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ARTICLES

FROM TUNIS TO VENICE

TRACES OF MAGHRIBĪ ASTRONOMY AND GEOGRAPHY IN MANUSCRIPTS FROM LATE MEDIEVAL ITALY

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Abstract

This article discusses the shared content of three interrelated astronomical manuscripts from late medieval Italy, arguing that certain elements of this shared content trace their origins to Maghribī sources. This includes two tables of geographic coordinates with a pronounced focus on locations in North Africa as well as a gnomonic table for the latitude of Tunis. One of the coordinate tables is known to resemble an Arabic table in a *zīj* by Ibn al-Raqqām, who was active in Tunis, Béjaïa, and Granada in the period 1280–1315. It will be argued that a likely explanation of this knowledge transfer lies in the documented mercantile and diplomatic contacts between the Republic of Venice and Ḥafṣid Tunisia in the decades around 1300.

Key Words

Maghribī astronomy; Arabic-to-Latin translations;
Geographic coordinates; Sundials; Venice



I. Introduction

From approximately the second half of the tenth century AD to the collapse of the *taifa* kingdoms at the end of the eleventh century, the area known as al-Andalus gave rise to a sophisticated tradition of mathematical astronomy, which managed to develop its own unique models and approaches compared to the ways in which the discipline was cultivated in the Arabic East. While this Andalusian astronomy entered the path of a slow decline in the twelfth century as far as its centres of origin are concerned, substantial traces of it continued to flourish for centuries in two adjacent regions, Latin Europe and the Maghreb, resulting in what Julio Samsó

has described as « a common astronomical tradition on both sides of the straits of Gibraltar ».¹

In the Latin European case, much of this state of affairs was due to Arabic-to-Latin translations produced on the Iberian Peninsula during the twelfth century, which resulted in the first genuine flowering of mathematical astronomy in the Christian West.² In the Maghreb, a full adoption of Andalusian mathematical astronomy is first in evidence in the early thirteenth century, starting with the lost astronomical tables of Ibn Ishāq al-Tūnisī (c.1222). The resulting Maghribī

¹ 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 1, 144), p. 1. See also Id., « La ciencia en al-Ándalus y su papel como puente entre la ciencia árabe y la europea », *Awraq*, 17–18 (2018), p. 9–22; Id., « Al-Andalus, a Bridge Between Arabic and European Science », *Alhadra*, 1 (2015), p. 101–125.

² SAMSÓ, *On Both Sides*, p. 18–33. For a selection of relevant literature, see CHARLES HOMER HASKINS, *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (Mass.) 1924; FRANCIS J. CARMODY, *Arabic Astronomical and Astrological Sciences in Latin Translation: A Critical Bibliography*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1956; OLAF PEDERSEN, « The *Corpus Astronomicum* and the Traditions of Mediaeval Latin Astronomy: A Tentative Interpretation », in OWEN GINGERICH, JERZY DOBRZYCKI (eds.), *Colloquia Copernicana III: Proceedings of the Joint Symposium of the IAU and the IUHPS, Cosponsored by the IAHS Astronomy of Copernicus and Its Background*, Toruń 1973, Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Wrocław 1975 (Studia Copernicana, 13), p. 57–96; DAVID C. LINDBERG, « The Transmission of Greek and Arabic Learning to the West », in Id. (ed.), *Science in the Middle Ages* University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1978, p. 52–90; MARIE-THÉRÈSE D'ALVERNY, « Translations and Translators », in ROBERT L. BENSON, GILES CONSTABLE (eds.), *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (Mass.) 1982, p. 421–462; CHARLES BURNETT, « The Translating Activity in Medieval Spain », in SALMA KHADRA JAYYUSI (ed.), *The Legacy of Muslim Spain*, Brill, Leiden 1992 (Handbook of Oriental Studies, Section 1, 12), p. 1036–1058; Id., « The Coherence of the Arabic-Latin Translation Program in Toledo in the Twelfth Century », *Science in Context*, 14 (2001), p. 249–288; Id., « Translation and Transmission of Greek and Islamic Science to Latin Christendom », in DAVID C. LINDBERG, MICHAEL H. SHANK (eds.), *The Cambridge History of Science*, vol. II: *Medieval Science*, Cambridge University Press, Chicago 2013, p. 341–364; PAUL KUNITZSCH, « Gerard's Translations of Astronomical Texts, Especially the *Almagest* », in PIERLUIGI PIZZAMIGLIO (ed.), *Gerardo da Cremona*, Libreria del Convegno, Cremona 1992 (Annali della Biblioteca statale e Libreria civica di Cremona, 41), p. 71–84; STEPHEN C. MCCLUSKEY, *Astronomies and Cultures in Early Medieval Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1998; JULIO SAMSÓ, « El procés de la transmissió científica al nord-est de la península Ibèrica al segle XII: els textos llatins », in JUAN VERNET, RAMON PARÉS (eds.), *La ciència en la història dels Països Catalans*, vol. I: *Dels àrabs al Renaixement*, Institut d'Estudis Catalans, Valencia 2004, p. 269–296; JOHN NORTH, *Cosmos: An Illustrated History of Astronomy and Cosmology*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2008, p. 215–269; MAX LEJBOWICZ, « L'acculturation latine selon Platon de Tivoli », in Id. (ed.), *Une conquête des savoirs: les traductions dans l'Europe latine (fin du XI^e siècle-milieu du XIII^e siècle)*, Brepols, Turnhout 2009 (Rencontres médiévales européennes, 9), p. 121–141; 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.

branch of the Andalusian astronomical tradition continued to be cultivated well into the second half of the fourteenth century.³

What has so far received very little consideration from historians of science is the question of what, if any, interactions there may have been between Latin and Maghribī astronomy during the period of their parallel development. An opportunity to pose this question and bring fresh evidence to bear is offered by three astronomical codices of North Italian origin, two of which date from the first half of the fourteenth century. The following article is dedicated to an analysis of the shared content of these manuscripts. As will be shown below, they preserve evidence of a transmission of astronomy-related material from Northwest Africa to Italy, which included two tables of geographic coordinates, some diagrammatic drawings of astronomical instruments, and a gnomonic table for the latitude of Tunis. In the case of one coordinate table, there is a demonstrable link with a set of astronomical tables by Ibn al-Raqqām (*al-Zīj al-Shāmīl*), who was active in Tunis, Béjaïa, and Granada in the decades around 1300.

Most of the first half of this article will be taken up by a comparative discussion of the overall contents of the three manuscripts in question, focusing in particular on material related to the astrolabe. This will be followed by studies and editions of the two coordinate tables and the gnomonic table for Tunis, which will highlight the evidence of their Maghribī origin. A brief section towards end will consider the path of transmission that facilitated the arrival of this material in Italy, which could potentially have been a consequence of the mercantile and diplomatic links that existed between Ḥafṣid Tunisia and the Republic of Venice in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

³ SAMSÓ, *On Both Sides*, p. 4–18. See also DAVID A. KING, « On the History of Astronomy in the Medieval Maghrib », in *Études philosophiques et sociologiques dédiées à Jamal ed-Dine Alaoui*, Département de Philosophie, Sociologie et Psychologie, Fès 1998 (Université Sidi Mohamed Ben Abdallah, Publications de la Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines Dhar El Mahraz–Fès, N° Spécial, 14), p. 27–61; JULIO SAMSÓ, « Andalusian Astronomy in 14th Century Fez: *Al-Zīj al-Muwāfiq* of Ibn ‘Azzūz al-Qusanṭīnī », *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften*, 11 (1997), p. 73–110; ID., « Astronomical Observations in the Maghrib in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries », *Science in Context*, 14 (2001), p. 165–178. On the *zīj* of Ibn Ishāq, see Angel Mestres i Valero, « Materials andalusins en el *zīj* d’Ibn Ishāq al-Tūnisī », Ph.D. Diss., University of Barcelona 1999.

II. Three Latin manuscripts and their shared content

The following discussion will make frequent use of three manuscript sigla, which are:

E	Edinburgh, Royal Observatory, Crawford Collection, Cr. 3.28
F	Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, 866
V	Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, 2452

Taking these manuscripts in reverse order, V is a slim codex of only 15 folios that is concerned with astronomy and some related geographical knowledge.⁴ Fol. 1r–14r were written by one hand, roughly datable to the first half of the fourteenth century, whereas an astrological text on fol. 14v–15r (inc. *Septem planete dicuntur sydera que sunt omnium artium...*) was added later by a second scribe.⁵ Fol. 15v used to be the back cover of the booklet in question. It carries an owner's note showing that the booklet was at one point the property of Andrea Dandolo, who was the Doge of Venice from 1343 to 1354.⁶

The content of V, fol. 1r–14r is replicated with certain additions on fol. 1r–16r of F. This codex of 69 folios is mostly devoted to texts on the quadrivium, which were probably copied in the first half of the fourteenth century. Although the original core of this manuscript was almost certainly written in Italy, its precise origin as well as provenance remain unknown. The main scribal hand detectable on fol. 1r–16r also wrote most of the remaining items, namely: a glossed and diagrammatically illustrated copy of John of Sacrobosco's *Tractatus de spera* (fol. 18ra–23va),⁷ to which is attached an anonymous *Tractatus de planetis* (fol. 23vb–24vb);⁸ a dialogue between a student and a teacher (inc. *Principium omnium rerum est sapientia perfecta...*), which is derived from bk. 1 of Petrus Alfonsi's *Dialogus contra*

⁴ For a description, see TARIF AL SAMMAN, OTTO MAZAL, *Die arabische Welt und Europa: Ausstellung der Handschriften- und Inkunabelsammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek, Handbuch und Katalog; Prunksaal, 20. Mai–16. Oktober 1988*, Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, Graz 1988, p. 294. The authors date V to the thirteenth century, which is probably too early given the content discussed later in this article. Digital images of the manuscript are available at: <https://digital.onb.ac.at/RepViewer/viewer.faces?doc=DTL_6874206&order=1&view=SINGLE> (Accessed Oct. 2024).

⁵ This text also appears in MS Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 6972A, fol. 130va–136rb (s. XVth). See DAVID JUSTE, *Catalogus codicum astrologorum Latinorum*, vol. II: *Les manuscrits astrologiques latins conservés à la Bibliothèque nationale de France à Paris*, CNRS éditions, Paris 2015 (Documents, études et répertoires, 84), p. 70.

⁶ For biographical information, see GIORGIO RAVEGNANI, « Dandolo, Andrea », in ALBERTO MARIA GHISALBERTI (ed.), *Dizionario Biografico degli italiani*, vol. XXXII: *Dall'Anconata–Da Ronco*, Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, Roma 1986, p. 432–440.

⁷ Edition: LYNN THORNDIKE, *The Sphere of Sacrobosco and Its Commentators*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 1949, p. 76–117.

⁸ This text is unedited and seems to be unique to this manuscript.

Iudaeos (fol. 25ra–28ra);⁹ a text on the zodiacal signs, which was mainly excerpted from John of Sacrobosco's *Computus* (fol. 29ra–30rb);¹⁰ Alexander de Villa Dei's *Massa compoti* accompanied by a commentary (fol. 32ra–41r);¹¹ commentaries on passages in John of Sacrobosco's *Computus* concerning the motions of the Sun and Moon (fol. 41ra–43ra);¹² a parallel edition of Alexander de Villa Dei's metrical *Carmen de algorismo* and John of Sacrobosco's prose *Algorismus* (fol. 46va–51vb);¹³ an illustrated treatise on practical geometry, entitled *Ratio terre mensurandi secundum regulas et figuras* (fol. 53ra–57rb);¹⁴ a collection of mathematical problems, entitled *De quibusdam rationibus sive compotis secundum abacum* (fol. 58ra–62va).¹⁵ Other than the text texts just mentioned, *F* received numerous augmentations by later fourteenth-century hands (e.g., astronomical tables on fol. 16v–17r, 30v–31, 44v–45) as well as copious annotations from different scribes, some of which are in Castilian rather than Latin (e.g., fol. 10v–12r).

The third manuscript in this group, *E*, only dates from the latter half of the fifteenth century and is a slim codex comprising 52 folios.¹⁶ It begins with treatises on the construction and use of the astrolabe originally written by Christannus of Prachatic in Prague in 1407 and here wrongly attributed to Prosdócimo de' Beldomandi (fol. 1r–22v).¹⁷ They are followed by a fourteenth-century text on

⁹ PETRUS ALFONSI, *Dialogus*, bk. 1.109–144, ed. and trans. CARMEN CARDELLE DE HARTMANN, DARKO SENEKOVIC, THOMAS ZIEGLER, PETER STOTZ, SISMELE–Edizioni del Galluzzo, Firenze 2018 (Millennio Medievale, 116), p. 60–88: « Cum Deum esse per scripturas ... | ... undique fulcit probatio. »

¹⁰ JOHN OF SACROBOSCO, *Nova computi compilatio*, c. 5, in *Opera de computo a tempore post Gerlandum usque ad Iohannem de Sacrobosco*, ed. ALFRED LOHR, Brepols, Turnhout 2025 (Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis, 272A), p. 651–655 (ll. 85–161).

¹¹ For printed editions of the *Massa compoti*, see ROBERT STEELE, *Opera hactenus inedita Rogeri Baconi*, vol. VI: *Computus Fratris Rogeri*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1926, p. 268–283; WALTER ÉMILE VAN WIJK, *Le Nombre d'Or: étude de chronologie technique suivie du texte de la Massa compoti d'Alexandre de Villedieu*, Nijhoff, La Haye 1936, p. 52–64.

¹² The lemmata commented upon are: JOHN OF SACROBOSCO, *Nova computi compilatio*, c. 7, 14–17, 22, ed. LOHR, p. 661 (ll. 17–18), 684 (ll. 20–21), 685 (l. 50), 691 (l. 22), 692 (l. 2), 693 (l. 2), 705 (l. 2)..

¹³ John of Sacrobosco's *Algorismus* was last printed in FRITZ S. PEDERSEN (ed.), *Petri Philomenae de Dacia et Petri de S. Audomaro Opera quadrivialia*, vol. I: *Opera Petri Philomenae*, Gad, Copenhagen 1983 (Corpus philosophorum Danicorum Medii Aevi, 10.1), p. 174–201. On the *Carmen de algorismo*, see NADIA AMBROSETTI, « Algorithmic in the 12th Century: The Carmen de Algorismo by Alexander de Villa Dei », in FABIA GADDUCCI, MIRKO TAVOSANIS (eds.), *History and Philosophy of Computing: Third International Conference, HaPoC 2015, Pisa, Italy, October 8–11, 2015, Revised Selected Papers*, Springer, Cham 2016, p. 71–86.

¹⁴ This text is unedited and seems to be unique to this manuscript.

¹⁵ This text is unedited and seems to be unique to this manuscript.

¹⁶ For a description, see NEIL RIPLEY KER, *Medieval Manuscripts in British Libraries*, vol. II: *Abbotsford–Keele*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1977, p. 569–570.

¹⁷ Critical editions of both texts appear in: ALENA HADRAVOVÁ, PETR HADRAVA (eds.), *Křišťan z Prachatic: Stavba a užití astrolábu*, Filosofia, Praha 2001. See also PETR HADRAVA, ALENA HADRAVOVÁ, « Christannus de Prachaticz's Treatises on the Astrolabe », in FILIPPOMARIA PONTANI (ed.), *Certissima*

fractional calculation, the *Algorismus de minutiis* of Jean de Lignères (fol. 22v–30v).¹⁸ Almost the entire remainder of the codex, from fol. 31r to fol. 52r, is taken up by texts, tables, and diagrams that are also found in *F*, fol. 1r–16r. This holds true with the single exception of an unfinished diagram in the top half of fol. 50v and a table for the solar declination on fol. 51r.¹⁹ A paper slip placed before fol. 1r and a note on the verso of the final page (fol. 52v) inform us that *E* was at one point the property of Federico Delfino (1477–1547), who taught mathematics (including astronomy/astrology) at the University of Padua from 1520 to 1547.²⁰ It is known that Delfino spent an earlier part of his career practicing medicine in Venice, which raises the unresolved question of his relations to the famous Delfin or Dolfin family, which belonged to Venice's ancient nobility. A Venetian connection is evident in the case of *V*, whose provenance from the collection of Andrea Dandolo has already been noted. This leads us to the interesting possibility that at least two of the three manuscripts considered here originated in the Republic of Venice, which may be relevant to explaining the transmission of some of their shared content to (Northern) Italy, a point to be considered at the end of this study.

Codices *FV* open with the same pairing of texts on the astrolabe, which are here both claimed to be Arabic-to-Latin translations by « John of Spain » (*Iohannes Yspanus*). The first text is a manual on how to construct an astrolabe, whose opening words seem to imply that its content was taught or dictated by John, the supposed translator (inc. *Dixit Iohannes: Cum volueris facere astrolabium accipe auricalcum optimum...*).²¹ Other than in *F* (fol. 1ra–6va), *E* (fol. 31r–40r), and *V* (fol. 1r–5v), it has been preserved in at least five other manuscripts:

signa: A Venice Conference on Greek and Latin Astronomical Texts, Edizioni Ca' Foscari, Venezia 2017 (Antichistica, 13; Filologia e letteratura, 2), p. 295–312.

¹⁸ Edition: HUBERTUS L. L. BUSARD, *Het rekenen met breuken in de middleleeuwen, in het bijzonder bij Johannes de Lineriis*, Paleis der Academiën, Brussel 1968 (Mededelingen van de Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België, Klasse der Wetenschappen, Jaargang 30, nr. 7), p. 21–36.

¹⁹ Heading: *Tabula declinationis solis verificata que est distancia eius ab equinoctiali secundum Albategni*. The table was computed to a precision of minutes for an obliquity of the ecliptic of 23;33°. Contrary to what is stated in the heading, it does not go back to al-Battānī (who used 23;35°, see n. 144 below), but instead resembles BA21 in *The Toledan Tables*, ed. FRITZ S. PEDERSEN, 4 vols., Reitzel, Copenhagen 2002 (Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, Historisk-filosofiske Skrifter, 24), vol. III, p. 964 (for 23;33,30°).

²⁰ CONCETTA BIANCA, « Delfino (Dolfin), Federico », in ALBERTO MARIA GHISALBERTI (ed.), *Dizionario Biografico degli italiani*, vol. XXXVI: *De Fornari-Della Fonte*, Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, Roma 1988, p. 552–554.

²¹ Partially edited in JOSÉ MARÍA MILLÁS VALLICROSA, *Las traducciones orientales en los manuscritos de la Biblioteca Catedral de Toledo*, CSIC, Madrid 1942, p. 322–327, from MS Toledo, Archivo y Biblioteca Capitulares, 98–27, fol. 35r–48v (s. XV). See PAUL KUNITZSCH, « Glossar der arabischen Fachausdrücke in der mittelalterlichen europäischen Astrolabliteratur », *Nachrichten der*

1. Fermo, Biblioteca Civica 'Romolo Spezioli', 85, fol. 99rb–106rb (s. XIII^{2/2})
2. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Canon. Misc. 340, fol. 49r–54r (attr. to John of Seville; s. XIV)
3. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 7293A, fol. 1r–14v (s. XIII/XIV)
4. Toledo, Archivo y Biblioteca Capitulares, 98–27, fol. 35r–48v (s. XV)
5. Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolic Vaticana, Vat. lat. 4087, fol. 74v–80v (s. XV^{1/4})

The second text is a Latin translation of a well-known treatise on astrolabe use by the Andalusian astronomer Ibn al-Šaffār (d. 1035), which has been transmitted much more frequently than the preceding text on construction (inc. *Primum capitulum in invention astrolabii...*).²² In addition to F (fol. 6va–12ra), E (fol. 40r–48v), and V (fol. 5v–10r), the entire text of this translation or substantial excerpts from it can be found in the following manuscripts:

1. Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, 634, fol. 32r–40v (s. XV^{1/2})
2. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, lat. fol. 62, fol. 218r–226v (s. XIV)
3. Cambridge, Clare College, 15, fol. 24ra–29ra (s. XIII^{2/2})
4. Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, McClean 165, fol. 48v (c. 23, 37; s. XII^{4/4})
5. Cambridge, St John's College, F.25, fol. 61v–69v (s. XIII/XIV)
6. Cambridge, University Library, Kk 1.1, fol. 112ra–117vb (s. XIII^{1/2})
7. Erfurt, Universitätsbibliothek, Dep. Erf. CA 4° 363, fol. 95vb–97ra (c. 14–17, 19, 21–23, 25–26, 28, 34–35, 37–40; s. XIII/XIV)
8. Erfurt, Universitätsbibliothek, Dep. Erf. CA 4° 369, fol. 183vb–184ra (excerpts; s. XIV^{1/2}), fol. 241ra–va (c. 21; s. XIV^{1/2})
9. Fermo, Biblioteca Civica 'Romolo Spezioli', 85, fol. 87vb–94vb (c. 1–beginning of c. 36; XIII^{2/2})
10. London, Wellcome Library, 19, fol. 95ra–102v (a. 1332)
11. Madrid, Biblioteca nacional de España, 10053, fol. 112ra–117vb (s. XIII^{med})
12. Manchester, John Rylands Library, 67, fol. 255r–261r (s. XV^{1/2})

Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, phil.-hist. Kl., 1982/11, p. 455–571 (488); RICHARD LORCH, « The Treatise on the Astrolabe by Rudolf of Bruges », in LODI NAUTA, ARJO VANDERJAGT (eds.), *Between Demonstration and Imagination: Essays in the History of Science and Philosophy Presented to John D. North*, Brill, Leiden 1999 (Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, 96), p. 55–100 (93–95); C. PHILIPP E. NOTHAFT, « The *Liber Theoremacie* (1214) and the Early History of the *Quadrans Vetus* », *Journal for the History of Astronomy*, 51 (2020), p. 51–74 (61); SAMÓS, *On Both Sides*, p. 413–414.

²² Edited in MILLÁS VALLICROSA, *Las traducciones*, p. 261–284, from MS Madrid, Biblioteca nacional de España, 10053, fol. 112ra–117vb (s. XIII^{med}) and (for c. 1) MS Toledo, Archivo y Biblioteca Capitulares, 98–27, fol. 48v–49r (s. XV). See JOSÉ MARÍA MILLÁS VALLICROSA, « Los primeros tratados de astrolabio en la España árabe », *Revista del Instituto Egipcio de Estudios Islámicos en Madrid*, 3 (1955), p. 35–49 (40–49); KUNITZSCH, « Glossar », p. 486–487; SAMÓS, *On Both Sides*, p. 376–377.

13. New York, Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Smith Western Add. MS 06, fol. 29r–44r (s. XIII/XIV)
14. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Canon. Misc. 340, fol. 54va–56rb (excerpts, c. 13, 15–17, 24–27, 30–32, 38, 40; s. XIV)
15. Oxford, Bodleian Library, Selden supra 76, fol. 37v (c. 39; s. XIII^{2/2})
16. Oxford, Merton College, 259, fol. 48r–53r (s. XIII^{1/2})
17. Oxford, St John's College, 188, fol. 97ra–98rb, 99ra–102ra (c. 2–17, 19, 21–23, 25–26, 28, 34–35, 37–40, 33; s. XIII/XIV)
18. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 7293A, fol. 16v–25v (s. XIV)
19. Pommersfelden, Gräfllich Schönbornsche Bibliothek, 66 (2640), fol. 34ra–47ra (s. XIII^{1/2})
20. Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Math. 4° 33, fol. 49r (c. 19; s. XII^{2/2})²³
21. Toledo, Archivo y Biblioteca Capitulares, 98–27, fol. 48v–49r (c. 1; s. XV)
22. Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 1285, fol. 1ra–8rb (s. XIII^{1/2})
23. Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 3133, fol. 55r–v (end of c. 37–c. 40; s. XIV)
24. Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 4087, fol. 62r–71r (s. XV^{1/4})

The translation of the use treatise is widely and plausibly ascribed to John of Seville (*Iohannes Hispalensis*), who was active in the 1120s and 1130s.²⁴ It is less clear that this John was also the author or translator of the treatise on construction, especially given the separate existence of a translator of the mid-twelfth century named John of Spain (*Iohannes Hispanus*).²⁵ Our three manuscripts differ from other witnesses on the above two lists in the way they treat the texts on astrolabe

²³ See IRENE CAIAZZO, CHARLES BURNETT, « New Manuscripts of *On the Astrolabe* by Raymond of Marseilles », *Scriptorium*, 65 (2011), p. 338–349 (342–343).

²⁴ On this translator, see MANUEL ALONSO ALONSO, « Juan Sevillano: sus obras propias y sus traducciones », *Al-Andalus*, 18 (1953), p. 17–49; MAUREEN ROBINSON, « The Heritage of Medieval Errors in the Latin Manuscripts of *Iohannes Hispalensis* (John of Seville) », *Al-Qanṭara*, 28 (2007), p. 41–71; CHARLES BURNETT, « John of Seville and John of Spain: A *mise au point* », *Bulletin de philosophie médiévale*, 44 (2002), p. 59–78; ID., « Introduction: John of Seville and Limia », in CHARLES BURNETT, PEDRO MANTAS-ESPAÑA (eds.), « *Ex Oriente Lux* »: *Translating Words, Scripts and Styles in Medieval Mediterranean Society; Selected Papers*, UCOPress, Córdoba 2016 (*Arabica Veritas*, 2), p. 11–17; DAG NIKOLAUS HASSE, « Stylistic Evidence for Identifying John of Seville with the Translator of Some Twelfth-Century Astrological and Astronomical Texts from Arabic into Latin on the Iberian Peninsula », in CHARLES BURNETT, PEDRO MANTAS-ESPAÑA (eds.), « *Ex Oriente Lux* »: *Translating Words, Scripts and Styles in Medieval Mediterranean Society; Selected Papers*, UCOPress, Córdoba 2016 (*Arabica Veritas*, 2), p. 19–43.

²⁵ See BURNETT, « John of Seville », p. 75–76, who notes stylistic similarities between the construction treatise and the *Epitome totius astrologiae*, whose attribution to John of Seville is very likely to be spurious.

construction and use as one unified composition, which they introduce with the following title: *Liber astrolabii editus a magistro Iohanne Yspano interprete quem translatauit de Arabico in Latino* (F, fol. 1ra; V, fol. 1r; E, fol. 31r, where *Latino* is corrected to *Latinum*). The copy in *E* qualifies this to some extent, as it also inserts a colophon differentiating between the construction part (*canones compositivi*) and the use part (*canones operativi*) contained in the overall work (E, fol. 40v):

Expliciunt canones compositivi astrolabii quos Ioannes Yspanus transtulit de Arabico in Latinum. Et sequuntur hos canones operativi, ut vides.

The scribe responsible for this *explicit* was evidently confused about where to place it and ended up writing it only after the opening chapter of the use treatise. This error stems from the fact that his exemplar identified the said opening chapter as a *Recapitulatio*, as is evident from the chapter headings preserved in *F* (fol. 6va: *Recapitulatio primum capitulum*) and *V* (fol. 5v: *Recapitulatio I capitulum in mentione astrolabii et omnium super illud cadentium*). In *E*, the same heading reads *Recapitulatio totius operis* (fol. 40v), thus suggesting that the chapter in question still belongs to the preceding treatise on construction.

F's copy of the construction treatise incorporates a table showing the declinations and mediations (in whole degrees) of 29 astrolabe stars. It is written across the two columns of fol. 6r, where it separates the text's instructions on how to make the instrument's suspension rings from the chapter describing the hour-lines on its alidade. The column for the degrees of the mediation is misleadingly labelled *hic est locus stellarum 12 signorum*, making it seem as if the numbers within it referred to each star's ecliptic longitude. *E* places its version of the same table on the page that follows the aforementioned colophon (fol. 41r), allowing it to serve as a divider between the construction and use parts distinguished in this manuscript. It is different in *V*, where the star table only appears several pages after the two astrolabe texts (fol. 13v), being separated from them by the two tabular lists of geographic coordinates that are discussed below.

According to Paul Kunitzsch's 1966 classification, the table in question represents a unique type within the wider tradition of Latin star tables, which probably depends on a separate Arabic source.²⁶ Other than in *EFV*, it has so far only been found, in a somewhat altered form, in MS Oxford, Bodleian Library, Canon. Misc. 340, fol. 54r (s. XIV), which codex is a witness to both astrolabe treatises contained in our three manuscripts. The position of the star table here resembles that in *E*, as the page containing it intervenes between the end of the

²⁶ See PAUL KUNITZSCH, *Typen von Sternverzeichnissen in astronomischen Handschriften des zehnten bis vierzehnten Jahrhunderts*, Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden 1966, p. 31–33, who knew *V* and the Oxford manuscript and considered the table to belong to the construction treatise.

construction treatise (fol. 49r–53v) and some chapters that were excerpted from the use treatise (fol. 54v–56r).

The recension of the use treatise in *EFV* divides the text into 42 chapters as opposed to the 40 chapters counted in certain earlier copies, such as MS Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 1285, fol. 1ra–8rb (s. XIII^{1/2}), and MS Madrid, Biblioteca nacional de España, 10053, fol. 112ra–117vb (s. XIII^{med}). A further peculiarity concerns the final chapter, which normally offers instructions on how to compute the day of the week in the Julian calendar (based on a calendrical diagram), followed by some remarks on the equivalent date in the Arabic calendar for 1 January in certain years between 1023 and 1036.²⁷ The recension in *EFV* omits the second half of the chapter involving the Arabic calendar. In *EF*, the chapter accordingly ends with this sentence, which refers to a Mozarabic custom of inserting the Julian bissextile day in December: *Tunc scies quia December, qui est novissimus mensium, erit eodem anno ex 32 diebus* (F, fol. 12va; E, fol. 48v, which has *quod* for *quia*). V concludes one sentence earlier, with *Et scies annum bisextilem cum fuerit sub anno scripto in circulo tertio bissextus* (V, fol. 10r), which is one of multiple indicators that neither *F* nor *E* depend on it.

