développée au début des années vingt comme on a vu, il élargit, par la suite, la force édificatrice de la mer à tout le genre humain:

> Ce sont des Méditerranéens qui ont fait les premiers pas certains dans la voie de la précision des méthodes, dans la recherche de la nécessité des phénomènes par l'usage délibéré des puissances de l'esprit, et qui ont engagé le genre humain dans cette manière d'aventure extraordinaire que nous vivons [...].[44]

Valéry pose les fondements d'un géo-déterminisme méditerranéen selon lequel l'espace méditerranéen détermine, voire, favorise l'épanouissement humain ou, comme il dit, « l'édification de la personnalité humaine ».[45] Dans ce contexte, il reprend la formule du penseur présocratique Protagoras selon lequel « l'homme est la mesure de toutes choses » pour définir non plus l'esprit européen, mais l'esprit méditerranéen.[46] Cette notion de 'mesure' à laquelle sont liées différentes dimensions significatives, telles que la dimension géométrique de la proportion, la dimension philosophique d'un équilibre méditerranéen ainsi que la dimension politique de la démocratie et de la justice, jouera, par la suite, un rôle primordial dans la philosophie d'Albert Camus, c'est-à-dire sa 'pensée de midi', basée justement sur l'idée de la mesure dans la philosophie grecque. Les textes sur la Méditerranée que Valéry créa en 1933 témoignent donc d'une transformation de la vision socioculturelle de la Méditerranée bien que son concept d'humanisme méditerranéen reste tout de même lié à une perspective européenne. Il est intéressant de constater que c'est au moment, où cette conception d'un humanisme méditerranéen se cristallise chez Valéry, qu'il théorise dans les « Inspirations méditerranéennes » les trois points de vue sur la Méditerranée, c'est-à-dire le sensuel, voire sensoriel, l'intellectuel et le socioculturel, comme des aspects interdépendants. C'est pour cette conception universaliste de la Méditerranée que ce texte a connu un vif écho chez les auteurs méditerranéistes, comme par exemple chez Jean Grenier. Rappelons que le texte des « Inspirations méditerranéennes » a été rédigé comme une conférence pour l'Université des

[44] Paul Valery, « Le Centre Universitaire Méditerranéen », in Id., *Œuvres*, t. I., éd. Michel Jarrety, Librairie Générale Française, Paris 2016, p. 1624–1644, ici 1633.

[45] Valery, « Le Centre Universitaire Méditerranéen », p. 1635.

[46] Cf. Valery, « Le Centre Universitaire Méditerranéen », p. 1635.

Annales pour inaugurer un cycle de conférences à caractère autobiographique intitulé *Confidences d'auteurs*.[47] À partir de ses souvenirs d'enfance au bord de la mer et de ses impressions et sensations marines, il élabore sa théorie philosophico-culturelle de la Méditerranée. Il précise lui-même son approche méthodologique dans les « Inspirations méditerranéennes »:

> Mais je procède, dans ces confidences relatives, du concret vers l'abstrait, des impressions aux pensées, et je dois à présent, vous évoquer des sensations plus simples, plus profondes et plus complètes, ces sensations de l'ensemble de l'être, qui sont aux couleurs et aux odeurs ce que les formes et la composition d'un discours sont à ses ornements, à ses images, et à ses épithètes.[48]

Méthodologiquement, Valéry procède donc par l'induction, c'est-à-dire, depuis des exemples concrets, il progresse vers l'abstrait. Outre les impressions marines autobiographiques, le texte puise dans deux autres sources écrites de l'auteur, c'est-à-dire un poème en prose intitulé « Nage » et composé en 1921 ainsi que le déjà cité extrait du programme-manifeste du *Centre Universitaire Méditerranéen*. Ces trois sources de ce texte composite représentent donc exemplairement les trois dimensions de la Méditerranée chez Valéry, la dimension sensorielle, intellectuelle, voire existentielle, et la dimension socioculturelle de sorte que Valéry ne procède pas seulement du concret vers l'abstrait, des impressions vers les idées, mais aussi de la signification individuelle de la Méditerranée vers sa signification collective. Structurellement, nous pouvons donc dégager une tripartition du texte: les deux premières parties du texte, c'est-à-dire les impressions marines et le poème « Nage », sont qualifiées de « prélude »[49] par Valéry, qui évidemment considère les réflexions sur l'humanisme méditerranéen, qui succèdent dans la troisième partie du texte, comme les thèses principales.

Dans les « Inspirations méditerranéennes », Valéry en tant que voix narrative occupe la position de l'observateur, voire du spectateur. Les termes les plus utilisés, dans cette première partie, sont « regarder », « regard », « œil » pour décrire la perspective du narrateur, ainsi que le champ de mot théâtral et pictural pour exprimer l'impact de la nature méditerranéenne sur lui. Ce qui est mis en cause, ce sont donc les interdépendances entre l'homme et la nature (la mer et la terre) méditerranéenne qui est à la fois caractérisée par sa pérennité et son éphémerité causée par le temps et l'homme:

> L'œil peut se reporter, à chaque instant, à la présence d'une nature éternellement primitive, intacte, inaltérable par l'homme, constamment et visiblement soumise

[47] Cf. Valery, « Inspirations méditerranéennes », p. 437.
[48] Valery, « Inspirations méditerranéennes », p. 444.
[49] Valery, « Inspirations méditerranéennes », p. 446.

> aux forces universelles, et il en reçoit une vision identique à celle que les premiers êtres ont reçue. Mais ce regard, se rapprochant de la terre y découvre aussitôt, d'abord, l'œuvre irrégulière du temps, qui façonne indéfiniment le rivage, et puis l'œuvre réciproque des hommes [...].[50]

Cependant, ce sont moins les actions de l'homme sur la nature que l'emprise inverse des actions de la mer et de la nature méditerranéenne sur le spectateur qui prévalent. On peut classer trois différents impacts: la mer comme source d'inspiration artistique, la mer comme miroir de la propre existence, la mer comme édificateur de l'esprit personnel et collectif. C'est par une référence au peintre Claude Lorrain (1600–1682), célèbre paysagiste des vues marines du XVII[e] siècle, que Valéry introduit la première partie sur ses impressions personnelles:

> L'œil ainsi embrasse à la fois l'humain et l'inhumain. C'est là ce qu'a ressenti et magnifiquement exprimé le grand Claude Lorrain, qui, dans le style, le plus noble, exalte l'ordre et la splendeur idéale des grands ports de la Méditerranée: Gênes, Marseille ou Naples transfigurées, l'architecture du décor, les profils de la terre, la perspective des eaux, se composant comme la scène d'un théâtre où ne viendrait agir, chanter, mourir parfois qu'un seul personnage: LA LUMIERE![51]

Valéry nous présente une suite d'« impressions marines de jeunesses »,[52] c'est-à-dire des spectacles observés au bord de la Méditerranée qui, elle, est décrite comme une source d'inspiration artistique et comme « génératrice de formes et de projets extraordinaire ».[53] C'est dans ce contexte que Valéry offre au lecteur sa propre peinture de paysage marin, générée par un « spectacle noble »:[54] le retour des pêcheurs de thon, et qui est suivie par son versant inverse, la découverte du massacre des thons le lendemain. Le narrateur rend compte de cet événement par une écriture picturale témoignant des couleurs et des formes observées qui transcrivent les interactions entre la lumière et l'eau. A la fin de cette suite d'impressions, le narrateur interpelle le lecteur par une question directe – « Quelles sont ces sensations générales? »[55] – qui marque la transition vers la méditation d'une autre action de la mer sur le narrateur, sa prise de conscience existentielle, transposée dans le poème « Nage ». L'action de nager est comparée à l'acte amoureux qui engage à la fois le corps et l'esprit de l'homme:

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50 VALERY, « Inspirations méditerranéennes », p. 439.
51 VALERY, « Inspirations méditerranéennes », p. 439.
52 VALERY, « Inspirations méditerranéennes », p. 444.
53 VALERY, « Inspirations méditerranéennes », p. 442.
54 VALERY, « Inspirations méditerranéennes », p. 442.
55 VALERY, « Inspirations méditerranéennes », p. 444.

> Il me semble que je me retrouve et me reconnaisse quand je reviens à cette eau universelle. [...] se jeter dans la masse et le mouvement, agir jusqu'aux extrêmes, et de la nuque aux orteils; se retourner dans cette pure et profonde substance; boire et souffler la divine amertume, c'est pour mon être le jeu comparable à l'amour, l'action où tout mon corps se fait tout signes et tout forces, comme une main s'ouvre et se ferme, parle et agit. Ici tout le corps se donne, se reprend, se conçoit, se dépense et veut épuiser ses possibles. Il *la* brasse, il *la* veut saisir, étreindre, il devient fou de vie et de sa libre mobilité, il l'aime, il *la* possède, il engendre avec elle mille étranges idées. Par elle, je suis l'homme que je veux être. Mon corps devient l'instrument direct de l'esprit, et cependant l'auteur de toutes ses idées.[56]

En intégrant ce poème « Nage » dans les « Inspirations méditerranéennes », Valéry concrétise la topographie où cette action a lieu: L'« eau universelle » dont il y est question correspond aux flots de la Méditerranée. C'est par la natation dans la Méditerranée que corps et esprit communie et que le narrateur se reconnaît en tant qu'être humain. La mer, imagée comme l'amoureuse du narrateur, engendre donc la prise de conscience de son existence corporelle et intellectuelle. Représentée comme l'amour corporel, la nage est figurée comme une ivresse de vie, et un « excès du réel »[57]. C'est à travers ce poème que Valéry établit le lien entre les impressions marines, décrites dans la première partie du texte, et les réflexions sur l'humanisme méditerranéen, qui suit le poème, dans la troisième partie du texte. C'est après ce long prélude que Valéry établit les liens entre impressions marines, réflexions existentielles et interprétation philosophique:

> Mieux que toute lecture, mieux que les poètes, mieux que les philosophes, certains regards, sans pensée définie ni définissable, certains regards sur les purs éléments du jour, sur les objets les plus vastes, les plus simples, le plus puissamment simples et sensibles de notre sphère d'existence, l'habitude qu'ils nous imposent de rapporter inconsciemment tout événement, tout être, toute expression, tout détail, aux plus grandes choses visibles et aux plus stables, nous façonnent, nous accoutument, nous induisent à ressentir sans effort et sans réflexion la véritable proportion de notre nature, à trouver en nous, sans difficulté le passage à notre degré le plus élevé, qui est aussi le plus *humain*.[58]

Par cette synthèse, Valéry donne au lecteur la clé de compréhension de sa conception de la Méditerranée: C'est à travers les regards sur la nature méditerranéenne, c'est à travers les impressions et les sensations nées par le contact de l'homme avec la Méditerranée qu'il prend conscience de sa propre vie et de son humanité. Les « purs éléments », ici évoqués, correspondent à ce que

[56] Valery, « Inspirations méditerranéennes », p. 445.
[57] Valery, « Inspirations méditerranéennes », p. 445.
[58] Valery, « Inspirations méditerranéennes », p. 446–447.

sont, pour Valéry, les trois déités principales, la Mer, le Ciel, le Soleil, au contact desquelles l'homme s'identifie comme humain. C'est le résumé de ce que Valéry entend par l'expression d'une « expérience méditerranéenne »,[59] qui est à la base de sa conception philosophico-culturelle de la Méditerranée. C'est au contact avec la Méditerranée que l'esprit humain se constitue, c'est-à-dire l'idée de l'homme comme mesure de toute chose.

IV. *Conclusion*

Nous avons essayé de montrer que la conception de la Méditerranée chez Valéry s'inscrit dans un discours sur la Méditerranée dans l'entre-deux-guerres, qui est dominé par deux pôles, la vision nationaliste d'une Méditerranée latine et la vision de la Méditerranée comme espace transculturelle, véhiculée par les auteurs méditerranéistes des années 1930. Dans ce discours, Valéry détient une position charnière: Alors que son œuvre a eu une influence notable sur certains des auteurs méditerranéistes, dont Jean Grenier et Albert Camus, l'aspect socioculturel de la Méditerranée diverge. Pour comprendre, la conception de Méditerranée chez Valéry nous nous sommes appuyées à la classification utile de Valéry-Robinson selon laquelle ils existent trois perspectives sur la Méditerranée chez Valéry, la perspective sensuelle, intellectuelle et socioculturelle. Les perspectives sensuelle, voire sensorielle, et intellectuelle, voire existentielle, de Valéry et des méditerranéists sont très proches de sorte que la différence devient évidente sur l'aspect socioculturel. Pour en rendre compte nous avons retracé l'archéologie de la conception socioculturelle chez Valéry, dont les origines remontent à la période immédiatement après la Première Guerre mondiale. C'est dans le cycle des trois conférences sur l'identité européenne que nous avons observé que Valéry forge une conception euro-centriste de la Méditerranée. À cette époque, pour lui, la Méditerranée est définie comme un bassin européen, dans lequel s'est développé l'esprit européen basée sur la culture gréco-romaine. Jusqu'à la rédaction de ses deux textes majeurs sur la Méditerranée en 1933, c'est-à-dire son programme-manifeste pour le *Centre Universitaire Méditerranéen* et les « Inspirations méditerranéennes », cette vision s'atténue. C'est dans les « Inspirations méditerranéennes » que Valéry décrit sa conception de la Méditerranée de manière approfondie en liant les trois perspectives, la perspective sensuelle, intellectuelle et socioculturelle. La Méditerranée est conçue comme une source d'inspiration artistique, spirituelle et intellectuelle et comme un miroir de la condition humaine générant une prise de conscience de l'homme de son humanité, comme on vient de dégager. D'une expérience méditerranéenne, Valéry développe

[59] Valery, « Inspirations méditerranéennes », p. 450.

donc l'idée d'un humanisme méditerranéen, qui cependant, reste lié à l'idée d'une Méditerranée européenne, bien que la suprématie européenne ne soit plus au centre de son argumentaire.

GLI STUDI OVIDIANI DI MICHELANGELO PICONE*

THE OVIDIAN STUDIES OF MICHELANGELO PICONE

GIANPIERO ROSATI
SCUOLA NORMALE SUPERIORE, PISA

Anche se al centro degli interessi di ricerca di Michelangelo Picone furono certamente Dante (il suo « autore prediletto », p. 7 del volume qui sotto citato), e accanto a lui Petrarca e Boccaccio – cioè le 'tre corone' gloria di quella Toscana che, per lui nato in Sicilia, ad Aragona, fu tuttavia la regione d'elezione, e quasi scolpita nel suo nome splendido e solenne, Michelangelo –, ciò nonostante uno spazio cruciale del suo vasto orizzonte di ricerca occupano i temi e gli autori della cultura classica, greca e latina, soprattutto quest'ultima che è il presupposto di base di quei suoi autori privilegiati. Non bisognava necessariamente essere allievi della scuola di Gianfranco Contini, per i giovani studiosi di filologia romanza e moderna della generazione di Michelangelo e anche oltre, per avere nel proprio percorso di formazione ampie e non superficiali letture di classici, greci e soprattutto latini: erano un requisito ovvio, scontato, per qualunque studente che volesse costruirsi delle fondamenta solide sulle quali impostare e dare profondità di orizzonte alle proprie ricerche future.

Così ovviamente è stato anche per Michelangelo, i cui lavori di filologo romanzo, italianista e comparatista, non solo dimostrano conoscenze vaste e profonde ma in quel retroterra trovano sostanza e alimento. Tra le sue aree di ricerca, qui circoscriverò il campo al solo Ovidio, sia per mia competenza specifica (e per in-competenza su altri temi e autori) sia perché certamente nella corposa e differenziata bibliografia di Picone Ovidio occupa una posizione assolutamente

* Questa breve conversazione, seguita dagli interventi del pubblico presente (anche da collegamento online), fu tenuta nella sala Tamagni di San Gimignano, per iniziativa dell'Assessorato alla Cultura del Comune in collaborazione con il Centro Internazionale di studi sul Religioso Contemporaneo, il lunedì 24 aprile 2023 (giorno anniversario della scomparsa di Michelangelo Picone a Tempe, Arizona, nel 2009).

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centrale (come non stupisce che accada per tanti medievisti e filologi romanzi); e dunque lo spazio e l'attenzione, direi anzi la centralità che nella sua produzione di studioso Ovidio riceve sono davvero molto cospicui. Basta solo, per verificare questa centralità, scorrere la lista dei titoli nella sua vasta bibliografia e soprattutto la sezione, la seconda (*Dante e la cultura classica e mediolatina*, p. 139–340, sostanzialmente un libro nel libro), che Ovidio occupa in quel volume-monumento (quasi 800 pagine), tanto solido quanto elegante nella veste formale, che sono gli *Scritti danteschi*, curati con una affettuosa passione pari alla competenza professionale da Antonio Lanza per Longo editore (Ravenna 2017).

Va da sé che Picone studia Ovidio dalla sua prospettiva, cioè come un *auctor* o forse meglio l'*auctor* principale nel pantheon letterario e culturale del Medioevo, e quindi come una chiave essenziale per capire Dante e gli altri grandi che a lui, a Ovidio, hanno guardato come a un maestro e da lui hanno copiosamente attinto; quindi, diciamo, in una chiave di 'fortuna' dell'autore antico, o come oggi si preferisce dire di 'ricezione', di una sua rilettura creativa, orientata e capace di estrarne e attivare nuovi stimoli e suggerimenti. E naturalmente quando la ricezione avviene attraverso i grandi, i più grandi, come certamente Dante è, l'effetto che ne risulta è tanto rilevante quanto sorprendente. Ma come sempre accade, non solo ogni nuova lettura di un artista del passato ne modifica l'immagine e ce lo consegna in una luce nuova, tale da non poterne più prescindere per il futuro (quindi dopo la lettura, o meglio le letture, che di Ovidio fa il Medioevo, il poeta ci appare in una luce necessariamente diversa da prima), ma l'occhio del critico che studia come altri prima di lui (soprattutto i grandi di cui Picone si occupa) hanno letto un poeta del passato, contribuisce a sua volta a gettare luce nuova su quel poeta; e quindi si può dire che gli studi ovidiani di Picone sono importanti non solo per capire come Dante, Petrarca, Boccaccio e altri hanno letto Ovidio, che è lo scopo primario di Picone, ma anche per capire Ovidio stesso. Anche senza farlo direttamente, cioè senza proporselo come obiettivo e finalità esplicita, Picone diventa di fatto un critico di Ovidio, e si inserisce nella vastissima schiera dei suoi interpreti. Mi limito a qualche esempio significativo.

Non farò un elenco né dei titoli di lavori pubblicati che nella sua vastissima bibliografia hanno Ovidio come oggetto diretto, o meno diretto, della sua attenzione, e nemmeno delle innumerevoli iniziative culturali (convegni, seminari, incontri) ed editoriali che egli promosse nella sua inesauribile energia creativa (davvero vulcanica, come la terra da cui proviene, con le sue famose maccalùbe). Mi piace solo ricordare la serie di seminari organizzati a Zurigo insieme a Bernhard Zimmermann e pubblicati col titolo di *Ovidius redivivus. Von Ovid zu Dante* (M&P Verlag, Stuttgart 1994; il volume è ristampato nel 2014 da Rombach Verlag con un ricordo di Michelangelo Picone a cura di un'autorità nel campo della romanistica come Karlheinz Stierle); perché quel titolo mi sembra potersi intendere anche nel senso che la ripresa degli studi sulla ricezione di Ovidio

in Dante, e prima di lui, dà del poeta latino un'immagine rinnovata, arricchita appunto dalle letture che della sua opera hanno dato i suoi interpreti più grandi.

Il cospicuo contributo di lavori di Picone sui due poeti si inserisce, e anzi ne promuove intensamente la ripresa, nel nuovo sviluppo che, dopo la fioritura di studi per il centenario della nascita di Dante, nel 1965, hanno conosciuto gli studi su Ovidio e su Dante insieme. Il bimillenario della morte di Ovidio, nel 2017, e per quanto riguarda Dante il settimo centenario della sua morte, celebrato nel 2021, hanno contribuito negli anni che ruotano attorno a queste due scadenze recenti e quasi concomitanti una ricchissima fioritura di studi sui due autori, sia individualmente sia nei rapporti reciproci tra i due autori. Penso, solo per fare qualche esempio, ai volumi *Miti, figure, metamorfosi. L'Ovidio di Dante*, a cura di Carlota Cattermole e Marcello Ciccuto, Le Lettere, Firenze 2019; o *I classici di Dante*, a cura di Paola Allegretti e Marcello Ciccuto, Le Lettere, Firenze 2017; o ancora *Dante e la tradizione classica*, a cura di Stefano Carrai, Longo, Ravenna 2021 (dove sul rapporto tra Ovidio e Dante si rimanda, p. 152 n. 26, come punto di riferimento centrale, proprio ai lavori di Michelangelo Picone).

Mi pare già sufficientemente indicativa, come prova della centralità riconosciuta a Ovidio dal romanista Picone, la frase d'esordio del suo saggio *Dante, Ovidio e la poesia dell'esilio*:

> *Ab Ovidio principium*. La storia letteraria dell'Occidente sembra dover fare continuamente i conti con questo autore, vero e proprio *mediatore fra la cultura greca e quella latina* [corsivo mio, perché mette l'accento su un ruolo svolto dal poeta non sempre debitamente riconosciuto dalla critica], ma anche profondamente sintonizzato con la cultura cristiana (p. 223).

La densità e perentorietà di questo incipit mette subito a fuoco la chiarezza di idee e le coordinate critiche fissate da Picone per la sua lettura di Ovidio. Un'affermazione la sua che coglie questo ruolo essenziale di Ovidio come 'poeta tra due mondi', tra mondo greco e mondo latino (con le sue propaggini medievali nella declinazione cristiana), un'etichetta famosa coniata da un grande studioso tedesco-americano del poeta, Hermann Fränkel, in un libro pubblicato a Berkeley – Los Angeles nel 1945 (anno cruciale nella storia politica europea), *Ovid. A Poet between Two Worlds*. La formula critica, che riassumeva molti degli stimoli proposti da quel volume, è stata poi molto discussa e infine accantonata, ma se depurata dalle implicazioni psicologistiche che Fränkel vi legava coglie alla perfezione la funzione storico-culturale svolta da Ovidio (sulla rilevanza dell'opera e la sua funzione di stimolo nella critica ovidiana del secondo Novecento si vedano le osservazioni di Francesco Ursini, *Ovidio e la cultura europea. Interpretazioni e riscritture dal secondo dopoguerra al bimillenario della morte (1945–2017)*, Editrice Aspes, Roma 2017, p. 27–37).

Per il lettore comune di Dante può suonare inaspettata, e forse non del tutto persuasiva, questa asserita centralità di Ovidio rispetto a Virgilio, che a tutti sembra tanto ovvia quanto indiscutibile. L'affermazione apparentemente paradossale (« sorprendente ma geniale » la dice Picone, p. 217) di Thomas Stearns Eliot, « che Dante debba più ad Ovidio che a Virgilio », trova nelle pagine degli *Scritti danteschi* di Picone una piena conferma e una dimostrazione ripetuta e ben argomentata. Il duplice rapporto di Dante con Virgilio e con Ovidio, cioè come si definisce il loro diverso ruolo nella *Commedia*, è un tema appunto cruciale, che non sorprende, e che è affrontato a più riprese da Picone; e anzi, si inserisce in una specifica linea di ricerca degli studi di letteratura e cultura latina che in questi ultimi decenni si è focalizzata sul rapporto, spesso concorrenziale, che intercorre tra questi due autori nella tradizione culturale europea: mi limito a citare il volume di Séverine Clement-Tarantino e Florence Klein, *La représentation du 'couple' Virgile-Ovide dans la tradition culturelle de l'Antiquité à nos jours*, Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, Villeneuve d'Ascq 2015 (in cui manca – mentre ci starebbe benissimo – un capitolo specifico su Dante). Faccio solo qualche esempio dell'importanza del tema in Picone.

Prendiamo i celebri versi del primo canto dell'*Inferno* in cui il protagonista dopo l'ingresso nella « selva oscura » raggiunge le pendici di un colle illuminato dal sole e si appresta all'ascesa, ma viene ricacciato indietro dalla comparsa delle tre fiere minacciose, quando gli appare una figura che lo salva sottraendolo al rischio di riprecipitare nella selva oscura: « Mentre ch'i' rovinava in basso loco, / dinanzi a li occhi mi si fu offerto / *chi per lungo silenzio parea fioco* » (61–63). Ora, in quest'ultimo verso, che identifica il salvatore e aiutante Virgilio, Michelangelo Picone vede un preciso riferimento alla ripresa, al ritorno in auge di Virgilio dopo il netto predominio di Ovidio nell'età che da lui prende il nome (l'etichetta appunto di *aetas Ovidiana* fu notoriamente coniata dal grande paleografo e medievista tedesco Ludwig Traube per caratterizzare il profilo culturale dei secoli XII–XIII attraverso la sua figura-simbolo). La centralità indiscussa di Virgilio nell'opera dantesca, affermata così solennemente nel prologo del poema, non sminuisce peraltro in alcun modo, secondo Picone, la rilevanza, anzi addirittura il primato di Ovidio nell'opera dantesca. Così egli lo ribadisce nettamente in un altro punto:

> il passaggio da Ovidio a Virgilio al livello del programma poetico non comporta affatto, al livello della composizione letteraria, un'emarginazione del modello ovidiano. Ben al contrario, Ovidio, detronizzato dalla funzione di guida e quasi assente come personaggio nella *Commedia*, si prende la sua rivincita assumendo il ruolo di ispiratore segreto, ma continuo, del nuovo stile epico dantesco. Ancora più dell'*Eneide*, infatti, le *Metamorfosi* costituiscono l'*intertesto classico privilegiato* [corsivo mio] col quale la *Commedia* si trova a dialogare (p. 152).

La stessa idea che la riconosciuta centralità 'ideologico-culturale' di Virgilio non equivale affatto a una emarginazione del ruolo, anzi del primato di Ovidio, emerge più volte anche altrove. Ad es. alle p. 179–80:

> Ovidio, detronizzato della mansione di guida diegetica, al livello dell'intreccio narrativo [che è notoriamente prerogativa di Virgilio], non perde affatto la sua funzione di guida poetica, al livello della costruzione letteraria dell'opera. Rimane infatti lui l'*auctor* eponimo della materia stessa della quale il poema sacro si compone: e cioè la metamorfosi, la trasformazione spirituale dell'uomo che assume, per effetto della giustizia divina, e quindi a seconda dei propri meriti o demeriti, la natura divina o una natura simile a quella degli esseri irrazionali.

È superfluo ricordare che la centralità di Ovidio nella tradizione culturale europea è oggi unanimemente riconosciuta. Il contributo fornito in tale prospettiva dalla sua intera produzione – da quella erotica giovanile (che ha alimentato la tradizione lirica europea, dai trovatori al petrarchismo al barocco e oltre), a quella matura delle *Metamorfosi* (la « Bibbia dei pittori », secondo la celebre definizione del grande pittore e critico fiammingo cinquecentesco Karel van Mander, che ha costituito un inesauribile repertorio di immagini e di miti in un orizzonte che va dalla pittura pompeiana alla cultura visiva dei nostri giorni), alla produzione senile dell'esilio (che fa Ovidio il prototipo dell'intellettuale esule nella intera cultura europea) – è di rilevanza assoluta, e probabilmente superiore a quella di qualunque altro scrittore antico, Virgilio compreso.

Molto in questa chiave ha contribuito la stessa vicenda biografica del poeta, con la drammatica esperienza dell'esilio: certo Ovidio non fu il primo artista antico a subire tale destino (basti pensare tra i poeti ad Alceo, o Teognide e altri ancora) ma è diventato lui nella cultura occidentale il paradigma-archetipo del poeta esule, condannato dal potere e cacciato dalla sua patria, lungo una *lignée* che già prima di Dante includeva Severino Boezio e poi Tasso, Foscolo, fino a Milan Kundera, Iosif Brodskij (che diceva di Ovidio « è stato lui a insegnarmi tutto ») o, ancora per sua stessa ammissione, Salman Rushdie. E naturalmente il tema dell'esilio, un argomento molto studiato negli ultimi decenni (anche in relazione ad altri grandi esuli romani come Cicerone e Seneca) riceve un'attenzione adeguata in Picone (*Dante, Ovidio e la poesia dell'esilio*, p. 223–238), secondo il quale anzi « rimane ancora stranamente carente lo studio relativo all'impatto che l'opera e la figura di Ovidio esule hanno avuto sull'autore della *Commedia*, sicuramente il maggior poema medievale dell'esilio » (p. 224).

Non mi soffermo sui molti episodi e miti delle *Metamorfosi* che Dante riprende, anche espressamente (« Taccia di Cadmo e d'Aretusa Ovidio… »), o a cui allude, o che comunque mostra di conoscere e presuppone (su tanti di essi Picone indaga a

fondo, da Medea agli Argonauti, a Ipsipile, Ulisse, Piramo e Tisbe, Icaro, Glauco e altri ancora) e che nel volume sono attentamente illustrati. Più interessante mi pare accennare all'immagine complessiva del poeta che il Medioevo elabora e trasmette alle età successive e a noi moderni, così come la mette a fuoco l'analisi di Picone (p. 223): cioè nella sostanza l'idea delle tre età o fasi biografiche e letterarie (quella giovanile di tematica erotica, quella matura con al centro i generi epico e eziologico-didascalico, quella senile dell'esilio) che hanno condizionato, nel bene e nel male, lo sviluppo della critica ovidiana in età moderna; anche per quella tendenza a biografare, diciamo pure a romanzare, la personalità degli autori, che solo nel secondo Novecento è stata radicalmente contestata (ormai perfino troppo: toccando cioè degli eccessi di separazione tra i testi e i rispettivi autori, che solo molto di recente sono stati corretti).

Non c'è insomma nessuno dei grandi temi della critica ovidiana che Michelangelo Picone non abbia toccato e cui non abbia dato il suo contributo, mostrando come ognuno di essi avesse le sue radici già nella cultura e letteratura medievale, e come abbia fatto da alimento alla grande tradizione europea. In questo senso l'apporto di un punto di vista diverso rispetto a quello tradizionale dei classicisti è stato uno stimolo importante anche per rinsaldare la coesione tra cultura classica e cultura medievale e intensificare il dialogo tra le voci principali della nostra storia culturale.

Note to « The Forgotten Gifts of Hermes: The Latin Reception of Proclus' Commentary on Euclid's Elements »

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In the last issue of *Mediterranea* (March 2023, 8) was published my paper entitled « The Forgotten Gifts of Hermes: The Latin Reception of Proclus' *Commentary on Euclid's Elements* » (p. 193–278). Its aim is to provide and compare transcriptions of some passages from the various Latin translations of Proclus' *Commentary on Euclid's Elements*. These included passages found in Bartolomeo Zamberti's Latin translation (MS Münich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Clm 6, fol. 4v–6v) and Giovanni Batista Gabia's (MS Ambrosiana P51 sup. fol. 11r–17v).

Prof. Carlos Steel noticed some errors in the transcriptions of these two Latin translations and shared with me his remarks. The updated and corrected versions of these transcriptions are published here.

In the light of the corrected transcriptions, my claim about the defective text used by Zamberti and the conjectures on his translation (p. 204) must be ignored.

I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Steel for his valuable corrections, which have contributed to the enhancement of my research. I would also like to extend my thanks to the editors of *Mediterranea* for making these improved transcriptions available to the readers, thus enabling me to refine my research further.

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I. Bartolomeo Zamberti transl. *Procli lycii diadochi Platonici in primum librum Elementorum Euclidis*, MS Münich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Clm 6, fol. 4v–6v [= M]

Incipit /1r/

Procli lycii diadochi Platonici in primum librum Elementorum Euclidis megarensis mathematici praestantissimi, commentariorum liber primus, Bartholomaeo Zamberto Veneto interprete.

[...]

/4v/ Consequens[1] autem fuerit ut scrutemur qualem essentiam formarum ac generum mathematicarum[2] dicere congruum sit, et utrum ipsam a sensilibus subsistere admittendum sit vel per ablationem, sicuti dicere consueverunt, vel per particularium collectionem in unam communem rationem, vel ipsi essentiam haec praecedentem assignare conveniat, sicuti Plato arbitratur universorumque processus ostendit.

Et[3] in primis, si mathematicas formas a sensilibus subsistere dixerimus, anima in semet ipsa posteriori genitura formante a materiosis triangulis vel circulis, circulosam vel triangularem formam, unde erit certitudo illa et illud quod in rationibus coargui non potest? Necesse enim est quod aut a sensilibus, aut ab anima. Atqui a sensibilibus impossibile est, nam in his longe maiori indagine opus est. Ab anima igitur; nam his quae imperfecta et incerta sunt, perfectionem certitudinemque exhibet. In sensilibus enim, ubinam est individuum vel id quod latitudine vel id quod crassitudine caret? Et ubi earum quae ex centro sunt aequalitas? Et ubi laterum rationes sunt stabiles? Et ubi angulorum rectitudines? Nec video, sicut in alternis omnia divisibilia commisceri, et in his nihil sincerum est, et a contrario expurgatum, sed omnia partitionem, intervallum ac unionem admittere. Quo igitur pacto his quae immobiles[4] sunt ex mobilibus et aliquando aliter se habentibus ipsam stabilem essentiam assignabimus? Nam[5] omne quod ex essentiis motis subsistit, essentiam mutabilem etiam ab ipsis obtinere, apud omnes indubitatum est. Et quo pacto illis formis quae certae sunt, et coargui nequeunt, ab his quae incerta sunt certitudinem applicabimus?[6] Nam omne quod est causa eius cognitionis quae semper mobilis est, illud ipsum magis est huiusmodi. Supponendum igitur /5r/ est animam mathematicarum formarum et rationum genitricem esse. Sed cum siquidem exempla obtineat ipsa secundum substantiam

1 Consequens] 38 Genera et formae mathematices unde essentiam obtineant? *add. in marg.* M
2 add. illig. ce...
3 Et] 39 Si mathematicae formae a sensilibus subsistunt, quid sequatur? *add. in marg.* M
4 immobiles *post corr. ex* immobilibus
5 Nam] 40 Id propter quod unumquodque tale etiam magis est huiusmodi *add. in marg.* M
6 applicabimus?] Aliter: nam omne quod est causa cognitionis immobilis, id ipsum magis huiusmodi est. *add. in marg.* M

substernit, et generationes sunt integumenta earum formarum quae in ipsa praeexistunt, haec dicentes Platoni astipulabimur, veraeque mathematarum essentiae erimus inventores. Si vero non habet neque rationes prius assumens, tantum materie expertem apparatum sustinet, tantamque contemplationem gignit, quo pacto ea, quae genita sunt, numquid seminaria sint vel vana, et eorum, quae vere sunt simulacra, diudicare potest? Qualibus vero regulis utens in his veritatem existentem metitur? Quo etiam modo essentiam non habens ipsorum tantam rationum varietatem gignit? Sic enim ipsorum essentiam vagam ad nullumque terminum relatam efficerimus. Igitur si formae mathematicae ab anima ortum habent, nec a sensilibus rationes suscipiunt[7], sicut anima substinet, et ab illis has eruit ipsius quoque partus, a manifeste sempiternis formis oriuntur.

Praeterea, si inferius et a sensilibus mathematicarum rationes colligamus, quo modo fieri poterit ut non dicamus quod illae demonstrationes, quae ex sensilibus fiunt, potiores sunt, et non illae quae ab universalibus et simplicioribus formis infe[r]runtur? Dicimus[8] enim quod causae ubique demonstrationibus ad quaesiti venationem sunt peculiares. Igitur si particularia universalium, et sensilia intellectilium sunt causae, quis unquam excogitabit quod terminus demonstrationis ab universalibus assumptus magis conferat, quam a particularibus? Quo enim pacto quipiam ostenderit quod intellectilium essentia sit magis affinis demonstrationibus quam essentia sensilium? Neque enim si quis, inquiunt, demonstraret quod triangulum aequicrurium tres habet angulos duobus rectis aequales, et itidem aequilaterum, et scalenum, is id quoddam modo scit. Verum qui scit quod omne triangulum, idque simpliciter demonstrat, is scientiam per se obtinet. Et [9] rursus id quod universale est, quoad demonstrandum, particulari melius est. Et insuper quoniam ipsorum demonstra/5v/tiones universaliores sunt, illa vero sunt priora et natura ea praecedunt quae singularia sunt, et eorum quae demonstrantur sunt causae ex quibus demonstrationes fiunt. Igitur scientiae demonstrativae opus habent, ut ea, quae sensilia sunt et posterius genita ac hebetiora, colligantur. Non autem ea, quae, cum a cogitatione percipiantur, his sunt perfectiora, quae sensu et opinione considerantur.

Tertio vero loco, dicimus quod illi, qui haec dicunt, animam formis viliorem efficiunt. Nam si materia ea quae substantialia sunt ac magis entia ac integriora a natura suscipit, anima vero ab illis secundum locum obtinet ac sustinet istam, simulacra et imagines posterius genitas effingit ad ignobiliores essentias ea referens, quae ex natura a materia inseperabilia sunt, quo pacto animam imbecilliorem materiaque inferiorem esse non ostendunt? Locus is et silva est et si<l>vestrium rationum, et anima formarum, sed alia quidem primarum, alia vero secundarum, et alia eorum quae praecipue entia sunt, alia porro eorum quae inde

[7] suscipiunt] subs *add. sed del.* M
[8] dicimus] 41 Causae ad quaesiti indaginem demonstrationibus sunt peculiares *add. in marg.* M
[9] Et] 42 Universale ad demonstrandum particulari efficacius est *add. in marg.* M

subsistunt, et alia sunt eorum quae secundum substantiam et alia, demum, eorum quae secundum excogitationem dicuntur. Quo igitur pacto illa, quae intellectus et intellectillis essentiae primum particeps est, et inde cognitionem implens et totius vitae, hebetiores formas suscipit, quae in his, quae sunt ultima, sedes est et ad essentiam omnibus imperfectior est? Atqui huic opinioni, quae multis molestiam exhibuit, occurrere superfluum sane fuerit.

Si vero formae mathematicae non sunt per materialium ablationem, neque per illorum collectionem, quae in singularibus sunt communia, neque posterius et a sensilibus genitae, animam vel ex se ipsa, vel ab intellectu, vel et a se ipsa et ab illo, ipsas assumere necessarium est. Atqui si ex semet ipsa solum, hae quo modo intellectilium formarum imagines erunt? Quo autem pacto inter individuam dividuamque naturam mediae sunt, nullum a primis supplementum sortita? Quo modo universorum prima exempla /6r/ in intellectu prius insederunt? Si vero ab illo solum, ille actus et motus per se, qui in anima est, quo modo permanere potest? Quandoquidem quae in ipsa sunt rationes, per essentiam eorum, quae ab alio moventur, in ipsam aliunde influxere, etenim quo differet a materia, quae potentia solum omnia est, materiosam[10] autem formam nullam gignit. Relinquitur[11] ergo, quod a se ipsa et ab intellectu haec deducat, et quod ipsa earum formarum sit supplementum, quae ab intellectilium exemplis subsistunt ex se ipsa generans, ut sit gressus. Nec[12] proinde anima tabula est rationibus vacua, sed semper descripta, et semet ipsam describens, et ab intellectu descripta. Intellectus enim est et anima, qui cum semet ipsum vertat, illius imago et forma extrorsum fit. Igitur[13] si ille omnia intellectiliter, anima quoque cuncta animate; et si ille exemplariter, anima etiam imaginater; et si ille collectim, anima divisim.

Quo<d> [14] quidem Plato etiam inspiciens, animam ex omnibus formis mathematicis constituit, ipsamque per numeros dividit, proportionibus rationibusque convenientibus colligit, primaque principia figuras constituentia in ipsa constituit, et rectum et circumductum, ac in ipsa orbes intellectiliter movet. Igitur[15] omnia mathematica primo in ipsa sunt anima, et[16] ante numeros se ipsos moventes, et ante figuras apparentes figurae animales, et ante ea quae concentu conveniunt rationes harmonicae, et ante illa corpora quae circulose moventur orbes non apparentes creantur, et[17] anima omnium est plenitudo. Et ornamentum huiusmodi aliud, idem semet ipsam deducens, et a proprio principio deductum se

10 materiosam] 43 Materia solum potentia omnia est *add. in marg.* M
11 Relinquitur] 44 Anima et a se et ab intellectu formas mathematicas deducit *add. in marg.* M
12 Neque] 45 Anima non est tabula vacua, sed semper discripta *add. in marg.* M
13 Igitur] 46 Intellectus et anima qualiter mathematicae percipiunt *add. in marg.* M
14 Quo] 47 Animam ex omnibus formis mathematicis constitui iuxta Platonem *add. in marg.* M
15 Igitur] 48 Mathematicae primo insunt animae *add. in marg.* M
16 Et] 49 Harmonica ratio quid sit Nicomachus docet in secundo libro Arithmetices
17 et] 50 Anima est plenitudo omnium *add. in marg.* M

ipsum vita perficiens, et ab opifice refertum, corporis expers est, ac intervallo caret, et quando suas suppeditat rationes, tunc scientias ac virtutes omnes patefacit. Anima [18] igitur in huiusmodi formis essentiam summit, neque admittendum est quod numerus in anima sit unitatum multitudo, neque etiam percipiendum est, quod idea eorum quae intervallata sunt, /6v/ in corporis modum intelligantur, sed omnia exempla numerorum apparentium, figurarum, rationum et motuum, et animate intellectiliterque suscipere debemus, Timaeum sequentes, qui[19] universam ipsius genituram et opificium ex mathematicis formis perficit in ipsaque causas omnium statuit. Omnium enim numerorum septem limites lineatorum, planorum, ac solidorum principia comprehendunt, septem vero limites omnium rationum, quo ad ipsam causam in ipsa praeexistunt. Principia vero figurarum in ipsa operando statuerunt, ex motibus vero ille praecipuus est omnesque alios comprehendit ac movet, qui cum ipsa simul constat. Omnium nanque[20] eorum quae moventur, circulus motusque circulosus principium est. Mathematicorum igitur rationes substantiales et ex se mobiles animas perficiunt, quas cogitatio suppeditans ac revolvens universam mathematicarum scientiarum varietatem statuit, et semper gignens, nunquam desinit aliaque ex aliis investigans, ipsius impartibiles rationes explicat. Omnia enim a primis formis assumpsit, ex suique potestate infinita ex principiis prius assumptis variarum inspectionum diverticula efficit.