Another astrolabe-related item that occurs in all three manuscripts is a brief text beginning *Astrologie speculationis exercitium habere volentibus* (F, fol. 14v; V, fol. 14r; E, fol. 50r), which has the character of a prologue. Most of it comments on the significance of the name « astrolabium » as well as the instrument's various purposes, after which was supposed to follow an explanation of its method of operation. Rather than moving on to this topic, the text before us attaches a paraphrase of a passage in Cicero's *Cato Maior de senectute* and a quote from Macrobius's commentary on the *Somnium Scipionis* in Cicero's *De re publica*, which appear together in this form in a thirteenth-century commentary on Peter of Spain's *Summule logicales*.²⁸ The resulting text runs as follows:²⁹

Astrologie speculationis exercitium habere volentibus huius instrumenti ratio naturali quodam³⁰ ordine primitus occurrit investiganda. Nullius enim artis

²⁷ IBN AL-ŠAFFĀR, *On the Uses of the Astrolabe*, trans. JOHN OF SEVILLE, c. 40, in MILLÁS VALLICROSA, *Las traducciones*, p. 284. See SAMSÓ, *On Both Sides*, p. 377.

²⁸ LAMBERTUS M. DE RIJK, « On the Genuine Text of Peter of Spain's *Summule logicales* », *Vivarium*, 7 (1969), p. 8–61 (11); STEN EBBESEN, « A New Version of 'Robertus Anglicus' on Peter of Spain », *Cahiers de l'Institut du Moyen-Âge Grec et Latin*, 90 (2021), p. 384–500 (425–426). The sources quoted are M. TULLIUS CICERO, *Cato maior de senectute* 21.77, ed. J. G. F. POWELL, *De re publica* [etc.], Oxford University Press, Oxford 2006, p. 310; AMBROSIIUS THEODOSIUS MACROBIUS, *Commentarii in Somnium Scipionis* 1.8.3, ed. JAMES WILLIS, 2nd ed. (repr.), Teubner, Stuttgart 1994, p. 37, ll. 7–9.

²⁹ The following edition follows *F* while using the notes to record variants in *EV* as well as some errors in *F*.

³⁰ quodam] quodam modo V

noticiam sive exercitium sine proprio et convenienti³¹ instrumento quemquam habere posse³² manifestum est. Sed quia astrologie dum³³ instrumentum est astrolabium, primo videndum est quid sit³⁴ astrolabium et unde dicatur et quid³⁵ sit eius utilitas et de modo operacionis³⁶ per ipsum.

Est igitur³⁷ astrolabium tabula³⁸ plana in modum celestis spere circulis, colluris,³⁹ axe et ceteris que in spera maiori continentur insignita. Dicitur autem astrolabium quia sicut labia intra se continent naturalia instrumenta vocis, ita astrolabium motus in se continet⁴⁰ celestium corporum; vel, sicut quibusdam placet, astrolabium dicitur ab⁴¹ « astrorum lapsus ». Unde dicitur astrolapsus a quibusdam quia astrorum representat ortus et occasus.

Utilitas vero eius iocunda est⁴² et delectabilis, quia non solum hore diei et noctis equales vel inequales secundum augmentum vel decrementum dierum vel noccium⁴³ per illud inveniuntur,⁴⁴ verum etiam⁴⁵ ortus et occasus siderum,⁴⁶ altitudo stellarum fixarum, loca planetarum, longitudo et latitudo terreni⁴⁷ ambitus orbis et geometralium⁴⁸ disciplinarum seu aliorum, que pene numerum et ingenium nostrum ad presens excedunt, perutilis habetur certitudo, que omnia quantum alliciunt animum scrutantis nemo quis ingenii in hiis⁴⁹ haberet⁵⁰ exercitacionem facile advertere potest. Hiis habitis, videndum est de nominibus super illud accidentibus, ut hiis primo memorie commendatis⁵¹ que in sequentibus⁵² dicenda sicut de facili comprehendantur.⁵³

³¹ convenienti] conveniente F

³² posse] *om.* E

³³ dum] *lege* certum

³⁴ sit] est E

³⁵ quid] que EV

³⁶ operacionis] operandi V

³⁷ igitur] enim E

³⁸ tabula] tabulla E

³⁹ colluris] coluris EV

⁴⁰ in ... continet] continet in se E

⁴¹ ab] quasi V

⁴² iocunda est] est iocunda V

⁴³ dierum ... noccium] diei vel noctis V

⁴⁴ inveniuntur] invenitur E inveniunt V

⁴⁵ etiam] *eciam* E

⁴⁶ siderum] syderum E

⁴⁷ terreni] terre in E

⁴⁸ geometralium] geumetralium EV

⁴⁹ in hiis] *om.* E

⁵⁰ haberet] haberent F

⁵¹ commendatis] commendaris E

⁵² sequentibus] sequenti E

⁵³ comprehendantur] comprehenduntur E

Tullius in libro de senectute⁵⁴ ait⁵⁵ ob hoc nobis animus ex altissimo Dei domicilio datus est, ut celestium motus et ordines contemplaremur et contemplando sequeremur. Idem libro de sompno: illos liquet esse sapientes qui superna tota mentis⁵⁶ acie requirunt et quesita sagaci diligencia comprehendunt.

The two Ciceronian quotes are clearly extraneous to the preceding prologue on the astrolabe, which is otherwise attested as the opening portion of a treatise on astrolabe use. Differing recensions of this treatise are attested in the following manuscripts, which all date from the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries:

1. Bergamo, Biblioteca Civica Angelo Mai, MA 388 (Sigma II 2), fol. 76r–85r (attr. to Robert Grosseteste; s. XV^{2/2})
2. Cracow, Biblioteka Jagiellońska, 813, fol. 174rb–178vb (s. XIV^{2/2})
3. Erfurt, Universitätsbibliothek, Dep. Erf. CA 4° 386, fol. 110v–115v (attr. to John of Seville; s. XIV^{med})
4. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 7292, fol. 292va–296vb (attr. to John of Seville; s. XV^{med})
5. Prague, Národní knihovna České republiky, XIII.F.24, fol. 82ra–87vb (s. XIV)
6. Salamanca, Biblioteca Universitaria, 2353, fol. 13rb–15vb (s. XIV)
7. Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 1381, fol. 221r–226r (s. XIV/XIV).

Barring some negligible variations, the opening sentences of this text are practically identical with the prologue attested in *EFV* up to *de facili comprehendantur*. However, *EFV* share an error with regards to the penultimate sentence, where the clause *que omnia quantum alliciunt animum scrutantis nemo quis ingenii in hiis haberet exercitacionem facile advertere potest* should have read *que omnia quantum alliciunt animum scrutantis nemo nisi qui ingenii in hiis haberet exercitacionem facile advertere potest* (« how much all these things attract the mind of the investigator, no one can easily notice unless they have exercised their intellect in these matters »).⁵⁷ This seems to rule out that the text in *EFV* represents some original nucleus of the prologue in question. Rather, we are dealing with a slightly corrupted excerpt from the use treatise found in the seven manuscripts just listed. The latter closely resembles the use treatise by Ibn al-Šaffār in John of Seville's translation, not least by featuring nearly the same opening chapter after the prologue. Some of the other chapters, however, show greater similarities with the

⁵⁴ senectute] senetute *E*

⁵⁵ ait] *om. V*

⁵⁶ mentis] metis *F*; mente *E*

⁵⁷ As seen, e.g., from MS Erfurt, Universitätsbibliothek, Dep. Erf. CA 4° 386, fol. 110v.

popular *Practica astrolabii* of pseudo- Māshā'allāh (inc. *Nomina instrumentorum sunt hec...*), which was itself based on this translation.⁵⁸

It seems worth noting, moreover, that a similar prologue to the one quoted above precedes a concise treatise on astrolabe construction,⁵⁹ which the thirteenth-century *Speculum astronomiae* identifies as another translation by John of Seville.⁶⁰ This text is much shorter than the construction treatise in *EFV* beginning *Dixit Iohannes* and may in part depend on it. Its extant witnesses include the following, some of which come without the prologue in question:

1. Edinburgh, Royal Observatory, Crawford Collection, Cr. 5.14, fol. 7ra–vb (s. XIII^{2/2})
2. Göttingen, Niedersächsische Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, Theol. 124, fol. 143va–145ra (no prologue; s. XIV^{1/2})
3. London, Wellcome Library, 19, fol. 102va–104va (a. 1332)
4. Madrid, Biblioteca nacional de España, 10009, fol. 18rb–20rb (s. XIII^{2/2})
5. Madrid, Biblioteca nacional de España, 10063, fol. 12ra–13ra (s. XIII^{4/4})
6. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 28229, fol. 67r–69v (s. XIV^{1/2})
7. New York, Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Smith Western Add. MS 06, fol. 44v–47r (s. XIII^{2/2})
8. Oxford, Merton College, 259, fol. 89v–90v (s. XIII^{1/2})
9. Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, 879, fol. 48v–51v (s. XIII/XIV)
10. Pommersfelden, Gräflisch Schönbornsche Bibliothek, 66 (2640), fol. 106ra–109rb (attr. to John of Seville; s. XIII^{1/2})
11. Prague, Národní knihovna České republiky, XIII.F.24, fol. 87vb–90ar (without prologue; s. XIV)
12. Salamanca, Biblioteca Universitaria, 2353, fol. 3va–4va (attr. to Hermann of Reichenau; s. XIV)

⁵⁸ Edition: RON B. THOMSON (ed.), *Pseudo-Māshā'allāh: On the Astrolabe*, vol. IV: *Practica*, version 1.7 (Toronto, 2022) <<https://shareok.org/handle/11244/14221.3>> (Accessed Oct. 2024). See PAUL KUNITZSCH, « On the Authenticity of the Treatise on the Composition and Use of the Astrolabe Ascribed to Messahalla », *Archives Internationales d'Histoire des Sciences*, 31 (1981), p. 42–62 (48–56); ID., « Glossar », p. 501–502; WILBUR R. KNORR, « Sacrobosco's *Quadrans*: Date and Sources », *Journal for the History of Astronomy*, 28 (1997), p. 187–222 (200–212).

⁵⁹ Edited in Millás Vallicrosa, *Las traducciones*, p. 316–321, from MS Madrid, Biblioteca nacional de España, 10009, fol. 18rb–20rb (s. XIII^{2/2}). See KUNITZSCH, « Glossar », p. 496–497.

⁶⁰ *Speculum astronomiae*, c. 2, ed. STEFANO CAROTI, MICHELA PEREIRA, STEFANO ZAMPONI, PAOLA ZAMBELLI, in PAOLA ZAMBELLI, *The Speculum Astronomiae and Its Enigma: Astrology, Theology and Science in Albertus Magnus and his Contemporaries*, Kluwer, Dordrecht 1992 (Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science, 135), p. 218: « Sunt praeterea libri necessarii de hac parte scientiae, qui per viam narrationis demonstrationem planisphaerii imitantur, ut est ille quem transtulit Ioannes Hispalensis, qui sic incipit: Astrologicae speculationis etc. » The same passage mentions John of Seville's translation of Ibn al-Ṣaffār use treatise, which suggests that the author had seen a manuscript in which the two texts followed each other.

13. Salamanca, Biblioteca Universitaria, 2353, fol. 12ra–13rb (without prologue; s. XIV)
14. Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. lat. 276, fol. 51r–56v (a. 1473)
15. Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 1285, fol. 36ra–38rb (s. XIII^{1/2})
16. Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 3114, fol. 75r–77v (s. XIII/XIV)

The opening portion of this text once again bears a close resemblance to the prologue in *EFV* up to the words *representat ortus et occasus*, the difference being that here the words in question serve to introduce a discussion of astrolabe construction rather than use. To make this relationship clearer, I shall quote the beginning of the construction treatise as found in one of the earliest known witnesses, MS Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 1285, fol. 36ra (s. XIII^{1/2}). Wording shared with the prologue as it appears in *EFV* is italicized:

Astrologice speculationis exercitium habere volentibus ratione naturali quodam ordine primitus occurrit investiganda. Nullius enim artis exercitium absque proprio et convenienti sibi instrumento quemquam habere posse manifestum est. Sed quia astrologie instrumentum fore certum est astrolabium, ipsius constitutionis apertissima ex libris Ptolomei aliorumque quorundam astrologorum collecta in hoc brevi opusculo dabimus documenta. Cuius talis est nominis interpretatio. Astrolabium dicitur quasi astrorum labium, per similitudinem dictum. Sicut enim labia infra se claudunt naturalia instrumenta vocis, ita astrolabium in se motus celestium continet corporum; vel, ut quibusdam placet, astrolapsus, id est, astrorum lapsus, quia eorum representat ortus et occasus.

It seems reasonable to suppose that the prologue beginning *Astrologi(c)e speculationis exercitium habere volentibus* originated in the form just quoted and was subsequently detached from the construction treatise to be remodelled into the opening of a use treatise.

In addition to the astrolabe-related material discussed so far, *F* and *V* also share the following content, which I shall discuss in more detail below:

- A table of the geographic longitudes and latitudes of 95 locations as allegedly found (*sicut continetur*) in the *liber algerafien*, i.e., in the *Book of Geography* (*F*, fol. 12va–13ra; *V*, fol. 10v–12r).
- A second set of tables of geographic coordinates showing the longitudes and latitudes of 63 locations (*F*, fol. 12ra–b; *V*, fol. 12r–13r).

- A gnomonic table showing the solar azimuth and the length of a shadow for each completed seasonal hour at the summer and winter solstice, as valid for a northern latitude of 36°, here identified with Tunis (F, fol. 15r; V, fol. 14r).

While F, fol. 1r–16r replicate the entire content of V, fol. 1r–14r, the former manuscript as well as E preserve some additional material not found in V. This includes a brief text on the seven geographic climates and their determination through altitude measurements (F, fol. 13v: *Climatum autem divisio et distinctio per quadrantem poterit habere per hunc modum...*). It assumes the same boundaries between the climates as does John of Sacrobosco's popular *Tractatus de spera*, which appears later in the same manuscript (fol. 18ra–23va).⁶¹ The text is accompanied by numerical tables showing for each degree of latitude within the seven climates the maximum daytime length (in hours and minutes) and the cumulative extent in terrestrial miles. It extends from 12° to 50° and implicitly equates one degree of terrestrial latitude with a length of 87.5 miles, which is rooted in the classical Eratosthenian estimate for the circumference of the Earth (252,000 stades = 31,500 miles).

The text and table on the climates appear in E on fol. 49r–v, where they are accompanied by a drawing of an astrolabe's rete (fol. 49r). A note that was left on fol. 38r shows that this drawing had originally been intended to appear on the latter page, in the context of the construction treatise on fol. 31r–40v (*figura que deberet esse in hoc spatio est descripta in 49^a carta supra tabulas climatum*). It was presumably moved to a later page because of a lack of adequate drawing space on fol. 38r. F shows this drawing in its original context (fol. 5ra), but in an unfinished version that lacks most of the star pointers and inscriptions. The more fully executed state of this drawing in E would seem to indicate that, despite all similarities, that relevant parts of E are not an apograph of F.

Also included in F is an unusual astronomical table that shows the altitude of the Sun as a function of (i) the twelve unequal hours of daylight and (ii) the noon altitude (F, fol. 14r). There are accordingly ninety rows of entries for the ninety full degrees of solar noon altitude.⁶² Its entries do not seem related with those in the gnomonic table for Tunis, which will be discussed below. The latter table as well as the previously discussed prologue on the astrolabe (F, fol. 14v: *Astrologie speculationis exertitium habere volentibus...*) both appear in F in the context of a four-page sequence of detailed and well-executed technical drawings (F, fol. 14v–16r). Leaving aside a few geometrical sketches on fol. 15v, these drawings include the

⁶¹ JOHN OF SACROBOSCO, *Tractatus de spera*, c. 3, ed. THORNDIKE, p. 111–112.

⁶² This table bears no close resemblance to a table for the same purpose edited in *The Toledan Tables*, ed. PEDERSEN, vol. III, p. 1136–1138 (BM13), which begins at a noon altitude of 10°, showing altitudes in steps of 0;30° and times in steps of 0;15h.

following: (i) a drawing of the rete of an ordinary astrolabe (*F*, fol. 14v); (ii) two construction drawings with added degree scales for inscribing azimuths and almucantars on an astrolabe's horizon plates (*F*, fol., 14v–15r; *E*, fol. 52r); (iii); a construction drawing with degree scales for a horizontal sundial (*F*, fol. 15r; *E*, fol. 52r); (iv) two drawings showing the inscriptions on the face of an universal astrolabe in the style of Ibn al-Zarqālluh's *ṣaḥīḥa shakkāziyya* (*F*, fol. 15v–16r; *E*, fol. 50r–v).⁶³

E (fol. 50r–v, 52r) contains four of these six drawings, as it omits the astrolabe's rete and the diagram for the almucantars (found in *F* on facing pages, fol. 14v–15r). Its renditions of the remaining ones are on the whole very similar to those in *F*, suggesting that both sets of drawings faithfully represent the content of a lost archetype.

III. Two coordinate tables

The two tables of geographic coordinates that are included in *F* on fol. 12r–13r and in *V* on fol. 10v–12r are both very unusual in a Latin context and have so far not been found in any other manuscript.⁶⁴ Their primary focus is on locations in Iberia and North Africa (including Egypt), although they both also include a selection of cities or regions in Italy, the Levant, and the Arabian Peninsula. Their relatively broad coverage of North Africa explains why both tables as they appear in *V* were included in the *Monumenta cartographica Africae et Aegypti*, published between 1926 and 1951 and financed by the Egyptian prince Yusuf Kamal (1882–1965). Their

⁶³ On this type, see ROSER PUIG, « Concerning the *Ṣaḥīḥa Shakkāziyya* », *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften*, 2 (1985), p. 123–139; ID., *Al-Šakkāziyya: Ibn al-Naqqāš al-Zarqālluh*, Instituto « Millás Vallicrosa » de Historia de la Ciencia Árabe, Barcelona 1986; SAMSÓ, *On Both Sides*, p. 450–453.

⁶⁴ On the wider subject of medieval Latin tables of geographic coordinates, see DANA BENNETT DURAND, *The Vienna-Klosterneuburg Map Corpus of the Fifteenth Century: A Study in the Transition from Medieval to Modern Science*, Brill, Leiden 1952, p. 93–113; C. PHILIPP E. NOTHAFT, « A Thirteenth-Century Latin List of Ptolemaic Coordinates », *Mediterranea*, 7 (2022), p. 1–15; ID., « Geographic Longitude in Latin Europe during the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries », *Archive for History of Exact Sciences*, 78 (2024), p. 29–65. For the Islamic world, see 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, Frankfurt am Main 1987 (Veröffentlichungen des Institutes für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften, Reihe A: Texte und Studien, 2); ERIC MERCIER, « Mathematical Geography in the Western Islamic World: Geographical Coordinates of Localities in the al-Maghreb and al-Andalus Localities (9th–18th Centuries) », *Suhayl*, 18 (2020–2021), p. 25–49.

printed edition is there juxtaposed with photographs of the relevant manuscript pages in V.⁶⁵

F features the same two tables in reverse order. The second table in this manuscript (F, fol. 12v–13r), which is the same as the first in V (fol. 10v–12r), contains 95 entries. With the notable exception of the first eight entries, which may have a separate origin, the entries in this table are placed in a mostly consistent order of increasing longitude, starting in the far west and ending in the east. A column to the very left assigns each location to one of the first five climates, which are bands of northern latitude.⁶⁶ These placements suggest overall that the third climate was assumed to begin between 27° and 28° and to end at c.33°, but there is no consistency as to whether latitudes between 37° and 38° still belong to the fourth or already to the fifth climate.

The heading of this table in F is *Latitudo et longitudo regionum sicut continetur in libro algerafien*. In V the same heading appears four times, at the top of each page, but the word *algerafien* is twice (fol. 10v, 11v) misspelled as *algeralien*.⁶⁷ The same word, which is clearly a transliteration from Arabic (*al-jughrāfiyā*), makes an earlier appearance in both manuscripts in the treatise on the uses of the astrolabe by Ibn al-Šaffār. Its chapter on the determination of geographic longitudes contains the following reference to Ptolemy's *Geography*:

Et iam collegit Ptolomeus in libro quem nominavit algerafien collegitque in eo longitudes civitatum cognitarum posuitque latitudinem earum... (F, fol. 9ra–va; V, fol. 8r).⁶⁸

Another mention of this *liber algerafien* appears in the immediately following chapter, which deals with determining the direction (azimuth) of a location of known geographic longitude and latitude (F, fol. 9va; V, fol. 8r).⁶⁹ It would appear, then, that the heading is not germane to the table in question but was added to

⁶⁵ YUSUF KAMAL, *Monumenta Cartographica Africae et Aegypti*, vol. IV: *Époque des portulans, suivie par l'époque des découvertes*, fasc. 1, sin. loc., 1936, p. 1115. Reprinted in FUAT SEZGIN, *European Geographical Tables Based on the Arabic Tradition*, Institut für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften an der Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt am Main 1992 (Islamic Geography, 23), p. 57–60.

⁶⁶ On the climates and their role in ancient and medieval geography, see ERNST HONIGMANN, *Die sieben Klimata und die ΠΟΛΕΙΣ ΕΠΙΣΗΜΟΙ: Eine Untersuchung zur Geschichte der Geographie und Astrologie im Altertum und Mittelalter*, Winter, Heidelberg 1929.

⁶⁷ In KAMAL, *Monumenta*, p. 1115, it is reproduced as *Alg'alien*.

⁶⁸ See IBN AL-ŠAFFĀR, *On the Uses of the Astrolabe*, trans. JOHN OF SEVILLE, c. 26, ed. MILLÁS VALLICROSA, p. 275.

⁶⁹ See IBN AL-ŠAFFĀR, *On the Uses of the Astrolabe*, trans. JOHN OF SEVILLE, c. 27, ed. MILLÁS VALLICROSA, p. 276. For a discussion of the references to the *Geography* in these two passages as well as in some other twelfth-century Latin texts, see PATRICK GAUTIER DALCHÉ, *La Géographie de Ptolémée en Occident (IV^e–XVI^e siècle)*, Brepols, Turnhout 2009 (Terrarum orbis, 9), p. 98–111.

create a link with the book of geographic longitudes and latitudes mentioned in the preceding treatise. This circumstance may also speak in favour of considering the arrangement of the tables in *V* to be closer to the shared archetype, as here the table of coordinates *sicut continetur in libro algerafien* comes immediately after the use treatise, while the second table is introduced with the simpler title *Item alia tabula de eodem*. The scribe of *F* may have found the same arrangement of tables in his exemplar but decided to reverse their order to make the best possible use of manuscript space. Owing to its smaller size, the second table could fit onto the page that contained the end of the use treatise (fol. 12ra), leaving the following page spread (fol. 12v–13r) free to receive the first table with its comparatively larger number of entries (95 vs. 63).

When it comes to the 95 entries contained in the table linked with the *liber algerafien*, it can be observed that of the 72 entries whose locations can be identified with some confidence, almost half (35) are found in North Africa. The Maghreb—as defined by modern-day Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya, plus the city of Ceuta—accounts for most of these (30). Another sizeable cluster of entries belongs to Iberian cities, of which there are at least 14, while most of the remaining places can be found in Italy, the Levant, and the Arabian Peninsula.

An important discovery with regards to the origin of this source was made by Fuat Sezgin (1924–2018), who noticed some decades ago that the first table in *V* resembles a geographic coordinate table included in a *zīj* by Ibn al-Raqqām, a noted Andalusī-Maghribī astronomer.⁷⁰ The *zīj* in question, *al-Zīj al-Shāmil*, was computed for Béjaïa in modern-day Algeria, perhaps as early as 1279–80, but more plausibly around 1290.⁷¹ Besides the *Shāmil zīj*, Ibn al-Raqqām is known to have

⁷⁰ FUAT SEZGIN, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, vol. X: *Mathematische Geographie und Kartographie im Islam und ihr Fortleben im Abendland: Historische Darstellung, Teil 1*, Institut für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften an der Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt am Main 2000, p. 231; ID., *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, vol. XIII: *Mathematische Geographie und Kartographie im Islam und ihr Fortleben im Abendland: Autoren*, Institut für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften an der Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, Frankfurt am Main 2007, p. 394–398. See previously already E. S. KENNEDY, « The Astronomical Tables of Ibn al-Raqqām, a Scientist of Granada », *Zeitschrift für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften*, 11 (1997), p. 35–72 (35–36, 66–67), who credits Sezgin.

⁷¹ A partial edition of this *zīj* appears in MUHAMMAD ‘ABD AL-RAḤMĀN, « Ḥisāb aṭwāl al-kawākib fī al-Zīj al-shāmil fī tahdhīb al-kāmil li-Ibn al-Raqqām », Ph.D. Diss., University of Barcelona 1996, which I have not been able to access. Regarding the date, see SAMSÓ, *On Both Sides*, p. 769. On the author, see JULIO SAMSÓ, « Ibn al-Raqqām, Abū ‘Abd Allāh », in JORGE LIROLA DELGADO (ed.), *Biblioteca de Al-Andalus*, vol. IV: *De Ibn al-Labbāna a Ibn al-Ruyūlī*, Fundación Ibn Tufayl de Estudios Árabes, Almería 2006, p. 440–444; JOSEP CASULLERAS, « Ibn al-Raqqām: Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm ibn ‘Alī ibn Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf al-Mursī al-Andalusī al-Tūnisī al-Awsī ibn al-Raqqām », in THOMAS HOCKEY et al. (eds.), *The Biographical Encyclopedia of Astronomers*, 2nd ed., Springer, New York 2014, p. 1057–1058; JOSÉ BELLVER, JULIO SAMSÓ, « Ibn al-Raqqām on Lunar Parallax », *Suḥayl*, 11 (2012), p. 189–229 (189–193).

authored two other sets of astronomical tables. *Al-Zīj al-Mustawfī*, his most frequently preserved *zīj*, was made for Tunis shortly after 1280–81.⁷² *Al-Zīj al-Qawīm* was likewise originally made for Tunis after 1280–81 but later received revisions for Granada, where Ibn al-Raqqām settled at some point between 1288–89 and 1302 and died in 1315.⁷³

Of the two *zīj*es just mentioned, the first contains a coordinate table for 67 locations, the second for 94 locations.⁷⁴ The table in the *Shāmīl zīj*, which has 97 entries, has been translated into German by Sezgin on the basis of the only known manuscript (MS Istanbul, Kandilli Observatory, 249, copied c.1800).⁷⁵ Using Sezgin's translation as a reference, I have found at least 75 entries in Ibn al-Raqqām's table with a counterpart in the relevant table in FV, which almost always places these locations in the same relative order.⁷⁶ This overlap is less consistent when it comes to the numerical values for longitudes and latitudes shown in both tables, though much of this can be explained with transcription errors in both versions as well as with a downward displacement of the coordinates relative to their place name that affects some entries in the table published by Sezgin.⁷⁷

The following edition of the table *sicut continetur in libro algerafien* takes into account both available witnesses, F and V. It usually follows the readings in F, whose scribe made slightly fewer mistakes when transcribing numbers. Variants in V and occasional emendations are indicated in the footnotes. The six middle columns replicate the columns found in the manuscripts, which are for: (i) the number of the climate in which the location is found; (ii) the name of the location; (iii) the degrees of longitude; (iv) the minutes of longitude; (v) the degrees of latitude; (vi) the minutes of latitude. Added to the left of the core table is a column providing an index number for each entry. A second number placed in square brackets indicates the position of the same entry in the coordinate table of Ibn al-Raqqām *Shāmīl zīj*, as reproduced by Sezgin.⁷⁸ A column to the right has been added to provide, wherever possible, modern identifications of the locations shown in the table. It uses the following country codes: DZ = Algeria, EG = Egyptian, ES =

⁷² JULIO SAMSÓ, « Ibn al-Raqqām's *al-Zīj al-Mustawfī* in MS Rabat National Library 2461 », in NATHAN SIDOLI, GLEN VAN BRUMMELEN (eds.), *From Alexandria, Through Baghdad: Surveys and Studies in the Ancient Greek and Medieval Islamic Mathematical Sciences in Honor of J.L. Berggren*, Springer, Berlin 2014, p. 297–328; ID., *On Both Sides*, p. 770–771.

⁷³ SAMSÓ, *On Both Sides*, p. 769–770.

⁷⁴ On the other two tables, see SAMSÓ, « Ibn al-Raqqām's *al-Zīj al-Mustawfī* », p. 324–325.

⁷⁵ SEZGIN, *Geschichte*, vol. XIII, p. 395–397.

⁷⁶ KENNEDY, « The Astronomical Tables », p. 67, found that only 40 entries in V also appear in the *Shāmīl zīj*, which is too low an estimate.

⁷⁷ This displacement was already suspected by KENNEDY, « The Astronomical Tables », p. 66. It is made a practical certainty if the data are collated with those in the Latin table, which are often more accurate. I do not see on what basis SEZGIN, *Geschichte*, vol. XIII, p. 395, 397, twice characterizes the table in V as « dilettantisch ».

⁷⁸ SEZGIN, *Geschichte*, vol. XIII, p. 395–397.

Spain, IL = Israel, IQ = Iraq, IT = Italy, LB = Lebanon, LY = Libya, MA = Morocco, SA = Saudi Arabia, SD = Sudan, SY = Syria, TN = Tunisia, TR = Turkey, YE = Yemen.