[18] Anima] 51 Numerus in anima non est unitatum multitudo *add. in marg.* M
[19] qui] 52 Anima ex formis mathematicis *add. in marg.* M
[20] namque] 53 Circulus omnium eorum quae moventur principium est *add. in marg.* M

2. Giambattista Gabia transl. *Procli Diadochi in primum Elementorum Euclidis,* MS Ambrosiana P51 sup., fol. 11r-17v [= A]

Incipit /1r/

Johanne Baptista Gabio interprete, Procli Diadochi in primum Elementorum Euclidis liber primus.

[...]

/11r/ Capitulum quintum

Sequitur ut inspiciamus quanam mathematicarum formarum[21] generumque natura[22] merito dicatur, et utrum ab iis, quae sensu percipiuntur[23], ipsam profectam consistere[24] concedendum sit, sive secundum ablationem[25], ut quidam dicere consueverunt, sive secundum singularium[26] collectionem in unam communem rationem, an etiam ipsi ante haec status sit tribuendus, quemadmodum et Plato censet, et universalium demonstrat progressus.

Primum igitur[27], si ab iis, quae <sen>su percipimus[28], mathematicas formas dicamus statum habere atque produci /11v/, cum anima ab iis triangulis aut circulis, qui in materia sunt, formam circularem aut triangularem posteriore loco in seipsa formet, undenam perfectio et id quod minime convinci possit rationibus inerit? Necesse est enim ut vel a sensibus vel ab animo[29]. Sed a sensibus fieri non potest, quibus potius hae perfectionem impartiuntur. Ab animo[30] igitur, qui[31] imperfectis perfectum, incertis certum apponit. Ubi enim in iis quae sensu percipiuntur[32] reperiemus id nos quod sine parte sit, aut id quod careat latitudine, aut id quod altitudine vacet? Et ubinam linearum, quae sint a centro, aequalitas? Et ubi semper permanentes laterum rationes? Atque ubi angulorum /12r/rectorum[33] rationes? Nonne videmus inter se omnia sub sensum cadentia[34] commista esse nihilque in iis syncerum aut a contrario vacuum, sed omnia[35] dividua, dimensionique ac motui obnoxia. Qua ratione igitur[36] immobilibus ab iis,

21 formarum *post corr. ex* specierum A
22 natura *post corr. ex* substantia A
23 [a]b iis que sensu principiuntur *post corr. ex* sensibilibus A
24 Pro [...] consistere *post corr. ex* subsistere A
25 secundum ablationem *post corr. ex* per divisionem A
26 secundum singularium *post corr. ex* per particularium A
27 igitur *post corr. ex* itaque A
28 ab iis que suspercipimus *post corr ex* sensibilibus A
29 animo post corr. ex anima
30 animo post corr. ex anima
31 qui post corr. ex quae
32 iis quae quae sensu percipiuntur *post corr. ex* sensibilibus A
33 Rectorum *post corr. ex* rectitudines A
34 Omnia sub sensum cadentia *post corr. ex* sensibilia A
35 omnia] add. illig. sed del. A
36 igitur] igiturum *corr. sup. lin ex* itaque A

quae moventur, et alias aliter se habent, ipsam manentem stabilemque[37] naturam tribuemus? Quicquid enim producitur ab iis naturis[38], quae moventur, etiam naturam[39] mutabilem habere omnes fatentur[40]. Et quomodo perfectis ac certis, ita ut coargui nequeant, formis ab incertis perfectionem adhibebimus? Quippe cum omnis causa cognitionis illius, quae semper mobilis est, magis ipsa talis existat. Concedendum igitur[41] nobis est animum[42] esse /12v/ qui[43] mathematicas formas et rationes gignat et procreet. Et si exempla habens secundum naturam[44], ipsas producit generationesque sunt formarum, quae in ipsa prius insunt, progressus, et[45] cum Platone consenserimus[46] eadem dicentes, et veram disciplinarum naturam invenerimus. At si haec non habens, cum neque ante rationes acceperit, tantum subtexit ordinem materia vacantem tantamque speculationem gignit[47], quomodo ea, quae genita[48] sunt, diiudicare potest, utrum naturalia sint an vana, et simulachra pro veris? Quibusve regulis utens eam, quae in iis est, veritatem observat? Quomodo item non continens[49] ipsorum naturam[50] tantam rationum /13r/ gignit varietatem? Ita enim temere et per se natam ipsorum naturam[51] faciemus et quae ad nullum terminum referatur. Si igitur[52] ab animo[53] sunt mathematicae formae oriundae, non ab iis quae sensu percipiuntur[54], rationes habent, quas animus[55] producit, et ab illis ipsae progrediuntur, atque ipsius animi[56] partus ac foetus permanentium formarum et sempiternarum perspicui[57] sunt.

Deinde, igitur,[58] si ab inferioribus et <ab iis,> quae sub sensum cadunt[59], disciplinarum rationes colligamus, qui fieri potest quin praestantiores illas

37 stabilemque] substantiam et *add. sed. del.* A
38 ab iis naturis *post corr. ex* substantiis A
39 naturam *post corr. ex* substantiam A
40 omnes fatentur *post corr. ex* apud omnes est confessum A
41 igitur *post corr. ex* itaque A
42 animum *post corr. ex* animam illam A
43 qui *post corr. ex* quae A
44 naturam] has *add. sed del.* A
45 et *post corr. ex* atque ita A
46 con- add. sup. lin. A
47 gignit *post corr. ex* generat A
48 genita *post corr ex* generata A
49 continens *post corr. ex* habens A
50 naturam *post corr. ex* substantiam A
51 naturam *post corr. ex* substantiam A
52 Igitur *post corr. ex* itaque A
53 genita *post corr ex ex* animo A
54 ab iis que sensu percipiuntur *post corr. ex* etiam a sensibilibus A
55 animus *post corr. ex* anima A
56 animi *post corr. ex* animae A
57 perspicui *post corr. ex* manifesti A
58 igitur *post corr. ex* itaque A
59 Quae sub sensum cadunt *post corr. ex* sensibilibus A

demonstrationes asseramus, qua<e>cumque ab iis, quae sensu percipimus[60], et non illas, quae a magis universalibus semper et simplicioribus formis, constituuntur? Causas enim ubique demonstrationibus proprias esse asserimus ad rei, quae quaeritur, inquisitionem. Si igitur[61] particularia /13v/ universalium, et quae sub sensum cadunt[62], eorum, quae cogitatione percipiuntur, causae sunt, quomodo possumus demonstrationis definitionem ad universalia magis quam ad particularia referre? Et eorum, quae cogitatione comprehendimus, naturam magis quam eorum, quae sensu, demonstrationibus cognatam demonstrare? Neque enim si quis, ut aiunt, demonstraret ex duabus aequalibus lineis constantem [63] triangulum, quem aequicrurum vocant, habere tres angulos aequales duobus rectis, et triangulum tribus aequalibus lineis contentum, quem aequilaterum appellamus, et similiter tribus inaequalibus, quem dicunt scalenum[64], hic recte scit. Sed qui de omni triangulo, id et simpliciter, demonstravit, hic habet scientiam per se. Rursusque quia praestantius est universale particulari ad demonstrationem, atque item quia /14r/ demonstrationes ex universalibus magis, ex quibus autem demonstrationes proficiscuntur,[65] haec priora et natura praecedunt particularia, et causae sunt eorum quae demonstrantur. Multum igitur abest ut demonstrativae scientiae in iis[66] versentur, quae posteriore loco genita sunt, et iis quae sensu percipiuntur [67] hebetioribus [68] , et non ea speculentur [69] , quae cogitatione comprehendi possunt, perfectiora sane iis, quae sensui nota sunt et opinioni.

Praeterea tertiam rationem afferimus, quod qui haec asserunt, illi ignobiliorem animum[70] formis efficiunt. Nam si materia naturalia, et quae magis sunt atque certiora, suscipit a natura, animus[71] vero posteriora ab illis et /14v/ simulachra et imagines secundo loco genitas in se ipso[72] confingit,[73] viliorem naturam[74] auferens a materia, videlicet[75] ea quae secundum naturam ab ipsa separari nequeunt[76],

60 [a]b iis quae sensu percipimus *ex* sensibilibus
61 igitur *post corr. ex* itaque A
62 Quae sub sensum cadunt *post corr. ex* sensibilia A
63 ex duabus aequalibus lineis constantem *post corr. ex* aequicrurum A
64 tribus [...] rectum *post corr. ex* aequilaterum et scalenum similiter hic recte A
65 proficiscuntur *post corr. ex* procedunt A
66 in iis *post corr. ex* circa ea A
67 iis quae sensu percipiuntur *post corr. ex* sensibilia quae sunt A
68 hebetioribus *post corr. ex* hebetiora A
69 speculentur] que *add. sed del.* A
70 animum *post corr. ex* animam A
71 animus *post corr. ex* anima A
72 ipso post corr. ex ipsa
73 confingit propter *add. sed del.* A
74 naturam *post corr. ex* substantiam A
75 videlicet *post corr. ex* scilicet A
76 Ab ipsa separari nequuunt *post corr. ex* inseparabilia

quomodo non animum[77] imbecilliorem materia deterioremque constituunt? Locus enim etiam materia rationum, quae materia carent, et animus[78] formarum. Sed hic[79] primarum, illa secundarum, et hic[80] quidem eorum quae primo loco insunt, illa rerum quae illinc producuntur, et hic[81] quidem eorum quae sunt secundum naturam, illa eorum quae cogitatione gignuntur. Qua ratione igitur[82] animus[83] mentis[84] et intelligentis naturae primus[85] consors est, et cognitionis quae illinc /15r/ proficiscitur, totius vitae particeps, incertiorum formarum est receptaculum quae sedem ultimam inter ea, quae sunt, obtinent, et omnium minime[86] [imperfectiorem] perfectam[87], quatenus ad hoc, ut sint, attinet? Sed huic opinioni, quae multis saepe multas arguendi praebuit occasiones, occurrere supervacaneum est.

Quod si neque per ablationem ab iis quae materia vacant sunt mathematicae formae, neque per collectionem eorum, quae in particularibus communia sunt, neque prorsus posteriore loco et ab iis quae sub sensum cadunt[88], genita, necesse sane est animum[89], vel ab se, vel a<b> mente[90] ipsas accipere, aut et a se et ab illa. Sed si a se tantum, quomodo hae sunt intelligentium formarum imagines? Et quomodo inter individuam naturam dividuamque nullam a primis in gratia[91] ut sint, perfecti[92]/15v/onem sortita sunt? Et quomodo prima exempla universalium, quae in mente[93] sunt, ante fuere? Et si ab illo tantum, quomodo id, quod est animi[94] per se operans et per se mobile, permanere potest, siquidem rationes, quae in ipso[95] sunt, secundum eorum naturam[96], quae ab aliis moventur, aliunde in ipsam defluxerunt? Et quid a materia differet, quae potestate tantum est omnia, nullamque gignit ex iis formis, quae materiae sint immunes? Relinquitur igitur, ut et a se, et a mente has producat, ipsa sit formarum perfectio et ipsas compleat,

77 animum *post corr. ex* animam A
78 animus *post corr. ex* anima A
79 hic post corr. ex haec
80 hic post corr. ex haec
81 hic post corr. ex haec
82 igitur *post corr. ex* itaque A
83 animus *post corr. ex* anima A
84 mentis *post corr. ex* qui mentis
85 primus] primae A
86 omnium minime add. sup. lin.; minime] perfectionis *add. sed del.* A
87 perfectam *post corr. ex* omnibus
88 ab iis quae sub sensum cadunt *post corr. ex* sensibilibus A
89 animum *post corr. ex* animam A
90 ab mente *post corr. ex* intellectu A
91 in gratia *post corr. ex* ad hoc A
92 perfectio *post corr. ex* completio A
93 mente *post corr. ex* intellectu A
94 animi *post corr. ex* animae A
95 ipso *post corr. ex* ipsa A
96 naturam] et substantiam *add. sed del.* A

quae quidem ab intelligentibus exemplis productae per se[97], ut sint, progressum sortitae fuerint. Et animus[98] igitur non erit tabula rudis[99] a sermoni/16r/bus vacuus[100], sed semper scriptus[101] et se ipsum[102] scribens et a mente[103] scriptus.[104] Etenim animus[105] quoque mens[106] est, more illius mentis[107] qui[108] est ante se, seipsum volvens, et imago illius, et typus extrinsecus effectus. Si igitur[109] ille omnia intelligenter[110], et animus[111] omnia animaliter; si ille exemplariter, animus[112] repraesentative; et si ille coniunctim, anima divisim.

Quod cum animadverterit et Plato, ex omnibus animum[113] producit, et secundum numeros illum[114] dividit, colligitque[115] analogiis et harmonicis rationibus, et prima figurarum principia in ipso[116] construit, rectum scilicet et circumferens, movetque circulos, qui in ipso[117] insunt, intelligendo. Omnia itaque mathematica primum in anima sunt, et ante numeros nu/16v/meri illi qui per se moventur, ante apparentes figuras animales figurae, et ante ea, quae concinnata sunt, rationes harmonicae, et ante corpora quae circulo moventur, minime apparentes circuli veluti opificio quodam constructi sunt. Et perfectio omnium animus[118] est, et ordo hic alius ipse seipsum producens et a proprio principio productus, vitaeque seipsum complens, et ab opifice completus sine[119] corpore, et sine[120] dimensione, et cum produxerit suas rationes, tunc etiam doctrinas[121]

97 per se] ad hoc *add. sed del.* A
98 animus *post corr. ex* anima A
99 tabula] rudis *add.* A
100 vacuus *post corr. ex* vacua A
101 scriptus *post corr. ex* scripta A
102 ipsum *post corr. ex* ipsa A
103 a mente *post corr. ex* ab intellectu A
104 scriptus *post corr. ex* scripta A
105 animus *post corr. ex* anima A
106 mens *post corr. ex* intellectus A
107 mentis *post corr. ex* intellectus A
108 qui post corr. ex quae A
109 igitur *post corr. ex* itaque A
110 intelligenter *post corr. ex* intellectualiter A
111 animus *post corr. ex* anima A
112 animus *post corr. ex* anima A
113 animum *post corr. ex* animam A
114 illum *post corr. ex* illam A
115 colligi *post corr. ex* colligat A
116 ipso *post corr. ex* ipsa A
117 ipso *post corr. ex* ipsa A
118 animus *post corr. ex* anima A
119 sine *post corr. ex* absque A
120 sine *post corr. ex* absque A
121 disciplinas *post corr. ex* scientias A

virtutesque omnes praemonstrat. Statum igitur[122] in his formis habet animus[123] sed neque numerum in ipso[124] unitatum multitudinem opinari debemus, neque eorum, quae sub mensuram cadunt[125], ideam secundum corpus in/17r/telligere, sed omnia apparentium numerorum exempla et figurarum et rationum et motuum accipere debemus, Timaeum secuti, qui quidem omnem ipsius animi [126] originem, et creationem a mathematicis formis perfecit omniumque causas in ipso[127]constituit. Siquidem numerorum omnium rationes secundum causam in ipso [128] prius constituere, figurarumque item principia quasi per opificem in ipso sunt constituta.[129] Et motus qui inter motus caeteros principatum obtinet, quique alios omnes continet, et movet, in ipso [130] subsistit. Nam omnium quae moventur principium circulus est, et circularis motus. Naturales[131] igitur etiam illae, quae per se moventur, mathematicorum rationes animas perficientes, quas /17v/ cogitatio proferens atque evolvens omnem producit mathematicarum di<s>ci[s]plinarum[132] varietatem. Neque ullo unquam tempore desistet semper procreare[133], aliaque ad alia adinvenire suasque individuas [134] rationes explanare. Nam cum omnia in seipso[135] praeceperit secundum principem formam, ob infinitam suam facultatem ex praesumptis principiis cuiuscumque generis theoremata producit.

122 naturam igitur *post corr. ex* substantiam itaque A
123 animus *post corr. ex* anima A
124 ipso *post corr. ex* ipsa A
125 eorum quae sub mensuram cadunt *post corr.* dimensionum A
126 animi *post corr. ex* animae A
127 ipso post corr. ex ipsa A
128 ipso post corr. ex ipsa A
129 Follows an omission in respect to Friedlein's edition p. 17, l. 14–19.
130 ipso post corr. ex ipsa A
131 naturales *post corr. ex* substantiales A
132 disciplinarum *post corr. ex* scientiarum A
133 procreans *post corr. ex* generans A
134 Individuas *post corr. ex* indivisibiles A
135 ipso post corr. ex ipsa A

REVIEWS

AL-FĀRĀBĪ, *L'UNO E L'UNITÀ*. INTRODUZIONE, TESTO ARABO, TRADUZIONE E COMMENTO DI CECILIA MARTINI BONADEO CON SARA ABRAM, LUCA FARINA, GIOVANNI MANDOLINO, MARIANNA ZARANTONELLO, PISA UNIVERSITY PRESS, PISA 2023 (SERIES GRECO, ARABO, LATINO. LE VIE DEL SAPERE. TESTI 6), VIII + 262 PP., ISBN: 9788833397238.

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Oneness and Multiplicity

Al-Fārābī's *On One and Unity*, as Muhsin Mahdi calls it,[1] or *On the One and Oneness*, as Damien Janos does,[2] is a compact and short treatise, which until recently had not received as much attention as it deserves. Though already in 1960 Hāzim T. Mushtāq had included an edition of it based on two Istanbul manuscripts as well as an English translation in his Oxford B. Lit. thesis, scholars only became aware of it in 1989 when Muhsin Mahdi, who had discovered a third Istanbul manuscript, published his edition based on these three manuscripts. There are only two detailed studies of this text or of some of its aspects: one by Damien Janos to which I have already referred, and one by Philippe Vallat,[3] which includes a French translation of some paragraphs. Cecilia Martini Bonadeo and her team have now published a new edition with Italian translation and an extensive commentary, which gives a solid basis for further philosophical studies of its contents.

First, one could wonder whether this one brief text *On the One and Oness* really needed a multiplicity of editions and, therefore, this new critical edition, particularly since Cecilia Martini Bonadeo uses the very same manuscripts that Mahdi had used. Our answer to this query is positive.

1 *Alfarabi's On One and Unity*, ed. Muhsin Mahdi, Editions Toubkal, Casablanca 1989.

2 Khaled El-Rouayheb, Sabine Schmidtke (eds.), « Al-Fārābī's (d. 950) *On the One and Oneness*: Some Preliminary Remarks on Its Structure, Contents, and Theological Implications », in *The Oxford Handbook of Islamic Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2017, p. 101–128.

3 Philippe Vallat, « Le livre de l'Un et de l'unité de Farabi: l'invention persane de la doctrine des transcendantaux » in Pascale Bermon, Isabelle Moulin (eds.), *Commenter au Moyen Âge*, Vrin, Paris 2019 (Publications de l'Institut d'Études Médiévales de l'Institut Catholique de Paris), p. 211–241.

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Mushtāq had consulted only MSS Istanbul Süleymaniye Ayasofya 3336 (A) and 4839 (C). Mahdi had improved the text in making use not only of A but also of MSS Istanbul Ayasofia 4854 (B) of which, he thought (C) was only a copy. Mahdi, therefore, considered only MSS (A) and (B) and ignored (C). However, the new editor and Marianna Zarantonello, who presents the principles for this new edition, consider that in a few instances only (C) has the correct reading. For them it may be that (B) and (C) both derive from the same model and that, besides, the scribe of (B) compared his text with another manuscript, that may have belonged to the (A) family (p. 33). This, of course, justifies providing a new edition, particularly since the text at times is rather obscure. Mahdi himself in his English introduction had stated that « the resulting text remained full of difficulties and apparent lacunae that had to be filled in if the work was to make any sense » (p. 6). He also added that he had not been able to solve all the difficulties and was inviting competent readers to make their contributions in this regard. Vallat too emphasizes the difficulties of this text and the numerous lacunae (p. 227), as does Martini (p. VIII). As for Sara Abram, who wrote the introduction to Martini's edition, she speaks of the labyrinthine organization and of the obscurity of the Arabic in several places (p. 11). Thanks to her careful work, Cecilia Martini makes a valuable contribution to the establishment of this text, as Mahdi had hoped for. In the *apparatus criticus* she painstakingly lists not only the relevant differences between the three manuscripts but also all the conjectures and corrections Mushtāq and Mahdi had introduced. Besides, a fresh look at the manuscripts and her detailed knowledge of parallel passages in the Farabian corpus, which are examined in the commentary, allow her to resolve some of these difficulties. As the indices indicate, she also makes good use of editorial points raised by both Janos and Vallat.

Luca Farina, a collaborator of Martini, provides a detailed description of the three manuscripts and their contents. Two of them, (B) and (C), constitute collections of texts by al-Fārābī or attributed to him.

In order to help readers, Mahdi had introduced chapters, subdivisions, and numbered paragraphs, which he listed in Arabic in a table of contents (p. 9–18). Janos provides an English version of it, in an appendix (p. 122–127). Martini decided to remain closer to the manuscripts, which have no such chapters or divisions and, therefore, let the readers decide how to subdivide the text, except for paragraphing, but her paragraphs are not numbered and her paragraphing often does not match that of Mahdi. Janos

indicates that in MS (B) « the beginning of each section is marked out with red ink » (p. 103), but I could not determine whether Martini's paragraphing reflects these red markings. Though Martini follows closely the manuscripts' layout in the Arabic text, she kindly did not shy from providing some help for the reader. In the Arabic text she is more generous than Mahdi in providing vocalizations, shaddas, etc. In the Italian translation she gives in bold the theme of what she considers distinct sections or meanings of « one » or « multiple ». She and Sara Adams also provide a detailed table of the various meanings or types of « one » (p. 13).

As Mahdi in the margins of his edition had indicated where the folios, verso and recto, of MSS (A) and (B) began, Martini wisely adopted the same policy but this time for all three MSS (A, B, and C). This makes comparing sections of texts in both editions easy, even when the paragraphs are not parallel.

Having shown why this one little text, *On the One and Oneness,* deserved a new critical edition and that Martini and her team have ably filled this need, I then consider the translation. As up to now no full translation of the text in a main European language existed, one welcomes this Italian translation. One can only applaud its consistency in the use of technical terms. An extensive index of the main technical terms gives references to the Arabic text and the translation as well as to the explanation of these terms and their origin, as stated in the commentary. Yet, translating technical terms remains difficult. I will give an illustration, which points to one of the main interpretive problems in *On the One and Oneness*.

There is no doubt that in *On the One and Oneness* the Second Teacher goes beyond what the First teacher had done in *Metaphysics*, V. 5-6 & X.1 & 6, as well as *Physics* I. He gives meanings of « one » and « oneness » that apply beyond the categories and most of all develops at length the many meanings of « many » or « multiple » and how «multiple » or « many » originates from one. Mahdi had claimed that in *On the One and Oneness* the account of the generation of 'many' from 'one' makes no reference to the cosmological and metaphysical accounts of the origination and emanation of many things from the First One (p. 7). His remark tended to undermine influences of Neoplatonism on this text. On the other hand, Janos emphasizes its Neoplatonic background (p. 107–110) and points to some theological implications of this text (p. 110–121) while Vallat emphasizes the importance al-Fārābī gives to his understanding of Parmenides' statement that « Being is one », which relies on the commentators and

Neoplatonism. Martini's commentary mines the many sources and influences, particularly Neoplatonic. The Second Teacher, for instance, is well aware of Alexander of Aphrodisias's views, but often modifies them to follow Proclus or Plotinus.

Martini's interest in the Neoplatonic sources, at least in one case, colors her translation of a technical term. Besides, comparing three different translations of one and the same brief but metaphysically highly significant passage of the text will show the difficulties of *On the One and Oneness* as well as its importance. It will also show how multiplicity stems from oneness. The passage I have picked out is n. 17, p. 51, in Mahdi's edition, and p.50, ll.1-6 in Martini's edition. The two Arabic texts are identical except for minor differences in punctuation and more vocalization and shaddas in Martini's edition. I present in parallel columns the three translations of this passage. My underlinings indicate where three key technical notions are translated differently.

Janos' transl. p. 116-117	Vallat's transl. p. 228	Martini's transl. p. 50
« The one » is also said of that which is set apart by its quiddity (*al-munhāz bi-māhiyyatihi*) – whichever quiddity that may be, divisible or indivisible, conceived [by the human soul] or [existing] outside the soul. This is [the thing] set apart in its having a share (*qist*) of existence and [the thing] set apart in its share (*qist*) of existence. It is in the nature of « the one » said in this sens to accompany the existent, like the thing (*al-shay'*), and there is no difference between saying « all things » and saying « each one ». Likewise, it is said of all the categories, of the particular thing that is designated (*al-mushār ilayhi*), and of other things	De même, l'un se dit de ce qui est enclos par sa quiddité – qu'il s'agisse d'une quiddité divisible ou indivisible, conçue intellectuellement ou existant hors de l'âme; c'est là ce qui est enclos par le quantum d'être qu'il y a en vue de lui, et ce qui est enclos par son quantum d'être. À « l'un » entendu dans ce sens, il revient d'être coextensif à « l'existant » comme [il est coextensif] à « la chose », car il n'y a pas de différence entre dire « chaque chose » et dire « chaque une ». De même, [« un » entendu au sens de ce qui est enclos par sa quiddité] se dit de l'ensemble des catégories, de ce singulier-ci et des autres choses qui, si elles	L'uno si dice anche di ciò che si distingue per la propria quiddità, di qualunque quiddità si tratti, divisibile o no, concepita nell'anima o esterna ad essa. Si tratta cioè di ciò che si distingue per la partecipazione di esistenza che gli è propria, i.e. per la propria partecipazione di esistenza. L'uno in questa accezione accompagna l'esistente; come nel caso della cosa; infatti non c'è differenza nel dire 'ogni cosa tra tutte' o 'ciascuna'. Così si dice di tutte le categorie e di questo qualcosa di determinato e di altre cose fuori dalle categorie, se ne esistono.

– if they exist – outside the categories.	existent, transcendent les catégories.	

Let us begin with the first notion, '*qisṭ*' in Arabic, which means justice but also share or portion and which the *Qur'an* uses twice (4:135 & 7:29). On one hand, Mahdi, as we indicated earlier, had claimed that *On the One and Oneness* « makes no reference to the cosmological account or emanation of many things from the First One, an account that dominates the first parts of his *Virtuous City* and *Political Regime* » (p. 7). Yet, '*qisṭ*' plays an important role in three 'theological' and cosmological passages of the *Virtuous City* (I,1,19, 74.2-4; I,2,2, 94,17–96.2 & III, 9, 1, 144.15–146.1 in Walzer's edition)[4] and in the *Political Regime* (53, p.63, twice in n. 54, p. 63–64, Najjar's ed.),[5] as well as in *Selected Aphorisms* (n. 37, p. 53-54 & n. 53, p. 62, Najjar's ed.).[6] On the other hand, Martini translates this notion as « partecipazione di », which immediately brings Platonism and Neoplatonism to a philosopher's mind.

Both Janos and Vallat translate in a more literal and neutral manner as respectively « a share » and « a quantum » i.e. a determined quantity. None of the three translations is wrong, but word choice may give a specific coloration and bring different connotations to mind.[7]

The second term '*al-munḥāz*' (that which is distinguished or set apart), used three times in this brief text, is closely linked to '*qisṭ*' at least in the Second Teacher's mind. In two cases al-Fārābī indicates that what sets apart or distinguishes is '*qisṭ*', the allotted share. Janos translates it as « set apart »; Vallat uses « ce qui est enclos par... », i.e., « that which is enclosed by... ». These two formulations emphasise separateness, either directly in relation to others or indirectly in walling in on itself. Martini's translation speaks of « that which distinguishes itself from something else », a milder formulation as two things may be distinguished from one another without being really separated.

The third expression, '*al-mushār ilayhi*', is the usual Arabic translation for Aristotle's *tode ti*, as Vallat rightly indicates in n. 4, p. 228. Janos uses a periphrasis to translate it: « the particular thing that is designated »; Vallat

4 Al-Fārābī, *On the Perfect State*, ed. and transl. Richard Walzer, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1985.

5 *Al-Fārābī's Political Regime*, ed. Fauzi M. Najjar, Imprimerie Catholique, Beirut 1964.

6 *Al-Fārābī's Fuṣūl Muntazaʿah (Selected Aphorisms)*, ed. Fauzi M. Najjar, Dar el-Mashreq, Beirut 1971.

7 As this word stems from a juridical context and is used by al-Fārābī in various texts, « allotted » or « fair share » might be a better translation. Walzer on p. 359 had used « allotted part of existence ».

simply uses « ce singulier-ci » i.e., this singular, but, as we just said, explains it in a footnote, and Martini employs a rather vague formulation « qualcosa di determinato », i.e., « some determinate thing », which for a reader may not immediately recall the famous *tode ti*.

Interestingly, all three translators think this passage is very important and key to understanding some aspects of the Second Teacher's metaphysics, even if they raise further questions, such as: what exactly is the relationship between, being, thing, and oneness? They certainly invite us to a more detailed and precise examination of al-Fārābī's metaphysics and cosmology, as well as to a careful study of their terminology.

Better knowledge of the text and of its sources, as well as of parallel passages in other Farabian works will ensure a more accurate understanding of what the Second Teacher is doing in this text. In her extensive comments Martini provides invaluable help for such an understanding of *On the One and Oneness*. Her comments correspond to the divisions of the text she inserted in the Italian translation. She indicates the many Greek sources, particularly Neoplatonic and Hellenistic, with detailed information about their direct and indirect Arabic translations or transmissions. She also points to parallels and differences in al-Kindī, who preceded al-Fārābī, and in Yaḥyā ibn ʿAdī, the Second Teacher's main disciple, Ibn Bājjah (Avempace), and Ibn Rushd (Averroes), who came after him. The comments also show an extensive and impressive knowledge of whatever modern scholars have said. Furthermore, she also quotes parallel passages in other Farabian texts. She certainly shows that al-Fārābī, when he wrote *On the One and Oneness*, had a wide-ranging knowledge, be it direct or indirect, of Greek texts. Knowledge of the sources is much more than an exercise in erudition. What al-Fārābī does with them and how he interprets them helps us to determine what his own views are and what his purpose in writing this text may be, as *On the One and Oneness* begins abruptly, plunging into a dry, compact and terse presentation of the issues without explaining why the text was written. In pointing to parallel passages in other Farabian works, Martini also makes us more aware of how important some remarks and themes are, since they recur in various works.

One of the interpretative issues of which Martini is well aware is the link between *On the One and Oneness* and *The Book of Letters* or *Book of Particles*. Mahdi already had observed their closeness on the meanings of 'being', 'one' and 'many'. Since the two texts are also similar in terminology and structure, he had wondered whether the former could not be a part of the

latter, which too begins abruptly. Other scholars acknowledge this closeness without necessarily thinking that one is part of the other or that *On the One and Oneness* may have originally be conceived as part of the *Book of Letters*, but had grown too big and so the Second Teacher decided to make of it an independent treatise. Janos, for instance, addresses this issue on p. 103-105, and even provides a table with some textual parallels between the two texts. He points to terms and expressions that appear repeatedly in both, giving as examples two of the three terms or expressions we focused on when we commented on the differences in translation of a small key passage, i.e., '*al-mushār ilayhi*' or « the particular thing designated » and '*al-munḥāz*' « what is set apart ». Yet, he thinks that Mahdi's hypothesis at this point « finds no support in the manuscript evidence or in the primary sources in Arabic » (p. 105). Sara Abram, who wrote the introduction to the edition under Martini's direction, rejects Mahdi's hypothesis but affirms their closeness in contents and as illustrations of the Farabian way to do philosophy and metaphysics (p. 4–5).

Interestingly, in one and the same year we get Martini's new edition with translation and comments of *On the One and Oneness* and soon will get Charles Butterworth's new edition of the *Book of Letters* based on Mahdi's notes, as Mahdi had discovered two more Manuscripts of this important text. Butterworth's edition also provides an English translation (as far as I know, the first full translation) and an introduction (it is now in proofs at the Zaytuna College). The two new editions, the translations, and comments will certainly shed much more light on each of these texts, as well as on their relationships.

Putting aside the Neoplatonic influences and adaptations, which need to be explored more carefully and of which we have already spoken, one may wonder what al-Fārābī contributes on his own. Abram rightly points out to the importance of the notion of « set apart » (*munhaz*) as a meaning of 'one'. To be 'one' by a certain limit, or a certain place, or most of all by a certain quiddity has serious metaphysical and cosmological implications. This goes in particular for the notion of « set apart by a certain quiddity », which applies to material and immaterial realities, inside or outside the categories (p. 8). Janos calls this sense of the one, « the one-in-quiddity » and thinks that it « appears to be a Farabian innovation », essential to the Second Teacher's theology (p. 117).

Abram also shows how al-Fārābī, in what concerns the relationship between the 'one' and 'multiple' or 'many', both takes his departure from

Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, V, 6 and X, 3, but also goes far beyond it. First, he further develops the range of meanings of 'multiple'. Second, he argues that, though every 'multiple' is opposed to a 'one', not every 'one' is opposed to a 'multiple'.

Martini and her team have worked together closely. This seems the ideal way to establish a critical edition, translation, commentary, and detailed index for a text as compact and dense as this one. Besides, the young collaborators learned much about the various scholarly and technical aspects involved in such an enterprise.

This new edition, much enriched by a full translation, detailed commentary and indices, will certainly entice other scholars to ponder this difficult text, which is far more than a simple listing of various meanings. It has profound implications for understanding many other texts of al-Fārābī, but it is so dense that it will take time before it is fully appreciated. We can only congratulate and thank Martini and her team for having had the courage to face such a difficult task and having done it so well.

CHARLES H. LOHR, *THE ARISTOTELIAN TRADITION (1200–1650): TRANSLATION, THEMES AND EDITIONS*, ED. CHRISTOPH LÜTHY, ANDREA ALDO ROBIGLIO; VOL. I: *FROM ARISTOTLE VIA LULL TO THE RENAISSANCE. SELECTED ESSAYS*, ED. ANDREA ALDO ROBIGLIO; VOL. II: *LATIN ARISTOTLE EDITIONS (1450–1650)*, ED. CHRISTOPH LÜTHY, DAVIDE CELLAMARE, SISMEL–EDIZIONI DEL GALLUZZO, FIRENZE 2023 (CORPUS PHILOSOPHORUM MEDII AEVI. SUBSIDIA, 19), XIII + 249 PP., XXI + 216 PP., ISBN: 9788892902305.

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Posthumous collections of essays are typically a risk, since they could end up encapsulating more of the personality and the taste of the curators, rather than the preferences and the actual point of view of the late author. In these cases, certain choices could indeed be rebuked as arbitrary: why a certain essay should enter the collection in place of another, in a book that wants to be a celebration of a scholar's 'greatest hits'?

But all of this cannot be said of the two volumes by Charles H. Lohr, edited – with deep affection – by Andrea Robiglio and Christoph Lüthy. Volume I, curated by Robiglio, is in fact a collection of essays chosen by Lohr himself as his best and most representative. Volume II, edited by Lüthy together with Davide Cellamare, offers to the readers Lohr's *Catalogue of Latin Aristotle Editions (1450–1650)*. This would be already enough to celebrate the appearance of these volumes, in terms of defining the legacy of one of the greatest scholars of the twentieth century and giving life and circulation to an enterprise, the catalogue, he was not able to complete in his final years. But the volumes offer even more than that.

Volume I (*From Aristotle via Lull to the Renaissance*) is enriched by a series of articles that not only explains the genesis of these two books, but also allows a reader, not necessarily acquainted with Lohr's scholarship and biography, to situate the contributions presented in the two volumes. These include the preface by Andrea Robiglio, who asked Lohr to identify his most representative works now collected in the volume; an essay of Paul Richard Blum on Lohr as a scholar; an essay co-written by Pietro B. Rossi and Luca

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Bianchi on the history of the *Aristoteles Latinus* project, in which Lohr's catalogue is rooted; and, finally, an essay by Fernando Domínguez Reboiras on Lohr and Lull, one of the authors to which the Jesuit scholar devoted large part of his research. This same essay also shows the influence Friedrich Steigmüller – the founder of the Lull Institute – had on Lohr in inspiring his cataloguing achievements, while doing an effective job in introducing Lohr's essays in their reciprocal connections.

Lohr's essays, the culmination of this volume, are indeed a wonderful selection. « Aristotelianism », originally published in the 1990 *Handbook of Metaphysics and Ontology*, is an exemplar work that should be read in any introductory course of history of philosophy. With remarkable liveliness and synthesis, Lohr analyses here the vicissitudes of Aristotelianism throughout the centuries, highlighting its complicated relationship with Platonism and devoting a significant large section to the Arabic reception. The following piece, « Introduction to Psellus », zooms in on the Byzantine thinker whom Lohr had already singled out for a pioneering yet failed attempt at applying Aristotelian philosophy to the Christian dogma (p. 60). Here he focuses on Psellus's work as a commentator and offers a bibliographical tour-de-force on his early modern circulation. The essay was in fact the introduction to the photographic reprint of Giovan Battista Camozzi's translation of Psellus's *Physics*. The long essay « Metaphysics » – from the *Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy* – is the heart of the collection, and in many ways the jewel of the crown, embracing all the main directions of Lohr's research. It opens up with the ambiguous status of metaphysics in Aristotle ('first philosophy' and 'divine science') and shows how this ambiguity played out in a Christian context. Lohr follows therefore two paths, looking at the reception of metaphysics as science of God, and metaphysics as first philosophy. The first part is devoted to metaphysics as the science of God and starts with Lull, focusing on his *Ars Generalis*, the discussion of the Trinitarian principle, and his missionary apostolate: this already exemplifies the transition from a static metaphysics to a dynamic one, which reflects the social situation of the medieval Mediterranean. Lohr follows Lull's ideas in their *translatio* to a different, but equally dynamic context, Veneto, that rejected an abstract idea of science. The symbol of this movement, Venetian humanism, is indeed Petrarch, but in a wider perspective the contacts with the Greeks were decisive to suggest an alternative form of culture which unified philosophy and literature, and emphasized mathematics. Veneto is precisely where a few decades later

also Nicholas of Cusa would likely 'meet' Lull, from whom he would recover the same kind of dynamic metaphysics. At that point also the Platonic tradition was re-appearing and further complicating metaphysical debates in the Latin world. Ficino will operate a 'metaphysical turn' of Platonism that will be opposed by another reader of Lull, Pico della Mirandola. The second section is instead devoted to metaphysics as science of being, an approach that was more sympathetic to Aristotle's static views. Yet, a number of developments imposed to rethink the status and the realm of metaphysics. Scholastics embraced Aristotelianism because it was not only logically sound in a deductive system, but also efficiently supported apologetics. But the relationship between philosophy and theology was, over the centuries, hardly an easy one and the debates on the immortality of the soul caused a separation between metaphysics and natural science. This provoked a tug-of-war about the status of the science of the soul (that the Jesuit Pereira strongly maintained under the metaphysical umbrella) and more generally about the subject matter of metaphysics. These struggles favored a reform of the curriculum in Spain, in which metaphysics eventually reconquered its position in the arts curriculum, and were very much present in the Protestant world. It is hard to explain the richness of this essay in a few lines. Lohr's ability in intertwining general ideas, precise examples, and historical transnational circumstances in short paragraphs is simply extraordinary. « Aristotelian *scientia* and the Medieval *artes* » is one of the latest contributions by Lohr. With the usual clarity it articulates the shifting from *scientiae* to *artes*. The final essay, « The Arabic Background to Ramon Lull's *Liber Chaos* (ca. 1285) », goes back to Lull, showing how Arabic sources (and apologetic needs) influenced his writings. Some of the conclusions in Lull's *Liber Chaos* point already toward Nicholas of Cusa (an association, we have seen, already present in the essay « Metaphysics »). In spite of their different purposes and focuses, the five essays reveal a remarkable internal coherence, which make it easy to understand why Lohr selected precisely these texts for the collection. The dialogue, reception, or rejection of the different contexts in which Aristotelianism and Aristotelian metaphysics were discussed and modified represent the *fil rouge* and the core of Lohr's lifelong interests. And his incomparable bibliographical knowledge provided the backbone on which these texts were masterfully written.

Volume II, as said, is the *Latin Aristotle Editions* repertory. Initially conceived as a task Charles Schmitt had to complete, while Lohr was

collecting Aristotelian Renaissance commentaries, the catalogue was left unattended because of Schmitt's untimely demise. Lohr, who had in the meantime completed and published his commentaries repertory, decided therefore to provide also the other part of the work, coming close to achieve it through several sleepless nights. Lüthy, who assisted him when his health did not allow him this kind of efforts anymore, was asked by Lohr to complete and publish the catalogue. And, with the help of Cellamare, Lüthy had delivered a splendid, even if imperfect, instrument. Lüthy's notes make in fact very clear what one can and cannot expect to find in the catalogue, highlighting for example the torturous selection of the texts to be included in it (which respects Lohr's latest directions, and features only texts typically attributed to Aristotle, for which we have a Greek original, or texts which are not likely to be genuine, but for which we have the Greek text). Yet, in the Renaissance period the label of 'Aristotelian' was used in a more liberal way. Another significant problem is represented by the internal order of each entry, based on the names of the translators. What to do, in fact, in the case of revised versions of translations, which simply modified pre-existing renditions? And how to classify those editions which offer in juxtaposition two different translations? Moreover, as Lüthy mentions several times, another missing presence in the catalogue is the vernacular translations of Aristotle, at the center of a recent transnational scholarly interest. And obviously, even if Lohr contemplated the idea, manuscripts are not included. And yet, in spite of these issues, the catalogue offers an invaluable access to the oscillations in the reception of several Aristotelian texts, *in via quantitativa*, aside from offering valid indications of which translations were especially successful, and in which periods. One can only commend Lüthy and Cellamare for their painstaking work on Lohr's floppy disks, decrypting the abbreviations he used to describe each entry in his database.