No.							Identification
			Longitudo		Latitudo		
	Climata	Nomina civitatum	Gradus	Minuta	Gradus	Minuta	
1	4	Frequia	36	30	33	0	Ifriqiya (region)
2	4	Esfaquiç	41	0	35	30	Sfax (TN)
3	4	Affrica	42	0	35	30	
4	4	Suçā	41	50	35	50	Sousse (TN)
5	4	Capiç	43	0	34 ⁷⁹	0	Gabès (TN)
6	4	Ierba ⁸⁰	43	30	34	40	Djerba (island, TN)
7	4	Querquena	43	20	35	40	Kerkennah (islands, TN)
8	2	Cuç	48	20	27	0	
9	3	Villa ethiopum	20	15	31	0	
10 [3]	3	Marrochium	21	20	31	30	Marrakesh (MA)
11 [4]	3	Tedeliç	24	0	32	0	Tadla (region, MA)
12 [5]	4	Cadiç	24	0	36	0	Cádiz (ES)
13 [6]	3	Daraa	24	20	28	30	
14 [7]	4	Sale	24	40	33	20	Salé (MA)
15 [8]	4	Calata elmedina ⁸¹	24	40	33	32	
16 [9]	4	Mequineç çeytu	24	50	33	32	Meknes (MA)
17 [10]	4	Feç	25	0	33	40	Fez (MA)
18 [11]	4	Açile	25	34	34	0	Asilah (MA)
19 [12]	4	Tanger	25	0	35	0	Tangier (MA)
20 [13]	4	Cacer abdelcarim ⁸²	25	32	35	25	
21	4	Algeçira dalhadra	25	40	36	36	Algeciras (ES)
22 [15]	4	Sibilia	25	40	37	30	Seville (ES)
23 [18]	4	Septa	26	0	35	20	Ceuta (ES)
24 [16]	4	Saguielmesa ⁸³	26	20	35	20	Sijilmassa (MA)
25	4	Malecha	26	22	36	30	Malaga (ES)
26	4	Corduba ⁸⁴	27	0	38	30	Córdoba (ES)
27 [20]	4	Granada	27	30	37	30	Granada (ES)
28 [21]	4	Almeria	28	36	37	30	Almería (ES)
29 [22]	4	Toledo	28	0	40	0	Toledo (ES)

⁷⁹ 34] 43 V

⁸⁰ Ierba] Ierma V

⁸¹ Calata elmedina] Calamelmedina V

⁸² abdelcarim] abdelçirim V

⁸³ Saguielmesa] Daguielmesa F Saguielmessa V

⁸⁴ Corduba] Cordova V

From Tunis to Venice

30 [23]	4	Maqueda	28	0	30	0	Oujda (MA)(?)
31 [24]	5	Jaen	29	0	38	0	Jaén (ES)
32 [25]	4	Trimse	29 ⁸⁵	30	34	30	Tlemcen (DZ)
33 [26]	4	Mursia ⁸⁶	30	0	37	30	Murcia (ES)
34 [27]	5	Valencia	30	0	39	30	Valencia (ES)
35 [28]	5	Denia	30	0	37	59	Dénia (ES)
36 [29]	3	Ahruna ⁸⁷	30	0	32	0	Oran (DZ)(?)
37 [30]	3	Thaharath ⁸⁸	30	0	32	0	Tiaret (DZ)
38 [31]	5	Xativa	30	20	37	25	Xàtiva (ES)
39 [33]	4	Teneç	32	0	34	0	Ténès (DZ)
40 [34]	3	Castel dehamech ⁸⁹	32	0	33	0	
41 [35]	3	Tabna	32	0	31	0	Tobna (DZ)(?)
42 [36]	5	Tortosa	32	0	37	15	Tortosa (ES)
43 [37]	4	Algeçer	33	0	35	0	Algiers (DZ)
44 [38]	4	Bugia	34	0	36	0	Béjaïa (DZ)
45 [39]	3	Capsa ⁹⁰	35	0	29	0	Gafsa (TN)
46 [40]	3	Touçer	36	0	29	0	Tozeur (TN)
47 [41]	4	Constantina	36	0	35	0	Constantine (DZ)
48 [42]	4	Herca ⁹¹	37	15	34	40	
49 [43]	5	Manorca ⁹²	38	15	39	10	Menorca (island, ES)
50 [44]	4	Elcaroen ⁹³	38	45	36	0	Kairouan (TN)
51 [45]	3	Tacayuç	39	0	28	0	
52 [46]	5	Sicilia palerm	39	8	38 ⁹⁴	0	Palermo (IT)
53 [47]	4	Çubela	41	0	34	0	Zawīla (TN)
54 [48]	3	Capiç	41	0	32	0	Gabès (TN)
55 [49]	4	Sardinia ⁹⁵	41	30	37	30	Sardinia (island, IT)
56 [50]	4	Tuniç ⁹⁶	41	35	36	40	Tunis (TN)
57 [51]	4	Tripol	41	0	34	0	Tripoli (LY)
58 [52]	5	Ienoa ⁹⁷	43	0	39	0	Genoa (IT)
59 [53]	5	Pisa	44	0	39	0	Pisa (IT)
60 [54]	5	Roma	45	0	41	0	Rome (IT)

⁸⁵ 29] 39 V

⁸⁶ Mursia] Murcia V

⁸⁷ Ahruna] Ahuça V

⁸⁸ Thaharath] Taharath V

⁸⁹ hamech] hamet V

⁹⁰ Capsa] Capça V

⁹¹ Herca] id est pedam, terra nigrorum *add. F* Terra de negres V

⁹² Manorca] Manorcha V

⁹³ Elcaroen] Elcarcen V

⁹⁴ 38] 28 V

⁹⁵ Sardinia] Serdeyma V

⁹⁶ Tuniç] Tunis V

⁹⁷ Ienoa] Genoa V

61 [55]	5	Sicilia	45	20	37	30	Sicily (island, IT)
62 [56]	3	Vden	46	0	28	0	Waddan (LY)
63 [57]	3	Barcha	45 ⁹⁸	0	33	0	Cyrenaica (region, LY)
64 [58]	4	Antiochia	60	0	37	0	
65 [59]	3	Alexandria ⁹⁹	61	59	31	0	Alexandria (EG)
66 [60]	3	Macçer	64	50	30	0	Miṣr/Cairo (EG)
67 [62]	3	Ascalona	65	0	33	0	Ashkelon (IL)
68 [63]	3	Armenia	65	50	32	0	Ramla (IL)(?)
69 [64]	3	Acon	66	0	35	0	Acre (IL)
70 [66]	3	Sur	66	0	33	0	Şūr/Tyre (LB)
71 [67]	4	Damascus	66	0	34	0	Damascus (SY)
72 [68]	3	Falastin	66	15	32	30	Palestine
73 [69]	4	Tripol de suria	66	20	34	0	Tripoli (LB)
74 [70]	3	Iherusalem	66	30	32	0	Jerusalem
75	1 ¹⁰⁰	Sanacha ¹⁰¹	67	0	14	0	Sanaa (YE)
76 [72]	2 ¹⁰²	Sussan	69	0	27	0	Aswan (EG)
77 [74]	5	Emç	69	35	38	50	Homs (SY)
78 [75]	4	Antalia	69	35	34	10	Antalya (TR)(?)
79 [76]	2	Coç	69	32	26 ¹⁰³	0	Qus (EG)
80 [77]	4	Halap	71	35	34	30	Aleppo (SY)
81	1 ¹⁰⁴	Aaçen	71	40	15	0	
82	4	Arcelfe ¹⁰⁵	72	30	35	40	
83	4	Antiochia	69	5	34	10	Antakya (TR)(?)
84 [80]	1 ¹⁰⁶	Aadeb	73	0	19	30	'Aydhab (EG/SD)
85 [81]	4	Arracha	73	15	36	0	Raqqa (SY)
86	5	Satalia	74	0	39	0	
87	1 ¹⁰⁷	Terra etiopum	74	40	13	0	
88	1 ¹⁰⁸	Çeeria	76	0	17	0	
89 [85]	2	Jeddehe	76	12	21	10	Jeddah (SA)
90 [86]	2 ¹⁰⁹	Mecha	77	0	21	40	Mecca (SA)

⁹⁸ 45] ?5 F 35 V

⁹⁹ Alexandria] in ...ne ...li add. F

¹⁰⁰ 1] 2 V

¹⁰¹ Sanacha] Sanaha V

¹⁰² 2] 3 V

¹⁰³ 26] 21 V

¹⁰⁴ 1] 2 V

¹⁰⁵ Arcelfe] Arcelphe V

¹⁰⁶ 1] 2 V

¹⁰⁷ 1] 2 V

¹⁰⁸ 1] 2 V

¹⁰⁹ 2] 3 V

91	2	Etip ¹¹⁰ elmedina	77	0	25	0	Medina (SA)
92 [89]	3	Achalbi	79	20	20	0	
93 [90]	3	Babilonia	80	0	33	0	Baghdad (IQ)
94 [91]	1 ¹¹¹	Çaba	80	30	16	4	Saba'
95 [92]	3	Hacça	81	0	31	0	

Tab. 1: table of geographic coordinates in *F*, fol. 12va–13ra and *V*, fol. 10v–12r

The second coordinate table in *V* is considerably shorter, containing 63 entries, as well as more compact, showing only degrees of longitude and latitude while omitting any columns for minutes. Like the preceding table related to Ibn al-Raqqām's *Shāmil zīj*, it is especially concerned with locations in the Maghreb, which account for at least 24 of its 57 securely identifiable entries. The Iberian Peninsula comes in a close second, with 19 entries. Compared to the longer list, there is a slightly higher percentage of places outside the Islamic world, including Paris (#59) and 8 islands or cities in Italy. There are some glaring inconsistencies in the displayed longitudes, which would seem to indicate that the information in this table was gathered from disparate sources using different meridians of reference. This is nowhere more obvious than in the case of the four Italian cities listed, where Pisa (#39, long. 51°) and Genoa (#40, long. 50°) have assigned longitudes that exceed those of Venice (#47, long. 29°) and Rome (#48, long. 25°) by over 20°.

Instead of being ordered according to geographic longitude, most of the 63 locations in this table are grouped according to climates, starting with those in the second climate and ending with those in the fifth. Overall, these groupings seem to place the lower boundary of the third climate at or before 28°, that of the fourth climate between 34° and 35°, and that of the fifth climate between 38° and 39°. An entry that clearly violates this rule is that for the Tunisian city of Tozeur (*Touçer*, #28), which despite its assigned latitude of 29° (correct: 33;55°) is here assigned to the fourth climate. The final six entries, which include one city in the seventh climate (Paris, #59), eschew the ordering according to climates altogether, presumably because they were later additions to the original list.¹¹²

The location of the first entry is identified as *Elmedina ubi pseudo iacet*, which can perhaps be interpreted as « Medina, where the false prophet lies » and was obviously meant as a derogatory reference to Mohammed and his tomb in the Prophet's Mosque in Medina. If this statement was not simply inserted by the translator, it could be a sign that the source itself was created by a Christian rather than a Muslim. The same possibility is raised by the third entry on the list, for

¹¹⁰ Etip] Etrp(?) *F*

¹¹¹ 1] 2 *V*

¹¹² In *V*, a later hand repeated the names of the last seven location below the end of the table, but added no coordinates except for a longitude of 28° that is here wrongly assigned to *Saguialmesa*.

Sepulcrum domini (« The Lord's Sepulchre »), an obvious reference to the Holy Sepulchre and hence to the city of Jerusalem. Of some interest, moreover, is the use of *Mont de Barques* (#6), a medieval Catalan name for the Cyrenaica region, which raises the possibility that the table was in some way connected with the activities of Catalanian traders in North Africa in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.¹¹³

As was already mentioned above, *F* reverses the order between the two coordinate tables, by placing the shorter table immediately after the end of the treatise on astrolabe use. It here carries the descriptive heading *Tabula in qua inveniuntur longitudines et latitudines locorum*, followed by a redundant opening statement: *Hec est tabula per quam inveniuntur longitudines et latitudines civitatum et locorum et in quo climate sint* (fol. 12ra). Evidence of the use of this particular table in the second half of the fourteenth century appears in a long gloss written in Castilian that fills the upper and outer margins of the facing page (fol. 11v). It comments on the penultimate chapter of the treatise on astrolabe use by Ibn al-Ṣaffār, which deals with computing the so-called revolution of the years of the world (*revolutio annorum mundi*). In explaining how to adjust this calculation for geographic longitude, the author uses as his example the year 1360 and the longitudes of Tunis (*Tunes*) and Marrakesh (*Maroques*), placing them 20° apart, at 21° (Marrakesh) and 41° (Tunis). These longitudes correspond exactly to those shown in the table on fol. 12ra (see entries #12 and #25 in the edition below) and were presumably plucked from there.¹¹⁴

The below edition of the second table observes the same principles as Tab. 1 above. To the four columns that make up the table in the two manuscripts, it adds a column of index numbers to the left and a column of place identifications to the right. *F* is once again used as the guide manuscript, while variants in *V* or emendations are documented in the footnotes.

No.					Identification
	<i>Climata</i> ¹¹⁵	Nomina civitatum	Longitudo	Latitudo	
1	2	Elmedina ubi pseudo iacet	87	25	Medina (SA)
2		Meca	77	21	Mecca (SA)
3	3	Sepulcrum domini	68	33	Jerusalem
4		Alexandria	66	31	Alexandria (EG)

¹¹³ MARIA TERESA FERRER, « Catalan Commerce in the Late Middle Ages », *Catalan Historical Review*, 5 (2012), p. 29–65 (39).

¹¹⁴ *F*, fol. 11v: « Debes saber que el montante del anno sse varia segunt las lunguezas de las tieras. Exemplo: [...] en Tunes fue el montante del dicho anno Capricornius en 5 gradus, que es la longueza suya 41 grado. Et la longueza de Maroques es 21, asy 20 grados es mayor la longueza de Tunes de la de Maroques, que fa 1 hora et terzia. »

¹¹⁵ *climata] om. V*

From Tunis to Venice

5		Acre	69	34	Acre (IL)
6		Mont de Barques ¹¹⁶	60	33	Cyrenaica (LY)
7		Capsa	33	30	Gafsa (TN)
8		Tenes ¹¹⁷	31	34	Ténès (DZ)
9		Algeçer ¹¹⁸	30	33	Algiers (DZ)
10		Hauran ¹¹⁹	28	32	Oran (DZ)
11		Tenimsen ¹²⁰	28	34	Tlemcen (DZ)
12		Marrochs	21	31	Marrakesh (MA)
13		Besquera	28	28	Biskra (DZ)
14		Busch ¹²¹	35	34	
15	4	Ierba	48	34	Djerba (island, TN)
16		Querquena ¹²²	47	35	Kerkennah (islands, TN)
17		Cicilia ¹²³	46	37	Sicily (island, IT)
18		Cerdinia	43	37 ¹²⁴	Sardinia (island, IT)
19		Affrega	46	39	
20		Capiç	48	34	Gabès (TN)
21		Sfaquis	46	35	Sfax (TN)
22		Sussa ¹²⁵	45	36	Sousse (TN)
23		Hamamet	44	36	Hammamet (TN)
24		Besert	39	36	Bizerte (TN)
25		Tuniç	41	37	Tunis (TN)
26		Alcaroen	36	36	Kairouan (TN)
27		Tripol de Barbaria	47	34 ¹²⁶	Tripoli (LY)
28		Touçer ¹²⁷	34	29	Tozeur (TN)
29		Bugia	33	36	Béjaïa (DZ)
30		Almeria	28	36	Almería (ES)
31		Granada	27	37	Granada (ES)
32		Iaen	28	37	Jaén (ES)
33		Cartagenia	41	36	Cartagena (ES)
34		Maleca	26	37	Malaga (ES)
35		Bona	37	36	Annaba (DZ)

¹¹⁶ barques] barches V

¹¹⁷ tenes] teneç V

¹¹⁸ algeçer] algeer F

¹¹⁹ hauran] hurara V

¹²⁰ tenimsen] tenimse V

¹²¹ busch] brasch V

¹²² querquena] querqna V

¹²³ cicilia] sicilia V

¹²⁴ 37] 38 add. F

¹²⁵ sussa] suçā V

¹²⁶ 34] 38 V

¹²⁷ touçer] toucçer V

36		Septa	25	35	Ceuta (ES)
37		Feç	24	34	Fez (MA)
38	5	Assur	150	40	
39		Pisa	51	39	Pisa (IT)
40		Ienoa	50	39	Genoa (IT)
41		Barchinona ¹²⁸	31	39	Barcelona (ES)
42		Mayorcha	37	39	Mallorca (island, ES)
43		Minoricha ¹²⁹	35	39	Menorca (island, ES)
44		Tortosa	31	40	Tortosa (ES)
45		Saragossa	30	41	Zaragoza (ES)
46		Marsela	33	38	Marseilles (FR)(?)
47		Venecia	29	41	Venice (IT)
48		Roma	25	43	Rome (IT)
49		Cordova	27	38	Córdoba (ES)
50		Xibilia ¹³⁰	28	29	Seville (ES)
51		Tarif	27	38	Tarifa (ES)
52		Traya	22	48	
53		Tarragona	28	40	Tarragona (ES)
54		Valencia	27	39	Valencia (ES)
55		Gerona	30	39	Girona (ES)
56		Leyda	29	39	Lleida (ES)
57		Murcia	28	38	Murcia (ES)
58	3	Antaquia	70	32	Antakya (TR)
59	7	Paris	20	48	Paris (FR)
60	4	Cremona	31	45	Cremona (IT)
61		Corduba ¹³¹	39	37	Córdoba (ES)
62	5	Napols		40	Naples (IT)
63	3	Saguiamesa	15	22	Sijilmasa (MA)

Tab. 2: the second table of geographic coordinates in *F*, fol. 12ra–b and *V*, fol. 12r–13r

IV. A Tunisian table for the construction of sundials

Ibn al-Raqqām's period of activity, from the composition of his first astronomical tables in the early 1280s to his death in 1315, provides us with an approximate *terminus post quem* for the Arabic source that must underlie some of the material we find in *V* and *F*. A possible hint that this source was written in Tunisia can be gleaned from a small table for the solar azimuths and shadow lengths at the two

¹²⁸ barchinona] barcelona *V*

¹²⁹ minoricha] menorcha *V*

¹³⁰ xibilia] sibilial *V*

¹³¹ corduba] cordova *V*

solstices that has, to my knowledge, never been mentioned in any earlier literature. The table appears in *F* on fol. 15r, where it is accompanied by construction drawings for an astrolabe's horizon plate and a horizontal sundial. This juxtaposition of the sundial diagram and the table is probably not coincidental and may point towards a shared origin for this material. *V* has the same table on fol. 14r, placing it underneath the prologue on the astrolabe edited above. According to the headings in both manuscripts, the table was computed for a geographic latitude of 36°, which is here identified with that of Tunis. Tab. 3 below provides an edition of the table that takes into account variants between the two witnesses.

[*F*] Hec est tabula de horis cognoscendis in diei in lapide de 36 latitudo Tunicii [*F*]
 [*V*] Ista tabula est de horis cognoscendis in lapide de 36 latitudo Tunicii [*V*]

	[<i>F</i>] Çempt [<i>F</i>] [<i>V</i>] arçemut [<i>V</i>]		umbra			[<i>F</i>] Çempt [<i>F</i>] [<i>V</i>] arçemut [<i>V</i>]		umbra	
hore	gradus	minuta	gradus	minuta	hore	gradus	minuta	gradus	minuta
1	19 ¹³²	41	51	0	1	36	0	84	46
2	10	3	23	16	2	45	22	43	50
3	0 meridies	14	13	27	3	54	52	30	27
4	12	28	8	2	4	65	34	24	17
5	34 ¹³³	53 ¹³⁴	4	27	5	75	30	21	38
6	90	0	2	47	6	90 ¹³⁵	0	20	24

Tab. 3: table of solar azimuths and shadow lengths for Tunis (36°)
 in *V*, fol. 14r and *F*, fol. 15r

Tables of this general type could be used in conjunction with a gnomon of known length to mark the solstitial shadow traces of a horizontal sundial, which take on a hyperbolic shape.¹³⁶ The reference to a « stone » (*lapis*) in the headings in both witnesses points towards a horizontal dial with vertical gnomon whose diagram was inscribed on a marble or some other type of stone surface, as was commonly

¹³² 19] 10 *F*

¹³³ 34] 0 *add. sub linea FV*

¹³⁴ 53] 0 *add. sub linea FV*

¹³⁵ 90] 9 *V*

¹³⁶ DAVID A. KING, « On the Astronomical Tables of the Islamic Middle Ages », in OWEN GINGERICH, JERZY DOBRZYCKI (eds.), *Colloquia Copernicana III: Proceedings of the Joint Symposium of the IAU and the IUHPS, Cosponsored by the IAHS Astronomy of Copernicus and Its Background, Toruń 1973*, Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Wrocław 1975 (Studia Copernicana, 13), p. 37–56 (51–53); ID., *In Synchrony with the Heavens: Studies in Astronomical Timekeeping and Instrumentation in Medieval Islamic Civilization*, vol. I: *The Call of the Muezzin*, Brill, Leiden 2004 (Islamic Philosophy, Theology and Science: Texts and Studies, 55), p. 84–89.

done in al-Andalus, the Maghreb, and elsewhere in the Islamic world.¹³⁷ As can be seen from the above transcription, the copies of the present table in *F* and *V* are not perfectly identical. Each contains one clear numerical error, which presumably demonstrates their mutual independence. *F* mistakenly gives the degrees of the first azimuth in the left half of the table as 10;14° instead of 19;14°, making it too close to the 10;3° in the next line below. *V* gives the final azimuth in the right half as 9° when the logic of the table dictates that it must be 90°, which here stands for due south.

A more striking difference between the two manuscripts concerns the headings of the two azimuth columns, which have the word *Çempt* in *F* but the alternative form *Arçemut* in *V*. This difference is presumably rooted in the distinction between the singular and plural forms of the same Arabic word, *as-samt* (« the direction », « the way »). *F*'s transliteration corresponds to the singular, whereas *V*'s *Arçemut* mirrors the plural *as-sumūt*.¹³⁸ There is no apparent reason why this should be the case, unless *F* and *V* preserve two independent translations of the same Arabic source.

Given the fact that one of the two geographic coordinate tables in *F* and *V* overlaps to a significant extent with a table in the *Shāmīl zīj* of Ibn al-Raqqām, it may be relevant to observe that Ibn al-Raqqām's other known works include the *Risāla fī 'ilm al-ẓilāl* (*Treatise on the Science of Shadows*), which consists of 44 chapters on the theory and construction of sundials.¹³⁹ While this work leaves no doubt that he would have been capable of constructing a table of the type shown above in Tab. 3, there is no further evidence that would allow us to trace this particular table to him. What would seem to make his authorship unlikely is the evidence of Ibn al-Raqqām's two *zīj*es for the coordinates of Tunis (*al-Mustawfī* and *al-Qawīm*), in which the city's latitude is given not as 36°, but as 36;37°, or occasionally as 36;40° (same as #56 in Tab. 1), values that are fairly close to the modern one

¹³⁷ See KARL SCHÖY, *Die Gnomonik der Araber*, Vereinigung wissenschaftlicher Verleger, München 1923 (Die Geschichte der Zeitmessung und der Uhren, 1.F); DAVID A. KING, « Three Sundials from Islamic Andalusia », *Journal for the History of Arabic Science*, 2 (1978), p. 358–392; Id., « Los cuadrantes solares andalusíes », in JUAN VERNET, JULIO SAMSÓ (eds.), *El legado científico Andalusí: Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid, abril-junio 1992*, Ministerio de Cultura, Centro Nacional de Exposiciones: Comisión Quinto Centenario Al-Andalus 92, Madrid 1992, p. 89–102; CARMEN BARCELÓ, ANA LABARTA, « Ocho relojes de sol hispano-musulmanes », *Al-Qanṭara*, 9 (1988), p. 231–247; JOAN CARANDELL, « Dos cuadrantes solares andalusíes de Medina Azara », *Al-Qanṭara*, 10 (1989), p. 329–342; SAMSÓ, *On Both Sides*, p. 110–115.

¹³⁸ For an overview of different transliterations of *samt* and *asumūt* in Latin astrolabe sources, see KUNITZSCH, « Glossar », p. 546–553.

¹³⁹ See JOAN CARANDELL (ed.), *Risāla fī 'ilm al-ẓilāl de Muḥammad Ibn al-Raqqām al-Andalusī*, Instituto « Millás Vallicrosa » de Historia de la Ciencia Árabe, Barcelona 1988. See also SAMSÓ, *On Both Sides*, p. 109–110.

(36;48°).¹⁴⁰ Moreover, while his *Shāmil zīj* does employ a round latitude of 36°, it is there applied to Béjaïa, not to Tunis.¹⁴¹

The picture painted thus far is complicated, however, by inconsistencies detectable in the numerical data provided by our table. These will be the subject of the following analysis, which is there to test the assumption that the table was indeed computed for a round latitude of 36°. Owing to the role that translation or transcription errors seem to have played in deforming the data at hand, the results of this analysis must necessarily remain tentative.

As a first step, it will be expedient to convert the shadow lengths on display into the solar altitudes from which they were, theoretically, derived. This is done using the modern relation $h = \arctan(\frac{12}{s})$, where h is the instantaneous solar altitude and s the length of the shadow, measured in digits that represent 1/12th of the height of a gnomon. The results of this transformation (rounded to minutes) are shown in Tab. 4 below.

0° ☽			0° ♀		
T	s	h	T	s	h
1	51;0°	13;14°	1	84;46°	8;3°
2	23;16°	27;17°	2	43;50°	15;19°
3	13;27°	41;44°	3	30;27°	21;31°
4	8;2°	56;12°	4	24;17°	26;18°
5	4;27°	69;39°	5	21;38°	29;1°
6	2;47°	76;56°	6	20;24°	30;28°

Tab. 4: shadow lengths (s) in Tab. 1 converted into solar altitudes (h)

Let us next turn to the implied values for the obliquity of the ecliptic (ϵ) and the geographic latitude (φ), which can normally be derived from the solar noon altitudes at the two solstices. However, in the case at hand the result for the obliquity would be $\epsilon = (76;56^\circ - 30;28^\circ) \div 2 = 23;14^\circ$, which is too low to be realistic. Another problem with these two values for the solstitial noon altitudes is that they fail to converge on $\varphi = 36^\circ$. In fact, $90^\circ - (30;28^\circ + 23;14^\circ) = 90^\circ - (76;56^\circ - 23;14^\circ) = 36;18^\circ$. To obtain $\varphi = 36^\circ$ from a minimum solar noon altitude of 30;28° would require ϵ to be $90^\circ - 36^\circ - 30;28^\circ = 23;32^\circ$. However, in that case one would expect the maximum solar noon altitude to be $90^\circ - 36^\circ + 23;32^\circ = 77;32^\circ$, which would require a shadow length of 2;39 as opposed to the 2;47 offered by Tab. 3.

The latitude mentioned in the table headings is thus irreconcilable with a maximum solar noon altitude of 76;56°, as this would require the underlying value of ϵ to be $76;56^\circ - (90^\circ - 36^\circ) = 22;56^\circ$. Things look different if we accept the more

¹⁴⁰ SAMSÓ, « Ibn al-Raqqām's *al-Zīj al-Mustawfī* », p. 298–299, 301, 321.

¹⁴¹ KENNEDY, « The Astronomical Tables », 62.

accurate latitude value known from Ibn al-Raqqām, who placed Tunis at 36;37°. It would enable us to retain the maximum solar noon altitude of 76;56° shown in the left half of Tab. 4, provided that $\varepsilon = 23;33^\circ$, which is indeed a widely attested value.¹⁴² The same is not true, however, of the minimum noon altitude in the right half of the same table, where a reduction from 30;28° to 29;50° would be in order, since $90^\circ - 36;37^\circ - 23;33^\circ = 29;50^\circ$.

A potential explanation for this strange state of affairs lies in the hypothesis that the two halves of Tab. 3 were computed for different latitudes, and perhaps also with different underlying values for ε . To test this hypothesis, I have converted each solar altitude (h) shown in Tab. 4 into a value for the solar azimuth (a) using the formula

$$(1) \quad a = \arcsin \frac{\sin h \sin \varphi - \sin \delta}{\cos h \cos \varphi},$$

which is equivalent to solutions already used in medieval Islamic astronomy.¹⁴³ In addition to h and φ , this conversion involves δ , the solar declination, which at the solstices will be equivalent to positive or negative ε . The result, a , will be positive for southern azimuths, negative for northern ones. Using $\varepsilon = 23;33^\circ$, the results for $\varphi = 36^\circ$ and $\varphi = 36;37^\circ$ will be as shown in Tab. 5. It can be seen that the re-computed azimuths for the summer solstice attain a closer overall fit with the tabulated azimuths if the value of φ is taken as 36;37° rather than 36°. The opposite is true in the case of the winter solstice, where 36° leads to results that are significantly closer to what is shown in the table.

0° ☊				0° ☋			
T	aTab.3	a36°	a36;37°	T	aTab. 3	a36°	a36;37°
1	-19;41°	-19;40°	-19;40°	1	+36;0°	+36;59°	+37;26°
2	-10;3°	-10;26°	-10;11°	2	+45;22°	+45;19°	+46;2°
3	-0;14°	-0;47°	-0;14°	3	+54;52°	+54;49°	+55;54°
4	+12;28°	+11;23°	+12;26°	4	+65;34°	+65;30°	+67;18°
5	+34;53°	+32;36°	+34;54°	5	+75;30°	+75;25°	+78;57°
6	+90°	+90°	+90°	6	+90°	+90°	+90°

Tab. 5: comparison of the values for the solar azimuth (a) in Tab. 3 with recomputed values for $\varphi = 36^\circ$ and $\varphi = 36;37^\circ$, assuming $\varepsilon = 23;33^\circ$

Given these results as well as the remaining discrepancies, it appears likely that the two halves Tab. 3 were computed using not just different latitudes but also different values of ε . A re-computation that closely approaches most of the

¹⁴² For attestations of 23;33° and its variants in Andalusī and Maghribī astronomy, see the index of SAMSÓ, *On Both Sides*, p. 980–981.

¹⁴³ See SCHOY, *Die Gnomonik*, p. 17–21; KING, *In Synchrony*, p. 36–37.

tabulated values for the winter solstice can in fact be achieved on the assumption that $\epsilon = 23;35^\circ$, which is a value introduced into Islamic astronomy by al-Battānī,¹⁴⁴ provided the solar noon altitude (H) is adjusted from $30;28^\circ$ to $30;25^\circ$.¹⁴⁵ To find h from H and the completed seasonal hour before noon, one can use the formula

$$(2) \quad h = \arcsin \frac{\left(\text{vers} \frac{d}{2} - \text{vers } t \right) \sin H}{\text{vers} \frac{d}{2}},$$

where t is the hour angle counted from noon, and d is the arc of daylight.¹⁴⁶ The maximum and minimum value for d at a given latitude can be obtained via the relation,

$$(3) \quad d = 180^\circ \pm 2e,$$

where e is the ascensional difference obtained via

$$(4) \quad e = \arcsin (\tan \delta \tan \varphi).¹⁴⁷$$

Applying $\epsilon = 23;35^\circ$, $\varphi = 36^\circ$, and $H = 30;25^\circ$ in formulae (1) to (4) will lead to the results shown in Tab. 6 below.