The story of how the catalogue was finally printed, as charmingly recounted by Lüthy, has a moral that can be easily extended to both these Lohrian volumes: doing research is at once an individual and collective effort, one that is built across generations and decades, in order to make future advancement of our knowledge possible. And this awareness certainly drove Father Lohr in all his enterprises.

PAUL RICHARD BLUM, *ORACLES OF THE COSMOS: BETWEEN PANTHEISM AND SECULARISM*, SCHWABE VERLAG, BASEL 2022, 102 PP., ISBN: 9783796545467.

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Questo volume è composto da due ampi saggi dedicati al problema dei rapporti fra visione teologica del mondo e visione scientifica del mondo nella modernità, dal Rinascimento a oggi. A fare da sottofondo della trattazione stanno gli interrogativi, ben presenti alla coscienza di qualsiasi osservatore della situazione contemporanea, che nascono dal bilancio assai problematico che oggigiorno si può trarre dalla scissione tra scienza e fede, atto costitutivo della rivoluzione scientifica fra Sei e Settecento. Un fenomeno correlato alla dissociazione fra tecnoscienza e tradizione etica dell'Occidente, similmente affermatasi come pilastro della modernità e interpretabile come atto costitutivo della rivoluzione prometeica su cui poggia la civiltà della arendtiana *vita activa*.

Il primo saggio parte da una questione apparentemente marginale ed erudita, come è la ricerca degli antecedenti del termine 'oracolo' che fra Sette e Ottocento viene usato come arma di battaglia da alcuni pionieri del processo di secolarizzazione in ambito inglese. Nel 1784 Ethan Allen pubblicò la sua *Reason the Only Oracle of Man*, nel 1841 fu fondata a Londra la rivista *The Oracle of Reason*. Alle spalle di entrambe queste tappe di un percorso che elevò la ragione naturale a unica fonte affidabile di conoscenza per l'uomo, è ipotizzabile la conoscenza di quei saggi eterodossi che Charles Blount raccolse nel 1693 con il titolo *The Oracles of Reason*. Qui Blount oppose la regolarità della religione naturale all'arbitrio della rivelazione divina e dei suoi interpreti, facendo del libero pensiero uno strumento di emancipazione che tuttavia non intendeva approdare all'irreligione. La ragione stessa infatti guida l'uomo al perfetto atto di adorazione di Dio, che è quello privo di immagini, di passioni, di riti e di mediazioni: il deismo sarebbe, in altre parole, niente altro che un cristianesimo purificato.

In quest'ottica, la critica alla religione tradizionale non sarebbe affatto un principio di dissoluzione della religione in sé; la stessa modernità non sarebbe altro che il coerente approdo della Riforma, il superamento della regressione infantile e tirannica del cristianesimo, prodotta dalla cosiddetta 'superstizione' papista. Ma da dove arrivava questo impulso correttivo, intriso di anelito alla palingenesi? Secondo la genealogia proposta da Blum, la scintilla scoccò nel XV secolo, quando le turbolenze della grande politica internazionale e il processo di frantumazione

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delle Chiese d'Oriente e d'Occidente portarono un grande intellettuale bizantino come Giorgio Gemisto Pletone ad auspicare una *renovatio* generale del mondo cristiano, allora sofferente sotto i colpi della dominazione ottomana che si era estesa alla Grecia, sua patria. Fu Pletone a lanciare la conoscenza in Occidente di un testo come gli *Oracoli caldaici*: un evento che – sempre secondo Blum – avrebbe connotato la parola *oraculum* di un senso nuovo, non più legato solo alla tradizione sibillina ma anche al proposito di una sovversione delle convenzioni religiose ereditate.

La tesi di Blum relativa alla semantica del termine *oraculum* può naturalmente essere sottoposta a critiche e revisioni; ma va osservato che essa serve solo da pretesto discorsivo per mettere a fuoco un problema assai più cruciale, costituito dalla direzione che prese la visione scientifica del mondo nell'Occidente moderno, una volta stabilita l'irrilevanza del sapere teologico. Secondo Blum infatti la constatazione dell'abissale inconoscibilità di Dio, ribadita dalla tradizione religiosa specialmente in quel suo filone detto 'teologia negativa', creò in età moderna un moto di sfiducia verso la religione costituita che divenne dirompente quando si incrociò con la sfiducia verso la conoscibilità dei decreti di Dio attraverso le Chiese istituzionali, sprofondate nel discredito a causa delle lotte confessionali. Da questa svalutazione prese le mosse un fenomeno in qualche modo compensatorio, rappresentato dall'interesse per il mondo, indagato *iuxta propria principia* e dunque utilizzando la ragione naturale, e non la fede rivelata, come bussola. Una ragione che, come si è detto, poté all'occasione esprimersi attraverso 'oracoli' autogenerati.

Se questa è la tesi di fondo, va detto che lo sviluppo del ragionamento tende a mescolare in maniera sistematica – e forse troppo ardita – esperienze di pensiero che solo a fatica si lasciano ricondurre a un'ispirazione unitaria. L'introduzione in Europa del mito della sapienza zoroastriana, compiuta da Pletone con la divulgazione degli *Oracoli caldaici* tramandati da Michele Psello nell'XI secolo, trovò la sua piena consacrazione con la traduzione di questo testo in latino ad opera di Marsilio Ficino, seguita a poco più di un secolo di distanza dalla riedizione nella *Nova de universis philosophia* di Francesco Patrizi (1593). Nel 1655 prese ad apparire la *History of Philosophy* di Thomas Stanley, che conferì alla sapienza caldaica – a prescindere dalla polemica nel frattempo apertasi intorno all'autenticità dei testi che la avevano tramandata, e che sono in effetti apocrifi – la dignità di un'alta scuola di pensiero, benché attestata solo per via di oscuri aforismi, per l'appunto 'oracolari'.

La rivalutazione in età rinascimentale di quella che la cultura ellenistica definiva 'teologia dei Barbari' – quali erano i popoli della Mesopotamia e della Persia – fu un'operazione che, secondo Blum, contribuì a demolire la presa della teologia ecclesiastica sulla visione scientifica del mondo. Anche questa tesi, avanzata in chiave di sollecitazione intellettuale, è suscettibile di obiezioni, alle

quali si potranno aggiungere le riserve in merito al metodo con cui sono intessuti gli snodi successivi di un discorso che, come si è detto, tende a mescolare autori e contesti fra loro distanti e discordanti. Se, come Blum sostiene, la traiettoria della modernità avrebbe portato il razionalismo scientifico a pretendere di fare a meno di ogni residuo di spiritualità e di trascendentalismo nel dar conto della realtà del mondo, allora non si capisce il fondamento di una genealogia di tale razionalismo che metta insieme posizioni antitetiche in materia di fede.

Per fare un esempio, Blum tende a equiparare l'antropocentrismo religioso di Marsilio Ficino e di Pico della Mirandola – che si nutre di un afflato mistico derivante non solo dal platonismo, ma anche dalla rivisitazione del ricchissimo lascito del Medioevo cavalleresco e mendicante – con l'esaltazione della *theologia naturalis* che Raimondo Sabundo (o Sibiuda, morto nel 1436) pose al centro del suo *Liber creaturarum*. Come noto, Sabundo accostò il libro della Natura a quello della Bibbia e ne desunse una convergente esplicazione di Dio come suprema intelligenza autrice dell'ordine cosmico. L'accostamento ha però il sapore di una forzatura. Se proprio si volesse trovare un'assonanza tra la magnificazione dell'*ordo naturae* di Sabundo e la *pia philosophia* di Ficino e Pico, si potrebbe sottolineare la comune attitudine a contemplare il mondo come un'opera d'arte, recante sotto il velame la firma del suo mirabile creatore: un retaggio del platonismo medievale, portato a somme altezze da san Bonaventura. Ma Sabundo orienta il suo discorso verso una meta che né Bonaventura né Ficino avrebbero legittimato: l'autoevidenza di Dio al semplice sguardo di un intelletto investigante *sine Gratia*, e d'altronde l'autosussistenza del sapere scientifico che sarebbe *naturaliter* religioso, anche senza l'intervento della Rivelazione. Per inciso, soggiungeremo che non senza motivo l'opera di Sabundo fu subito gravata di un sospetto di eresia da cui mai si liberò: tanto che a oltre un secolo di distanza il grande Montaigne fu spinto a comporre la sua celebre *Apologia* da un sincero moto di simpatia verso un libro che egli stesso percepì come facilmente contestabile, pur tenendolo in grande stima e avendolo tradotto in francese.

Tralasciando in questa sede il punto relativo all'impossibilità di mettere in un unico paniere la teologia naturale e la teologia platonica, e magari aggiungervi il latitudinarismo anglosassone e lo scetticismo relativista del *libertinage érudit*, diremo che Blum compie un'operazione comunque corretta nel tracciare un asse che collega, ad esempio, Sabundo ad Amos Comenio, il quale ripubblicò il *Liber creaturarum* nel 1661. L'approccio innatista della linea riformatrice impersonata da Comenio e da altri pensatori a lui affini consentì di innalzare la ragione scientifica, vedendola come il perfetto compimento di una missione investigatrice che Dio stabilisce per l'uomo nel momento in cui lo dota della capacità di scrutare l'universo. In altri termini, si potrebbe concludere che molteplici furono le vie che condussero al trionfo della visione scientifica del mondo, e che alcune di queste vie passarono non dalla lotta, ma dall'elaborazione di una nuova alleanza fra

scienza e religione. Significativamente, in questa chiave la scienza apparve non solo come il necessario correlato teorico della fece cristiana, ma anche il miglior antidoto contro l'ateismo: così ragionarono alcune menti pie e illuminate del Seicento.

Certo, una ricostruzione anche sommaria di tali vicende non potrà mai trascurare la radice irreligiosa che trasparì fin dai primordi rinascimentali della rivoluzione scientifica. Una figura eloquente in proposito è Girolamo Cardano, che a dispetto di ogni verbale attestazione di ossequio fu permeato da una sostanziale indifferenza verso la fede, giustificata sulla base di un atto di apparente adorazione, ma in realtà di estraniamento: Dio non ha bisogno di nulla, e nulla può essere aggiunto alla sua creazione; l'uomo è tenuto a prestargli gratitudine ma poi è libero di dedicarsi alla scienza mediante cui si sforza di aumentare le proprie risorse e prerogative. Un programma di autopotenziamento che Francesco Bacone avrebbe condotto ai suoi più decisivi sviluppi, ponendosi dunque come anello di congiunzione fra Rinascimento e Illuminismo: ed è suggestivo rilevare che anch'egli parlò di 'oracoli' come fonti della conoscenza. Oracoli che, secondo Bacone, posso provenire ora dalla religione ora dalla scienza, ed esigono pertanto un diverso trattamento intellettuale.

Nella schematizzazione proposta da Blum, la fondazione baconiana della moderna civiltà scientifica viene ricompresa entro una genealogia che prende le mosse da Pletone e da Ficino, e che comprende altri momenti e autori salienti tra cui, impossibile da omettere, quel Giordano Bruno che qui viene presentato come il necessario antecedente di Spinoza e come il profeta del moderno panteismo. Anche di questa linea di pensiero viene rilevata l'importanza ai fini della formazione della visione scientifica del mondo, se è vero, come Blum afferma, che essa finisce per considerare coestensivi e dunque identici Dio e natura, creatore e creatura. Ma senza indugiare oltre nel richiamare questo o quell'autore fra i molti citati in questo denso saggio, ci avvieremo a chiudere il nostro resoconto ribadendo che il lettore dovrà stare attento a districare momenti e dottrine che furono assai disparati fra loro e che a fatica possono essere compresi sotto uno stesso ombrello concettuale.

Andrà piuttosto ribadito il pluralismo di cui si nutrì l'eteroclita esperienza storica della modernità scientifica, un processo che risulta tuttora aperto e per nulla irreversibile. Molto di ciò che effettivamente accadde nell'età moderna, compreso il cosiddetto 'secolarismo', andò totalmente contro e addirittura tradì le attese di molti tra i principali artefici della modernità stessa: i quali, tanto per fare una considerazione importante, non avrebbero neppure salutato positivamente il weberiano processo di 'disincantamento' quando esso si rivelò per quello che effettivamente fu, e cioè il presupposto per lo svilimento della natura e della stessa società umana a oggetto di manipolazione pianificata razionalmente – e magari formulata attraverso gli 'oracoli' del totalitarismo e dell'economia politica.

Lo stesso Blum riconosce che non fu affatto inevitabile né scontato il fatto che il rapporto uomo-natura nella modernità si avviò verso la perdita di qualsiasi dimensione religiosa, solo perché Dio fu considerato inaccessibile alla comprensione umana – a dispetto di ogni nozione cristiana incentrata sul *Logos* – e dunque qualsiasi congettura di ordine teologico fu dichiarata fallace. La liquidazione dei vincoli metafisici e l'appropriazione indiscriminata del mondo naturale, autorizzata dall'allontanamento dal *Logos*, furono solo uno dei diversi esiti possibili della riforma antiecclesiastica avviata dai pionieri della modernità. Così come il riduzionismo scientista rappresenta solo una risposta, fra le tante possibili, al bisogno di dotare comunque di un principio di rassicurante intelligibilità l'esperienza umana della realtà del mondo.

Alle sfide che la modernità non ha mai potuto veramente risolvere, nel momento in cui si è rivelata come forza dissolutrice degli antichi vincoli – ma generatrice di un nuovo e più terribile disordine, dunque di una malattia che qui definiremo come *acosmìa* – è dedicato il secondo saggio che Blum ha compreso nella presente raccolta. In questo caso a stimolare la riflessione dell'autore è la considerazione retrospettiva del successo presso il grande pubblico degli anni Ottanta del XX secolo di una serie televisiva intitolata *Cosmos*, ideata da Carl Sagan che si fece poi autore di un libro volto a compendiarne i contenuti. In linea con un *mainstream* che da allora si è largamente imposto come dominante, quest'operazione mediatica ha inteso divulgare un'aggiornata visione scientifica dell'universo che da un lato risultasse priva di ogni riferimento all'idea di creazione, ma che dall'altro fosse intrisa di ammirazione verso quelle meraviglie che rimandano alla presenza nell'universo stesso di una componente di «mistero» inesauribile.

Lo stato d'animo di stupore permette dunque all'uomo di tenere lontano qualsiasi sentimento di irrilevanza, a dispetto della proclamazione del proprio essere briciola sperduta in spazi sconfinati. Risalta piuttosto, in questo quadro, la retorica del genio umano che rifiuta le false idee della religione perché le trova inadeguate e oppressive; e ciononostante, si scopre religioso perché percepisce qualcosa che va al di là delle apparenze e della contingenza. Non senza significato, Sagan scelse di intitolare il suo programma *Cosmos*: riprese infatti il titolo che il grande Alexander von Humboldt prescelse per il suo famoso compendio di scienze naturali, pubblicato fra 1845 e 1862, adottando un termine che l'antica cultura greca aveva elaborato per esprimere l'idea di una totalità ordinata.

Erede della tradizione umanistica e classicista dell'aristocrazia tedesca ed europea della prima età moderna, lo scienziato Humboldt mutuò dall'ambito letterario un concetto saturo di implicazioni teologiche, di cui si servì per avanzare una concezione olistica della realtà ma senza mai entrare in contatto – né in contrasto – con i dogmi della fede. Svolse insomma il lavoro dello scienziato serio, che non pasticcia con la religione ma che d'altronde va incontro a un bisogno

acutamente avvertito dall'intelletto umano: quello di unificare le conoscenze e di tenere aperta la comprensione di un oggetto di per sé infinitamente suscitatore di sorprese sempre nuove. Un oggetto, il mondo, che la mente umana riconosce come cosmo e che dunque riconduce alla sfera dell'ordine e del possibile senso ulteriore.

Un simile approccio, che risulta rispettoso non tanto di una qualche pretesa derivante dalla religione costituita, ma dalle esigenze più profonde e vitali della mente umana, trovò espressione nella tradizione classico-cristiana in una suggestiva metafora, quale quella del Dio architetto che si serve della geometria per costruire un mondo che risulta strutturato secondo mirabili rapporti proporzionali. Alla mente umana, ontologicamente consonante con quella divina proprio in virtù della facoltà di misurare il mondo secondo una scala di rapporti armonici, spetta dunque il compito sacrale di conoscere la realtà per arricchirla in continuità con le sue leggi e le sue costanti. Apparentemente, tale affinità tra mente divina e mente umana sembrerebbe perduta con l'avvento della modernità scientifica, quando si impose quella triplice scissione fra uomo, Dio e natura che consentì al primo di fare a meno del secondo e di manipolare senza scrupoli la terza. Eppure, obietta Blum, questa piega nefasta non corrisponde del tutto alle intenzioni delle grandi menti che hanno fatto la storia della scienza.

Una breve carrellata di autori a noi vicini può servire a dimostrare l'assunto secondo cui il problema del rapporto fra scienza e religione è tutt'altro che archiviato nel panorama attuale dei saperi. Basti richiamare la lezione di Franz Brentano (m. 1917), che con una deliberata ripresa della nozione originaria di filosofia arrivò a definire la felicità come lo scopo della scienza: ad essa l'intelletto arriva attraverso un liberatorio atto di contemplazione della perfezione del mondo. Interessante ricordare che Brentano fu uno dei più geniali rivisitatori di Aristotele fra Otto e Novecento: in questa chiave ribadì la non sufficienza delle cause seconde e la necessità per esse di appoggiarsi a una causa prima di ordine metafisico, senza la quale esse non trovano significato. Brentano sostenne anche la natura teoretica dell'intelletto umano e dunque della scienza, contro ogni tendenza di comodo al settorialismo specialistico e produttivista, nonché al riduttivismo abdicatario.

In tempi più recenti, Stephen Toulmin (m. 2009), un filosofo della scienza che affrontò la post-modernità nei suoi presupposti epistemologici, rilevò nel mondo attuale un'irriducibile esigenza di sacro che, una volta escluse le religioni costituite e interdetta la sfera sociale, trova espressione nell'ambientalismo. Un movimento che si nutre di attaccamento primigenio a un ordine cosmico il quale non solo chiede di essere rispettato, ma che esige addirittura di regolare le nostre vite, anziché essere stravolto in nome dell'utilità, come avviene ad opera della tecnoscienza. Da più di un punto di vista, l'attuale fenomeno para-religioso dell'ecologismo può considerarsi l'inveramento di quella ricostituzione dell'unità tra Dio, uomo e natura, auspicata a suo tempo da Teilhard de Chardin.

Anche il filosofo ungherese Béla von Brandenstein (m. 1989) sostenne l'urgenza ai nostri tempi di trovare nuove vie per il ripristino della solidarietà originaria fra uomo e natura, così centrale nella visione classico-cristiana del mondo ma poi relegato ai margini di una modernità tanto corrosiva quanto devastante nella sua tendenza a compartimentare la conoscenza e neutralizzare la domanda di senso e di bene che l'uomo porta inscritta in sé. Oggigiorno, davanti all'alternativa fra continuare oppure smettere di violentare la natura, risulta quanto mai pressante il bisogno di reimparare a trattare educatamente l'universo. Fra le molte strade possibili, Blum ci ricorda che è sempre possibile un recupero di quella via regia della prima modernità cristiana, impersonata da due grandi personalità come Nicola Cusano (m. 1464) e Ruggero Boscovich (m. 1787). Sintesi esemplare di spirito scientifico e di *pietas* religiosa, entrambi furono fervidamente convinti dell'importanza dell'investigazione della natura, che vissero in sintonia con il contesto storico di cui furono partecipi. Ricordiamo che il cardinal Cusano si situò nella fase di trapasso dal Medioevo al Rinascimento, mentre il gesuita Boscovich appartenne al pieno Settecento che vide lo sviluppo dell'Illuminismo sulla base delle premesse gettate dalla rivoluzione scientifica nel secolo precedente.

La raccolta e l'ordinamento dei dati empirici era per entrambi un atto razionale che si volgeva in atto di adorazione, nascente dalla configurazione stessa della realtà secondo un ordine accessibile alla mente umana, ma non creato dall'uomo. Come affermò Boscovich, la presenza di Dio è rilevabile in un qualsiasi punto del mondo: una constatazione che se da un lato porta a respingere come irrazionale qualsiasi ipotesi ateista o casualista, dall'altro pone un severo interdetto su qualsiasi sfruttamento o manipolazione del mondo che consegue da un'appropriazione indebita, quale quella compiuta dall'*homo faber* traviato dal delirio di onnipotenza. Cosicché quando l'arbitrio umano si paluda di presunzione in nome della tecnoscienza, andrà ricordato – come Blum richiama in diversi luoghi – che il mito della scienza moderna come frutto di un'emancipazione dalla religione è un'asserzione non comprovata dalle fonti. Si tratta, per l'appunto, di un mito modernista, nascente dal proposito di liquidare la religione tradizionale e di sostituirla con un sistema di credenze che oggigiorno si avvale dei più moderni ritrovati della comunicazione mediatica: una religione senza Dio ma comunque intessuta di stupore e riverenza, e soprattutto propagandata per via oracolare da un agguerrito stuolo di predicatori.

ANDREAS SPEER, *1000 JAHRE PHILOSOPHIE. EIN ANDERER BLICK AUF DIE PHILOSOPHIE DES 'MITTELALTERS'*, BRILL, BOSTON 2023, 109 PP., ISBN: 9783957432834 (PAPERBACK), 9783969752838 (E-BOOK).

SARAH MARIE LEITENBERGER
KU LEUVEN



All those who are « curious about new worlds »,[1] whether they are scholars of medieval philosophy, or have never seriously considered it before, are the professed target audience of this book. Finding the balance between ensuring the accessibility of the topic for the latter and writing something that is still new and interesting to the former is a challenge just as great, if not more so, than Speer's project itself. He aims to not only offer a new perspective on this millennium of philosophizing but to do so in only 100 pages – and he does it admirably. For a book of such brevity, the sophistication and richness of its content, and the precision with which Andreas Speer unfolds it, are striking.

The book consists of four chapters, each of which despite their clear interrelation hold within themselves a complexity and breadth of subject matter that would befit an essay able to stand on its own. Its appendix includes a geographical map reaching from the British Isles and Ireland in the north-west, Timbuktu in the south-west, Aksūm and Mecca in the south, to Multān in the east.[2] There is also a timeline marked by the dates of birth and death of philosophers and other important historical figures, beginning with Thales and ending with Johannes Kepler.

Building on the work of Thomas Bauer, in the first chapter Speer stresses the importance of considering history for philosophy, pointing out that the term « Middle Ages » tends to artificially separate cultural and linguistic traditions intermingling in the philosophical discourse of the time, and to cut it off from its roots in antiquity. Further, it must indeed be viewed as a colonizing misnomer when applied to regions and cultural contexts outside of Western Europe. It is this thesis that sets the scene for the rest of the book and guides Speer's investigation into a new approach to these 1000 years of philosophy.

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1 ANDREAS SPEER, *1000 Jahre Philosophie. Ein anderer Blick auf die Philosophie des 'Mittelalters'*, Brill, Boston 2023, p. VIII: « neugierig auf neue Welten ».

2 ELMAR HOLENSTEIN, *Philosophie-Atlas. Orte und Wege des Denkens*, Amman-Verlag, Zürich 2004 (2nd edition), p. 91.

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In this project, it is the third chapter on which his entire thesis hinges. Here, Speer treats of the proper subject of philosophy, reason, in an investigation that, with the aim of finding the right approach to the diversity of the history of philosophy, analyses the universality of reason and of philosophy itself. Speer asks how, in our increasing focus on authors and traditions that for a long time stood at the periphery of Western academic discussion, we can even assume that any understanding is possible: if there are manifold philosophical languages, which all consist of both the language a certain discourse is held in, such as Arabic or Hebrew, and a pluralism of philosophical concepts and terms, which differs in each tradition, context, and language, what enables us to understand those philosophical languages?

Speer points to the twofold universality of reason, which can be either « weak » or « strong ».[3] Weak universality denotes the universality within the bounds of human reason and explicates, referring to those boundaries, the conditions that make rational speech possible.[4] Strong universality instead entails the crossing of those boundaries, striving towards an all-encompassing perspective on what is first and universal.[5] The universality of reason, either strong or weak, is the condition that must be met to enable philosophizing, as it gives it its realm and subject, and is at the same time the reason why we have so many different philosophical positions and languages, as this universality can be understood and explicated differently, leading to disagreements that will never be resolved. They can, however, be reconstructed and analysed focusing on the conditions that brought them about. This is the historical context, which leads us back to the main thesis of this book, as the historicity of reason is also the cause of the multiplicity of languages of reason. Historical contingency is a condition we can never shake when we study and participate in this debate – we should therefore not seek to elude it, but make it the focus of our analysis, appreciating and adequately considering the variety of approaches from all kinds of starting points, linguistically, regionally, religiously, and culturally speaking. Because of this, the terms « Middle Ages » and « medieval » are fundamentally inadequate.

It is with this in mind that I would like to lead back to the second chapter. Here, Speer admits that while we must break free of the limiting and misleading term « Middle Ages », we will never be able to inhabit a truly objective, complete viewpoint on philosophy and its history. Embracing this contingency, Speer instead opts to change his viewpoints on five fronts: chronologies and topographies, authors and « agents »,[6] and knowledge itself, insofar as it concerns philosophy and science in general. To explicate his whole argumentation would

3 Speer, *1000 Jahre Philosophie*, p. 71.
4 Speer, *1000 Jahre Philosophie*, p. 71.
5 Speer, *1000 Jahre Philosophie*, p. 71.
6 Speer, *1000 Jahre Philosophie*, p. 30: « Akteure ».

go beyond the scope of a review, but some observations can be made considering and juxtaposing the approach he espouses here and the approach he himself follows in this work.

One of the best examples of Speer's successful strategy to unify Latin, Arabic, and Hebrew philosophy in a manner that is accessible to every potential reader and yet does not fail to address the topic's complexity is his explanation of the relation of philosophy and theology. Starting from Aristotle's *Metaphysics* he showcases the importance of Boethius and of the Church fathers – not just mentioning Augustine of Hippo, but Gregory of Nyssa and Gregory of Nazianzus as well – in furthering the debate, and adequately addresses the differences to and fusions with Islamic and Jewish thought, demonstrating Stroumsa's whirlpool effect with clarity and brevity.[7]

What makes reading this book especially enjoyable is that Speer does not content himself with simply mentioning different traditions, but makes the effort to underline their specific advantages and virtues, such as the fact that the Byzantines, unlike for example the Latin West, did not have to rely on translations of Ancient Greek texts, which always bore the risk of mistranslation, and thus had a more direct and clear access to the Ancient authorities.[8]

Considering his first viewpoint, chronologies, Speer points out that compartmentalizing history into singular events and actors, and utilizing those to manufacture epochs, runs the risk of arbitrariness and counterfactuality, as this approach tends to put elements that are synchronous to one another into a diachronic order. This is the case, for example, when authors are shuffled into a timeline using their date of birth or of death – which Speer himself does in the appendix. Perhaps a more complex timeline, showcasing also the influence of different authors and traditions on one another could have supported his endeavour even better. I would like to relate this point to an observation Speer makes about topographies. He rightfully states that maps do not simply display the world as it is, but instead design a world and can reflect and enforce a certain worldview.[9] The same must be true of a timeline, into which goes some consideration regarding the question of which people merit inclusion. The timeline in the appendix visualizes a missed opportunity that runs throughout the book, namely the disregard of the contributions of women. One might consider that in this timeline, which ranges from the sixth century B.C. to 1630 C.E., women such as Hypatia of Alexandria, Hildegard von Bingen, and Christine de Pizan could

[7] Speer, *1000 Jahre Philosophie*, p. 36–38; Sarah Stroumsa, « Whirlpool Effects and Religions Studies: A Response to Guy G. Stroumsa », in Volkhard Krech, Marion Steinicke (eds.), *Dynamics in the History of Religions between Asia and Europe: Encounters, Notions and Comparative Perspectives*, Brill, Leiden 2012 (Dynamics in the History of Religions, 1), p. 159–162.

[8] Speer, *1000 Jahre Philosophie*, p. 41.

[9] Speer, *1000 Jahre Philosophie*, p. 25–26.

and should have been, but were not, included. As Speer addresses the gaps in the widespread philosophical and historical knowledge of many Western Europeans so eloquently and thoroughly, the fact that he did not choose to include female philosophers – not as the centre of his endeavour, but as one facet of the kaleidoscope he is illustrating for us – does constitute a considerable oversight.

While there are some shortcomings in the execution of the project Speer set out for himself, this book is a laudable effort in not just opening up the complexity and diversity that is found in the philosophy of these 1000 years, but guiding the reader through it in a manner that is coherent and aware of its own contingent and particular perspective. It is an invitation to reflect on our own personal standpoint in our research, the acceptance of which must be strongly recommended.

SIMON GOLDHILL, *THE CHRISTIAN INVENTION OF TIME: TEMPORALITY AND THE LITERATURE OF LATE ANTIQUITY,* CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, CAMBRIDGE 2022 (GREEK CULTURE IN THE ROMAN WORLD SERIES), 500 PP., ISBN: 9781316512906.

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Simon Goldhill's *The Christian Invention of Time* is a wide-ranging, interdisciplinary work of scholarship written for a broad scholarly audience. While trained primarily in classics and literary theory, the author draws on a wide range of sociological, philosophical, and theological sources in order to advance an original and provocative claim about time in late antiquity. The central argument of the book is that Christianity transformed the way time was conceptualised, lived, and experienced in late antiquity, in a manner analogous to the transformation of time in modernity, especially in the nineteenth century. Rather than offering a history of abstract theories of time, the book aims to address « how theological arguments about time come to ground the experience of time in daily practice and the engagement of individuals in a temporal world » (p. 216). It therefore focuses largely on issues of normativity in the conceptualisation, measurement, structure, and experience of time (p. 219; cf. p. 14–15). The main claim of the book, to paraphrase somewhat, is that there is a specifically Christian 'form' of time – i.e. a normative way of understanding, ordering, and inhabiting time – which emerged in the theological controversies of late antiquity and transformed the way time was lived, narrated, and experienced.

The book is divided into two parts, explained in the introduction. In the first part, the author identifies ten « formative categories of temporality » (p. 219, cf. p. 14). These are the fundamental notions that give 'form' to time, shaping an understanding of what it means to live in time and how one is to inhabit the present. The first ten chapters provide a sketch of the Christian form of time by analysing how Christianity transformed each of these formative categories from an initial starting point in Greco-Roman

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and/or Jewish literature and culture. While each chapter discusses a distinct formative category, according to Goldhill they are all interrelated in complex ways. As one reads, a « cross-cutting » argument thus emerges about the « Christian invention of time » (p. 13). The second half of the book then turns to specific texts and authors, arguing for a number of case studies in Nonnus's *Paraphrase of the Gospel of John* and *Dionysiaca* (ch. 11 and 12), selections from the poems and homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus (ch. 13), the hymns of Ambrose and Prudentius (ch. 14), and the historical writings of Sulpicius Severus and Paulus Orosius (ch. 15). The author's twofold aim here is « to explore how time is reinvented within the writing of late antiquity » and « extend [...] the canon of Western literature » (p. 219, cf. p. 14). Since the main argument of the book is provided in part one, however, I will focus primarily on chapters 1–10 for the remainder of the review.

Before proceeding, however, one thing that remains unclear from the introduction that is not clarified later in the book, so far as I can tell, is how the present study is situated in relation to previous scholarship on the notion of a Christian conception of time. While the author cites seminal studies from the twentieth century such as Oscar Cullmann's *Christus und die Zeit* (1946) and Jean Daniélou's *Sacramentum Futuri* (1950), there is no state of the art or explicit discussion regarding how his argument builds on previous literature. It would be helpful for the reader who is not an expert in the subject area(s) to provide an overview of the existing literature, clarifying the lines of debate as well as what is original to the present study.

The argument of the chapters 1–2 is that temporality is (re-)framed by eternity in late antiquity through the (1) conceptualisation of divine eternity and (2) Christian promise of eternal life. Chapter 1 contrasts the quasi-temporality of the gods in Homer and Hesiod, who are deathless and ageless but nevertheless « enjoy » the « opportunities » of time, to the timeless of God's eternity in Rabbinical literature, Augustine, and the Cappadocians (p. 43). Whereas in early Greek literature the fundamental contrast is between divine deathlessness and human mortality, for the latter it is between the extended (*diastema*) character of human life and the simplicity of divine eternity. The challenge is how to understand and express divine eternity within the temporal constraints of human language, as well as « the agency of a timeless God in the history of humans » (p. 43). Chapter 2 begins to spell out how this shift in understanding God's relation to time changes the conception of temporality (viz. what it means to be in

time). Here Goldhill argues that the promise of eternal life which accompanies this shift in Christianity transforms how the moment of death is understood, and therefore how one is « to inhabit time » (p. 63). In this chapter, he also discusses the distinction and relation between *chronos* and *kairos*: the « mundane time » of daily life and the critical moments of decision, turning points that tend to define a life, especially at the moment of death. In early Christian literature the promise of eternal life transforms both notions, according to Goldhill. In early narratives of martyrdom, the moment of death (*kairos*) becomes a transition from one life to the next; it defines the martyr's past life as well as the life to come, while martyr's suffering and public witness redirect the « immortal glory » of the Homeric heroes towards God (p. 58).[1] Similarly, in the lives of St. Mary of Egypt and Simeon Stylites, repentance, understood as a kind of death and rebirth, is followed by a long period of undifferentiated time lived in intense solitude and penance, where the very refusal of the pursuit of glory in anticipation of the life to come gives glory to God, transforming the « mundane time » of *chronos* (p. 58). Goldhill concludes the chapter by arguing that the contrast between Greco-Roman and Christian temporality is found on vivid display in the juxtaposition of Books 7 and 8 of the *Palatine Anthology*. While Book 7 is a collection 748 Greco-Roman epitaphs spanning several hundred years, wherein one finds « no acknowledgement of an afterlife or that the values of a lived life may be directed towards a life after death », the latter is a collection of poems by Gregory of Nazianzus honouring his Christian family and friends (p. 59). Here death is understood as a transition into light, rather than darkness, and the ordinary time of daily life is re-evaluated in light of Christian hope for eternal life, rather than the pursuit of immortal (earthly) glory.

Chapter 3 offers a wide-ranging essay about the politics of temporal measurement, calendars, and « the narratives of time » (p. 69). There are many interesting passages dealing with the measurement of time in rabbinical literature, ancient Mesopotamia, and Greco-Roman politics, as well as in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. However, the frequent shifting back and forth between different contexts and time periods makes the argument somewhat difficult to follow. Towards the end of the chapter, the author turns to the « unparalleled » regulation of time in late antiquity

[1] Goldhill's focus is on Prudentius's *Peristephanon*, and he notes that poet's glory is also re-directed towards God as worship.

in the emergence of Christian monasticism, where « every hour counts and must be counted » (p. 83). According to Goldhill, the distinction between *chronos* and *kairos* disappears in a monastic context, where the stress is on repetitive observance, whereby « all time is regulated to direct humans towards the worship of God » (p. 83). Viewed in a positive light, one could argue that in the monastic tradition, turning towards God renders all of time significant (not just the moment of *kairos* with its promise of glory), precisely because it « re-orders how life is seen » (p. 83). However, Goldhill concludes with a provocative question: whether « this extreme religious ordering of time leaves any narrative that is not of transgression or temptation. Is not the best monk a man without a story? » (p. 83). He then immediately asks whether the inevitability of temptation after the Fall makes « such a story without conflict, without a hesitation, without a crisis [...] impossible to tell » (p. 84). Could one not say that the monk's story is a reflection of the Christian story of Creation and Fall, redemption and conversion, leading to ultimate fulfilment, as the author's later description of the « temporality of the monk's *regula* » as a « constant effort of conversion » (p. 191) would seem to imply?

In chapter 4, Goldhill turns to the theme of waiting. Here he argues that waiting for the future and the end of the present seems to be something distinctively human. But *what* one is waiting for significantly impacts how daily life is to be lived in the present. After a brief but interesting survey of delay and deferral in Greco-Roman epic, Goldhill turns to delay and fulfilment in early Christianity. He begins with Jewish apocalyptic literature, focusing on the book of Daniel and 1 Enoch, and then discusses the book of Revelation, St. Paul, and the Synoptic Gospels.[2] Here the argument is that while in epic literature, waiting is « a time of threat [viz.] that deferral will block the heroic action necessary for immortal glory », for Christians, living between the Resurrection of Christ and the Eschaton,

[2] Though occurring in a relatively brief space (about 5 pages), his discussion here touches on a number of controversial issues, and this could perhaps be more explicit. Though he acknowledges that the dating of the Gospels is a highly contested issue, the contrast Goldhill draws between Luke and the other Synoptics, citing Paula Fredriksen, *When Christians Were Jews: The First Generation*, Yale University Press, New Haven 2018, has been a subject of debate since at least the twentieth century; cf. (e.g.) Oscar Cullmann, « Introductory Chapter to the Third Edition », in *Christ and Time: the Primitive Christian Conception of Time and History* (trans. Floyd V. Filson), Westminster Press, Philadelphia 1964, p. 1–16; Joseph Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth, Part Two: Holy Week. From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 2011, p. 24–52 (esp. 41–43).

« waiting and watching have become the human condition of the faithful » (p. 99). According to Goldhill, this sense of the present is reflected in Augustine's account of time as *distentio animi* in *Confessions* XI. Just as Christians in the present *time* look back towards the Resurrection and forwards towards the Second Coming, so too at the level of the present moment consciousness is distended into the past by memory and the future by anticipation.

Chapter 5 discusses Christian typological readings of scripture, considered against the background of the classical use of *exempla* in the Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition. The chapter begins with an introductory discussion of classicism as a turn to Greek and Roman exemplars. According to Goldhill, classicism always involves four things: (1) idealisation of the (Greco-Roman) past; (2) a « genealogical link » between the past and the present; and (3) a sense of « untimeliness », i.e. of a rift between the past and the present (p. 103). Arguing that the use of exemplars in classical rhetoric always involves a combination of idealisation, genealogy, untimeliness, and self-positioning in time, Goldhill the adds a fourth: « self-positioning in time » (p. 104–106). The contrast he draws in this chapter is between the « layered and complex » historicity of classical exemplars and the temporality of Christian typology, wherein persons, things, and events from the Hebrew Scriptures are interpreted as signs pre-figuring New Testament fulfilments (p. 111–112). The temporality of typology is 'non-linear' in the sense that past and present are taken as models of one another: Christ is the new Adam, Adam a type of Christ. According to Goldhill, this way of reading scripture is rooted in divine eternity: « The timelessness of God, the co-eternity of Son and Father, finds here in typology its strategy of reading, where any sense of past and present becomes rather a revelation of the always already » (p. 111). He also argues, however, that it is bound up with « supersessionist violence against the Jews » (p. 110). Goldhill provides at least one clear example of this in chapter 5 (Melito of Sardis), but his other examples are much less clear-cut (Origen and Jerome). Does this apply to *all* Christian typological readings of Scripture, or only to some? By chapter 15, it becomes clear that according to Goldhill there is a « violent [supersessionist] logic » inherent in Christian typology as such (p. 359). This is a strong and provocative claim, but it is also ambiguous. The terms « violent », « aggressive », and « supersessionist » recur frequently throughout the book, in connection with significantly different authors and ideas, texts and contexts. But they

are never defined or distinguished, and their sense is not always entirely clear. What precisely constitutes an « aggressive » re-writing of a text, as Goldhill describes the echoes of Genesis in the Gospel of John, the echoes of John in Augustine (implicitly), Nonnus's *Paraphrase of the Gospel of John*, and Ambrose's use of the psalms? Are all forms of supersessionism (equally) violent? It is not entirely clear, when the author remarks at the end of the study that it « has uncovered its fair share of extreme ideologues », who precisely is to be included in the list (p. 421).

Chapter 6, « Making Time Visible », focuses on the various forms of cultural memory in late antiquity. The author discusses the roles of architecture, sculpture, ritual, and public speeches in Athenian and Roman politics and memory, before transitioning to Christian pilgrimage literature via the travel literature of Pausanias and Lucian. Here the main point of contrast is between the different « normative expectations » of Christian literary responses to memorial sites of the martyrs and Greco-Roman antecedents. This contrast is « embodie[d] », for Goldhill, in the « weeping, praying, humbled, prostrate Christian » exemplified by Prudentius's account of his visit to the tomb of Saint Cassian at Imola (p. 126). Weaving together passages from Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, and Jerome, he argues that the Christian on pilgrimage « inhabit[s] another time's present », looking through sacred memorial sites to the events themselves, in the eyes of faith, and responding by *pathos* expressed in song, weeping, and prayer and striving to imitate the martyrs, who in turn imitated Christ (p. 122–126). As Goldhill notes, this vision « turn[s] the layerings of history [...] into as close at is possible to get to a form of typology, where each life is an *imitatio Christi* » (p. 126). The chapter then concludes with a discussion of Augustine's account of memory, where the accent is on the fragility of memory and its role in Augustine's quest for God, self-knowledge, and morality (p. 127–131). This links to Goldhill's discussion of conversion literature in chapter 9, but first there is a cross-cut to the problem of simultaneity.

Chapter 7 addresses the problem of competing temporal frameworks though the problem of simultaneity: what does it mean to say that two events happened at the same time? The author discusses three examples from the ancient epigraphic tradition – the Pantheon, Lindos Chronicle, and Parian Marble – in order to establish that these temporal markers, like historiography, serve « to locate the self in time », within a specific

temporal framework (p. 136).[3] The framework in question can be more or less local and specific, but in Polybius, with the rise of Rome, local history is subsumed under something that approaches universal history through a geographically spread co-ordination of events within a single frame (p. 137–138). Yet according to Goldhill, competing timeframes still persisted and remained a « source of contention » in the Roman empire (p. 140). The author then turns back to Greek sources (Herodotus, Thucydides, and Demosthenes) in order to argue for a porous boundary between mythic and historical time, before turning to Eusebius of Caesarea, the Christian author discussed in this chapter.