T	a Tab. 3	h Tab. 4	a	h
1	+36;0°	8;3°	+37;2°	8;3°
2	+45;22°	15;19°	+45;22°	15;19°
3	+54;52°	21;31°	+54;52°	21;30°
4	+65;34°	26;18°	+65;36°	26;18°
5	+75;30°	29;1°	+77;27°	29;22°
6	+90°	30;28°	+90°	30;25°

Tab. 6: Comparison of the values for the solar azimuth (a) and solar altitude (h) at the winter solstice according to Tab. 3 and Tab. 4 with re-computed values assuming $\epsilon = 23;35^\circ$, $\varphi = 36^\circ$, and $H = 30;25^\circ$

¹⁴⁴ AL-BATTĀNĪ, *De motu stellarum*, c. 4, trans. PLATO OF TIVOLI, in *Continentur in hoc libro: Rudimenta astronomica Alfragani; item Albategnius astronomus peritissimus de motu stellarum*, Petreius, Nuremberg 1537, fol. 8r–v.

¹⁴⁵ The suggested set of parameters ($\epsilon = 23;35^\circ$, $\varphi = 36^\circ$, $H = 30;25^\circ$) has a precedent in the *zīj* of al-Battānī, which contains tables for h and a at the summer and winter solstice. See AL-BATTĀNĪ, *Opus astronomicum*, ed. CARLO ALFONSO NALLINO, 3 vols., Hoepli, Milano 1899–1907 (Pubblicazioni del Reale osservatorio di Brera in Milano, 40), vol. II, p. 188. See also the tables (a , s) for 36° and 38° included in AL-BATTĀNĪ, *De motu stellarum*, c. 56, trans. PLATO OF TIVOLI, fol. 88r.

¹⁴⁶ KING, *In Synchrony*, p. 33–36; SAMSÓ, *On Both Sides*, p. 95.

¹⁴⁷ SAMSÓ, *On Both Sides*, p. 93.

The overall agreement seems strong enough to sustain the hypothesis that the right hand of the table was computed using the parameters in question. This presupposes that the noon shadow was assumed to be 20;26, such that $h = 30;25^\circ$, though in *F* and *V* it is mistakenly given as 20;24. The most problematic set of entries are those for the end of the fifth hour from sunset, where $h = 29;1^\circ$ (as implied by $s = 21;38$) and $a = 75;30^\circ$ are not compatible with the surrounding values and presumably resulted from a computational error.

V. A Venetian route of transmission?

The pathways by which astronomical material of Maghribī origin became part of the Italian manuscripts discussed in this article must ultimately remain a matter of speculation. Nevertheless, a plausible hypothesis can be derived from the recorded ownership of *V* and *E*. It has already been mentioned that *V* was at one point the property of Andrea Dandolo, who was Doge of Venice in the mid-fourteenth century (1343–1354). *E* is a significantly later manuscript and its potential Maghribī contents, if they are present at all, would be limited to some of the astrolabe and sundial-related drawings that are also encountered in *F*. Its former owner, Federico Delfino, worked for some time in Venice and later taught for many years at the University of Padua, which from 1405 was part of the Republic of Venice. All this raises the possibility that the content of *E* was derived from a Venetian exemplar.

It is a matter of record that the trading networks of the Republic of Venice during the thirteenth to fifteenth centuries covered multiple ports in the Maghreb. In the case of Tunis, such mercantile contacts were first formalized in 1231, when Venice signed a treaty with the recently established Hafsīd ruler Abu Zakariya Yahya and opened a consulate in the city.¹⁴⁸ Tunis's role as a frequent destination for Venetian traders is manifest from late medieval merchant's notebooks such as the *Zibaldone da Canal*, whose content goes back to the early fourteenth century.¹⁴⁹ In the absence of more specific evidence, the existence of a

¹⁴⁸ ALBERTO SACERDOTI, « Venezia e il regno hafsida di Tunisi: trattati e relazioni diplomatiche (1231–1534) », *Studi Veneziani*, 8 (1966), p. 303–346; BERNARD DOUMERC, *Venise et l'émirat hafsīde de Tunis (1231–1535)*, L'Harmattan, Paris, 1999. On the wider subject of contacts between Italy and the Maghreb during the Middle Ages, see GEORGES JEHEL, *L'Italie et le Maghreb au Moyen Âge: conflits et échanges du VII^e au XV^e siècle*, PUF, Paris 2001; JOEL PATTISON, « Italy and the Hafsīds in the Medieval Period », *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History* <<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.013.1289>> (Accessed Oct. 2024).

¹⁴⁹ See JOHN E. DOTSON (trans.), *Merchant Culture in Fourteenth Century Venice: The Zibaldone da Canal*, Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, Binghamton (NY) 1994 (Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 98), p. 83–89, 94–98, 117, for notes on the conversions of Tunisian coins, weights, and measures.

well-established trade route between Tunis and Venice offers what is perhaps the best explanation for the textual transfer witnessed by *EFV*, though other European maritime powers such as Pisa, Genoa, or the Crown of Aragon could have played a role as well. We gain a very approximate *terminus post quem* for this transfer from the completion of Ibn al-Raqqām's *Shāmil zīj* around 1290, seeing as its table of geographic coordinates provides a close match with a coordinate table preserved in *FV*. The fact that this *zīj* was cast for Béjaïa, which at the time was controlled by a different branch of the Hafsīd dynasty than Tunis,¹⁵⁰ complicates our picture, as does the absence of any demonstrable link between the gnomonic table in *FV* and Ibn al-Raqqām's known output. It must be borne in mind, however, that the handful of Maghribī astronomical texts and tables that are currently known from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries are likely to be no more than a tiny fraction of what once existed.

VI. Conclusion

The main purpose of this article has been to document a particular instance of the movement of astronomical and geographic information from North Africa (Tunis) to Italy (Venice), which appears to have taken place in the early decades of the fourteenth century. Scholars have so far shown little interest in this direction of travel when it comes to sources of mathematical astronomy, despite Latin Europe and the Maghreb sharing a common legacy inherited from al-Andalus. Here it must be mentioned that traces of a seemingly unrelated transfer of astronomical material from the Maghreb to Latin Europe have recently been discovered in a document associated with Magister Alard of Diest (*fl.*1301/1308), which mentions astronomical tables for the coordinates of Tunis. As has been argued elsewhere, this could be a reference to a lost Latin translation of the tables of Ibn Ishāq al-Tūnisī (c.1222), which are the earliest known Maghribī astronomical tables cast in the Andalusian tradition of Ibn al-Zarqālluh. Unlikely as it may seem, these tables were apparently known to the Parisian astronomer John of Sicily in c.1293 and used by Alard of Diest in c.1307.¹⁵¹

Together with the results presented in this article, these recent findings go to highlight the importance of maintaining a broad geographic and chronological framework for the transfer of astronomical knowledge from the Islamic world and to Latin Europe, which in some instances continued beyond the thirteenth century and involved points of origin other than Iberia.

¹⁵⁰ DOMINIQUE VALÉRIAN, *Bougie, port maghrébin, 1067-1510*, École française de Rome, Rome 2006 (Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 328).

¹⁵¹ C. PHILIPP E. NOTHAFT, « Were the Tables Ibn Ishāq al-Tūnisī Known in Paris c.1300? », *Journal for the History of Astronomy*, 55 (2024), p. 490–503.

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THE EARLY MEDIEVAL IMAGE OF THE EARTH AND ITS TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE *LIBER DIVINORUM OPERUM* (VISIO II.1.1–7)*

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Abstract

The fifth vision (II.1) of Hildegard's of Bingen *Liber divinorum operum* presents a model of worldly geography. The present paper examines possible early medieval referents for this vision, such as the idea of the five climatic zones of the world, the place and form of the earth, and the Isidorian rotae of the year and of the mundus-annus-homo. These antecedents, transmitted through works on natural knowledge, are deeply transformed in Hildegard's vision. She describes first a distinct model of the world as having five parts and then correlates these parts with the five senses and the human acts. Furthermore, the climatic zones are transformed into places of reward and condemnation in the afterlife. Through the five senses Hildegard accomplishes thus a shift from the outer geography towards the soul and its actions.

Key Words

Early medieval science; Isidore of Sevilla; Bede Venerabilis; Medieval geography
Hildegard of Bingen; Five senses



Since the publication of Hans Liebeschütz's monograph almost one hundred years ago,¹ Hildegard of Bingen's cosmology has been at the centre of numerous studies. The relationship between the macro- and microcosmos, the place of the human

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¹ HANS LIEBESCHÜTZ, *Das allegorische Weltbild der heiligen Hildegard von Bingen*, B. G. Teubner, Leipzig 1930 (Studien der Bibliothek Warburg, 16), p. 16.

being within creation, and the deep interaction between creation and the History of Salvation are among the many themes that have been considered. Most publications that deal with Hildegard's view of the universe concentrate on how she conceives of the universe in two different forms: the universe being in the form of an egg as expressed in her first visionary work, *Scivias* (I.3), and in the form of a wheel (*rota*) in the first four visions of the *Liber divinorum operum* (hereafter, *LDO*).²

While *Scivias* can be characterized as a novel interpretation of the History of Salvation and the *Liber vite meritorum* as an investigation of the moral powers within the human soul, Hildegard's third and last visionary book, the *LDO*, displays a greater interest in the composition of the world and of the human being. When commenting on the first four visions of the *LDO*, scholars usually focus on supra lunar cosmology. The fifth vision (II.1) offers, in contrast, a model of worldly geography. In the present paper, I will consider possible early medieval referents for this vision, such as the idea of the five climatic zones of the world, the place and form of the earth, and the Isidorian *rotae* of the year and of the *mundus-annus-homo*. These antecedents, transmitted through works on natural knowledge, are deeply transformed in Hildegard's vision. She envisions first a distinct model of the world as having five parts and then correlates these parts with the five senses, and the actions that the soul takes through the sensory organs. The climatic zones are also transformed into places of reward and condemnation. Hildegard thus appropriates and reshapes a novel feature of twelfth-century cosmology: the incorporation of the afterlife into the physical cosmos.³ In addition, the correspondence of the micro-macrocosm moves away from the elementary physical makeup of the world and the human body to concentrate on the idiosyncratic characteristics attributed to the zones and their relationship to the five senses, seen as the basis to the moral human constitution. Through the five senses, a shift from the outer geography towards the soul and its actions is also accomplished.

² For a well-documented discussion (until 2000), see GIULIO PIACENTINI, « L'universo e l'uomo nel 'Liber divinorum operum' di Hildegarda di Bingen », *Rivista di filosofia neoscholastica*, 94 (2002), p. 195–236. Cf. also MONIKA KLAES, « Zu Schau und Deutung des Kosmos bei Hildegard von Bingen », in ADELGUNDIS FÜHRKÖTTER (ed.), *Kosmos und Mensch aus der Sicht Hildegards von Bingen*, Gesellschaft für Mittelrheinische Kirchengeschichte, Mainz 1987 (Quellen und Abhandlungen zur mittelrheinischen Kirchengeschichte, 60), p. 37–124; GEORGINA GONZÁLEZ RABASSÓ, « Subtilitates naturae: Continuitats i ruptures a la cosmologia d'Hildegarda de Bingen (1098–1179) », Ph.D. Diss. Universitat de Barcelona, 2015; JOSÉ C. SANTOS PAZ, « Visiones hildegardianas del cosmos: Del 'Scivias' al 'Liber divinorum operum' », *Studi Medievali*, 52 (2011), p. 213–241. For the differences between the two images regarding their composition, see DINAH WOUTERS, *Allegorical Form and Theory in Hildegard of Bingen's Books of Visions*, Springer, Cham 2022 (The New Middle Ages), p. 128–135.

³ Almost all works that deal with the fifth vision concentrate on this subject, see footnote 110 below.

I. Preliminary considerations: Hildegard's knowledge and her use of texts

The difficulty in establishing Hildegard's sources is well known. For one, aside from biblical quotations, she does not identify any. Plus, it is not possible to confirm which books were present in the libraries of St Disibod and St Rupertsberg, the two monasteries where she lived.⁴ Thus the origin of her scientific knowledge, discussed by Hans Liebeschütz, is still the subject of speculation.⁵ In fact, there could be multiple sources: she may have had direct access to works or extracts in compilations in the libraries of her cloisters or in the libraries of monasteries or chapters which she was in contact with, or she may have accessed this knowledge through oral communication.⁶ The latter option was proposed by Charles Burnett some decades ago.⁷ More recently, Justin Stover has underscored the role of conversation and intellectual exchange for Hildegard's knowledge. An indirect acquaintance with ancient and contemporary monastic and scholastic sources, subjects and methods would account for her terminology as well as for certain discussions and methods in her oeuvre.⁸ Furthermore, topics

⁴ For an extensive discussion with further literature, see MARÍA J. ORTÚZAR ESCUDERO, *Die Sinne in den Schriften Hildegards von Bingen: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Sinneswahrnehmung*, Hiersemann, Stuttgart 2016 (Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters, 62), p. 119–122; RAINER BERNDT, MAURA ZÁTONYI, *Glaubensheil: Wegweisung ins Christentum gemäss der Lehre Hildegards von Bingen*, Aschendorff Verlag, Münster 2013 (Erudiri Sapientia, 10), p. 95–98.

⁵ See, above all, PETER DRONKE, « Introduction », in Hildegardis Bingensis, *Liber divinorum operum*, ed. Albert Derolez, Brepols, Turnhout 1996 (Corpus Christianorum Continuatio mediaevalis, 92), p. VII–CXVII. See also MICHAEL EMBACH, « Hildegard von Bingen (1098–1179) – kryptische Gelehrsamkeit und rhetorischer Sprachgestus », in EDELTRAUD KLUETING, HARM KLUETING (eds.), *Fromme Frauen als gelehrte Frauen. Bildung, Wissenschaft und Kunst im weiblichen Religiosentum des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit*, Erzbischöfliche Diözesan- u. Dombibliothek, Köln 2010 (Libelli Rhenani, 7), p. 128–150; JUSTIN A. STOVER, « Hildegard, the Schools, and their Critics », in BEVERLY M. KIENZLE, DEBRA L. STOUT, GEORGE P. FERZOCO (eds.), *A Companion to Hildegard of Bingen*, Brill, Leiden 2014 (Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition, 6), p. 109–135. For the sources of her two writings of nature, partly composed by different hands in different times, see LAURENCE MOULINIER, « Introduction », in BEATE HILDEGARDIS, *Cause et cure*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin 2003 (Rarissima mediaevalia. Opera Latina, 1), p. XI–CXVII, esp. p. LXIII–CI; LAURENCE MOULINIER, « Ein Präzedenzfall der Kompendien-Literatur. Die Quellen der natur- und heilkundlichen Schriften Hildegards von Bingen », in EDELTRAUD FORSTER (ed.), *Hildegard von Bingen. Prophetin durch die Zeiten*, Herder, Freiburg i. Br. 1997, p. 431–447; LAURENCE MOULINIER-BROGI, « La connaissance de la Nature selon Hildegard de Bingen, entre Sagesse de Dieu et savoir d'une moniale », in ALESSANDRA BARTOLOMEI ROMAGNOLI, SOFIA BOESCH GAJANO (eds.), *'Speculum futurorum temporum'. Ildegarda di Bingen tra agiografia e memoria*, Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, Rome 2019 (Nuovi studi storici, 115), p. 195–214.

⁶ MOULINIER, « Ein Präzedenzfall der Kompendien-Literatur », p. 435.

⁷ CHARLES BURNETT, « Hildegard of Bingen and the Science of the Stars », in CHARLES BURNETT, PETER DRONKE (eds.), *Hildegard of Bingen. The Context of her Thought and Art*, Warburg Institute, London 1998 (Warburg Institute colloquia, 4), p. 111–120, here p. 120.

⁸ STOVER, « Hildegard, the Schools, and their Critics ».

in Hildegard's works such as Genesis and cosmogony and elemental cosmology coincide with « preoccupations of early 12th-century scholars like William of Conches, Thierry of Chartres, and Peter Abelard ».⁹ Her interest in the « role of human reason in moral decision making, cosmological speculation, and theology » brings her closer to William of St Thierry.¹⁰

With regard to the *LDO*, Peter Dronke has identified several possible referents for the four cosmological visions (I.1–4): « an impressive range of Christian Latin writings », Lactantius' *De opificio Dei*, the *Liber Nemroth*, Aethicus Ister' *Cosmographia* and Calcidius' *Commentary on Timaeus* – and many others.¹¹ The information Dronke provides for the chapters on the image of the earth (II.1) is much more scarce: it concentrates on possible sources of the word *ponderositas*, an expression that Hildegard probably adopted from other authors.¹² Furthermore, the *apparatus fontium* identifies solely sources for some passages which describe the places of chastisement.¹³

The discussion about Hildegard's sources probably reveals more about our way of learning than it does about hers. As already observed, Hildegard's understanding of nature and cosmology is much indebted to oral exchange – with the monks of Disibodenberg, with her secretaries Volmar and Guibert of Gembloux, with her spiritual daughters, with messengers who carried letters and with Church dignitaries who visited Rupertsberg.¹⁴ Consequently, we have good reason to assume that, at least indirectly, well-known sources on nature and cosmology shaped Hildegard's knowledge. In order to understand her image of the earth, we should examine *De natura rerum* and the *Etymologies* of Isidore of Sevilla,

⁹ STOVER, « Hildegard, the Schools, and their Critics », p. 127.

¹⁰ STOVER, « Hildegard, the Schools, and their Critics », p. 127–128.

¹¹ DRONKE, « Introduction », p. xvii–xxiv. The case for Hildegard's use of Calcidius is made by GEORGINA RABASSÓ, « La posible influencia del Timaeus en los planteamientos cosmológicos del 'Liber Diuinorum Operum' de Hildegarda de Bingen », in JOSÉ L. FUERTES HERREROS, ÁNGEL PONCELA GONZÁLEZ (eds.), *De Natura*, Húmus, Ribeirão 2015 (Textos e estudos de filosofia medieval, 8), vol. II, p. 719–728.

¹² The word occurs in Eurigena's *Periphyseon*, in writings of Gilbert of Poitiers, in Robert of Melun, and in the translations of Avicenna (*Metaphysics*) and Avencebrol's (*Fons vitae*). See DRONKE, « Introduction », p. xxvi.

¹³ Descriptions of the places of chastisement are to be read in her *Liber vite meritorum* and *Cause et Cure* as well as in Gregor's *Dialogi* and in Beda's *Historia ecclesiastica*.

¹⁴ For visitors at the Rupertsberg and the importance of messengers, see ALFRED HAVERKAMP, « Hildegard von Disibodenberg-Bingen. Von der Peripherie zum Zentrum », in ALFRED HAVERKAMP (ed.), *Hildegard von Bingen in ihrem historischen Umfeld. Internationaler wissenschaftlicher Kongress zum 900jährigen Jubiläum*, von Zabern, Mainz 2000, p. 15–69, here p. 66–69; ORTÚZAR ESCUDERO, *Die Sinne in den Schriften Hildegards*, p. 389. The case of the *philosophus* of Mainz that lived in Rupertsberg is often referred to in this context, see STOVER, « Hildegard, the Schools, and their Critics », p. 111–112; MOULINIER-BROGI, « La connaissance de la Nature selon Hildegard de Bingen », p. 206; RABASSÓ, « La posible influencia del Timaeus », p. 724.

Beda the Venerable's *De natura rerum* and even the *Commentary to the Dream of Scipio* of Macrobius. In what follows, my focus is not on these works as such but on how Hildegard appropriates them. My treatment is therefore deliberately descriptive.

II. The earth in early medieval cosmography

The *De natura rerum* of Isidore of Sevilla can be considered the first medieval cosmography, for it is a significant contribution to the establishment of a Christianized heaven through a simple arrangement of textual excerpts.¹⁵ The short treatise was well received in Western Europe, becoming « a standard point of reference » and « setting a template for discussion » in the field of the knowledge of nature.¹⁶

The image of the world is considered here in three chapters (9–11). *Mundus* is defined as everything in heaven and earth. In a mystical sense, however, this word signifies *homo*, because the human being is a smaller world, being composed of the same four elements of which the world is built.¹⁷ Chapter 10 introduces the notion of the world as divided by five climatic zones, which are imagined as five circles. To illustrate it, Isidore compares each zone with one of the five fingers:

But let us imagine them in the likeness of our right hand, so that the thumb is the Arctic circle, uninhabitable because of the cold; the second finger is the summer circle, temperate and habitable; the middle finger is the equatorial circle, torrid and uninhabitable; the fourth finger is the winter circle, temperate and habitable; the little finger is the Antarctic circle, cold and uninhabitable. The first of these circles

¹⁵ BARBARA OBRIST, « La cosmologie du Haut Moyen Age, le statut de la connaissance philosophique et la question d'un univers christianisé », in *La conoscenza scientifica nell'Alto Medioevo*, Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo, Spoleto 2020 (Settimane di studio della Fondazione Centro italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo, 67), vol. I, p. 53–112, here p. 86.

¹⁶ ANDREW T. FEAR, « Putting the Pieces Back Together: Isidore and the *Natura Rerum* », in ANDREW T. FEAR, JAIMIE WOOD (eds.), *Isidore of Seville and his Reception in the Early Middle Ages: Transmitting and Transforming Knowledge*, Amsterdam University Press, Amsterdam 2016 (Late Antique and Early Medieval Iberia, 2), p. 75–92, here p. 75.

¹⁷ ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum* IX.1–2, in ISIDORE DE SÉVILLE, *Traité de la nature: Suivi de l'épître en vers du roi Sisebut à Isidor*, ed. Jacques Fontaine, Féret, Bordeaux 1960 (Bibliothèque de l'École des hautes études hispaniques, 28), p. 165–237: « Mundus est uniuersitas omnis quae constat ex caelo et terra. De quo Paulus apostolus ait: praeterit enim figura huius mundi. Secundum mysticum autem sensum, mundus competenter homo significatur, quia sicut ille ex quattuor concretus est elementis, ita et iste ex quattuor constat humoribus uno temperamento conmixtis. Vnde et ueteres hominem in communione fabricae mundi constituerunt, siquidem graece mundus cosmos, homo autem micros cosmos, id est minor mundus est appellatus ». See FEAR, « Putting the Pieces Back Together », p. 90.

is the northern; the second, the solstitial; the third, the equinoctial; the fourth, the winter; and the fifth, the southern.¹⁸

In using this image – as Calvin Kendall and Faith Wallis comment – Isidore shifts from « thinking of the celestial sphere to thinking of the Earth, and instead of notional circles projected onto the heavens he is visualizing climatic zones on our planet ».¹⁹ Afterwards, he returns to the heaven spheres, defining the first circle of the celestial sphere as the northern and the fifth as the southern, and the others as « imaginary lines on the inner surface of the spherical universe ».²⁰ These lines refer to the trajectory of the sun: the second is the solstitial, the third the equinoctial, the fourth the hyemial.²¹ While the equinoctial circle is uninhabitable because of the excessive heat provoked by the sun « as it courses through the middle of the heavens », the northern and southern circles are inhabited because they « are placed far from the course of the sun, and are laid waste by the excessive cold of the heavens and the icy blasts of the winds ».²² The circles placed in the east and in the west are habitable, since they receive from two other circles both cold and heat.²³ A diagram, the *rota circulorum mundi*,²⁴ summarizes this information.²⁵ The diagram usually shows a framing circle that contains five

¹⁸ ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum*, X.1: « Sed fingamus eas in modum dexteræ nostræ, ut pollex sit circulus arcticus, frigore inhabitabilis, secundus circulus therinos, temperatus habitabilis; medius circulus isemerinos, torridus inhabitabilis; quartus circulus xeimerinos, temperatus habitabilis, minimus circulus antarcticus, frigidus inhabitabilis ». The translation follows ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, *On the Nature of Things*, ed. CALVIN B. KENDALL, FAITH WALLIS, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool 2016 (Translated Texts for Historians, 66), p. 128.

¹⁹ CALVIN B. KENDALL, FAITH WALLIS, « Commentary », in ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, *On the Nature of Things*, p. 177–253, here p. 194.

²⁰ KENDALL, WALLIS, « Commentary », p. 195.

²¹ ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum*, X.2: « Horum primus septentrionalis est, secundus solistitialis, tertius æquinoctialis, quartus hiemalis, quintus australis ».

²² ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum*, X. 3: « Sed ideo æquinoctialis circulus inhabitabilis est, quia sol per medium caelum currens nimium his locis facit feruorem, ita ut nec fruges ibi nascantur propter exustam terram, nec homines propter nimium ardorem habitare permittantur. At contra septentrionalis et australis circuli sibi coniuncti idcirco non habitantur quia a cursu solis longe positi sunt, nimioque caeli rigore uentorumque gelidis flatibus contabescunt ». For the translation, see ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, *On the Nature of Things*, p. 129.

²³ ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum*, X. 4: « Solistitialis uero circulus, qui in oriente inter septentrionalem et aestiuum est conlocatus, uel iste qui in occidente inter aestiuum et australem positus est, ideo temperati sunt eo quod ex uno circulo rigorem, ex altero calorem habeant ».

²⁴ Most of the manuscripts of *De natura rerum* contain the following seven diagrams: 1. *Rota mensium*, 2. *Rota anni*, 3. *Rota circulorum mundi* 4. *Cybus elementorum*, 5. *Rota mundi, anni, hominis* 6. *Rota planetarum*, 7. *Rota uentorum*; see CALVIN B. KENDALL, FAITH WALLIS, « Introduction », in ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, *On the Nature of Things*, p. 1–102, here p. 28–29.

²⁵ ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum* X.2: « Quorum circulorum diuisiones talis distinguit figura: Primus circulus arcticus frigore inhabitabilis. Secundus circulus therinos temperatus habitabilis.

circles or petals positioned around a central circle. This depiction has caused some perplexity, since it alters the simile between the fingers and the zones: while the thumb and little finger in an extended hand exemplify the distance between the Arctic and the Antarctic circles, these circles are represented as contiguous in the diagrams (see, for instance, Figure 1).²⁶ The notion of the five heavenly spheres influencing on the zones of the world was also transmitted by the *Etymologies* of Isidore in the books of *Mathematics*, which contains a section on astronomy (III.44), and *The World and its Parts* (XIII.6).

The following chapter on « the parts of the world » defines the four parts of the world as the four elements: fire, air, water, and earth.²⁷ An explanation of the Platonic qualities of the elements (thin-thick; mobile-immobile; sharp-blunt) and its corresponding diagram,²⁸ is followed by an exposition on the Hippocratic qualities, as rendered by Saint Ambrose in his *Hexameron*: earth is dry and cold, water is cold and moist, air is hot and moist, and fire is hot and dry. Some qualities are shared by different elements, allowing them to mingle: earth is linked to water « by the affinity of their cold », water to air through moisture, air to fire by heat, and fire to earth by dryness. In this manner, the elements are associated with each other in a circuit and « gather themselves together in harmonious union ».²⁹ The

Medius circulus isemerinos torridus inhabitabilis. Quartus circulus xeimerinos temperatus habitabilis. Quintus circulus antarcticos frigidus inhabitabilis ».

²⁶ See KENDALL, WALLIS, « Commentary », p. 195–196, and the discussion of this image in Boulogne-sur-Mer, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 188, fol. 30r, in BRUCE S. EASTWOOD, *Ordering the Heavens: Roman Astronomy and Cosmology in the Carolingian Renaissance*, Brill, Leiden – Boston 2007 (Medieval and Early Modern Science, 8), p. 415–416.

²⁷ ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum*, XI.1: « Partes mundi quattuor sunt: ignis, aer, aqua, terra ».

²⁸ ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum*, XI.1: « Quarum haec est natura: ignis tenuis, acutus et mobilis; aer mobilis, acutus et crassus; aqua crassa, obtunsa et mobilis; terra crassa, obtunsa, immobilis. Quae etiam sibi ita commiscuntur. Terra quidem crassa, obtunsa et immobilis, cum aquae crassitudine et obtunsitate conligatur. Deinde aqua aeri crassitudine et mobilitate coniungitur. Rursus aer igni communione acuti et mobilis conligatur. Terra autem et ignis a se separantur, sed a duobus mediis aqua et aere iunguntur. Haec itaque ne confusa minus colligantur, subiecta expressi pictura: Haec figura solida est secundum geometricam rationem ».

²⁹ ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum*, XI.2–3: « Ceterum sanctus Ambrosius eadem elementa per qualitates quibus sibi inuicem quadam naturae communione commiscuntur ita his uerbis distinguit: terra, inquit, arida et frigida est, aqua frigida atque humida, aer calidus est et humidus, ignis calidus atque siccus. Per has enim iugabiles qualitates sic sibi singula commiscuntur. Terra enim, cum sit arida et frigida, coniungitur aquae per cognationem qualitatis frigidae. Rursus aqua aeri per humorem, quia humidus est aer. Aqua uero quasi quibusdam duobus brachiis frigoris atque humoris, altero terram, altero aerem uidetur complecti, frigido quidem terram, aerem humido. Ipse quoque aer medius inter duo compugnancia per naturam, hoc est inter aquam et ignem, utrumque illud elementum sibi conciliat, quia aquis humore et igni calore coniungitur. Ignis quoque, cum sit calidus et siccus, calore aeri adnectitur, siccitate autem in communionem terrae sociatur, atque ita sibi per hunc circuitum quasi per quandam chorum concordie societate conueniunt ». For the translation, see ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, *On the Nature of Things*, p. 131.

combination of the elements is illustrated by a diagram that also shows the affiliations to the four seasons of the year and to the four humours:

Dry hot fire: summer, red bile
Hot moist air: spring, blood
Water moist cold: winter, phlegm
Earth cold moist: autumn, black bile.³⁰

Many versions of this diagram exist. Often it is represented by a framing circle containing six semicircles, each of them intersecting the two semicircles adjacent to it. In the space left in the middle of the image are written the words *mundus, annus, homo*. The symmetrical image conveys the same elemental composition of world, year, and man. It also shows how the elements are interrelated and intermingled.³¹

For the later analysis of Hildegard's vision of the earth, we must look more closely at a few of these diagrams. In some versions of it, four of the six inner circles form a sort of square in the middle – as in two manuscripts written in Salzburg at the end of the eighth/beginning of the ninth-century (Figure 2).³²

We find also, instead of six, only four circles that do not intersect with a square drawn in the middle of the figure – as shown in a manuscript from ninth-century Cologne.³³ An extremely schematic representation of this motif, where only the four elements are shown in each of the four semicircles, is to be found in a manuscript of St Gall, written between 760 and 780.³⁴

In addition, some versions of Isidore's diagram of the year, which can be considered as a previous stage to the *mundus-annus-homo* diagram, present a

³⁰ ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum*, XI.3: « Siccus calidus ignis: aestas, cholera rubea. / Calidus humidus aer: uer, sanguis. / Humida frigida aqua: hiemps, phlegma. / Frigida sicca terra: autumnus, melancholia ».