Eusebius, he argues, collapses the distinction between mythic and historical time into a single, historical narrative, tabulating chronologies so that « by comparing individual histories [...] the reader could see the hand of providence at work ».[4] Drawing on recent work by James Corke-Webster,[5] Goldhill presents Eusebius as a Christian author, well-versed in the Greco-Roman literary, philosophical, and historiographical traditions, who wrote for an elite audience at a critical moment in Roman imperial history in order to « synchronise » the Roman and Christian worlds (p. 149–155). In short, he presents Christian exemplars of both Roman and Christian values in order to argue that « the Christian [can] live a Christian and a Roman or Greek life *at the same time* » (p. 155). At the end of the chapter, Goldhill associates the « hope of a single narrative » in Eusebius with the « single theological normativity » of typological hermeneutics (chapter 5), asserting that there is a « violence », « encode[d] » in both (p. 155).

Chapter 8 cuts back to the theme of waiting from chapter 4, although here the question is how does waiting for eternal life impact a Christian's sense of the historical present. The chapter begins with a contrastive discussion of various senses of the present found in D.H. Lawrence, Walter Pater, Thomas De Quincey, Heidegger, modern anthropology, and, finally, Homer and Herodotus. As in previous chapters, the author stresses that the 'present' is « an ideologically fraught moment of self-positioning » (p. 165). He argues that « Christian thinkers, looking back to Plato, strive to create a

[3] Here he cites Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (trans. Keith Tribe), Columbia University Press, New York 2004.

[4] David Rosenberg, Anthony Grafton, *Cartographies of Time: A History of the Timeline*, Princeton Architectural Press, New York 2010, p. 15, quoted in Goldhill, *The Christian Invention of Time*, p. 148.

[5] James Corke-Webster, *Eusebius and Empire: Constructing Church and Rome in the Ecclesiastical History*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2019.

different sense of the present » – from the preceding authors – one that is « turned towards a timeless ideal » (p. 165). Then follows a brief exposition of time and eternity in Plato's *Timaeus* and its (critical) reception in Cicero and Lucretius, and a in third section on the politics of « imperial time » in the Seleucid and Roman empires. This leads into the final section on the « historical now » in Augustine's *City of God*. Here the author notes Augustine's reliance on « the repeated paradox of St John's Gospel, [that] 'the hour is coming and now is here' (4:23, 5:25) », arguing that for Augustine, « the now is always and necessarily marked by what is to come » (p. 177). In Augustine's typological theology of universal history (linking back to chapters 5 and 7) according to the seven days of creation in Genesis, the present is situated in the sixth age, between the Resurrection and the Second Coming. It thus looks forward towards a timeless future of eternal rest on the seventh day, the end of narrative. The problem, for Goldhill, is « how to conceive of the now of the earthly city [viz. Christian Rome] in relation to the final timelessness of the heavenly city » (p. 179). For Augustine, as he notes, there is no equation between the two: « a Christian empire can only ever be a precarious regime, a time before the end » (p. 179).

Chapter 9 continues this discussion of what it means to live « between the already and the not yet », by turning towards conversion narratives as the « paradigmatic story of a Christian life-time » (p. 181, 183). Augustine's *Confessions*, as one might expect, plays a key role in this chapter, though the author also discusses a number of conversion narratives, including the conversion of St. Paul in Acts, the « Acts of Paul and Thecla », the « Passion of Perpetua and Felicity », the « Life of Mary of Egypt » and Simeon Stylites (again), the Cappadocians, and Jerome. Contrasting these narratives with earlier Greco-Roman biographies and narratives of change (e.g. Apuleius and Ovid), he argues that conversion « changes the temporality of the narrative of a life-time », because it « organises [it] around a pivot of the fundamental alteration of self-understanding and perspective on how to live this life, here and now » (p. 183). The chapter then focuses on two aspects of conversion narratives: (1) the tension between conversion as a process and as a « blinding flash », and (2) how « life after conversion » is narrated (p. 203). In earlier narratives (e.g. the « Acts of Paul and Thecla »), conversion appears often as a sudden shift, whereafter the convert faces intense opposition and bears witness « to the point of death » (p. 188). In Augustine, by contrast, there is a profound tension between continuity and

rupture, process and the « blinding flash » of grace and conversion, while in the monastic tradition there is a stress on conversion as a continuous process (p. 191). In some later narratives (e.g. Simeon Stylites and the « Life of Mary of Egypt »), life after conversion is characterised by increasing penance and renunciation, found in an earlier and more moderated form in the Cappadocians, Jerome, and Augustine (p. 203). Noting, lastly, that « life-writing projects models to live by », the author concludes with a brief but interesting comparison with Jewish biographical literature in late antiquity, which focuses less on « the representation of such internal or social change » than the « precarious and porous boundaries of community and how they are to be policed » (p. 205).

Rather than discussing in detail the transformation of another specific aspect or « formative category » of temporality, chapter 10 concludes part one with a more general argument about temporal violence and the relation between time and narrative. The chapter begins with a passage from a poem in honour of Anicia Juliana, the Christian noblewoman who rebuilt the church of St. Polyeuctos in Constantinople. In the poem, she is said to have « forced » or « raped [*ebiēsato*] time / And surpassed the celebrated wisdom of Solomon », suggesting on Goldhill's analysis that « her building project must be seen as an intervention in history » (p. 207). The chapter then moves into a general discussion of the notion of suddenness, which helps clarify the connection between time and narrative, according to Goldhill, because it « depends on an intervention in the normal or expected timing of events and their telling » (p. 210). When something appears to be sudden it disrupts our expectations regarding the timing and sequence of events. Drawing on the work of Fredric Jameson, Goldhill characterises this as a kind of « violence to timing », which may be linked to various forms of political violence (e.g. revolutionary politics), and « reveal[s] » the way « narrative [...] *forces* [time] into the ideology of form » (p. 212–213, emphasis original). This appears, however, to be inescapable for Goldhill, since « any discussion [...] forces time into a form », including his own (p. 217). In short, then, time is constantly and inescapably 'forced' into a form both by the demands of « social process » and more theoretical discussions, which « makes doing violence to time the threat and promise of a potentate like Juliana, a philosopher like Parmenides, or a writer like Augustine » (p. 215).

What remains unclear in chapter 10, however, and throughout the book (so far as I can tell) is how to distinguish different forms of temporal

violence. Does one do violence to time by 'forcing' it into a form? The language of 'force' would seem to suggest so, but then one would do violence to time merely by discussing it. How does one distinguish such 'violence' from the 'violence' that according to Goldhill is inherent in Christian typology or the hope for a 'single narrative' of universal history? How does one distinguish between cases of 'threat' and 'promise' when it comes to temporal violence, especially if there is « no 'view from nowhere' » (p. 10) when it comes to religion in late antiquity?

In *The Christian Invention of Time*, Simon Goldhill has provided a detailed, well-research, and remarkably wide-ranging study of a complex and multifaceted topic. While the cross-cutting structure of the argument can at times be confusing, the book's attentiveness to connections between the conceptualisation and lived experience of time allows it to cover many diverse aspects of the problem, from epigraphs and monastic *regulae* to historiography, life narratives, and Christian typology. Many of the connections Goldhill draws will likely remain subject to debate, but there is much in the book to interest a wide scholarly audience, including classicists, philosophers, and theologians working on time and history in Christianity and late antiquity. For my own research on time perception and history in medieval Latin philosophy and theology, the book provides a helpful introduction to the shifts and debates about temporality in late antiquity and the patristic period. The many thought-provoking connections and subtopics dealt with in the book – including, for example, the conception and perception of time and the present, life-times, typology, and universal history – also suggest various possible lines of inquiry regarding later developments in the Middle Ages.

LESLEY SMITH, *FRAGMENTS OF A WORLD: WILLIAM OF AUVERGNE AND HIS MEDIEVAL LIFE*, THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, CHICAGO 2023, 312 PP., ISBN: 9780226826189.

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Professor Lesley Smith should surely be congratulated for her recent book on the nowadays obscure thirteenth-century figure William of Auvergne. She should also be commended for taking such an interest in this rather forgotten thinker and providing one of the only English accounts of this great Scholastic master's life. William was the bishop of Paris from 1228 until his death in 1249. This accompanied by the fact that he was also a Master of Theology made him one of the most important intellectual and political figures on the scene in Paris during his day. « William was a highly respected thinker in his time » (p. 86) but has today been largely forgotten. Smith's *Fragments of a World: William of Auvergne and his Medieval Life* goes a long way toward rescuing this forgotten figure, his intellectual accomplishments and, most interestingly, also gives us some sense of what kind of man he was. This work is not a linear biography of William's life, but rather something of a circling portrait that looks at William mainly through the testimony of his sermons (of which we have around 600), but at times his theological works as well. Thus, while Smith's work in many ways depends on Noël Valois's *Guillaume d'Auvergne, évêque de Paris*, and perhaps does not surpass that work as a pure history (except perhaps in its attention to the context of the developing city and University of Paris), it is a helpful supplement as it is more attentive to William's personality and examines a number of topics that go unexamined in Valois's work, largely due to its close attention to William's sermons.

As the title suggests this portrait is constructed through fragmentary (but extensive) evidence. It is « a series of glimpses into William's world » and yet what is found is far from a fragmented personality. William's chief concerns seemed to be his love of teaching and study as well as a deep concern for his pastoral flock. This, no doubt, seems to have contributed to his amenability to the mendicant orders of the Franciscans and Dominicans and explains his criticism at times of the secular masters at the university. Still, to paint broadly, William was a man of two worlds that were to a great degree in tension. On the one hand, he was at least « a visitor » (shall we say) to the somewhat glamorous world of Louis IX and his

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mother Blanche of Castile, the latter seems also to have been a good friend (p. 154). While, on the other, from his sermons we see him time and again valuing poverty and warning against the dangers of the world such as pleasure, money, worldly honor, power, vanity and so forth.

Two of the chief virtues of Smith's work are first the general explication of the context of the world in which William was born (perhaps in Aurillac), raised and found himself while in Paris. William was born into a time where we find something of a « twelfth-century Renaissance » as the city and University of Paris were developing, and new texts of Greek and Arabic learning were becoming available to the Medieval Latin West (p. 4). William found himself to be in something of the first generation of this reception of Greek and Arabic philosophical material. His major work the *Magisterium divinale et sapientiale* (written between 1223–1240s) is a highly synthetic project – almost summa-like in its structure as an ordered wisdom – whereby he takes what he finds to be true in the Christian tradition and in Greek and Arabic thought to give a sophisticated account of such topics as God, creation, providence, the soul, the *cur deus homo* question, virtues and vices as well as to refute the perceived dangers concomitant in these Greek and Arabic works such as the eternity of the world, the necessity of creation and mediation of God's creative act by separate intelligences. Smith is even attentive to the fact that in William's work, one of the principal sources (perhaps the principal source for William's philosophical thought) is Avicenna and that William even follows Avicenna in regarding God's proper name as *necesse esse per se* (p. 80).

This willingness to seek the truth found in philosophical texts is underscored by William's favorite analogy of seeing the world as a book written by God and so all things as bespeaking something of their author. To quote the text,

> William saw the world as the book the Creator had written so that humans could understand him. This gave him free rein to use anything and everything to shed light on the workings of God, drawing lessons from the most surprising everyday things (p. 178).

Thus, not only was William open to what was correctly written about the created world so as to lead us to some understanding of God and creation in the works of such important figures as Plato, Aristotle, Avicenna, Boethius, Augustine, Anselm, or the *Liber de Causis*, but he was also very attentive to his own experience from which he drew spiritual and moral analogies from even such things as baby spiders, toy bows and arrows used by children or drunk people falling into latrines.

This leads to the book's second chief virtue: the sheer number of different topics Smith examines in relation to William. This makes this work at once quite original and very enjoyable. Smith examines William's thoughts on a plethora of

different topics such as language, knowing, women, the Jewish people, the societally weak and marginalized, poverty, animals, food and drink and death. From all these diverse topics and his large number of sermons and personal comments we probably have a much better understanding of what William was like as a man, than we do of more popular figures such as Thomas Aquinas or Albert the Great.

From these we can surmise that he was probably an excellent preacher and took his duties to his parishioners and his care for their souls very seriously. He had something of a reformer's spirit, worked against pluralism – from which William apparently received considerable opposition from Philip the Chancellor (p. 67) – and was very concerned with Churchmen being occasions for scandal to the laity. One is tempted to think that if the Dominicans and Franciscans had found in Paris a Bishop more concerned with taking care of « his own » (the secular master's) the history of these Orders may have looked considerably different in Paris as it was under William that Roland of Cremona, John of St. Giles and Alexander of Hales all took the habit and were allowed to keep their university chairs. But William's « own » was the Church and he was concerned primarily with the care of those in his flock and the study of the truth. Thus, it is highly likely that « in the mendicants William thought he had found men after his own heart: educated and serious... [sharing] his focus on preaching and poverty » (p. 67).

Although he was a man of his times, we also find him to be a man of peace with « little taste for military expeditions » (p. 68) and a supporter of women (p. 120). He was especially concerned about their vulnerability at the hands of their family, husbands, priests and prostitution. William, to his credit, recognized that women turned to prostitution out of poverty and not immorality and « founded a religious house in Paris for former prostitutes, named the Daughters of God » (p. 122). According to Smith, « poverty is probably the single topic that William most often addresses » in his sermons and saw riches as a spiritual obstacle (p. 137). Interestingly, William categorically disagreed « with Aristotle's statement that the female is an imperfect male » (p. 123). William also seems to be a man with a good sense of humor, good taste in wine and a lover of dogs, saying if « you love me, love my dog » (p. 53).

While aspects of William's moral and pastoral theology, taken principally from his sermons, make many appearances as William articulates for his audience, often using colorful and insightful analogies, the nature of sin, vice, faith and virtue, this book would have benefitted from two helpful additions. The first is that while we have no solid dates for William's life prior to 1223, a brief chronological sketch of William's life from 1223 on, as far as possible, would have been quite desirable for both the specialist and the general reader. Smith's self-avowed goal was not to attempt a chronological biography, but a quick chronological sketch could have

been beneficial in order to give something of a historical skeleton to the circling portrait.

A second relevant addition to this publication would have been a more detailed treatment of William's philosophy and systematic theology. It would not be fair to say that these topics are absent especially as more aspects of the latter are treated in the chapter « Death and Beyond ». Nevertheless, since this work approaches William mainly through his sermons and ethical writings, considering in more detail William's philosophical and systematic theology could have achieved a more balanced presentation of William's thought. Although the author does spend some time discussing William's understanding of the soul, sin and death and comments a few times on the general importance of Avicenna, for these more speculative topics to be so lightly treated in a book on one of the most important Masters of Theology, one does not retain the sense of how cutting-edge William really was. Having read this book, the general reader would be informed that William wrote his *Magisterium Divinale et Sapientiale,* that this was a highly synthetic project, and that William was among the first in the West to seriously engage the newly translated Aristotelian and Arabic works, but would be left almost completely unaware of what most of William signature philosophical and theological teachings were or what his great synthesis consisted in. Here I suggest that this general work on William's life and thought would have benefitted from a brief and somewhat general discussion of William's understanding of the relationship of God to the world as seen, for example, in the first fourteen or so chapters of the *De Trinitate* and various texts from *De Universo,* where William critiques the Aristotelian-Avicennian universe. Just by way of example, William seems to be the first (certainly one of the first) to introduce the Avicennian distinction between essence and existence in creatures and their identity in God into the Latin West, which is, of course, a very important topic for medieval philosophy. William then goes on to use this distinction to great effect in articulating the relationship between God and the world or when critiquing the « Manicheans ». Additionally, some discussion of William's account of God as the intelligible world, the exemplar of all things and his analogy of all creatures as reflections of God as in a mirror would have connected quite nicely to his understanding of the universe as a book written by God.

Or to take another example, very little is said on the important issues of William's answer to the important *cur deus homo* question, his understanding of the Trinity, or even his epistemology. These topics are almost entirely unremarked upon, although his understanding of the sacraments, the soul and death are treated significantly. Of course, one can always suggest that a given book could have done more – and in the author's defense a full treatment of all these topics could have called for several monographs – but in the case of William, his philosophical and theological thought was an enormously important dimension of

his life (and time) and without more being said something of the portrait that is available to us of this great man remains unsketched.

All in all, *Fragments of a World* is a well written, enjoyable, and original work. Its detailed attention to what can be learned about William from his sermons is of considerable value. This work sets out in search of a human being and in this Smith certainly succeeds, even if he is only « reflected in a smokey mirror » (p. 216).

GIOVANNI CATAPANO, CECILIA MARTINI (EDS.), *LA FILOSOFIA NELLE OPERE DI DANTE / PHILOSOPHY IN DANTE'S WORKS*, IL POLIGRAFO, PADOVA 2021 (*MEDIOEVO. RIVISTA DI STORIA DELLA FILOSOFIA MEDIEVALE*, 46), 328 PP., ISBN: 9788893871983.

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Nel 2021, in occasione del settecentesimo anniversario della morte di Dante Alighieri (1265–1321), la rivista *Medioevo* non ha voluto far mancare il suo omaggio al Sommo Poeta e ha perciò allestito il numero monografico *La filosofia nelle opere di Dante / Philosophy in Dante's Works*. Frutto della congiunzione di sforzo scientifico e passione celebrativa, il denso volume comprende undici contributi – tutti in italiano, ad eccezione di due in inglese – che indagano con metodo storico-filosofico aspetti assai variegati della filosofia dantesca (soprattutto di quella espressa poeticamente nella *Commedia*), spesso tornando su luoghi memorabili per ricostruirne lo sfondo dottrinale e i possibili debiti testuali, così da arrivare a illuminarne sensi inediti.

Il volume si apre con il pregevole saggio di Giulio d'Onofrio, che, analizzando le personificazioni allegoriche della conoscenza 'naturale' e di quella teologica presenti nella *Commedia*, accosta da una prospettiva feconda un tema tipico del pensiero di Dante: « la distinzione e contrapposizione di filosofia terrena e dottrina rivelata » (p. 18). La sapienza teologica è rappresentata dalle tre donne che nella processione simbolica sul paradiso terrestre danzano alla destra del carro (*Purg*., XXIX, 121–129) e ovviamente da Beatrice (*Purg*., XXX, 31–33), le quali si manifestano a Dante con i colori delle virtù teologali (il bianco della fede, il verde della speranza e il rosso della carità), già anticipati nella descrizione dei gradini d'ingresso al purgatorio (*Purg*., IX, 94–102) e distorti invece (*Inf*., XXXIV, 37–45) « nella presentazione trionfalmente orrida dei tre volti di Lucifero » (p. 17, n. 27). All'ambientazione e alle figure del paradiso terrestre si contrappone lo scenario dei canti VIII e IX dell'*Inferno*, i cui « versi strani » (*Inf*., IX, 63) sulle tre Furie e Medusa celerebbero « i tratti e le conseguenze di un non felice progresso conoscitivo », cioè esclusivamente mondano e dimentico della radice sovrannaturale della *vera philosophia* (p. 24). L'incarnazione fondamentale di questo naufragio della conoscenza è poi la Sirena protagonista del sogno di Dante narrato nel canto XIX del *Purgatorio* (che rappresenterebbe dunque, più che la seduzione del piacere sensibile, l'ingannevole attrattiva della scienza terrena), così

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come il celebre personaggio che proprio la Sirena dichiara di aver 'volto' dalla sua via (*Purg*., XIX, 22–24): Ulisse, il cercatore infaticabilmente bramoso – e perciò perennemente insoddisfatto – della conoscenza di questo mondo. Dando prova di grande acume, d'Onofrio individua sorprendenti parallelismi inversi tra il racconto di Ulisse (*Inf*., XXVI) e l'elogio di Francesco d'Assisi per bocca di Tommaso d'Aquino (*Par*., XI), mostrando come Dante abbia consapevolmente (e magistralmente) intessuto una corrispondenza testuale tra i due pur lontani episodi per contrapporre all'« impresa disperata e infelice » di Ulisse « quella trionfale e santa » di Francesco (p. 39).

I successivi due contributi hanno per oggetto il *Convivio*. Il primo, di Filippo Contin, affronta, proponendone una nuova ipotesi di integrazione, il luogo lacunoso del trattato filosofico (I, 13, 4) in cui Dante ricorre all'analogia con l'arte del fabbro per illustrare il concorso della lingua volgare alla propria generazione e difendere così la nobiltà della 'loquela' naturale. Se la maggior parte dei commentatori ha spiegato il passo rinviando alla *Fisica* di Aristotele (II, 3) e al relativo commento di Tommaso d'Aquino, Contin invita a prestare attenzione a due gruppi di testi in cui l'analogia dantesca risulta centrale: il primo comprende la tradizione commentaristica a *Metafisica*, VII, 9, vari passi di Tommaso e soprattutto le *Quaestiones in Metaphysicam* di Sigieri di Brabante; il secondo è costituito dai commenti di Tommaso e Sigieri alla prima proposizione del *Liber de causis*. All'interno di questo complesso orizzonte filosofico sulla natura della causalità, « Dante sembra innestare il suo argomento originale a difesa del volgare, facendone addirittura una causa essenziale della propria esistenza » (p. 67).

Nel secondo contributo dedicato al *Convivio*, Mario Loconsole esplora il debito dello scritto dantesco verso il corpus di opere naturali di Alberto Magno (in particolare il *De animalibus*, il *De vegetabilibus*, il *De mineralibus* e il *De natura loci*). Prendendo in considerazione un'ampia gamma di temi – la generazione del vivente, la formazione delle sostanze minerali, la funzione del calore naturale nella generazione e il ruolo dei luoghi nei processi naturali – e raffrontando il testo del *Convivio* con molteplici passi albertini, Loconsole dimostra l'influenza profonda della filosofia naturale di Alberto sulla riflessione di Dante, come si evince dalle frequenti riprese nel trattato in volgare del lessico e delle espressioni del maestro domenicano. Questo, ovviamente, non legittima ad appiattire il *Convivio* sull'immagine ingenerosa di una mera compilazione di opere albertine: se Dante offre indubbiamente numerose « volgarizzazioni competenti di concezioni distintive della filosofia naturale del tempo », queste vanno comprese nel quadro della sua personale ambizione teoretica e della sua originale rielaborazione speculativa, sempre sorrette da una solida competenza tecnica (p. 93).

La figura di Alberto Magno è al centro anche del saggio di Maria Evelina Malgieri, che prende in esame la spinosa questione della ricezione in Dante della dottrina della creazione mediata. Postulando la derivazione di tutti gli enti tranne

la prima intelligenza indipendentemente dall'azione diretta della causa prima e rischiando quindi di limitare indebitamente l'atto creativo di Dio, questa dottrina era passibile di eterodossia e venne effettivamente colpita dalla condanna del 1277. Gli interpreti che si sono sforzati di salvaguardare l' 'ortodossia tomista' di Dante hanno pertanto negato che egli abbia abbracciato questa concezione, mentre altri (come Bruno Nardi), appoggiandosi soprattutto a *Par*., VII, 124–138, hanno sostenuto che l'avrebbe ammessa, anche a costo di opporsi a Tommaso e a molti altri autori scolastici. Malgieri interviene nel dibattito argomentando a favore di una posizione intermedia, secondo cui Dante accoglie la dottrina della causalità mediata nella versione elaborata da Alberto Magno nel *De causis et processu universitatis a prima causa*, in particolare nel commento alla quarta proposizione del *Liber de causis*, dove il maestro domenicano era riuscito a « superare gradualmente le perplessità nei confronti dei sistemi emanazionisti, [...] fino a codificare una dottrina del flusso teologicamente accettabile » (p. 112). In effetti, la caratterizzazione del Cristallino o Primo Mobile come il cielo in cui « l'esser di tutto suo contento giace » (*Par*., II, 114), cioè in cui l'essere è tutto intero, non differenziato, per poi darsi sotto forma di essenze diverse nell'ottavo cielo (*Par*., II, 115–117), esprime in maniera « più concentrata e per certi versi lapidaria, ma con tutta l'efficacia del linguaggio poetico » (p. 115) l'idea del *De causis* albertino per cui il primo creato funge da punto di raccordo tra la causa prima e tutti gli altri enti, senza che il nesso causale e provvidenziale tra la prima e i secondi venga interrotto (p. 115). Del resto, nota Malgieri, il saldo ancoraggio di tutta la realtà alla sua fonte è garantito dalla precisazione di Dante sulla collocazione del Cristallino: questo, e con esso tutto l'essere indifferenziato, si trova « dentro dal ciel de la divina pace » (*Par*., II, 112), ovvero nell'Empireo, 'luogo' di Dio, come a rimarcare che niente è escluso dalla Sua azione creatrice.

Alla *Monarchia* è dedicato poi il notevole saggio di Stefano Pelizzari sulle fallacie logiche rintracciate da Dante nelle argomentazioni degli avversari teocratici in difesa del primato papale. Contrariamente alla tendenza della critica « a rinviare, in modo piuttosto affrettato e generico, a una manciata di *loci* canonici » delle *Summulae logicales* di Pietro Ispano e degli *Elenchi sofistici* di Aristotele, Pelizzari analizza con cura e dovizia di particolari le obiezioni contenute nel libro III della *Monarchia* a tre fallacie (quella *secundum quid et simpliciter*, quella *secundum non causam ut causam* e quella *secundum accidens*), sottolineando la specificità e l'originalità dell'uso dantesco degli strumenti della logica (p. 125). Emerge così che anche nell'indossare la veste del 'loico' per confutare i « difettivi silogismi » (*Par*., XI, 2) di « chi pesca per lo vero e non ha l'arte » (*Par*., XIII, 123), Dante si muove tra conformismo e innovazione, cioè tra aderenza a nozioni tradizionali e loro autonoma rielaborazione.

Con il sesto contributo il volume torna a concentrarsi sulla *Commedia*, per occuparsene fino alla fine. Nel primo saggio di questa serie, senza dubbio una delle

perle del volume, Amos Bertolacci esamina l'ambivalente rapporto di Dante con la cultura arabo-islamica. Mentre nel canto XXVIII dell'*Inferno*, vista l'orrenda punizione di Maometto e ʿAlī, la condanna della religione islamica è feroce e assoluta, all'estremità opposta della cantica il grande apprezzamento di Dante per la cultura araba è testimoniato dall'inclusione di Saladino, Avicenna e Averroè tra gli « spiriti magni » (*Inf.*, IV, 119). È noto fin dagli studi di Fiorenzo Forti che la celeberrima sequenza di *Inf.*, IV, 64–144 è animata dal concetto aristotelico di *magnanimitas*, la virtù degli individui eccellenti e onorevoli tratteggiata nel libro IV dell'*Etica Nicomachea*. Sulla scorta di questa acquisizione consolidata, Bertolacci rilegge la memorabile scena in maniera programmaticamente contestuale, ossia focalizzandosi sulla *littera* del testo, evidenziando con encomiabile lucidità alcuni dettagli che fanno ancora una volta meravigliare dell'inesauribile ricchezza della *Commedia*. I tre gruppi di magnanimi – poeti, politici, filosofi e scienziati – sono disposti secondo un movimento ascendente di progressiva unificazione, per cui alla disgregazione della « bella scola » (*Inf.*, IV, 94) dei poeti e all'aggregazione precaria dei politici – sancita dalla posizione solitaria di Saladino (*Inf.*, IV, 129) – segue come momento culminante l'integrazione della « filosofica famiglia » (*Inf.*, IV, 132), tutta intenta a tributare il debito onore ad Aristotele. Così, « con magnifico effetto letterario e concettuale », il « maestro di color che sanno » (*Inf.*, IV, 131) « risulta essere il protagonista apicale dell'episodio descritto e, al tempo stesso » – per la centralità della nozione di *magnanimitas* – « l'ispiratore ultimo del pensiero etico che governa l'intero passo » (p. 165). La qualifica di Averroè – l'ultimo magnanimo e il più prossimo cronologicamente a Dante – come commentatore del Filosofo (*Inf.*, IV, 144) rafforza infine l'unità del gruppo dei sapienti attorno ad Aristotele, suggerendo che, a differenza della religione e della politica, spesso d'ostacolo alla comunicazione, la tradizione aristotelica poteva fungere da straordinario connettivo culturale capace di trascendere le epoche e le 'ideologie'.

Il tema dei successivi due contributi è il canto XXV del *Purgatorio*, uno dei canti su cui, per la complessità del discorso antropologico lì condotto, più si è soffermata la critica filosofica. Il bel saggio di Paolo Pagani ricostruisce efficacemente il resoconto di *Purg.*, XXV, 37–78 sulla formazione dell'embrione e dell'anima umana, spesso riformulando le espressioni dantesche con il lessico scientifico contemporaneo, per poi operare un confronto con il luogo parallelo di *Convivio*, IV, 21, 2–5 e soprattutto valutare le divergenze esegetiche sul passo della *Commedia*. L'antropologia poetica del canto XXV del *Purgatorio* ha costituito infatti un significativo terreno di scontro tra Bruno Nardi e Giovanni Busnelli: se il primo, nell'intento di smarcare il Sommo Poeta dall'ombra di Tommaso d'Aquino, ha insistito sulla vicinanza della dottrina dantesca all'idea di Alberto Magno di un progressivo emergere della forma-anima, l'altro ha riportato il pensiero di Dante a quello 'anti-gradualista' di Tommaso, secondo il quale concepire la generazione

come *motus continuus* rischia di far cadere nella fallacia categoriale di confondere il movimento sostanziale con l'alterazione qualitativa. Pagani si inserisce salomonicamente nella disputa rilevando la parzialità di entrambe le interpretazioni e notando che esse non si escludono vicendevolmente, ma colgono, da diverse angolazioni, elementi di verità: dal punto di vista fisiologico-descrittivo, il fenomeno della generazione presenta senz'altro il gradualismo caro ad Alberto, mentre da quello ontologico-definitorio, è sicuramente corretto distinguere con Tommaso i diversi momenti di una successione discreta. *Purg*., XXV, 37–78 può dunque essere legittimamente accostato da entrambe le prospettive.

Nel secondo contributo sul canto XXV del *Purgatorio*, scritto in inglese, Cecilia Trifogli affronta la descrizione dantesca della relazione tra l'anima separata e il corpo umbratile o aereo, avanzando un'ipotesi sulla sua derivazione. Dopo aver ripercorso i versi già al centro del saggio di Pagani (*Purg*., XXV, 37–78) e quelli immediatamente seguenti sullo stato dell'anima dopo la morte e la costituzione del corpo umbratile (*Purg*., XXV, 79–102), Trifogli compara i versi della seconda sezione con le discussioni di Tommaso d'Aquino e Sigieri di Brabante sulla condizione dell'anima separata nel fuoco dell'inferno. A differenza di Tommaso e Sigieri, che intendono l'unione *post mortem* tra anima e fuoco come un'unione 'secondo il luogo' e non secondo la forma, Dante teorizza originalmente un'unione formale tra anima e corpo umbratile, per la quale la *virtus formativa*, trasformatasi in anima, genera il corpo aereo e si unisce ad esso come forma. Nonostante questa differenza, secondo Trifogli, il Poeta elabora la sua dottrina sullo sfondo delle 'disputazioni' escatologiche dei due grandi maestri scolastici, evidentemente operative nella sua mente.

Proprio uno dei due celebri maestri, Tommaso d'Aquino, è il personaggio centrale del cielo degli spiriti sapienti nei canti X–XIII del *Paradiso*. Alla raffigurazione dantesca di Tommaso è dedicato il saggio di Riccardo Saccenti, un'altra delle gemme del volume. Dopo una panoramica sulla ricezione dell'eredità dell'Aquinate dalla sua morte (1274) fino al tempo di Dante, Saccenti compie una mirabile esegesi dei canti di Tommaso che arriva a isolare le caratteristiche che, attraverso la figura del Domenicano, Dante attribuisce alla sapienza. Innanzitutto, in virtù dell'accostamento con Francesco d'Assisi, di cui tesse le lodi nel canto XI del *Paradiso*, Tommaso incarna la necessaria associazione di *sapientia* e *humilitas*: quest'ultima è la 'povertà intellettuale' che pone al riparo dal rischio di 'vaneggiare', cioè di perseguire quelle *curae* mondane – quali ricchezza, fama e potere – che ostacolano il buon progresso spirituale (si ricordi la famosa descrizione dell'ordine domenicano come il gregge « u' ben s'impingua se non si vaneggia »; *Par*., X, 96). In secondo luogo, in perfetta conformità al Tommaso storico, insuperabile per chiarezza argomentativa, l'Aquinate si presenta a Dante come maestro di *distinctio*, ossia di quella capacità di analisi che si traduceva in

« precisa pratica scolastica codificata nella prassi dei *magistri* di università e *studia* » (p. 247). Del resto, ricorda puntualmente Saccenti, anche l'anima di Bonaventura da Bagnoregio esalta « l'infiammata cortesia di fra Tommaso e 'l discreto latino » (*Par.*, XII, 143–144), ovvero la sua precisione di pensiero e di scrittura saldata all'eleganza delle forme espressive, « che sono tutt'uno coi contenuti che veicolano e di cui si trova traccia negli scritti stessi dell'Aquinate » (p. 248). Infine, nel dissipare il dubbio di Dante sulla qualifica di Salomone come il più sapiente tra gli uomini (« a veder tanto non surse il secondo »; *Par.*, X, 114), Tommaso ha cura di distinguere la *sapientia* dei *doctores*, esperti nelle scienze teoretiche, dalla « regal prudenza » (*Par.*, XIII, 104) di Salomone, che sarebbe dunque il più sapiente non *simpliciter*, ma *secundum quid*, cioè limitatamente alla sfera della deliberazione politica. Secondo Saccenti, questa specificazione degli ambiti della sapienza mira a proporre un modello di regalità alternativo a quello che, proprio in quegli anni, si stava costruendo alla corte di Roberto d'Angiò, che pretendeva di riunificare nella propria persona i compiti del sovrano e quelli del dotto.

Gli ultimi due contributi riguardano ancora la terza cantica della *Commedia*. Il saggio di Marta Cristiani tenta di illuminare la terzina del canto XIV del *Paradiso* (88–90) in cui Dante dichiara di fare sacrificio di sé (« olocausto ») a Dio con tutto il cuore e con linguaggio universale. Cristiani invita a leggere questa affermazione, tutt'altro che perspicua, alla luce dei dibattiti medievali sulla natura dell'amore per Dio, nei quali era d'uso distinguere l'amore 'fisico-naturale', diretto al Creatore in vista della *beatitudo* del soggetto, da quello 'extra-naturale', privo di rimandi al sé e capace di sfociare nell'estasi mistica. L'olocausto offerto da Dante sarebbe un atto d'amore del secondo tipo, ovvero un « voto di rinuncia, sacrificio rituale solenne, a ogni riferimento al bene proprio, per affondare nel nucleo incandescente dell'amore divino » (p. 279). Questa esperienza sovrannaturale, nota suggestivamente Cristiani, riecheggia il passaggio dal terzo al quarto grado di carità descritto da Riccardo di San Vittore nel *De IV gradibus violentae caritatis* (c. 19), dove il superamento di sé che ha luogo nell'ascesa mistica viene equiparato al vanificare se stessi (« semetipsum exinanire »). Pertanto, se il canto V dell'*Inferno* ritrae il peccato mortale d'amore e i canti XVII–XVIII del *Purgatorio* illustrano l'*ordo amoris* quale fondamento dell'etica razionale, il canto XIV del *Paradiso* intende il livello più alto dell'amore per Dio come totale trascendimento di sé per approdare al Bene supremo.

Nel canto XXIX del *Paradiso*, seguendo l'agenda tematica fissata da Pietro Lombardo nel libro II delle *Sententiae*, Dante tocca una serie di questioni sulla creazione e la natura degli angeli. Il contributo conclusivo, scritto in inglese da Mattia Geretto, ripercorre l'angelologia di questo canto, insistendo ripetutamente su un aspetto cruciale: la necessità di contenere le argomentazioni razionali entro i loro limiti costitutivi e di subordinarle alla fede. Infatti, nel negare agli angeli la

facoltà della memoria, attribuita invece a loro dal *Magister Sententiarum* e da altri illustri dottori, Dante muove un'aspra critica ai disputanti delle 'scole', i quali, spinti dal desiderio di fama (« l'amor de l'apparenza e 'l suo pensiero »; *Par*., XXIX, 87), avrebbero violato i legittimi confini dell'indagine razionale, concependo gli angeli – creature sovrannaturali per noi difficilmente intelligibili – in termini troppo umani. In generale, la ricerca filosofica, che procede da principi e con metodi 'naturali', e quella teologica, fondata sulla rivelazione, formano indubbiamente « *un* sentiero » (*Par*., XXIX, 85, corsivo mio). Tuttavia, per Dante, « la ragione [...] è sostenuta in modo costante e decisivo dalla rivelazione »: il che, secondo Geretto, altro non è che l'insegnamento fondamentale di tutta la *Commedia* (p. 305, trad. mia).

Mi sembra evidente da questa ricostruzione dei contenuti del volume che *La filosofia nelle opere di Dante* rappresenti un'ulteriore, preziosa riprova della grandezza assoluta del Sommo Poeta, apprezzata stavolta dalla peculiare prospettiva dell'esegesi storico-filosofica. Nei testi del *Convivio*, della *Monarchia* e della *Commedia* qui presi in esame, Dante esibisce una straordinaria capacità di assimilare e rielaborare tutta la cultura filosofica e teologica del suo tempo e di concentrarla, in forme sempre originali, sia nella sua prosa latina e volgare sia, in modo ancora più stupefacente, nella *brevitas* miracolosa dei versi della *Commedia*. I saggi di questo numero di *Medioevo* sono allora, oltre che un tributo al Sommo Poeta da parte di studiosi di storia della filosofia medievale, un invito a focalizzare ancora le nostre forze su alcuni passi danteschi per meditarne l'infinita ricchezza e coglierne significati inaspettati. Da questo punto di vista, merita di essere riportata per esteso la conclusione del saggio di Amos Bertolacci, che rileva, riferendosi specificamente al capolavoro di Dante,

> un ulteriore motivo per ritenere 'divina' la *Commedia* di Dante, in aggiunta alla sua potenza espressiva, profondità concettuale e incomparabile bellezza. La densità del testo che essa trasmette, in cui ogni dettaglio è carico di significato, che suggerisce qualcosa di nuovo ogni volta che lo si rilegge, e che rimane, anche dopo sette secoli, fonte di ispirazione per il presente, rivela quella speciale inesauribilità che la tradizione esegetica attribuisce soltanto ai testi sacri (p. 174).

Da qui il dovere, sulle orme degli autori de *La filosofia nelle opere di Dante*, di continuare a 'voltare e rivoltare' le parole del Sommo Poeta con paziente attenzione, devota ammirazione e rinnovato desiderio di scoperta.

MATTHIEU HUSSON, CLEMENCY MONTELLE, BENNO VAN DALEN (EDS.), *EDITING AND ANALYSING NUMERICAL TABLES: TOWARDS A DIGITAL INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR THE HISTORY OF ASTRAL SCIENCE,* BREPOLS, TURNHOUT 2021 (PTOLEMAEUS ARABUS ET LATINUS. STUDIES, 2), IX + 594 PP., ISBN: 9782503596068.

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Although historical scholarship on premodern mathematics and astronomy has dealt with numerical and mathematical tables for quite some time, in the last two decades a number of collections of papers and research projects have set an overview study of the tables themselves at the center of inquiry. (A numerical table is a tabular object composed of numerals and a mathematical table is a tabular object produced by mathematical rules. Not all numerical tables are mathematical, and the converse.) This focus has allowed scholars to compare the use of tabular methods across cultures and periods, and to systematically approach the combination of technical and historical methods that are needed to study these important source documents. The current book, which is addressed to scholars working in the field or perhaps graduate students, is an excellent addition to recent scholarship on tables.

There are three main categories of research questions that we might raise when working on premodern numerical tables. In the first place, we can ask how we should take the evidence of our physical sources. In particular, since the sources are prone to transmission errors, or are sometimes fragmentary, what sorts of techniques should we use reconstruct the table that we think the compiler intended. That is, how should we create a critical edition of the table, which may correct errors of transmission, or flesh out parts of the table that have gone missing. Another important question concerns what sorts of mathematical or scientific criteria were used to construct a given table. That is, what, if any, geometrical model may underlie the table, what algorithms were used to compute its terms, what numerical parameters were used, and how are all these related to the mathematical principles at work in other sources. Finally, to what uses were the tables put by historical actors. Namely, how were the tables actually used to make calculations, to carry out new research and to generate knowledge. The papers in his book address all of these sorts of questions.

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The scholars involved in this book were well positioned to undertake this project. The editors are currently involved in major research projects studying numerical and astronomical tables (such as History of Astronomical Tables in India; Alfonsine Astronomy: Shaping a European Scientific Scene; Ptolemaeus Arabus ed Latinus; Tables Analysis Methods for the History of Astral Sciences), and producing digital tools for investigating tables (such as Computer Assisted Tables Editor; Digital Information Systems for the History of Astral Sciences), and a number of the authors, including the editors themselves, have been working on tables for many years.

The book is divided into four parts. (1) The first part treats the most commonly used methods of table 'cracking' – which is the use of mathematical and statistical techniques to draw unstated information from the numbers themselves, such as the authors' sources and methods of construction, missing entries, numerical parameters, dependencies between tables, computation methods, and so on. This part begins with an important methodological paper (by Glen Van Brummelen, Matthieu Husson, and Clemency Montelle) that summarizes the standard techniques, with examples. There are then papers giving further examples by José Chabás and Bernard R. Goldstein, Seb Falk, and Kailyn Pritchard. (2) The second part, consisting of papers by Montelle and Anuj Misra, gives two examples of how standard techniques of table cracking can be used to help produce critical editions of numerical tables. (3) The third part presents papers that use standard techniques of table cracking supplemented with an implementation of the computational and mathematical practices of the historical actors to produce critical editions of astronomical tables. There are three papers – by Van Brummelen, Sho Hirose, and Richard Kremer. (4) The final part – made up of papers by Husson, Johannes Thomann, and van Dalen – collects three sophisticated studies that employ computational and digital tools that do not fall easily into any of the other three parts. The final paper, by van Dalen, results in an edition of an important 13th-century geographical table, the only non-mathematical numerical table studied in this book.

If there is anything that I wish had been included, it would have been a full study of an ancient Near Eastern table, since this material has been especially well studied (there is one example in the first, methodological paper). On the whole, however, this book is an important contribution to our understanding of the premodern exact and astral sciences.