³¹ BRUNO REUDENBACH, « Ein Weltbild im Diagramm - ein Diagramm als Weltbild: Das Mikrokosmos-Makrokosmos-Schema des Isidor von Sevilla », in CHRISTOPH MARKSCHIES, INGEBORG REICHLÉ, JOCHEN BRÜNING, PETER DEUFLHARD (eds.), *Atlas der Weltbilder*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin 2011 (Forschungsberichte - Interdisziplinäre Arbeitsgruppen, Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 25), p. 32–40, here p. 38.

³² Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 14300, fol. 7v, and Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 16128, fol. 16. For another similar diagram from the eight/ninth-century (St Denis?), see Vatican City, BAV, Reg. lat. 310, fol. 25r. Online at <https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Reg.lat.310> (Accessed June 2024).

³³ Cologne, Erzbischöfliche Diözesan- und Dombibliothek, Cod. 99, fol. 63v. Online at <<https://digi.tal.dombibliothek-koeln.de/hs/urn:nbn:de:hbz:kn28-3-507-p0130-0>> (Accessed June 2024). Other instances of « middle squares » can be found in Staatsbibliothek Bamberg, Msc. Nat.1, fol. 16r; Besançon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 184, p. 41.

³⁴ St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek 238, p. 312–385, p. 338. Online at <<https://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/csg/0238/338/0>> (Accessed June 2024).

framing circle with four semicircles inscribed within. The space left in the middle assimilates to a square. We find some instances of this kind of depiction in the already mentioned manuscripts of Cologne,³⁵ Salzburg (Figure 3) and St Gall (Figure 4). The two last mentioned not only match two qualities to each season of the year, but also relate them to the four parts of the world:

East: wet and hot; spring
South: hot and dry; summer
West: dry and cold; autumn
North: cold and wet; winter

At the closing of the *De natura rerum*, some characteristics of the earth are considered for a second time. Chapter 45 discuss the position of the earth. Isidore presents Ambrose's view according to which the earth is suspended in the void (cf. Job 26:7), to explain how the air rests upon the earth and remains in equilibrium.³⁶ He describes also the opinion of the philosophers, who think that « the earth is held up by thick air and hangs immobilized like a sponge because of its mass, so that it is buoyed up by an equal motion on one side and the other, as by wings beating like oars on every side ». ³⁷ Another two images of the earth are given in the last chapter of the book. The first presents the earth at the centre of the universe, at equal distance to all its other parts.³⁸ The second shows the earth divided into three parts: Europe, Asia, and Africa.³⁹ The position of the continents in the world is illustrated by the O-T map that supplements this chapter. A very similar account on the central place of the earth is found in the *Etymologies* (XIV.1). It also refers in the next chapter (XIV.2) to its name, *orbis* (globe), that originates

³⁵ Cologne, Erzbischöfliche Diözesan- und Dombibliothek, Cod. 99, fol. 59v. Online at <<https://digital.dombibliothek-koeln.de/hs/content/zoom/171269>> (Accessed June 2024). The manuscript for Hildebald, Bishop of Cologne (798–805), is very similar; see Cologne, Erzbischöfliche Diözesan- und Dombibliothek 83(II), fol. 129v. Online at <<https://digital.dombibliothek-koeln.de/hs/content/zoom/168779>> (Accessed June 2024).

³⁶ ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum*, XLV.1: « Qualiter terra super aerem fundata libratis credatur stare ponderibus, sic dicit Ambrosius: de terrae autem qualitate siue positione sufficiat secundum scripturam Iob sciendum quia suspendit terram in nihilo ».

³⁷ ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum*, XLV.1: « aere denso terram sustineri et quasi sphungiam mole sua immobilem pendere, sicque ut aequali motu hinc atque inde ueluti alarum suffulta remigiis ex omni parte librata propendeat, nec in partem possit inclinari alteram ». For the translation, see ISIDORE OF SEVILLE, *On the Nature of Things*, p. 172.

³⁸ ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum*, XLVIII.1: « Terra, ut testatur Hyginus, mundi media regione conlocata, omnibus partibus aequali dissidens interuallo, centron obtinet ».

³⁹ ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum*, XLVIII.2: « Regio autem terrae diuiditur trifarie, e quibus una pars Europa, altera Asia, tertia Africa uocatur. Europam igitur ab Africa diuidit mare ab extremis oceani finibus et Herculis columnis ».

« from the roundness of the circle, because it resembles a wheel; hence a small wheel is called a 'small disk' (*orbiculus*) ».⁴⁰

The *De natura rerum* of the Venerable Bede, deeply indebted to Isidore's homonymous work, also contributed to shaping medieval cosmography.⁴¹ It was sometimes transmitted together with Isidore's *De natura rerum*, and there are Carolingian examples of Isidore's *rotae* that illustrate the text of Bede.⁴² Bede adds some new traits to the knowledge of the universe. As Isidore does, he describes the universe as consisting of heaven and earth, while pointing up that it is « rounded out of four elements into the appearance of a complete sphere ». The following lines state that, of the four elements, the earth « is the middle and lowest portion of the world. It hangs suspended, motionless, with the universe whirling around it ».⁴³ In the next chapter, dedicated to the elements, Bede first resorts to the Aristotelian idea of their natural places. To the earth, being « the heaviest substance and that which cannot be supported by another substance », corresponds « the lowest place among created things ». According to their lightness, the other elements of water, air, and fire are distributed in ascending order above the earth. After that, Bede briefly describes the notion of how the elements are associated with one another through their specific qualities.⁴⁴

Bede's exposition on the five climates appears among the chapters on the heavens. Like Isidore, he considers five zones in the spherical universe, that

⁴⁰ WESLEY M. STEVENS, « The Figure of the Earth in Isidore's 'De natura rerum' », *Isis*, 71 (1980), p. 268–277, here p. 274.

⁴¹ OBRIST, « La cosmologie du Haut Moyen Age », p. 96.

⁴² KENDALL, WALLIS, « Introduction », p. 11.

⁴³ BEDA VENERABILIS, *De natura rerum*, in BEDA VENERABILIS, *Opera didascalica* I, ed. CHARLES W. JONES, Brepols, Turnhout 1975 (Corpus christianorum Series Latina, 123A), p. 173–234, here p. 194: « Mundus est uniuersitas omnis, quae constat ex caelo et terra, quattuor elementis in speciem orbis absoluti globata: igne, quo sidera lucent; aere, quo cuncta uiuentia spirant; aquis, quae terram cingendo et penetrando communiunt; atque ipsa terra, quae mundi media atque ima. Librata uolubili circa eam uniuersitate pendet immobilis. Verum mundi nomine etiam caelum a perfecta absolutaque elegantia uocatur; nam et apud graecos ab ornatu cosmos appellatur ». For the translation, see BEDE, *On the Nature of Things*, in BEDE, *On the Nature of Things and On Times*, transl. CALVIN B. KENDALL, FAITH WALLIS, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool 2010 (Translated Texts for Historians, 56), p. 69–103, here p. 75.

⁴⁴ BEDA VENERABILIS, *De natura rerum*, p. 195–196: « Elementa sibimet sicut natura, sic etiam situ differunt. Terra enim, ut grauissima et quae ab alia natura sufferri non possit, imum in creaturis obtinet locum. Aqua uero quanto leuior terra tanto est aere grauior, qui, si forte aquis in uase aliquo subdatur, statim ad superiora ut leuior euadit. Ignis quoque, materialiter accensus, continuo naturalem sui sedem super aera quaerit; sed ne illuc perueniat in mollem aerem, cuius circumfusione deprimitur, euanescit. Quae tamen quadam naturae propinquitate sibimet ita commiscuntur, ut terra quidem arida et frigida frigidae aquae, aqua uero frigida et humida humido aeri, porro aer humidus et calidus calido igni, ignis quoque calidus et aridus terrae societur aridae. Vnde et ignem in terris et in aere nubila terrenaque corpora uidemus ». For the translation, see BEDE, *On the Nature of Things*, p. 75–76.

become five regions when projected into the earth.⁴⁵ He also explains the position of the earth by resorting to the Aristotelian idea of natural place. Because the earth is the heaviest element, it is « situated in the centre or pivot of the world » and must « hold the lowest and central place in creation ».⁴⁶ Bede also stresses its spherical form.⁴⁷

The idea of the earth as divided into five climatic zones was also transmitted in the Early Middle Ages by the fifth-century *Commentary to the Dream of Scipio* of Macrobius. Referring to the lost work of Cicero, Macrobius reports the vision of Scipio Africanus the Younger of the earth and the celestial spheres around it. The *Commentary* includes instructions for the drawing of four diagrams, the third corresponding to the zonal map.⁴⁸ The map includes three uninhabitable zones: two frigid polar zones and a torrid equatorial zone. Between these two extremes

⁴⁵ BEDA VENERABILIS, *De natura rerum*, p. 199–200: « Quinque circulis mundus diuiditur, quorum distinctionibus quaedam partes temperie sua incoluntur, quaedam inmanitate frigoris aut caloris inhabitabiles existunt. Primus est septentrionalis, frigore inhabitabilis, cuius sidera nobis numquam occidunt. Secundus solstitialis, a parte signiferi excelsissima, nobis ad septentrionalem plagam uersus temperatus, habitabilis. Tertius aequinoctialis, medio ambitu signiferi orbis incedens torridus, inhabitabilis. Quartus brumalis, a parte humillima signiferi ad austrinum polum uersus, temperatur, habitabilis. Quintus australis, circa uerticem austrinum qui terra tegitur, frigore inhabitabilis. Tres autem medii circuli inaequalitates temporum distinguunt, cum sol hunc solstitio, illum aequinoctio, tertium bruma teneat. Extremi enim semper sole carent. Vnde et a thule insula unius diei nauigatione ad aquilonem mare congelatum inuenitur ». See also CALVIN B. KENDALL, FAITH WALLIS, « Commentary: On the Nature of Things », in BEDE, *On the Nature of Things and On Times*, p. 133–165, here p. 141; STEVENS, « The Figure of the Earth in Isidore's 'De natura rerum' », p. 273.

⁴⁶ BEDA VENERABILIS, *De natura rerum*, p. 227–228: « Terra fundata est super stabilitatem suam, abyssus sicut pallium amictus eius. Sicut enim ignium sedes non est nisi in ignibus, aquarum nisi in aquis, spiritus nisi in spiritu. Sic terrae arcentibus cunctis nisi in se locus non est, natura cohibente et quo cadat negante. Quae in centro uel cardine mundi sita, humillimum in creaturis ac medium, tamquam gratissima, locum tenet cum aqua, aer, et ignis ut leuitate naturae, ita et situ se ad altiora praeueniant ». For the translation, see BEDE, *On the Nature of Things*, p. 97.

⁴⁷ BEDA VENERABILIS, *De natura rerum*, p. 228–229: « Orbem terrae dicimus, non quod absoluti orbis sit forma, in tanta montium camporumque disparilitate, sed cuius amplexus si cuncta linearum comprehendantur ambitu, figuram absoluti orbis efficiat. Inde enim fit ut septentrionalis plagae sidera nobis semper appareant, meridianae numquam; rursusque haec illis non cernantur, obstante globo terrarum. Septentriones non cernit Troglodytice et confinis Aegyptus nec Canopum Italia. Quamuis eiusdem orbis pene dimidio maior pars ab oriente ad occasum quam a meridie ad septentrionem habitetur, hinc calore illinc rigore prohibente accessum ».

⁴⁸ ALFRED HIATT, « The Map of Macrobius before 1100 », *Imago Mundi*, 59 (2007), p. 149–176, here p. 150.

are two habitable, temperate zones (Figure 5).⁴⁹ The zones are described as five bands (*cinguli*).⁵⁰

The aforementioned representation of the climatic zones was further passed on through Martianus Capella's *Marriage of Philology and Mercury*, and is well represented in the manuscripts of the Middle Ages.⁵¹ This map was originally intended to show the oceanic system,⁵² not to provide an image of the world, and is best understood as « a bridge between geography and cosmology – between the desire to see and to map the known world and the desire to explain the position of the earth in terms of the cosmic system referred to by Cicero and explicated by Macrobius ». ⁵³

As in the case of the five-zones map, the function of medieval cartographic representations was not merely scholarly; rather, their functions differed according to the context of origin.⁵⁴ As in the *Vita Columbani*, some descriptions of the world are found in accounts of visions, where the protagonist sees the world from above. These world images may have served as an aid in the process of contemplation.⁵⁵ These and other cartographic representations can be understood as comprising world-views, merging geography, myths and Salvation History in one image.⁵⁶

⁴⁹ DAVID WOODWARD, « Medieval Mappaemundi », in JOHN B. HARLEY, DAVID WOODWARD (eds.), *Cartography in Prehistoric, Ancient, and Medieval Europe and the Mediterranean*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2002 (The History of Cartography, 1), p. 287–369, here p. 300; NATHALIE BOULOUX, « Ordering and Reading the World », in CHRISTOPH MAUNTEL (ed.), *Geography and Religious Knowledge in the Medieval World*, De Gruyter, Berlin – Boston 2021 (Das Mittelalter. Perspektiven mediävistischer Forschung. Beihefte, 14), p. 85–108, here p. 90; PATRICK GAUTIER DALCHÉ, « De la glose à la contemplation. Place et fonction de la carte dans les manuscrits du haut Moyen Âge », in *Testo e immagine nell'alto medioevo*, Centro italiano di studi sull'Alto Medioevo, Spoleto 1994 (Settimane di studio del Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 41,2), p. 693–771, here p. 713.

⁵⁰ HIATT, « The Map of Macrobius before 1100 », p. 151; 154.

⁵¹ EVELYN EDSON, EMILIE SAVAGE-SMITH, ANNA-DOROTHEE V. D. BRINCKEN, *Der mittelalterliche Kosmos: Karten der christlichen und islamischen Welt*, Primus-Verlag, Darmstadt 2005, p. 52–53. See also EASTWOOD, *Ordering the Heavens*, p. 200.

⁵² GAUTIER DALCHÉ, « De la glose à la contemplation », p. 714.

⁵³ HIATT, « The Map of Macrobius before 1100 », p. 163–164.

⁵⁴ PATRICK GAUTIER DALCHÉ, « Conceptions et représentations géographiques du haut Moyen Âge. Conditions, techniques intellectuelles, évolutions », in *La conoscenza scientifica nell'Alto Medioevo*, vol. I, p. 335–378, here p. 354.

⁵⁵ GAUTIER DALCHÉ, « De la glose à la contemplation », p. 764.

⁵⁶ HANS-WERNER GOETZ, *Gott und die Welt. Religiöse Vorstellungen des frühen und hohen Mittelalters. Teil I, Band 2: Die materielle Schöpfung: Kosmos und Welt; Die Welt als Heilsgeschehen*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin 2012 (Orbis mediaevalis. Vorstellungswelten des Mittelalters, 13,2), p. 142.

III. Elements of early medieval cosmography in the twelfth-century

The long twelfth century is usually seen as a turning point in regard to the knowledge of nature in the Middle Ages. A novel understanding of the body and its workings was brought about by the translations associated with Monte Cassino in South Italy. In addition, an interest in cosmogony and cosmography is revealed by the renewed attention paid to Calcidius's translation and commentary of Plato's *Timaeus* and its influence on the masters of the school of Chartres, and elements of the Ptolemaic astronomy were revealed by a group of translators in the region of the Ebro in the second quarter of the century.⁵⁷ The works of Aristotle and of his Greek, Arabic and Jewish commentators were translated into Latin from the middle of the century onwards.

On the other hand, research on the *computus* tradition has shown that in the centuries before there was already « an apparent interest in natural phenomena in the field of astronomy », which considers physical explanations and their revision for attaining a better understanding and prediction of celestial phenomena.⁵⁸ This tradition cannot be strictly distinguished from the more textual one of Isidore, Beda's *De natura rerum* and from Macrobius and Martianus Capella, since sometimes materials from these different sources were compiled together as they deal broadly with the same phenomena.

The new knowledge that was being made available did not mean a break with former traditions. The « scientific Isidore » continued, at least indirectly, to be copied, read, and incorporated into encyclopaedias.⁵⁹ There has been less research on the reception of Isidore in these centuries,⁶⁰ in part because scholarship on Isidore's works tends to focus on the earliest manuscripts of the seventh to the ninth centuries, and on occasion the tenth.⁶¹ The vitality of early medieval

⁵⁷ CHARLES BURNETT, « A Group of Arabic-Latin Translators Working in Northern Spain in the Mid-12th Century », *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1 (1977), p. 62–108; CHARLES BURNETT, « Translation from Arabic into Latin in the Middle Ages », in HARALD KITTEL, JULIANE HOUSE, BRIGITTE SCHULTZE (eds.), *Übersetzung: Ein internationales Handbuch zur Übersetzungsforschung*, De Gruyter, Berlin – New York 2007 (Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft, 26), vol. II, p. 1231–1237, here p. 1231–1232.

⁵⁸ NADJA GERMANN, « Natural Philosophy in Earlier Latin Thought », in ROBERT PASNAU (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2010, vol. I, p. 219–231, here p. 225.

⁵⁹ JACQUES ELFASSI, BERNARD RIBÉMONT, « La réception d'Isidore de Séville durant le Moyen Âge tardif (XIIe–XVe s.) », *Cahiers de recherches médiévales et humanistes*, 16 (2008), p. 1–5.

⁶⁰ BOUDAIN VAN DEN ABELE, « La tradition manuscrite des Étymologies d'Isidore de Séville. Pour une reprise en main du dossier », *Cahiers de recherches médiévales et humanistes*, 16 (2008), p. 195–205, here p. 202.

⁶¹ WINSTON BLACK, « Isidore of Seville in Scholastic Europe », in ANDREW FEAR, JAMIE WOOD (eds.) *A Companion to Isidore of Seville*, Brill, Leiden – Boston 2020 (Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition, 87), p. 569–603, p. 570–571.

cosmography in the twelfth-century is evident in how that period witnessed the greatest number of copies of both *De natura rerum*.⁶²

Accordingly, we find in England, still at the end of the century, a compendium of cosmography that includes both works as well as extracts from Pliny the Elder and Abbo of Fleury.⁶³ Another scientific compilation written in England brought together passages from Isidore, Abbo of Fleury, and Macrobius, and also contains Bede's *De natura rerum* and *De temporum ratione*.⁶⁴

If we take Isidore's treatise on nature as an indicator for the relevance of early medieval cosmology, there are interesting findings in Hildegard's cultural landscape. From « West Rhineland » comes an exemplar of *De natura rerum* dated on 1136, placed among the third and four books of the *Etymologies*. The manuscript contains diagrams of the five zones of the world and of *mundus-annus-homo*.⁶⁵ At the end of the century, another exemplar with the corresponding diagrams (followed by Bede's *On Times* and then by the fourth book of the *Etymologies*) originates in the Cistercian Abbey of Salem (Diocese of Konstanz).⁶⁶ In this abbey was also written a manuscript of *Scivias*, and Abt Gero of Salem and Hildegard were in epistolary contact between 1165 and 1173.⁶⁷

In this context can also be mentioned an exemplar of *De natura rerum*, copied probably around the 1130s by eight nuns at the Benedictine monastery at Munsterbilsen near Maastricht (now Belgium).⁶⁸ The manuscript was later in the same century located at the Diocese of Trier, at the Premonstratensian Abbey of

⁶² KENDALL, WALLIS, « Introduction », p. 64. The manuscripts of Isidore's *De natura rerum* are listed in *Ibid.*, p. 67–99; and complemented by JACQUES ELFASSI, « Review: Isidore of Seville, On the Nature of Things. Translated with Introduction, Notes and Commentary. Translated Texts for Historians, 66 », *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* (2017), <<https://bmc.brynmawr.edu/2017/2017.03.22>> (Accessed 22 March 2022). For the *Etymologies*, see also VAN DEN ABEELE, « La tradition manuscrite des Étymologies d'Isidore de Séville », p. 199.

⁶³ Baltimore, Walters Art Museum, MS W.73. Online at <<https://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/html/W73/>> (Accessed June 2024). Both works are also together in British Library, Cotton MS Domitian A I <http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Cotton_MS_Domitian_A_I&index=13> (Accessed June 2022).

⁶⁴ Oxford, St John's College, MS 17.

⁶⁵ London, British Library, Harley MS 2660, fol. 36v and 37r.

⁶⁶ Heidelberg, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. Sal. IX,39, fol. 26v (for the diagram *mundus-annus-homo*). No exact provenience (just « Germany ») is given for Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 333 Gud. lat. (Katalog-Nr. 4640).

⁶⁷ MICHAEL EMBACH, *Die Schriften Hildegards von Bingen: Studien zu ihrer Überlieferung und Rezeption im Mittelalter und in der Frühen Neuzeit*, Akademie Verlag, Berlin 2003 (*Erudiri Sapientia*, 4), p. 71. For the description of this *Scivias*, see *Ibid.*, p. 84–85.

⁶⁸ PAMELA R. ROBINSON, « A Twelfth-Century Scriptorix from Nunnaminster », in PAMELA R. ROBINSON, RIVKAH ZIM (eds.), *Of the making of books: Medieval manuscripts, their scribes and readers*, Scholar Press, Aldershot 1997, p. 73–93, here p. 88.

Arnstein.⁶⁹ It contains a year diagram that uses four semicircles, thereby forming a kind of square in the middle (Figure 6). Each season corresponds not to two, but to a single Hippocratic quality and a single part of the world:

East: hot; spring
South: dry; summer
West: cold; autumn
North: wet; winter

A similar figure appears in another work written in a women's cloister: the *Hortus deliciarum* of Herrad of Hohenbourg. The schema of the elements relates each of them to two Hippocratic qualities as well to their numerical ratio according Plato's *Timaeus*. It bears considerable parallels with some of the previously discussed diagrams of *annus* and *mundus-annus-homo*.⁷⁰

This brief overview suggests that the early medieval cosmography was still passed on, even in monasteries that can be connected to Hildegard, and that it was also known in some female monasteries. Isidore and Bede are, in addition, authors who are listed in the *similia* registers of the critical editions of Hildegard's main works.⁷¹

As already discussed, Hildegard may well have been aware of the principal tenets and their depiction through oral communication, through *florilegia* and other works. Thus, the *Summarium Heinrici*, whose two versions were known to the visionary, refers briefly to the five climatic zones and to the earth⁷² – references

⁶⁹ London, British Library, Harley MS 3099. See description of ownership in <http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Harley_MS_3099> (Accessed June 2022). For an overview of Hildegard's contacts to Trier, see ADELGUNDIS FÜHRKÖTTER, « Hildegard von Bingen und ihre Beziehungen zu Trier », *Kurtrierisches Jahrbuch*, 25 (1985), p. 61–72.

⁷⁰ Cf. HEIKE WILLEKE, « Ordo und Ethos im Hortus Deliciarum: Das Bild-Text-Programm des Hohenburger Codex zwischen kontemplativ-spekulativer Weltschau und konkret-pragmatischer Handlungsorientierung », Ph.D. Diss. Universität Hamburg, 2004, p. 123–125.

⁷¹ BERNDT, ZÁTONYI, *Glaubensheil*, p. 94. According to the *index auctorum*, we find *similia* to Isidore's *De natura rerum* once in Scivias and five times in *LDO*, and to Bede's *De natura rerum* only once in Scivias. Much more similitudes are found with Isidore's *Etymologiae* (Books VI, VII, X, XI, XIII, XVII, XX): once in Scivias, four times in *LVM* (two of them also found in Hraban Maur), and four times in *LDO*. In *Cause et cure*, Moulinier identifies one possible reference to Isidore's *De natura rerum* and four to Bede's homonymous work. The references to the *Etymologies* (Books I, III, IV, VI, X–XVII) are much more numerous (around 70).

⁷² *Summarium Heinrici. Band 1: Textkritische Ausgabe der ersten Fassung*, ed. REINER HILDEBRANDT, de Gruyter, Berlin 1974 (Quellen und Forschungen zur Sprach- und Kulturgeschichte der germanischen Völker, 185), V.3: « Zone vel circuli celi quinque sunt: primus arcticos, secundus terinus tropicus, tertius himerinus qui a Latinis equinoctialis, quartus antarcticus, quintus eimerinus, latine vero hiemalis sive brumalis; V.12: Terra est in media mundi regione posita, omnibus partibus celi in modum centri equali intervallo consistens, que singulari numero totum

taken from Isidore's *Etymologies*. The *Imago mundi* of Honorius Augustodunensis (written around 1110) also discusses ideas such as the roundness of the earth (I.5) and its division in five climate zones, of which only the two middle zones are habitable.⁷³ Similar to Hildegard's *Scivias*, the *Imago mundi* describes the universe in the form of an egg.⁷⁴

Before concentrating on Hildegard's vision, there is one more novel aspect to consider: the re-sacralisation of cosmology at the beginning of the twelfth-century.⁷⁵ As Barbara Obrist states, the growing relevance of the History of Salvation and of the eschatological perspective leads to alterations to the structure of the universe itself. The places of saved and condemned souls are added to its centre and the inferno and the celestial paradise to its periphery.⁷⁶ These new features were first observed in the *Imago mundi* of Honorius, which includes « cosmic places associated with major stages » of the History of Salvation. Paradise is conceived as being above the eight spheres of stars and hell as in the centre of the cosmic system.⁷⁷ We also find the idea of a corporeal place of punishment in Hugh of St Victor, among others.

IV. *The fifth vision of the LDO: Image, sources, reinterpretation*

Hildegard opens her three books of visions by explaining the circumstances and the origin of her visions. Her account is followed by the visions themselves, each comprising first a description of what she saw and then an explanation of the vision through the divine voice. According to Dinah Wouters, Hildegard's visions

orbem significat [...] Orbis kreiz [sic] a rotunditate, quia rota est; qui trifarie divisus est: e quibus una pars Asia, altera Europa [...] tertia est Affrica [...] ». For Hildegard's knowledge of both versions of this work, see REINER HILDEBRANDT, « Summarium Heinrici: Das Lehrbuch der Hildegard von Bingen », in ERNST BREMER, REINER HILDEBRANDT (eds.), *Stand und Aufgaben der deutschen Dialektlexikographie*, De Gruyter, Berlin – New York 1996 (Historische Wortforschung, 4), p. 89–110.

⁷³ VALERIE I. J. FLINT, « Honorius Augustodunensis Imago Mundi », *Archives d'histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Âge* 49 (1982), p. 7–153; Edition p. 48–153. Online at <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/44403737>> (Accessed December 2024), here p. 51. For a short description of this work, see GOETZ, *Gott und die Welt*, p. 153.

⁷⁴ For a discussion of whether Hildegard was influenced by Honorius or was using a widely received image, see SANTOS PAZ, « Visiones hildegardianas del cosmos », p. 221–223.

⁷⁵ OBRIST, « La cosmologie du Haut Moyen Âge », p. 112.

⁷⁶ BARBARA OBRIST, « L'univers du Liber floridus et les lieux des anges, des âmes et de la divinité », in PATRIZIA CARMASSI (ed.), *Time and Science in the « Liber floridus » of Lambert of Saint-Omer*, Brepols, Turnhout 2021 (Les Études du RILMA, 13), p. 127–150, here p. 127.

⁷⁷ BARBARA OBRIST, « The Physical and the Spiritual Universe: Infernus and Paradise in Medieval Cosmography and its Visual Representations (Seventh-Fourteenth Century) », *Studies in Iconography*, 36 (2015), p. 41–78, here p. 69.

are the result of her thinking poured into a textual form. This textual form, the vision itself, is an allegory. The allegory is then explained through textual exegesis. Textual exegesis is carried out by means of the divine voice which, on the one hand, elucidates the vision itself and, on the other, it sets out certain aspects.⁷⁸ In the *LDO*, the cosmos is transformed into an allegory whose meaningful aspects are to be discerned.⁷⁹ Hildegard relates these aspects to the divine mysteries. By abstracting and rearranging the elements of reality, that is, by distinguishing the meaningful aspects of the allegorical cosmos, she is able to communicate her visions to a wider audience. In this way, she guides her audience to the insights she has received through divine grace, thereby fulfilling her role as a prophetess.⁸⁰

The role of Hildegard's visions – also of her vision of the earth – is different from the role of some medieval maps and of the diagrams mentioned above. It does not depend on the accompanying text; rather, the text is built upon the vision. It differs as well from some cosmic visions, for the optical or the speculative activity are not foregrounded;⁸¹ the accent is not on the vision itself but on its interpretation in words.

Her third book of visions, the *LDO*, is divided into three sections and comprises ten visions, each illuminating an aspect of the cosmos. The first section deals with the relationship between the macro- and microcosmos, and the third with the History of Salvation. The second section, comprising only the fifth vision, has its place between the other two, connecting them.

In her first vision, Hildegard sees a human image with the most beautiful, radiant head. Appearing above the head is the face of an old man. This winged figure is holding a lamb in his arms. The tunica that covers him is the mortal garment (i.e., the body) of the Son of God. In her second vision, the wheel (*rota*) of the universe appears in the breast of the image. Planets and different parts of the human body are placed into a relationship. The macro- and microcosmos are the subject of the third vision, which examines the interaction between worldly winds and human humours. In the fourth vision, Hildegard considers the measures and occurrences of the firmament and their rapport with worldly phenomena and especially with the human body. These four visions, which constitute the first section, present a close connection between the universe and the human body: this body not only mirrors the celestial phenomena, but also acts as a hinge between the envisioned cosmos and a psychological or moral explanation.

The fifth vision does not describe the interaction between the different elements of the universe, earth phenomena, and the human body. Leaving the

⁷⁸ WOUTERS, *Allegorical Form and Theory*, p. 244.

⁷⁹ WOUTERS, *Allegorical Form and Theory*, p. 135.

⁸⁰ WOUTERS, *Allegorical Form and Theory*, p. 244; 242.

⁸¹ WOUTERS, *Allegorical Form and Theory*, p. 755; 757.

universe behind, Hildegard concentrates on the earth, which she envisions as follows:

Then I saw the round of the earth divided into five parts, so that one part was to the east, one to the west, the third to the south, the fourth to north, while the fifth in their middle. The extent of the eastern part and the extent of the western part were of equal dimension, and each had the form of a drawn bow. The extent of the southern part and the extent of the northern part also were of a single measure, equal in length and breadth to the previous two parts—except that, because the inner edges of the previous two parts curved around, these two appeared as if truncated as they bent inwards. So they too imitated the form of a drawn bow, except that their inner edges were truncated.⁸²

The four zones of the earth are ordered according to the four cardinal directions and a fifth appears in the middle of them. Eastern and western, and northern and southern parts mirror each other. Further details are added to the vision. The middle part has the form of a rectangle, and it is divided into three sections: one is exposed to heat, another to cold, and the third to a warm breeze.⁸³ While the eastern part is bright, the western is dark.⁸⁴ The northern and southern parts are each divided into three sections. The middle section of both parts abounds in horrors and punishments, while the two extreme sections are full of punishments.⁸⁵ It follows the description of some forms around and behind the wheel, which will not be of concern in this paper.

⁸² HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1 (Visio): « Deinde uidi rotunditatem terrę in quinque partes distinctam, ita ut pars una ad orientem, altera ad occidentem, tertia ad austrum, quarta ad septentrionem, quinta autem in medio istarum esset. Et ambitus partis orientalis ambitusque partis occidentalis equalis mensurę erant, formamque extenti arcus uterque habebat. Ambitus quoque partis australis ambitusque partis septentrionalis, unius mensurę existentes, longitudini et latitudini priorum duarum partium adequabantur, excepto quod in interioribus sinibus suis propter arcuatos interiores fines earundem priorum duarum partium quasi truncati uidebantur formamque extenti arcus preter ipsos truncatos interiores fines suos imitabantur ». For the translation, see HILDEGARD OF BINGEN, *The Book of Divine Works*, ed. NATHANIEL M. CAMPBELL, Catholic University of America Press, Washington DC 2018 (The Fathers of the Church. Mediaeval Continuation, 18), p. 264.

⁸³ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1 (Visio): « Quinta autem pars priorum partium, quę in medio omnium istarum erat, in quadrata forma apparebat atque alibi ardore, alibi frigore, alibi autem temperamento aeris perfusa erat ».

⁸⁴ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1 (Visio): « Et predicta pars orientalis multa claritate lucebat, occidentalis autem quadam tenebrositate oblecta tenebrescebat ».

⁸⁵ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1 (Visio): « Nam hę utręque partes, scilicet pars australis parsque septentrionalis, in tres partes distinguebantur, quarum duę medię ipsarum partium unius formę uniusque mensurę erant. Reliquę quatuor etiam, quę finetenus erant [...] australis uero, quę tribus distinctionibus distinguebatur, duas distinctiones quę finetenus erant plenas quibusdam penis habebat. Terciam autem, quę media uidebatur, non quidem penis, sed

In the other visions of the *LDO* as well as in her other visionary works, Hildegard writes regularly about the four parts of the world (*partes mundi, plagae mundi*).⁸⁶ The idea of the earth as divided in five zones appears only here. The division is further connected to climatic events, but these are not the result of heavenly circles that are projected on the earth – as in Isidore and Bede. Hildegard's wheel of the earth has, as do some of the *rotae anni* and *rotae mundi-anni-hominis*, a rectangle in the middle. The rectangle, divided into three sections, is affected by heat, cold, and warm breeze. The use of a square in the middle in combination with the circle, as Barbara Obrist points out in her study on wind diagrams, could symbolize « the surface of the earth and the world in its spatial extension ».⁸⁷ It slightly evokes the division of the world in three parts as represented in the O-T schemes, while at the same time makes use of the idea of habitable and non-inhabitable parts distinctive of the climatic models of the earth.

The vision and its illustration in the Lucca manuscript (Figure 7), an interpretation of this vision that dates from the first half of the thirteenth-century and was probably written in a Rhenish Abbey,⁸⁸ also has some traits in common with a number of the Isidorian *rotae*: the circle containing four (kinds of) semicircles, their correspondence with the four cardinal points, and the square in the middle. In her study on the depiction of Hildegard's visions, Keiko Suzuki relates this illustration to Isidore's *annus* diagram: the concave square, and the division of not all, but of two of the principal segments in three (as when the semicircles intersect). The division of the square into three parts is a new element.⁸⁹

The vision's description is followed by an explanation by a celestial voice. Some characteristics of early medieval cosmology, too, can be distinguished in this

alii quibusdam monstruosis terroribus horrendam demonstrabat. Quod et septentrionalis pars, tres etiam separationes habens, in duabus extremis separationibus diuersis penis habundantibus et in media quamplurimis horroribus siue penis horrenda ostendebat ».

⁸⁶ For Hildegard's use of the four cardinal points, see BARBARA MAURMANN, *Die Himmelsrichtungen im Weltbild des Mittelalters: Hildegard von Bingen, Honorius Augustodunensis und andere Autoren*, Fink, München 1976 (Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften, 33).

⁸⁷ BARBARA OBRIST, « Wind Diagrams and Medieval Cosmology », *Speculum*, 72 (1997), p. 33–84, here p. 63.

⁸⁸ EMBACH, *Die Schriften Hildegards von Bingen*, p. 166. For the circumstances of its production and a rejection of the idea that Hildegard had something to do with the composition of these miniatures, see also NATHANIEL M. CAMPBELL, « Picturing Hildegard of Bingen's Sight: Illuminating Her Visions », in JENNIFER BAIN (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Hildegard of Bingen*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2021, p. 257–279, here p. 272–276.

⁸⁹ KEIKO SUZUKI, *Bildgewordene Visionen oder Visionserzählungen: Vergleichende Studie über die Visionsdarstellungen in der Rupertsberger « Scivias »-Handschrift und im Luccheser « Liber divinorum operum »-Codex der Hildegard von Bingen*, Lang – Bern i.a., 1998 (Neue Berner Schriften zur Kunst, 5), p. 221–222. Suzuki refers specifically to the year diagram in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Lat. 6413, fol. 1r. Online at <<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10527898d/f9.item.zoom>> (Accessed June 2024).

section. The explanation of the earth being in the middle of the three other elements, so that it could not fall or break up,⁹⁰ is reminiscent of the Aristotelian notion of the elements having their natural places as it was transmitted by Bede. Likewise, Hildegard stresses the roundness of the earth and associates it to its equilibrium: « This is because, if the earth were angular and not round, its corners would cause it the defect of an unequal distribution of weight ».⁹¹ As with Isidore in his *De natura rerum* (Chapter 45), Hildegard relates form and equilibrium of the earth, for the proper balance and stability also count the interaction between the four exterior and the interior parts. This idea, already idiosyncratic, is deepened through a correlation between the earth and the human being (*homo*), who is strengthened for all that he needs and also led to salvation through the five senses.⁹²

From this point onwards, the traces of early medieval cosmology become increasingly blurred. In the following chapter, the five parts of the earth are further described in terms of their relationship to the middle part and of their correlation with the five senses.⁹³ The part oriented to the east, which lends useful greenness to the middle part by giving its « good sap », is compared to sight that is directed to the « origin of clarity ».⁹⁴ The part directed to the west gives to the middle part a moisture that is sometimes good and sometimes bad. It is compared to the sense of audition, which announces the whole body of favourable and

⁹⁰ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.2.1–5: « Orbem terrę Deus in medio trium elementorum ita suspendit, ut nequaquam labi nec dissolui possit; et in hoc se mirabilem atque potentem ostendit, cum etiam nec carnem nec ossa hominis in puluerem sic redigit, quin ea in nouissimo die ad integritatem suam restituat ».

⁹¹ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.13–21: « et hoc ideo est, quoniam, si terra angulosa et non rotunda esset, anguli ipsius defectum et inequalitem ponderositatis ei inferrent ». For the translation, see HILDEGARD OF BINGEN, *The Book of Divine Works*, p. 267.

⁹² HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.2: « Et si quinque partibus non distingueretur, recto moderamine non pensaretur, quia quatuor exteriores partes eam ad rectitudinem ponderant, quinta autem, quę media est, eam in rectitudine ista solidam et stabilem facit; designans etiam quod homo, quem terra demonstrat, quinque sensibus, qui in eo uigent, ad quęque sibi necessaria solidatur atque ad salutem animę suę dirigitur ».

⁹³ Interestingly, the following passages are not analysed in AZUCENA A. FRABOSCHI, « El lenguaje del cuerpo y los sentidos como teofanía en la obra teológica de Hildegarda de Bingen », *Teoliterária*, 3 (2013). In contrast, these passages (Chapters 2–5) are used to illustrate the importance of the five senses in Hildegard's thought by MAURA ZÁTONYI, *Das große Hildegard von Bingen Lesebuch: Worte wie von Feuerzungen*, Herder, Freiburg i. Br. 2022, 229–233.

⁹⁴ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.3: « Vnde et pars una ad orientem uersa medię parti sucum bonum uiriditatemque utilem tribuit, quemadmodum et hominis uisus quasi ad ortum claritatis directus ipsi, qui uelut in medio elementorum est, salutem corporis et animę subministrat ».

adverse things.⁹⁵ The third part, inclined to the south, lends to the same middle part a heat tempered by the cold breeze of the winds. It is compared to the sense of smell, which originates as a vapour from the heat and gives the human being the odour that comes from the hot and cold mixtures and the one that comes from the celestial sighs.⁹⁶ The fourth part, directed to the north, introduces to the middle part the cold from the north and the heat from the east. It is equated with the sense of taste that distinguishes cold from hot things, striking the human being with manifold flavours and celestial sweetness.⁹⁷ The fifth and middle part is strengthened and influenced by the other four. Similarly, the sense of touch, in between the other senses, receives from them the strength to live and operate.⁹⁸

In this manner, the four exterior parts influence the interior, middle part. The influence responds in the cosmological realm only to the qualities of cold and heat; wet and dry are not mentioned – unless we understand moisture as wet. It seems that here as well there is no association between the four parts and the seasons, as in some *rotae mundi-anni-hominis*. The middle part is consistently regarded as the human being. The correspondence between parts of the world and the senses is the following:

Eastern part (good sap): sight
Western part (moisture): hearing
Southern part (tempered heat): smell
Northern part (cold and heat): taste
Earth in the middle: touch

Before turning again to this correspondence, which appears throughout the account of the vision itself, Hildegard explains the same extension and form of a

⁹⁵ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.3: « Altera autem ad occidentem respiciens humiditatem interdum bonam, interdum nociuam eidem parti dat, ut etiam auditus totum corpus hominis uelut ad occidentem concutiens et penetrans nunc prospera, nunc aduersa, nunc animę salutem, nunc desperationem illi denuntiat ».

⁹⁶ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.3: « Tercia uero ad austrum uergens calorem frigidus flatu uentorum temperatum ipsi parti inmittit, sicut et odoratus quemadmodum uapor de calore surgens odorem de calidis et frigidis temperamentis procedentem odoremque de supernis suspiriis uenientem homini infundit ».

⁹⁷ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.3: « Sed quarta ad septentrionem tendens frigus a septentrione et calorem ab oriente uenientem predictę medię parti inducit, uelut gustus, frigida recipiens frigidaque et calida discernens, diuerso sapore supernaque dulcedine hominem concutit ».

⁹⁸ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.3: « Quinta autem in medio istarum existens ab ipsis in soliditate confortatur diuersisque infusionibus temperatur; quemadmodum et tactus uelut in medio aliorum sensuum uigens ab eis roboratur, cum omnes ipsi uires tribuunt et eum ad uegetationem consolidant, ut etiam in dispositione digitorum ostenditur; quia et per ipsos opera ad eternam remunerationem respicientia perficiuntur ».

drawn bow for the eastern and western parts, for the sun in its trajectory covers the same distance when it rises as when it sets.⁹⁹ As we saw, the distances covered by the sun is a subject treated together with the five circles of the heaven and five parts of the earth in both Isidore's and Bede's *De natura rerum*. The movement of the sun is compared to sight: vision rises by the science of the good and descends by the science of the bad.¹⁰⁰ The extension and form of the southern and northern parts, truncated at their inner edges, are due to the fact that « the south fills the earth with heat as much as the north fills it with cold ».¹⁰¹ The ascription of heat to the south and cold to the north could relate to some *mundus-annus-homo* diagrams, in which south and north are associated respectively with the seasons of summer and winter, and with the qualities of dry and hot, and wet and cold. Next, she compares smell and taste to the truncated parts of the earth: the sense of smell turns to the right on behalf of the odour of the virtues; the sense of taste turns to the left because of the taste of the vices. But they are unable to accomplish the action they have begun.¹⁰²

The subsequent paragraphs continue the parallels between human actions and the threefold division of northern and southern parts and their outer and inner limits.¹⁰³ First, Hildegard underscores that humans are unable to inhabit the southern and northern parts because of the heat, the cold, or the serpents.¹⁰⁴ Climatic inhabitability is then compared to the human *inhabitabilitas*, when the soul is inclined at the same time to good and bad actions by the smell of the virtues

⁹⁹ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.3: « Et, ut uides, ambitus partis orientalis ambitusque partis occidentalis equalis mensurę sunt, formamque extenti arcus uterque habet, quoniam sol oriendo et occidendo equalia spacia terrarum in circuitu cursus sui occupat ».

¹⁰⁰ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.3: « Quod etiam ostendit uisum per scientiam boni et mali in hac similitudine esse, uidelicet quod, sicut uisus per scientiam boni ad hoc quod bonum est sursum tendit, ita et per scientiam mali ad hoc quod malum est deorsum descendit; per illam quidem se a malo retorquendo, per istam autem a bono se recurando ».

¹⁰¹ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.3: « quantum terrę auster in calore, tantum septentrio in frigore occupat ». For the translation, see HILDEGARD OF BINGEN, *The Book of Divine Works*, p. 269.

¹⁰² HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.3: « Sic et odoratus, cum per odorem uirtutum tendit ad dexteram, gustus uero per saporem uiciorum ad sinistram, in hoc optentu uelut par studium, quamuis contrarium, habentes, origini suę se assimilant, cum ille bono, hic malo se coaptat; sed tamen neuter istorum in inicio inceptionis suę plenitudinem conatus sui habere potest, quia, dum primitus homo siue bonum siue malum incipit, scienter in eodem facto se constringit; quoniam nondum illi se totum committere audeat ».

¹⁰³ The division of these parts in three zones as well as the further description of the otherworldly places in the four parts of the world could have as reference the Book of Enoch; see MAURMANN, *Die Himmelsrichtungen im Weltbild des Mittelalters*, p. 74–75.

¹⁰⁴ In his *Imago mundi* (I.9), Honorius also describes desert places beyond the Paradise, being inhabitable due to serpents and other beasts. See FLINT, « Honorius Augustodunensis *Imago Mundi* », p. 52.

and the taste of sin, ignorant about what the soul, body, and human actions are.¹⁰⁵ The middle, symmetrical section of each part stands for the soul that has only one disposition when desiring God, although it is amidst the odour of virtues and the taste of sin.¹⁰⁶ The explanation continues to explore the relationship between body and soul.

The identification between the fifth, square zone in the middle and the sense of touch is deepened in the exegesis of the vision: it means the perfection of the works and not the levity of the vices.¹⁰⁷ As in the climatic models of Isidore and Macrobius, Hildegard distinguishes between habitable and uninhabitable zones. Nevertheless, we deal here with three and not five zones: cold and heat – caused as well by the closeness or distance to the sun – make two of them unfit for human habitation. Amidst them is the only habitable zone. To show how the uninhabitable zones collaborate with heat and cold with the third one, Hildegard introduces a simile with the fingers of a hand and the five senses. We have here again an element of Isidore's description of the earth, but this time it has nothing to do with the disposition of the zones themselves.¹⁰⁸ After that, a novel element is introduced: the habitable parts represent the faithful, the uninhabitable the unfaithful.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁵ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.4: « Nam et hę utręque partes, scilicet pars australis parsque septentrionalis, in tres partes distinguuntur, quę hinc pre ardore, hinc pre frigore, hinc pre serpentibus inhabitabiles hominibus sunt. Hoc quoque demonstrat quod odoratus cum ascendit ad odorem uirtutum, gustus uero cum declinat ad saporem uiciorum, hominis corpus animamque eius ac opera ipsius diuerso modo tangunt; ubi et illum quasi inhabitabilem ostendunt, si non intelligit quid corpus, quid anima, quid opera in ipso sint, et si etiam in semetipso nec rectum temperamentum discernere nouit ».

¹⁰⁶ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.4: « Quarum duę medię ipsarum partium unius formę uniusque mensurę sunt; quoniam pars australis et pars septentrionalis, in recta mensura existentes, his etiam sua rectitudine iusta moderamina concedunt; atque designant quod anima, in odore uirtutum et in sapore uiciorum uelut media inter corpus et opera ipsius existens, unius moderaminis et dispositionis est, cum mala metuendo ad Deum suspirat ».

¹⁰⁷ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.5: « Quinta uero pars priorum partium, quę in medio omnium istarum est, in quadrata forma apparet, quatinus a ceteris ęqualiter contineatur et perfundatur; designans etiam quod tactus perfectionem operum et non leuitatem uiciorum habeat ».

¹⁰⁸ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.5: « Atque alibi ardore, alibi frigore, alibi autem temperamento aeris perfusa est, quia ardor solis eam hic propter uiciniam suam perurens, frigus uero propter remotionem ipsius eam illic constringens, inhabitabilem hominibus reddit. Temperies autem caloris et frigoris illam istic habitabilem concedit; quemadmodum et digiti a se differentes manum tamen fortitudine sua continentes roborant, et ut quinque sensus hominis, quamuis sibi dissimiles sint, uelut per ignem et aquam temptationem transeuntes, adminicula adiutorii sibi inuicem ad uirtutes exhibent ».

¹⁰⁹ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.5: « Sed et hęc eadem loca habitabilia fideles homines demonstrant, qui diuinam legem semper ruminantes et se totos ad supernam uitam erigentes in bonis operibus se habitabiles reddunt; inhabitabilia autem infideles designant, qui

In the next section, Hildegard turns her attention from the middle part to the four surrounding arches and considers them in terms of inhabitation. The five parts of the world come to be interpreted, as Peter Dronke puts it, as the « geography [...] of felicity, purgation and perdition ».¹¹⁰ The eastern, bright part is the place of the *beatae animae* and has the consolation of the blissful soul. It warns the soul to consider the true light with its interior sight.¹¹¹ In the four corners of the earth places of punishment have been assigned, where the souls, removed from their bodies, are examined according to their faults.¹¹² Accordingly, the remaining three major zones are related to different kinds of faults:

Western part: failure to hear the clamour of the truth¹¹³

Southern part: failure to smell the odour of truth¹¹⁴

Northern part: failure to taste the flavour of life¹¹⁵

uerbis Dei resistere et repugnare conantes et fidem abnegare ueritatemque et soliditatem eiusdem fidei lacerare et perrumpere laborantes his peruersitatibus se inhabitabiles faciunt, quia Spiritui Sancto habitaculum in semetipsis non concedunt ». A longer version of this chapter is found in the 'Fragment of Berlin' (Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Lat. Qu. 674) III.48. For a contraposition of both texts, see JOSÉ C. SANTOS PAZ, « El fragmento de Berlín atribuido a Hildegarde de Bingen y la actividad del scriptorium de Rupertsberg », *Anuario de Estudios Medievales*, 52 (2022), p. 857–886, here p. 863–864.

¹¹⁰ DRONKE, « Introduction », p. LIX. For the « Jenseits », see as well OBRIST, « The Physical and the Spiritual Universe », p. 51; BARBARA NEWMAN, « Hildegard of Bingen and the 'Birth of Purgatory' », *Mystics Quarterly*, 19 (1993), p. 90–97, here p. 93–94; MAURMANN, *Die Himmelsrichtungen im Weltbild des Mittelalters*, p. 74–80; LIEBESCHÜTZ, *Das allegorische Weltbild der heiligen Hildegard von Bingen*, p. 58; 119–121.

¹¹¹ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.6: « Et predicta pars orientalis multa claritate lucet, quoniam in ipsa locus uoluptatis et deliciarum est, refrigerium beatarum animarum in se habens, et ut anima interiorem uisum ad aspectum ueri luminis figat monens ».

¹¹² HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.6. « Contra uicia autem multorum peccatorum, quibus homines iusticiam preuaricantur, penalia et transitoria loca in quatuor angulis terre posita sunt, quibus anime saluandorum secundum quod culpę eorum exigunt, corporibus exutę, examinantur ».

¹¹³ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.6: « Vnde occidentalis pars quadam tenebrositate oblecta tenebrescit, his tenebris penas leuium minorumque peccatorum in se continens, scilicet hominum illorum qui ignorantia delinquant, et in eis auditum hominis a clamore ueritatis auersum ostendens ».

¹¹⁴ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.6: « Australis uero pars, quę in tribus distinctionibus diuisa est, duas distinctiones quę finetenus sunt plenas quibusdam penis habet; in quibus fortia peccata animarum illarum puniuntur, quę dum in corporibus suis essent odorem uirtutum neglexerunt ».

¹¹⁵ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.6: « Quod et septentrionalis pars, etiam tres separationes habens, in duabus extremis separationibus diuersis penis habundantibus ostendit, in quibus anime illorum purgantur, qui gustum uitę postponentes concupiscentias carnis suę secuti sunt ».

Among the punishments of one of the sections of the southern zone and one of the northern are still some associated with fire (*penae ignei*)¹¹⁶ and with cold (*durissimae penae frigoris*).¹¹⁷ Nevertheless, the idea of the climatic zones makes way to an image of the world that includes corporal places for the blissful, the sinners and the condemned. The association between the parts of the world and the five human senses, first applied to stress the stability of the earth and the human being, changes now to relate a specific punishment with the fault committed with a specific sense.

This idea is brought up one last time, when Hildegard considers that, since human beings live by their five senses, they do wrong and, therefore, they make penitence in the different parts of the earth, most of them uninhabitable for human beings.¹¹⁸ In this manner, the habitability/inhabitability of the places of the earth responds both to the extreme climates and to the physical presence of reward and penitential places in the earth.

The remainder of the vision deals no further with the image of the earth, the five senses, or the places of reward and punishments. The divine judgments that are effective in all four parts of the earth lead Hildegard to an excursus about the four horsemen of the Apocalypse (II.1.8–9). She completes the exegesis of her vision (II.1.10–13), and concludes with a praise to God the Creator and a recounting of the fall of angels and of the human being and the redemption (II.1.14–16). Finally, Hildegard introduces the biblical account of the six days of the Creation, which she examines according to three of the four senses of the scripture: literal, allegorical, and tropological (II.1.17–49).

¹¹⁶ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.6: « Nam in distinctione anguli huius, qui inter orientem et austrum est, acerrimę penę ignei et uentosi aeris aliorumque cruciatuum sunt ».

¹¹⁷ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.6: « In separatione enim anguli istius, qui inter orientem et septentrionem est, durissimę penę frigoris et uentorum aliorumque cruciatuum sunt; in quibus infidelitas quorundam incredulorum hominum examinatur, qui dum in seculo manerent incredulitatem imitantes gustum uerę fidei neglexerunt, in hora tantum mortis suę per penitentiam ad fidem catholicam redeunt gustum rectitudinis tandem receperunt ».

¹¹⁸ HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, II.1.7: « Quia autem homo in quinque sensibus consistens semper peccat, idcirco in prefatis quinque partibus terrę purgationem patitur, sed paruas penas in supradicta tenebrositate occidentalis partis illi sustinent, quibus presens terra dum in corporibus suis essent quasi carcer ob amorem celestium fuit. Qui autem uoluptati carnis seruunt, in aliis purgatoriis penis, qui et in partibus austri et septentrionis sunt, ut predictum est, purgantur; quia quamuis peccauerint, Deum tamen et iustam fidem non abiecerunt. Has etenim supradictas, orientis et occidentis scilicet duas rotunditatis terrę principales partes, necnon et austri et septentrionis, ut prefatum est, quatuor angulares fines mortalis homo non inhabitat, quoniam pre inmutabilitate caloris seu frigoris seu pre aliis incommoditatibus illarum in eis uiuere non posset; quemadmodum etiam, si homo supra modum se exaltauerit aut si in desperationem ceciderit, uel si dextram negligens ad sinistram declinauerit, Spiritum Sanctum in habitaculum cordis sui non recipit ».

In terms of the structure of the work, one can see how Hildegard incorporates into her vision some of the elements that characterise the conception of the earth in early medieval cosmology. Some of these elements are also incorporated into her explanation of the vision. In interpreting the « allegory of the earth », she radically transforms these elements and brings them into play to examine the human constitution as having five senses, the actions that are accomplished through the senses and finally the rewards and punishments that human beings shall receive according to these actions. Thus, the five senses guide the reader or hearer along the different levels to which the vision refers: the world, the human being with her ability to distinguish it and to act in it, the purgatory geography. They give rise to a further, inner geography: that of the soul and human works. And this is the core message of the vision.

V. Transforming traditional knowledge: From the outer world to the human works

In the fifth vision of *LDO*, we can trace a route that departs from a cosmological picture and ends by considering God the Creator. This path resorts to the five senses to reinterpret *mundus* in terms of the human body, to relate human body to its actions and, finally, to offer an image where *mundus* contains the rewards for the performed actions.

The image of the world presents many elements of the early medieval cosmology: the place of the earth in the middle of the cosmos, amidst the other three elements, the spherical form of the earth, the trajectory of the sun, the earth's division in five parts as in the zonal maps of Macrobius and the *rota circularum* of Isidore, or in three parts as in the O-T diagrams of the world. Nevertheless, in Hildegard's vision there are either Macrobian « stripes » (in their vertical or horizontal versions) or Isidorian circles. There is, though, an association between different climates and different parts of the world.

On the other hand, the form of the bows or semicircles – truncated or not – recalls some diagrams of the year and of *mundus-annus-homo*, as does the square in the middle. The macro- and microcosmos correspondences between the four elements, their four qualities, the four seasons, and the four human humours are characteristic of the Isidorian diagrams. Hildegard seems to maintain this relationship, though applying it to the division of the earth in five parts and its correspondence with the five human senses. Elements, qualities, and seasons play a minor role in the vision, and the humours none at all. As in the Isidorian *rota mundi-anni-hominis*, the square in the middle sometimes signifies the earth and sometimes the human being, the microcosmos. The transition from the climatic zones to the realm of the human being is probably mediated by the *mundus-annus-homo* scheme.

There is another characteristic that relates Hildegard's allegory to medieval representations of the earth. Her image of the earth contains important elements that correspond not only to its 'scientific' image, but also to its history: the end and the beginning. The envisioned image of the earth leads Hildegard to approach her principal subjects: the *homo interior* and the History of Salvation. In an Augustinian fashion, she departs from the knowledge of the terrestrial and celestial things, from the *scientia*, to arrive at knowledge of human weakness and of God and his Salvation History, that is, to *sapientia*.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ GAETANO LETTIERI, « Cosmologie protocristiane e patristiche dagli gnostici valentiniani ad Agostino », in *La conoscenza scientifica nell'Alto Medioevo*, vol. I, p. 21–52, here p. 47.

Images



Figure 1: Rota circularum.

ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum. Sententiae* – Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 14300, fol. 5v (detail). Regensburg, St Emmeram, eight/ninth-century. Online at <<https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/en/view/bsb00046640?page=14,15>> (Accessed June 2024). Used under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 (CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0).

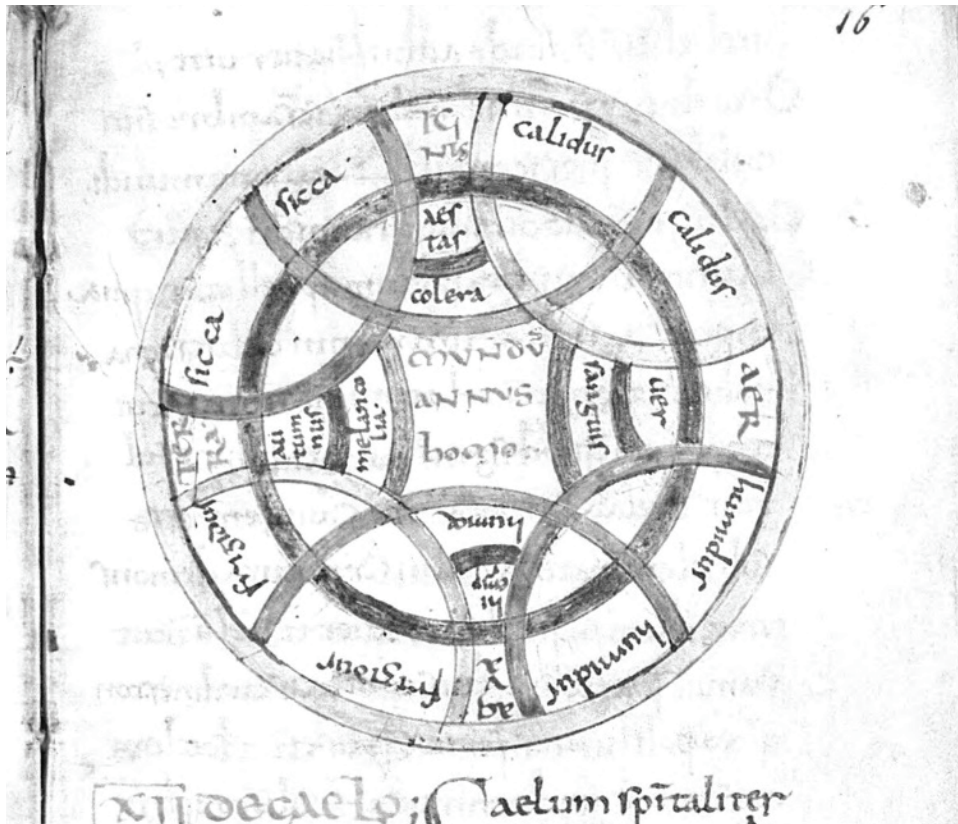


Figure 2: Rota mundi-anni-hominis

ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum* – Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 16128, fol. 16r (detail). Salzburg, end of the eighth-century. Online at <<https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/view/bsb00122734?page=37>> (Accessed June 2024). Used under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 (CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0).



Figure 3: Rota anni

ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum. Sententiae* – Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 14300, fol. 5v (detail). Salzburg, end of the eighth-century/beginning of the ninth-century. Online at <<https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/en/view/bsb00046640?page=14,15>> (Accessed June 2024). Used under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial-ShareAlike 4.0 (CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0).



ISIDORUS HISPALENSIS, *De natura rerum* – St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek 238, p. 331 (detail). St Gall, AD 760–80. Online at <<https://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/csg/0238/331/0/>> (Accessed June 2024). Used under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial 4.0 (CC-BY-NC 4.0).



Figure 5: Map of five zones

MACROBIUS, *Commentarii in Ciceronis Somnium Scipionis* – Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS D'Orville 77, fol. 100r (detail). South Germany, late tenth-century/early eleventh-century. Online at <<https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/5fe47e7a-1ee6-4bb0-a2bc-798285e7d150/>> (Accessed June 2024). Used under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non Commercial 4.0 (CC-BY-NC 4.0).



Figure 6: Rota anni

ISIDORUS HISPALIENSIS, *De natura rerum* – British Library, Harley MS 3099, f. 156r (detail). Benedictine nunnery at Munsterbilsen, c. 1130–1174. Courtesy of the British Library Board.



Figure 7: The image of the earth

HILDEGARDIS BINGENSIS, *Liber divinorum operum*, Vision II.5 – Biblioteca Statale di Lucca, MS 1942, fol. 88v. First half of the thirteenth-century (at a Rhenish Abbey). Digitized at <<https://www.loc.gov/item/2021668244/>> (Accessed June 2024).

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CONTEXTUALIZING ASTROLOGY IN THE ISLAMIC TRADITION

PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS AND CELESTIAL INFLUENCES^{*}

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Abstract

This paper examines the theoretical foundations of astrology within the Islamic intellectual tradition, with a particular focus on the adaptation and transformation of Aristotelian cosmology through key texts and figures. It analyzes the *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm* (Picatrix) and *Fīl-tadbīrāt al-falakiyyah*, attributed to Alexander of Aphrodisias and adapted by the circle of al-Kindī, tracing their role in the conceptual development of astrology as a science. The study investigates how al-Kindī, his intellectual circle, and Abū Ma'shar al-Balkhī contributed to the integration of astrology within a broader philosophical and theological framework, emphasizing the cosmological and providential roles of the heavenly bodies. By contextualizing the influence of Baghdad as a centre of translation and synthesis, the paper highlights the gradual development of astrological thought that later found resonance in 10th-century al-Andalus. The analysis revisits the notion of the 'astrologization of the Aristotelian cosmos' and examines the relationship between astrology, providence, and human free will, offering new insights into the ways medieval Islamic scholars reconciled celestial influence with metaphysical doctrines. Ultimately, this paper situates astrology within the broader trajectory of medieval Islamic philosophy, shedding light on its epistemological and practical dimensions.

Key Words

Astrology; Al-Kindī; cosmology; Alexander of Aphrodisias; Ptolemy; Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm; astrologization of the Cosmos; Abū Ma'shar Al-Balkhī



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In the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of
the day and night there are signs for people of reason

Qu'ṛān 3:190

I. Cosmology in Context: Between 9th-century Baghdad and 10th-century al-Andalus

Despite the significant spatial and temporal gap between the *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm* (*The Aim of the Wise*), known in the Latin West as *Picatrix*, and the short treatise *Fī l-tadbīrāt al-falakiyyah* (*On the Governments of the Spheres*), attributed to Alexander of Aphrodisias (2nd–3rd century AD), several common elements can be identified when the latter is taken as a point of reference.¹ This treatise is, in fact, a translation and adaptation, produced within the circle of al-Kindī (3rd century H/9th century CE), of Alexander's *Περὶ προνοίας* (*On providence*). It explores not only the concept of divine governance and the mediating roles attributed to the heavenly bodies but also the arrangement of the cosmos in terms of God's creation and providence.

¹ This paper represents a further development of a discussion that followed my contribution to the 27th annual Colloquium of the S.I.E.P.M. (Société Internationale pour l'Étude de la Philosophie Médiévale), held in Trento. I had the honor of presenting a talk on the theoretical relationship between the *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm* (*The Aim of the Wise*), i.e., *Picatrix*, and the *Fī l-tadbīrāt al-falakiyyah* (*On the Governments of the Spheres*), attributed to Alexander. The proceedings of the colloquium will be published shortly. Cf. GIULIO NAVARRA, « Alexander of Aphrodisias and the Influence of the Stars: 'Arabic Aristotelianism' as Metaphysical Foundation of Astrology and the Practice of Divination », in 27th Annual Colloquium of the S.I.E.P.M. (Société Internationale pour l'Étude de la Philosophie Médiévale) 'Medieval Debates on Foreknowledge: Future Contingents, Prophecy, and Divination', Trento (Italy), 12–15 September 2023, Brepols (forthcoming). The publication of my PhD dissertation consisting of the first Arabic edition, English translation and an analytical introduction of the Kindī-circle Alexander's *Fī l-tadbīrāt al-falakiyyah* is forthcoming. The manuscripts preserving the *Fī l-tadbīrāt al-falakiyyah* are two: ms. El Escorial Árabe 798, fol. 77b–82b (= E), and ms. Istanbul, Süleymaniye Kütüphanesi, Millet-Carullah 1279, fol. 51a–53a (= C). The Escorial manuscript is more reliable. An earlier edition, which does not distinguish between the two Arabic translations of Alexander's *Περὶ προνοίας*, is in: HANS-JOCHEN RULAND (ed.), « Die Arabischen Fassungen von zwei Schriften des Alexander von Aphrodisias Über die Vorsehung und Über das liberum arbitrium », PhD Dissertation, University of Saarland, 1976. Other editions based on Ruland's: SILVIA FAZZO, MAURO ZONTA (eds.), *La Provvidenza. Questioni sulla provvidenza*, BUR, Milano, 1998; PIERRE THILLET (ed.), « Un traité inconnu d'Alexandre d'Aphrodise sur la Providence dans une version arabe inédite », in *L'homme et son destin d'après le penseurs du Moyen Âge. Actes du 1er Congrès International de Philosophie Médiévale*, Nauwelaerts, Louvain – Paris, 1960, p. 313–324 (new edition by THILLET in: *Alexandre d'Aphrodise, Traité de la Providence. Περὶ προνοίας. Version arabe de Abū Bišr Mattā Ibn Yūnus*, Éditions Verdier, Lagrasse, 2003). For the circle of al-Kindī, fundamental are: GERHARD ENDRESS, « Die wissenschaftliche Literatur », in HELMUT GÄTJE (ed.), *Grundriß der arabischen Philologie. Bd. II: Literaturwissenschaft*, Ludwig Reichert Verlag, Wiesbaden, 1987, p. 400–506; 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 Greek Philosophy and Sciences dedicated to H.J. Drossaart Lulofs on his Ninetieth Birthday*, CNWS publications, Leiden, 1997, p. 43–76.

Both aspects are essential to *Fī l-tadbīrāt al-falakiyyah* and serves as critical backdrop to the development of Islamic astral sciences.

Indeed, these two works were composed in different contexts: 9th-century Baghdad for the *maqālah* of the Kindī-circle, and 10th-century al-Andalus for the composition of the *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm*.² As is known, Maslama b. Qāsim al-Qurṭubī (d. 353 AH/964 AD), the learned scholar supposed to be the author of the *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm*, travelled from Cordova to the Eastern Islamicate world, visiting Baghdad, before returning to al-Andalus. During his travels, he acquired vast knowledge in *ḥadīth*, philosophy, mysticism and occult sciences.³ Consequently, Baghdad and al-Andalus were deeply connected as routes of knowledge exchange.

Central to the exploration I propose here is Gad Freudenthal's thesis of the 'astrologization of the Aristotelian cosmos',⁴ which suggests a significant shift in the medieval reception of Aristotelian cosmology, characterized by an increasing emphasis on celestial influence. This shift can be viewed from the perspective of: (a) the new centrality given to the heavenly realm as intermediary in Creation and God's governance (providence) over the sublunary realm; and (b) the role of heavenly bodies as 'mediators', 'causes', or 'indicators' of earthly events; thus, (c) the foundational role of meteorology for astrology.

In this contribution I will attempt to deepen this perspective by connecting the two aforementioned texts through a few threads: Ptolemy's conception of the stars and planets in his *Tetrabiblos* (*Apotelesmatika*); the foundational cosmology found in the astrological works of 'the first philosopher of the Arabs', Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb ibn Ishāq al-Ṣabbāḥ al-Kindī (d. 256 AH/870 AD circa); and the teachings of the most prominent astrologer of medieval Islam, Abū Ma'shar Ja'far b. Muḥammad b. 'Umar al-Balkhī (d. 271 AH/886 AD), who was a direct pupil of al-Kindī. These interwoven themes connect 9th-century Baghdad and 10th-century al-Andalus. Moreover, this connection illustrates how the 'astrologization of the Aristotelian cosmos' unfolded within Islamic thought and its Latin reception.⁵ The core

² Cf. MARIBEL FIERRO, « Bāṭinism in Al-Andalus. Maslama b. Qāsim al-Qurṭubī (d. 353/964), Author of the *Rutbat al-Ḥakīm* and the *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm* (Picatrix) », *Studia Islamica*, 84/2 (1996), p. 87–112. See also: GODEFROID DE CALLATAÏ, SÉBASTIEN MOUREAU (eds.), « Again on Maslama Ibn Qāsim al-Qurṭubī, the Ikhwān al-Ṣafā' and Ibn Khaldūn: New Evidence from Two Manuscripts of the *Rutbat al-Ḥakīm* », *Al-Qantara: Revista de Estudios Arabes*, 2/37 (2016), p. 339–372.

³ FIERRO, « Bāṭinism in Al-Andalus », p. 87–92.

⁴ GAD FREUDENTHAL, « The Medieval Astrologization of the Aristotelian Cosmos: From Alexander of Aphrodisias to Averroes », in *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph*, 59 (2006), p. 29–68; ID., « The Astrologization of the Aristotelian Cosmos: Celestial Influences on the Sublunar World in Aristotle, Alexander of Aphrodisias, and Averroes », in CHRISTIAN WILDBERG, ALAN C. BOWEN (eds.), *New Perspectives on Aristotle's De Caelo*, Brill, Leiden – Boston 2009, p. 239–281.

⁵ IBN AL-NADīm, *Fihrist*, ed. GUSTAV FLÜGEL, Vogel, Leipzig 1871–1872, p. 277.1–8; PETER ADAMSON, « Abū Ma'shar, Al-Kindī and the Philosophical Defence of Astrology », *Recherches de théologie et philosophie*

questions that led to this shift and the reformulation of cosmology in Abrahamic terms include: (i) What kind of science is astrology, that is, what study we need to predict future events? (ii) How do the heavenly bodies govern and influence human life and events on Earth? (iii) How is this Aristotelian cosmos re-structured to preserve the absolute separateness of God (i.e., the First Cause), His absolute will and providence? (iv) How far does the influence of the heavenly bodies on human actions extend? Is there astrological determinism, or does it allow for human free will?

II. Astrology as a Science and Art

Astrology has historically been conceived as both a science and a divinatory art, particularly since its scientific formalization in the Hellenistic world. Rooted in Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos*, this divinatory practice allowed astrologers to forecast future events by interpreting heavenly signs and the dispositions and configurations of the stars and planets.⁶ However, in the medieval Arabic-Islamic world, astrology underwent an unprecedented transformation, characterized by a high degree of mathematization, which distinguished it from earlier traditions. Islamic scholars not only preserved but also expanded upon Hellenistic astrological concepts, incorporating advanced mathematical techniques and developing sophisticated instruments to enhance their predictive accuracy.

As a prognostic science grounded in mathematical astronomy, the 'science of the stars' has historically been divided into two main areas: (i) the mathematical study of the positions and movements of the stars in relation to each other and to the earth (i.e., astronomy), and (ii) the divinatory art related to the heavenly signs whose interpretations allow the astrologer to predict the future (i.e., astrology in the strict sense).

More specifically, it was Ptolemy (100–170 AD circa) who distinguished between mathematical astronomy as the astronomical prediction of the movements and relationships of the heavenly bodies (e.g., the times of equinoxes, eclipses, or planetary conjunctions) and astrological prediction of future events

médiévales, 69/2 (2002), p. 245–270. Cf. CHARLES BURNETT, « Agency and Effect in the Astrology of Abū Ma'shar al-Balkh (Albumasar) », *Oriens*, 47/3–4 (2019), p. 348–364; DAVID A. KING, « Astrology », in MICHAEL J.L. YOUNG, JOHN D. LATHAM, ROBERT B. SERJEANT (eds.), *Religion, Learning and Science in the 'Abbāsid Period*, Cambridge U.P., Cambridge (MA) 1990, p. 290–300, in part. p. 297–298.

⁶ CHARLES BURNETT, « Ptolemy's Differentiation between Astronomy and Astrology in the Greek-Arabic-Latin Tradition », *Cahiers de recherches médiévales et humanistes – Journal of Medieval and Humanistic Studies*, 47/1 (2024), p. 373–403.

related to birth or the date of conception, or judicial questions, or interrogations.⁷ Ptolemy's approach also reflects the view that astrology is closely connected to philosophy, as astrological judgments apply philosophical reasoning to interpret celestial influences and their relationship to earthly events. This dual role positions the astrologer as both a practitioner of divinatory arts and a philosopher engaging with the underlying principles of causation and order in the cosmos.

Indeed, 'genethliac astrology' (casting nativities) provided the basis for the subsequent subdivisions of this art into 'general astrology' or 'astrological history' (forecasting future trends and developments in the community as a whole), 'catarchic astrology' or 'electional astrology' (determining the most beneficial and rewarding moment in time to undertake a venture),⁸ and 'interrogatory' or 'judicial astrology' (providing answers to queries posed by a questioner based on the disposition of the heavens at the time of the question). Other forms of astrology ran alongside these as variants, such as 'astrometeorology', 'astral medicine' and 'military astrology'.⁹

As a benchmark of the transmission of astrology from the Hellenic world to the Islamic empire, Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos* was read and translated not only in the Hellenized Middle East but throughout the entire Mediterranean basin in different languages, becoming the starting point for the debate on astrology's scientific nature and its effectiveness.¹⁰ Ptolemy was aware that astrology lacked a solid scientific foundation as it could not approach demonstrative proofs; according to him, it was clear that astrology was not an apodictic science, at least as Aristotle intended syllogistic demonstrations.¹¹ Rather, astrology as a divinatory practice is a conjectural science, closer to medicine than to physics. As such, although it is not infallible, this science deserves the highest respect as prognostication, just as medicine does: the course of terrestrial events is not completely determined or ordained by a superior necessary cause, but it can be modified by an external

⁷ PTOLEMAEUS, *Tetrabiblos*, I.1; I.2, ed. FRANK E. ROBBINS, Harvard U.P., Cambridge (MA) – London 1940. In short, prediction of movements and prediction of effects: cf. BURNETT, « Ptolemy's Differentiation », p. 373–403, in part. p. 388–394.

⁸ In the Islamic world, and later in the Latinate, 'catarchic astrology' was composed of three branches, as inherited from the Hellenistic world: (i.) *ikhtiyārāt* (elections, χαταρχαί); (ii.) *masā'il* (interrogations, ἐρωτήσεις); (iii.) *tahāwil al-sinīn* (*revolutiones annorum*). Cf. RAFAEL MUÑOZ JIMÉNEZ, « Una maqāla astrológica de al-Kindī », *Boletín de la Asociación Española de Orientalistas*, 15 (1979), p. 127–138.

⁹ For a general view of this field see the entry « Astrology » in *Encyclopedia Britannica*, by ROBERT A. GILBERT, DAVID E. PINGREE (eds.): <<https://www.britannica.com/topic/astrology>> (published March 2024, accessed June 2024). See also: KING, « Astrology », in YOUNG, LATHAM, SERJEANT, *Religion, Learning and Science*, p. 290–300.

¹⁰ On Ptolemy's reception in the Middle Ages see the articles in DAVID JUSTE, BENNO VAN DALEN, DAG N. HASSE, CHARLES BURNETT (eds.), *Ptolemy's Science of the Stars in the Middle Ages*, Brepols, Turnhout 2020.

¹¹ PTOLEM., *Tetrabiblos*, I.2.15, ed. ROBBINS.

independent cause, such as the course of disease, on which a physician can intervene.

Astrology and medicine indeed belong to the same field of prognostics, and Ptolemy adopted anti-determinism to defend astrology as a science: its weakness and uncertainty mark its scientific value.¹² Moreover, the encounter with a bad astrologer, the influence of profit on the astrological response, and even the simple failure or error of the prediction do not diminish the validity of this science but rather show the conjectural nature and the close connection between its two parts.

As a science of the Ancients (*'ulūm al-qudamā'*) and part of the Alexandrian curriculum of study, the *'ilm al-nujūm* ('science of the stars') entered the Islamic world as a foreign science and reflected the duality of the cosmological tradition in form and contents: it was both mathematical astronomy (*'ilm al-nujūm al-ta'limī*), intended also as cosmography (*'ilm al-hay'a*), and judicial astrology (*'ilm aḥkām al-nujūm*), concerning both the divine upper realm of the cosmos and the lower sublunar world.¹³ This entry took place through the translations of Ptolemy's works, writings attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, and other pieces translated from the Hellenic, Indian and Persian astrological traditions.¹⁴ Naturally, Sasanian and Syriac sources directly influenced the Arabic astrological literature during the Graeco-Syriac-Arabic translation movement, with the Persian influence being particularly crucial. Iranian astrologers were prominent among translators and

¹² SILVIA FAZZO, « Alessandro d'Afrodisia e Tolomeo: Aristotelismo e astrologia fra il II e il III secolo d.C. », *Rivista di Storia della Filosofia*, 43/4 (1988), p. 627–649, in part. p. 635–637. For the Latin context, cf. GIULIO NAVARRA, « From Toledo to the Court of Frederik II. The 'Science of the Stars' and the Human Soul in the 4th *Distinctio* (*De Anima*) of Michael Scot's *Liber Introductorius* », *Bulletin de Philosophie Médiévale*, 65 (2023), p. 35–63.

¹³ A reference to this study is in my « Astrology as the 'Queen of the Sciences' in Michael Scot's *Liber introductorius* », *Intersezioni. Rivista di Storia delle Idee*, 44/2 (2024), p. 197–213. Cf. TZVI LANGERMANN, « Arabic Cosmology », *Early Science and Medicine*, 2/2 (1997), p. 185–213; FUAT SEZGIN, *Geschichte des Arabischen Schrifttums*, Bd. VII: *Astrologie, Meteorologie und Verwandtes bis ca. 430 H.*, Inst. für Geschichte der Arab.-Islamischen Wiss., Brill, Leiden 1979; GEORGE SALIBA, « Islamic Astronomy in Context: Attacks on Astrology and the Rise of the Hay'a Tradition », *Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies*, 4/1 (2002), p. 25–46; Id., *Astronomy and Astrology in medieval Arabic thought*, in ROSHDI RASHED, JOËL BIARD (eds.), *Les doctrines de la science et l'antiquité à l'âge classique*, Peeters Publisher, Leuven 1999, p. 131–164. See also: TOUFIC FAHD, « Nudjūm (Aḥkām al-) », in CLIFFORD E. BOSWORTH, EMERI VAN DOZEL, WOLFHART P. HEINRICHS, GÉRARD LECOMTE (eds.), *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, New Edition, vol. VIII, Brill, Leiden 1995, p. 105b–108b. Cf. SHLOMO PINES, « The Semantic Distinction between the Terms Astronomy and Astrology according to al-Birunī », *Isis*, 55/3 (1964), p. 343–349.

¹⁴ IBN AL-NADĪM, *Fihrist*, ed. FLÜGEL, p. 297.12–15; transl. DODGE, p. 638–639. As for the relation between Hermeticism and learned astrology, the *Kitāb 'arḍ miftāḥ al-nujūm* attributed to Hermes and edited by Alessandro Bausani is particularly noteworthy: ALESSANDRO BAUSANI, « Il *Kitāb 'arḍ miftāḥ al-nujūm* attribuito a Hermes: prima traduzione araba di un testo astrologico? », *Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei. Classe di Scienze morali, storiche e filologiche*, 27/8.2 (1983), p. 83–140.

literati of the 'Abbāsid period.¹⁵ Furthermore, it is essential to remember that Ḥarrān, a city historically significant for hosting a Neoplatonic school purportedly founded by Simplicius of Cilicia (480–560 AD circa) and other philosophers who sought refuge after Justinian's closure of the Athenian Academy in 529, was not merely an intellectual haven. This city was deeply rooted in ancient astral cults, notably venerating the Moon, which underscores the profound interplay between its philosophical and religious traditions.¹⁶

Therefore, the translation movement marked a turning point in the history of astrology in the 3rd/9th century, and vice versa, astrology was crucial for the constitution of the 'Abbāsid caliphate and its cultural policy.¹⁷ This turning point concerns the construction of the astronomical tables, the development of the use of the astrolabe, and the increase in the amount of astronomical data and calculations, but also the elaboration of celestial omens, the interpretation of nativities, and the practice of 'astrological history'. Astrological history, as a specialized branch of judicial astrology, focuses on interpreting celestial influences to understand and predict the rise and fall of religions, dynasties, and the governance of peoples, thereby linking astrology to political and historical narratives. How the upper world affects the lower one was a metaphysical theme related to the study of nature and, in particular during the caliphate of al-Ma'mūn (r. 198 AH/813 CE – 218 AH/833 CE), to the newly introduced Peripatetic physics and its notion of 'heavenly power'.¹⁸

Medieval Islamic astrologers, such as al-Kindī, Abū Ma'shar, and Abū Rayḥān al-Bīrūnī (d. 440 AH/1048 CE), contributed significantly to this dual approach by integrating astrology with mathematics and philosophy. They expanded

¹⁵ Above all, Māshā'allāh b. Atharī al-Baṣrī (d. 200 AH/815 AD ca.), whose influence went beyond the Islamic world and passed through Latin, Hebrew and the Byzantine Greek, and Abū Ḥafṣ 'Umar ibn al-Farrukhān al-Ṭabarī (d. 197 AH/813 AD), who is said to be the author, among other works, of an abbreviated version of Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos*.

¹⁶ TAMARA M. GREEN, *The City of the Moon God: Religious Traditions of Harran*, Brill, Leiden – Boston 1992; DAVID E. PINGREE, « The Ṣābians of Ḥarrān and the Classical Tradition », *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, 9/1 (2002), p. 8–35. About this syncretic view on the stars inherited by the Islamic culture: ALESSANDRO BAUSANI, *Appunti di astronomia e astrologia arabo-islamiche*, Venezia 1997 (I would like to thank the librarians of the Warburg Institute in London for kindly providing me with a copy of this typescript).

¹⁷ DIMITRI GUTAS, *Greek Thought, Arabic Culture. The Graeco-Arabic Translation Movement in Baghdad and Early 'Abbāsid Society (2nd–4th/8th–10th Centuries)*, Routledge, London – New York 1998; MIRELLA CASSARINO, *Traduzioni e traduttori arabi dall'VIII all'XI secolo*, Salerno Editrice, Roma 1998.

¹⁸ Cf. Alexander's *Quaestiones* 1.8 and 2.19 in ROBERT W. SHARPLES, *Alexander of Aphrodisias, Quaestiones* 1.1–2.15, Duckworth, London 1992; Id., *Alexander of Aphrodisias, Quaestiones* 2.16–3.15, Duckworth, London 1994. Cf. SILVIA FAZZO, HILLARY WIESNER, « Alexander of Aphrodisias in the Kindī-circle and in al-Kindī's cosmology », *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 3 (1992), p. 119–153; SILVIA FAZZO, *Alexander Arabus. Studi sulla tradizione greco araba di Alessandro di Afrodizia*, Petite Plaisance, Pistoia 2018.

Ptolemaic frameworks by introducing sophisticated methods to calculate planetary influences and their effects on sublunary affairs. Central to their approach was the belief that astrological judgments, while conjectural, relied on rigorous geometrical and arithmetical models, paralleling the predictive nature of medical diagnosis. Unlike in earlier traditions, medieval Islamic astrology developed its own distinctive computational methods and mathematical tools, which were essential for interpreting planetary influences.

Astrologers employed advanced arithmetical and trigonometric algorithms, astronomical tables (*zījāt*), and specialized instruments, such as the astrolabe, to perform calculations related to: (a) the division of astrological houses (*taswiyat al-buyūt*), which required precise calculations to determine the twelve segments of the sky relative to the observer's location; (b) the projection of rays (*maṭraḥ al-shu'ā'āt*), used to determine planetary aspects and their angular relationships, critical for forecasting outcomes; (c) progressions and directions (*tasyīr*), methods that involved calculating the movement of celestial bodies over time to predict events in an individual's life.¹⁹

These mathematical techniques were not mere borrowings from astronomy; they formed a distinct and sophisticated branch of applied mathematics specifically tailored to astrological predictions. As outlined by Edward S. Kennedy and John D. North, Islamic astrologers classified multiple methods for calculating planetary aspects and progressions, refining earlier Greek techniques.²⁰

Through translations of works such as Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos*, the writings attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, and contributions from Indian and Persian traditions, astrology was transmitted across the Islamic world and into Latin Europe.

Abū Ma'shar, in particular, authored works that drew from Hellenic, Indian, Persian, and Ḥarrānian themes. While following Ptolemy's abstention from using the terminology of demonstration (*burhān*) and irrefutable proofs in reference to

¹⁹ JOSEP CASULLERAS, « The Instruments and the Exercise of Astrology in the Medieval Arabic Tradition », *Archives Internationales d'Histoire des Sciences*, 63 (2013), p. 517–540; JOSEP CASULLERAS, JAN P. HOGENDIJK, « Progressions, Rays and Houses in Medieval Islamic Astrology: A Mathematical Classification », *Suḥayl*, 11 (2012), p. 33–102; JOSEP CASULLERAS, « The Astrological Computations Attributed to Ptolemy and Hermes in Medieval Arabic Sources », in JUSTE, VAN DALEN, HASSE, BURNETT (eds.), *Ptolemy's Science of the Stars in the Middle Ages*, Brepols, Turnhout 2020, p. 201–221.

²⁰ JOHN D. NORTH, *Horoscopes and History*, The Warburg Institute, London 1986; EDWARD S. KENNEDY, « The Astrological Houses as Defined by Medieval Islamic Astronomers », in JOSEP CASULLERAS, JULIO SAMSÓ (eds.), *From Baghdad to Barcelona. Studies in the Islamic Exact Sciences in Honour of Prof. Juan Vernet*, Instituto Millás Vallicrosa de Historia de la Ciencia Árabe, Barcelona 1996, vol. II, p. 535–578 (Reprinted in Id., *Astronomy and Astrology in the Medieval Islamic World*, Variorum, Aldershot 1998, ch. xix).

astrology,²¹ he nonetheless maintained the notion of ‘analogy’ (*qiyās*) as a form of conjectural reasoning to develop judgements about future events. Astrology concerns what may or may not happen: possibility (*mumkin*) refers to particular heavenly configurations and powers having particular effects on the sublunar world or delineating aspects of an individual life.²² This is similar to medicine, whereby the doctor analyses the signs and symptoms of a disease to propose a cure for that particular case: from the general knowledge of the relations of the signs and symptoms of a disease, the physician defines the particular cure in relation to that particular body affected by that disease.

The prognostic and conjectural nature of astrology prevented it from being confined strictly within the framework of Aristotle’s *Organon*. Rather, it held a position that also aligned with the approach of the ‘purely Islamic sciences’, such as grammar (*naḥw*), religious law (*fiqh*), tradition (*ḥadīth*), and theology (*kalām*).²³ Abū Ma’shar’s use of *qiyās* (analogical reasoning) appears to reflect this connection.

III. On the Heavenly Power as Nature, the Heavenly Bodies as ‘Indicators’, and their Will

Abū Ma’shar not only adheres to the text of Aristotle,²⁴ but also aligns with the cosmology developed within the circle of al-Kindī, which is compatible with Islam, specifically with the two Islamic dogmas of absolute monotheism and creationism. In this view, the cosmos is divided into the upper divine realm and the sublunar

²¹ CHARLES BURNETT, « The Certitude of Astrology: The Scientific Methodology of al-Qabisi and Abu Ma’shar », *Early Science and Medicine*, 7 (2002), p. 198–213. On the methods of astrological judgements according to Ptolemy: BURNETT, « Ptolemy’s Differentiation », p. 373–403, in part. p. 390–394.

²² ADAMSON, « Abū Ma’sar, Al-Kindī », p. 245–270; BURNETT, « Agency and Effect », p. 348–364; ID., « The Certitude of Astrology », p. 198–213.

²³ Although Islamic theology is still in its formative stage, the two distinct approaches to the sciences of the Ancients are already clearly visible. The theologians and traditionists tend to adopt a cautious and often critical stance towards these sciences, prioritizing religious orthodoxy and scriptural interpretation. In contrast, philosophers and astrologers engage with the sciences of the Ancients more openly, seeking to reconcile them with Islamic thought and incorporating them into their broader intellectual framework. This divergence highlights the emerging tension between theological conservatism and philosophical exploration within the early Islamic intellectual landscape.

²⁴ RICHARD J. LEMAY, *Abū Ma’shar and Latin Aristotelianism in the Twelfth Century. The Recovery of Aristotle’s Natural Philosophy through Arabic Astrology*, American University of Beirut, Beirut 1962. Fidelity to Aristotle’s works is also verifiable where the Islamic astrologer speaks of the infinite power of the heavenly bodies: cf. ABŪ MA’SHAR AL-BALKHĪ, *Kitāb al-mudkhal al-kabīr*, ed. KEIJI YAMAMOTO, CHARLES BURNETT, Brill, Leiden – Boston 2019, I.3.9c.

realm, created by God and well-ordered through the governance of the heavenly bodies over the sublunar bodies. Consequently, the heavenly bodies serve as intermediaries of divine government (providence) and the intermediaries of God's creation. In these terms, the 'astrologization of the Aristotelian cosmos' initiated by Alexander of Aphrodisias continues and finds a significant development in the Kindī-circle's work, particularly in the *Fī l-tadbīrāt al-falakiyyah*.

The Islamic understanding of the cosmos places significant emphasis on the roles and attributes of the heavenly spheres, carefully distinguishing them from God's essence and unique nature. This emphasis serves to avoid any implication of associating the spheres with divinity or equating their characteristics with those of God. On the other hand, this emphasis on the heavenly bodies within the chain of being as Neoplatonic *hypostases* of God's creation allows for the mediated involvement of God in earthly events and their influence over the cosmos. Indeed, the dual nature of providence is central to the *Fī l-tadbīrāt al-falakiyyah*. Here, heavenly power is responsible for the individual and general arrangement of all beings and species in the universe. Thus, it coincides with nature and establishes the overall order and perpetuity of the cosmos.

In his work on the philosophical foundation of astrology, the *Great Introduction to Astrology* (*Kitāb al-mudkhal al-kabīr ilā 'ilm aḥkām al-nujūm*), known in the Latin world as *Introductorium maius*, Abū Ma'shar maintains the prominence of the heavenly bodies and a similar concept of 'heavenly power':

[T]he celestial bodies move, change, and transfer the terrestrial bodies from one to another. *This is because of the power in the celestial bodies, which moves, alters, and changes the terrestrial bodies, and the receptivity to movement, alteration, and change by the celestial bodies which is in the terrestrial bodies, because of their natural connection one to the other.* Since these terrestrial bodies shift one into another by the power of the movements of the celestial bodies, and coming-to-be and passing-away arise in them, then natural changes in these four elements and coming-to-be and passing-away may result from the natural movements over this world and, since coming-to-be and passing-away in this world result from their movements, *they bear the indication over what comes to be and passes away.*²⁵

The Persian astrologer posits that the heavenly bodies exert a profound influence over terrestrial phenomena through their movements and interactions. These movements not only affect the physical elements on Earth but they also contribute to the processes of generation, continuing in existence and dissolution. This basic perspective aligns with the idea that the heavenly bodies serve as mere 'indicators' of events in the earthly world, where events unfold according to natural laws and are subject to contingency, thus manifesting the realm of possibility.

²⁵ ABŪ MA'ŠHAR AL-BALKHĪ, *Kitāb al-mudkhal al-kabīr*, ed. YAMAMOTO, BURNETT, I.3.6 (emphasis mine).

In the context of the *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm*, which explores magical practices involving celestial influences, this connection becomes clearer. The 10th-century text acknowledges that celestial powers are not just symbolic but have tangible effects on the material world. This is astral magic.²⁶ Each star and celestial body, according to the *Ghāyat*, possesses distinct properties and energies that can be harnessed through rituals, images and talismans. This aligns with Abū Ma'shar's view that celestial movements directly impact earthly substances, influencing changes and events. Therefore, the art of *siḥr* (the Latin *nigromatia*), as described in the *Ghāyat*, involves understanding and manipulating these celestial influences to achieve specific outcomes. Whether it is creating talismans, using stones, or preparing herbs, practitioners seek to channel and utilize the inherent properties of celestial bodies to effect change in the earthly realm,²⁷ providing detailed instructions on how to harness these properties for various magical purposes, including love spells, vendettas, evocations of demons, summoning, etc. In this case, it is the sympathetic relations within matter that guide the actions of the magician, who engraves the symbol of the decanic demon or the planetary lord of the decans they wish to invoke, or from whom they want to harness benefits, onto the stone or amulet.²⁸

As such, this interconnectedness between the celestial and terrestrial realms underscores a worldview where cosmic forces play a decisive role in shaping the possibilities and outcomes within the natural world. Specifically, Abū Ma'shar's definition of the science of astrology contains several elements of interest for reconstructing this common theoretical background. He writes:

[Astrology] is the knowledge of the nature of every planet and sphere, and the property of their indications, and what arises and happens as a result of the powers of their different movements, and their natural imprint on this world which is under the sphere of the Moon, in respect to the difference of times and the alteration of the 'natures', i.e., fire, air, water, and earth, and <their imprint> on the individual animals, plants, and minerals which arise from these 'natures'. Information on this second species,

²⁶ Cf. CHARLES BURNETT, « The Three Divisions of Arabic Magic », in LIANA SAIF, FRANCESCA LEONI, MATTHEW MELVIN-KOUSHKI, FAROUK YAHYA (eds.), *Islamicate Occult Sciences in Theory and Practice*, Brill, Leiden – Boston 2021, p. 43–56.

²⁷ PSEUDO-MAJRĪTĪ [AL-QURṬUBĪ], *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm*, ed. HELLMUT RITTER (*Picatrix. Das Ziel des Weisen*, Teubner, Leipzig 1933), p. 148.8–149.5. *Picatrix Latinus*, III.1, ed. DAVID E. PINGREE (*Picatrix. The Latin Version of the Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm*, The Warburg Institute, London 1986), p. 91.9–12. Eng. transl. DAN ATTRELL, DAVID PORRECA, *Picatrix. A Medieval Treatise on Astral Magic*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park (PA) 2019, p. 131–132. See also the IV Book of the *Ghāyat* on talismans, the art of images and herbs.

²⁸ Cf. DAVID E. PINGREE, « Some of the Sources of the *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm* », *Journal of the Warburg Institute and Courtauld Institutes*, 43 (1980), p. 1–15, in part. p. 7.

which is the science of astrology, is obtained through the first species of the science of the stars, which is *the science of the universe* (i.e., *astronomy*).²⁹

Based on the knowledge of mathematical astronomy, astrology concerns the nature, properties and 'indications' or 'signs' (*dalālāt*) of each star and their effects on the four elements that constitute the sublunar world. This world is influenced by the powers emanating from the various movements of the heavenly bodies (*min quwwā ḥarakāti-hā al-mukhtalifah*).³⁰ Although heavenly power is differentiated according to each planet and star, it remains one and the same as a derivative of the First Cause.

Significantly, a comparable conception of the status of the heavenly bodies in the cosmos as instrumental causes and signs is articulated in one of the most relevant works of the circle of al-Kindī, the so-called *Theology of Aristotle* (*Uthūlūjiyyah Aristūtālīs* or *Discourse on the Divine Sovereignty*). This pseudepigraph is the Arabic rendering of Plotinus' *Enneads* IV-VI attributed to Aristotle, translated by 'Abd al-Masīḥ Ibn Nā'ima al-Ḥimṣī and corrected by al-Kindī himself for Aḥmad ibn al-Mu'taṣim, son of the caliph who reigned from 833 to 842 AD (218–227 AH).³¹ As such, this text presents itself as the work where Aristotle complete the analysis

²⁹ ABŪ MA'ŠHAR AL-BALKHĪ, *Kitāb al-mudkhal al-kabīr*, ed. YAMAMOTO, BURNETT, I.2.4 (emphasis mine).

³⁰ Cf. PTOLEM., *Tetrabiblos*, 1.2–5, ed. ROBBINS, p. 4–9.

³¹ Arabic editions: FRIEDRICH DIETERICI (ed.), *Die sogenannte Theologie des Aristoteles aus arabischen Handschriften zum ersten Mal herausgegeben*, J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, Leipzig 1882; 'ABDURRAḤMĀN BADAŪĪ, *Aflūṭīn 'inda al-'Arab. Plotinus apud Arabes. Theologia Aristotelis et fragmenta quae supersunt*, Maktaba al-nahḍa al-miṣriyya, Cairo 1955¹, 1966² (Islamica, 20); reprinted in Kuwait 1977. Partial edition and Italian translation in: 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, Il Poligrafo, Padova 2003; ID., *L'immortalità dell'anima IV 7 [2]. Plotiniana Arabica* (pseudo-Teologia di Aristotele, capitoli I, III, IX), ed. CRISTINA D'ANCONA, Pisa University Press, Pisa 2017. Cf. MAROUN AOUAD (ed.), « La Théologie d'Aristote et autres textes du Plotinus Arabus », *Dictionnaire des Philosophes Antiques* (hereafter DPhA) vol. I, Éditions du CNRS, Paris 1989, p. 541–590; FRITZ W. ZIMMERMANN, « The Origins of the so-Called *Theology of Aristotle* », in CHARLES B. SCHMITT, WILLIAM F. RYAN, JILL KRAYE (eds.), *Pseudo-Aristotle in the Middle Ages: The Theology and Other Texts*, The Warburg Institute, London 1986, p. 110–240; CRISTINA D'ANCONA, « Pseudo-Theology of Aristotle, Chapter 1: Structure and Composition », *Oriens*, 36 (2001), p. 78–112; EAD., « Tradizione greca e versione araba delle Enneadi: l'indipendenza reciproca e il caso del trattato Sull'immortalità dell'anima (IV 7[2]) », in ROSA B. FINAZZI (ed.), *Del tradurre. Da Occidente verso Oriente come incontro di lingue e culture. Atti della giornata di studio su 'Traduzioni orientali e testi classici: lo stato della ricerca'*, Brescia, 8 ottobre 2004, Pubbl. I.S.U. Università Cattolica, Milano 2005, p. 39–66; EAD., « Aux origines du dator formarum. Plotin, l'Épître sur la science divine et al-Fārābī », in ELISA CODA, CECILIA MARTINI BONADEO (eds.), *De l'Antiquité tardive au Moyen Âge. Études de logique aristotélicienne et de philosophie grecque, syriaque, arabe et latine offertes à Henri Hugonnard-Roche*, Vrin, Paris 2014 (Études musulmanes, 44), p. 381–414; EAD., « The Textual Tradition of the Arabic Plotinus. The *Theology of Aristotle*, its *ru'ūs al-masā'il*, and the Greek Model of the Arabic Version », in AAFKE M.I. VAN OPPENRAAY, RESIANNE FONTAINE (eds.), *The Letter before the Spirit: The Importance of Text Editions for the Study of the Reception of Aristotle*, Brill, Leiden – Boston 2012 (Aristoteles Semitico-Latinus, 22), p. 37–71.

of the four causes and his metaphysical discourse by focusing on the causal relationship between the One, the heavenly bodies and the sublunar world.

In a decisive passage at chapter 6, pseudo-Aristotle writes:

We say that *the stars are like the instruments* established as intermediary between the craftsman and the craftwork; and they do not resemble the First Agent Cause, nor do they resemble the matter that assists in the perfecting of the thing, nor do they resemble the form in which some part act upon others. Rather, they resemble the words of the world and the words of the city that collect the facts of the city and put everything in its proper place. They also resemble the law (*sunnah*) through which the people of the city discern what they ought to do from what they ought to avoid. Through these laws, they are guided towards praiseworthy matters and refrain from blameworthy ones. By them, they are rewarded for their good deeds and punished for their evil deeds. And though the law may differ, do yet all conduce to one purpose, that is, the good (*al-khayr*). Law <indeed> is what leads to the good. Likewise, the words which are in the world lead things towards the good, for they are to the world what the law is to the people of the city. If anyone says: The words of the world are perhaps *signs (dalā'il)* not agents, we reply: *Their purpose is not merely to indicate (istadalla), but they are within the domain of reason.* For it is through them that we might infer the consequences from the antecedent, and know the effect from the cause, and recognize the accidents from the preceding thing, and understand the compound from the simple and the simple from the compound.³²

What we are considering here is the general assumption that the heavenly bodies are said to be the instruments and mediators of God's creation and order. In this, they are similar to the words used by the lawmaker or God's order in writing the law for people who accept it in order to act correctly and to distinguish between right, good actions and evil. As such, both the words of the law and the heavenly bodies indicate but do not directly act and have no volition or will of their own.

³² PS.-ARISTOTELES, *Theologia* VI, ed. BADAWĪ, p. 74.7–19 (= ed. DIETERICI, p. 64.5–15); (own translation; cf. transl. GEOFFREY L. LEWIS, p. 135):

فنقول: إن الكواكب هي كالأداة الموضوعة المتوسطة بين الصانع والصنعة، وإنها لا تشبه العلة الفاعلة الأولى ولا تشبه أيضا الهيولى المعينة في إتمام الشيء، ولا تشبه أيضا الصورة التي يفعل بعضها في بعض. بل إنما تشبه كلمات العالم <أو> الكلمات <المدنية> [المدنية Ba] التي تضم أمور المدينة وتضع كل شيء منها في موضعه، وتشبه السنة التي فيها يتعرف أهل المدينة ما ينبغي لهم أن يعملوا مما لا ينبغي، وبها يبتدون إلى الأمور الممدوحة ويمتنعون من الأمور المذمومة، وبها يثابون على حسن أعمالهم ويعاقبون على سوء أعمالهم. والسنة وإن احتلفت، فإنها كلها تدعو إلى شيء واحد وهو الخير. والسنة هي التي تسوق إلى الخير. وكذلك الكلمات التي في العالم تسوق الأشياء إلى الخير لأنها في العالم كالسنة في أهل المدينة. فإن قال قائل: إن كلمات العالم ربما كانت دلائل غير فواعل - قلنا: إنه ليس غرضها أن تدلّ، لكنها لما كانت في طريق العقل، وذلك أنه ربما استدللنا على الأول من الآخر؛ وعرفنا المعلول من العلة، وربما عرفنا العوارض من الشيء السابق، والمركب من المبسوط والمبسوط من المركب.

As shown by Liana Saif,³³ the Arabic root used by Abū Ma'shar to say 'indication' or 'signification' is $\sqrt{d-l-l}$, from which comes the verb *dalla* (first form), meaning 'to show', 'to indicate', 'to prove', 'to demonstrate'. From this root, we derive the nouns *dalīl* and *dalālah* (pl. *dalā'il*, *dalā'lāt*), meaning 'sign(s)', 'guidance(s)', 'indication(s)', 'clue(s)', 'symptom(s)', and the verb *istadalla*, which means 'to deduce'. This same root and its semantic richness are shared by the adaptor of the circle of al-Kindī, who adopts the same terminology and context.

This linguistic and conceptual framework allows the astrologer to view the celestial bodies as instruments of divine indication rather than independent agents of causation. The root $\sqrt{d-l-l}$ and its derivatives emphasize a process of interpretation, whereby the astrologer reads the signs presented by the heavens to infer divine will or cosmic order. This approach aligns with the broader intellectual traditions of al-Kindī's circle, where the natural world, including the movements of the stars, is understood as a system of signs pointing toward deeper metaphysical truths.

Crucially, this perspective establishes a clear distinction between causing an earthly effect and merely indicating events without directly causing them. The heavenly bodies are not regarded as agents that actively bring about events but rather as symbols that reflect the underlying causal chain established by God. They serve as intermediaries that reveal, rather than produce, the interconnectedness of cosmic and terrestrial phenomena. In this sense, the stars 'indicate' through their motions and configurations the divine plan and the sequence of causation, allowing the astrologer to discern patterns and deduce outcomes without attributing any volitional or causal agency to the celestial entities themselves.

This distinction is central to Abū Ma'shar's defence of astrology, as he was acutely aware of the critiques posed by traditionalists. Having previously been a traditionalist himself, he was well-acquainted with their arguments and sought to address them comprehensively. Beyond situating astrology within a theological framework, Abū Ma'shar emphasized its foundation in sense perception (*ḥiss*) and empirical experience (*tajriba*). He argued that astrology, rather than being speculative or arbitrary, is rooted in careful observation of both celestial phenomena and human experiences, revealing consistent relationships between the movements of heavenly bodies and earthly events. This reliance on empirical evidence bolstered his defence, presenting astrology as a science firmly grounded in observable reality.³⁴

³³ SAIF, *The Arabic Influences*, p. 23.

³⁴ CHARLES BURNETT, « Obvious, Clear, and in Front of Our Eyes: Defending the Science of Astrology by Means of Experience », in HANNAH C. ERLWEIN, KATJA KRAUSE (eds.), *Revisiting Premodern Islamic Science and Experience*, Springer, New York (forthcoming). I am grateful to Charles Burnett for generously sharing the draft of his work with me.

For Abū Ma'shar, the astrologer is akin to a natural philosopher who systematically studies the interconnectedness of the cosmos through sensory experience and rational deduction, thereby aligning astrology with both Islamic theology and scientific inquiry.

This perspective resonates with the approach found in Kindī-circle's version of Alexander's *maqālah*, which emphasizes the causal role of the heavenly bodies as doers of earthly events, when the adaptor writes that:

[T]he celestial bodies do not only govern [*laysat tudabbiru...faqat*] these changing bodies, but they are also the cause of their being and permanence [*'illah kawni-hā wa-thabāti-hā*].³⁵

However, this causality is understood as mediated and derivative, aligning closely with Abū Ma'shar's conception of the stars as instruments that reflect divine causation rather than act independently. As causes of the existence and permanence of earthly bodies, the heavenly bodies are aware of them and do not miss anything that occurs on Earth, as earthly events follow their will (*irāda*):

This is because the things [i.e., the heavenly bodies] that know their substances and natures by themselves in an essential way have knowledge of the things of which they are the cause, and *nothing they know is contrary to their will*. And it is now clear that the activity of the first and noble bodies is not for the sake of the subsistence of the earthly world, nor for the sake of its perpetuation; and *nothing of what happens in the earthly world escapes them*, and there is *nothing that does not happen according to their will*, since they [the celestial bodies] *are the cause of the substances of the earthly world and their generation*. Nevertheless, *this does not derive from them intentionally*, rather the generation of the substances of these changing bodies and their order necessarily happens because of those <celestial> bodies. And there is nothing that escapes their knowledge, since these sublime bodies have a large share of the upper power and that is why they are complete and perfect.³⁶

Although earthly events follow the will of the heavenly bodies, as they are the causes of the sublunar bodies, this order is not intentionally determined by them but necessarily derives from the First Cause. Therefore, this is not a case of 'astrological determinism'. Moreover, the heavenly bodies are said to have

³⁵ [ALEXANDER APHRODISIAS], *Fī l-tadbīrāt al-falakiyyah*, ms. E, f. 82r 13–15:

فيه فتقول إنّ الأجرام السماوية ليست تدبّر هذه الأجرام المستحيلة فقط، لكنّها هي علّة كونها وثباتها أيضاً كما قلنا مراراً.

³⁶ [ALEX. APHROD.], *Fī l-tadbīrāt al-falakiyyah*, ms. E, f. 80r 3–9:

وذلك أنّ الأشياء التي تعرف جواهرها وطبائعها معرفة ذاتية هي معرفة الأشياء التي هي علّة كونها ولا يعرف فيها شيء من الأشياء من غير إرادتها. فقد بان إذن أنّه ليس فعل الأجرام الأول الشريفة من أجل ثبات العالم الأرضي ودوامه وأنّه لا يفوتها شيء من الأشياء ممّا يحدث فيه ولا يكون دون إرادتها، وأنّها علّة جواهر العالم الأرضي وكونها.

knowledge *per essentiam*, that is to say, they know their effects directly through their own essence rather than through reasoning process.³⁷ This form of apprehension pertains only to the superior bodies and implies an immediate and complete understanding of all possible effects that can rise from their essences, insofar as they are principles and causes. This knowledge is not discursive, but instantaneous and intrinsic, it is the apprehension of causal relationship and presupposes a hierarchical order of beings, i.e., the Neoplatonic chain of essences. As such, there is no intention in the order of the sublunar events established by them, but they accomplish the assignment received by God through creation: they cause the generation and becoming of the sublunar bodies and preserve the arrangement of the world through divine power. Thus, how is it possible that the sublunar order, which mirrors the divine because of the heavens, presents adverse events and evil in general?

In a subsequent passage, the adaptor clearly asserts that the cause of evil is the reception of privation by matter. The presence of evil in the lower realm thus depends on the material entity's capacity to fully receive the form or its privation:

[M]atter is not one of the things in act, but *only in potency*, so that it *frequently does not receive the act of the agent due to its weakness, since everything which is being-in-potency is deficient and incomplete*, and matter is every being-in-potency; therefore, it is so weak and defective that *error enters into it* and it is not able to receive all the forms that the shaper (*al-muṣawwir*) informs in it, but matter sometimes refrains from doing so, not because of the maker [demiurge], but because of itself, as we have clarified and explained. Furthermore, we also say that matter is receptive both of privation and of form and, insofar as it is receptive of the form, it tends towards *the excellent nature, that is, the power of the celestial body*, and is informed by it, and yearns for eternity and permanence; while, *insofar as it is receptive of the privation, that is, not being one of the things in act*, it does not tend to the power of the celestial body, it does not get affected by this power, it does not receive a form, and it does not yearn for eternity and permanence, but rather *it yearns for dissolution and annihilation*. For this reason, *the error* may enter the earthly world, not because of the celestial bodies, but because of matter, just as we have explained and made clear.³⁸

³⁷ On the rationality of the Kindī-circle Alexander's cosmos as determined by divine power, cf. GIULIO NAVARRA, « Reason and Rationality in Arabic-Islamic Cosmology. The Case of the *On The Governments of the Celestial Spheres* (*Fī l-tadbīrāt al-falakīyya*) », in *Atti del Convegno 'La ragione nella storia dal Medioevo all'Età moderna'* (Foggia, 2–3 marzo 2024), Quaderni di Noctua (forthcoming).

³⁸ [ALEX. APHROD.], *Fī l-tadbīrāt al-falakīyyah*, ms. E, 82v 10–22:

وذلك أن الهيولى ليست شيئاً من الأشياء بالفعل لكنها بالقوة فقط، فلذلك ربما لم يقبل فعل الفاعل لضعفها، لأن كل شيء بالقوة ناقص غير تام والهيولى هي كل شيء بالقوة؛ فلذلك صار ضعيفة ناقصة يدخل عليها الخطأ ولا تقبل جميع الصور التي يصور فيها المصور لكن ربما امتنعت من ذلك لا من أجل الصانع لكن من أجلها، كما بينا وأوضحنا. ونقول أيضاً إنها قابلة

This passage suggests that events in the sublunar world are governed not by necessity but by contingency. Matter interacts with celestial influences as a passive recipient of forms, existing in a state of pure potency that can potentially accommodate forms. This interaction means matter may either successfully receive the form or, alternatively, errors, imperfections, and evil may result.³⁹ The incapacity of matter is not related to the superior agent, but rather, when matter receives form, it tends towards an 'excellent nature', associated with the power and influence of the celestial bodies, desiring a stable, eternal status. Conversely, when receptive to privation, matter remains deficient, inclined towards dissolution, and ultimately tending towards annihilation. This distinction clarifies the relationship between the superior agent, termed 'the shaper' or 'the maker', and the inherent, contingent limitations of matter.

This ordering of contingency is also preserved in Abū Ma'shar. His concept of the 'connection' (*ittiṣāl*) between the celestial and the terrestrial realms occurs out of necessity, owing to the influence of the heavenly bodies transmitted through their movements.⁴⁰

IV. On Contingency and 'Astral Determinism': What does 'Astrologization' Mean in Cosmology?

The idea that astrology is rooted in Aristotelian meteorology, rather than merely containing a branch dedicated to weather forecasting, as we will explore later, is a compelling aspect when examining the theoretical background of this tradition. In Aristotle's *De generatione et corruptione* and *Physics*, the coming-to-be and passing-away of beings, namely, the order of nature, is related to the distance,

للعدم وقابلة للصور؛ فلأنها قابلة للصور تميل إلى الطبيعة الفاضلة، أعني قوة الجرم السماوي، ويتصور منها ويشتاق إلى الدوام والبقاء؛ لأنها قابلة للعدم، أعني أنها ليس شيئاً من الأشياء بالفعل لا تميل إلى قوة الجرم السماوي ولا ينفع فيها ولا يتصور ولا يشتاق إلى الدوام والبقاء، لكنها تشتاق إلى الفناء والتلاشي. فلهذه العلة ربما دخل الخطأ في العالم الأرضي لا من أجل الأجرام السماوية، لكن من أجل الهيولى، كما بينا وأوضحنا.

³⁹ A correspondent passage is in the well-known *Liber de causis* (*Kalām fī maḥḍ al-khayr*), chapter 23. Arabic editions: BADAWI, *Aflūṭīn 'inda al-'Arab*, (1955¹, 1966², 1977³); RICHARD C. TAYLOR (ed.), « The *Liber De Causis* (*Kalām fī maḥḍ al-khair*). A Study of Medieval Neoplatonism », PhD Diss., University of Toronto 1981 (unpublished dissertation, courtesy of the author whom I thank); OTTO BARDENHEWER, *Die pseudo-aristotelische Schrift über das reine Gute bekannt unter dem Namen Liber de causis*, Freiburg im Bresgau 1882 (reprinted in Frankfurt a. M. 1961). Latin text: ADRIAAN PATTIN (ed.), « Liber de causis », *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie*, 28 (1966), p. 90–203; THOMAS DE AQUINO, *Super Librum de causis expositio*, ed. HENRI D. SAFFREY, Vrin, Paris 2002; TOMMASO D'AQUINO, *Commento al Libro delle cause*, ed. CRISTINA D'ANCONA, Rusconi, Milano 1986. Cf. CRISTINA D'ANCONA, RICHARD C. TAYLOR (eds.), « Liber de causis » in *DPhA, Supplément*, Éditions du CNRS, Paris 2003, p. 599–647.

⁴⁰ Cf. ABŪ MA'SHAR AL-BALKHĪ, *Kitāb al-mudkhal al-kabīr*, ed. YAMAMOTO, BURNETT, Introduction, p. 10–11.

disposition and movements of the heavens. In *Meteorology*, Aristotle explains that the sublunar world is continuous with the heavenly region, and the movements of the heavenly bodies regulate the order of nature and its transformation in the sublunar region.⁴¹ Both of these works form the basis of Alexander of Aphrodisias' *Περὶ προνοίας* (*On providence*),⁴² which is the Peripatetic reply to the Stoic conception of providence as an all-embracing divine power regulating the order of nature ('πνεῦμα' or divine 'λόγος').⁴³ As such, Alexander's conception of divine power is far from the Stoic concept of a material pervading force. Instead, it is an informing principle transmitted by contact in relation to proximity, so that it coincides with nature. And this conception of nature dovetails with the Islamic one, as Alessandro Bausani has defined it: nature is the « impronta impressa dall'atto puntuale di Dio alle cose, [sicché] in certe lingue musulmane si usa per 'natura' persino un termine come *qudra*, potenza (divina creante) ».⁴⁴

This principle, as partially seen above, constitutes the sublunar bodies and informs them with the soul proper to each, delineating a twofold order of the cosmos: one is the First Cause's governance over the heavenly realm; the other is the governance of the sublunar world exerted by the heavenly spheres.⁴⁵ This

⁴¹ ARIST., *DGC*, 2.10, 338a 19–338b 1; *Phys.*, 3.1, 200b 12; *Meteor.*, 1.2, 339a 15–24, 340a 20–21. Cf. LIANA SAIF, *The Arabic Influences on Early Modern Occult Philosophy*, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2015, p. 17–18; EAD., « The Universe and the Womb: Generation, Conception, and the Stars in Islamic Medieval Astrological and Medical Texts », *Journal of Arabic and Islamic Studies*, 16 (2019), p. 181–198.

⁴² This text is lost in the original Greek but preserved in two Arabic translations: the first is the *Fī l-tadbīrāt al-falakiyyah*, the other is the translation by Abū Bishr Mattā ibn Yūnus (328 AH/940 AD), entitled *Fī l-'ināyah* (literally, *On providence*). The latter, because of the different theoretical aims of the milieu where Abū Bishr worked, the so-called Peripatetic School of Baghdad, and because of some fragments of the original Alexander's *Περὶ προνοίας* found in Cyril of Alexandria's *Contra Iulianum* (5th century CE), is more faithful to the original text than the Kindī-circle's translation/adaptation. Cf. RULAND (ed.), *Die Arabischen Fassungen*; FAZZO, ZONTA (eds.), *La Provvidenza*; THILLET, « Un traité inconnu d'Alexandre »; SILVIA FAZZO, « La versione araba del *Περὶ προνοίας* di Alessandro di Afrodisia e i frammenti greci nel trattato *Contra Iulianum* di Cirillo Alessandrino », *Aevum*, 74 (2000), p. 399–419.

⁴³ See Alexander's rejection of the Stoic theory of matter in his *De mixtione* (*Περὶ κράσεως καὶ ἀνξήσεως*): *Alexandri Aphrodisiensis praeter commentaria scripta minora*, ed. IVO BRUNS, *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca suppl.* 2.2, Reimer, Berlin 1892.

⁴⁴ BAUSANI, *Appunti di astronomia e astrologia*, p. 20.

⁴⁵ [ALEX. APHROD.], *Fī l-tadbīrāt al-falakiyyah*, ms. E, f. 79v 8–11:

فنقول أنّ التدبير ضربان: [١] أحدهما تدبير الأجرام السماوية من فلك الأقصى الى فلك القمر، [٢] والآخر تدبير العالم الذي تحت فلك القمر. فأما تدبير الأجرام الأول فيكون من قبل الفاعل الأول، وأما تدبير العالم الأرضي فيكون من قبل الأجرام الأول لما صار فيها من القوة الأولى.

« And we say that government is of two kinds: [i.] the first of these two is the government of the celestial bodies from the outermost sphere to the Moon's sphere; [ii.] the second one is the

intermediary role of the planets and stars in the arrangement of the cosmos concerns both its creation and its maintenance (providence). God is the only absolute cause of the universe, completely separate from the whole, creating it out of nothing through the mediation of the heavenly bodies, the so-called 'first bodies' (i.e., the first to be created).

This 'Origination' (*hudūth*) coincides with the emanation (*fayḍ*) of divine power over all beings through the mediation of the first bodies. As such, this creation is upheld as an eternal preservation according to number (heavenly bodies) and according to form (sublunar species). The resulting order is understood as 'universal government' (*tadbīr kullī*), exerted by God.

This is the order of providence described in the Kindī-circle Alexander's *maqālah*, which seems to have been, if not one of Abū Ma'shar's Hellenic sources (after Aristotle and Ptolemy), at least an inspiring text for the explanation of the causality of the heavenly bodies in his *Al-mudkhal al-kabīr*. Astral agency is not mechanical; although Alexander's defence of the causal connection between the order of sublunar nature and the orderliness and proportionality of the distances of celestial motions (with the notion of 'proximity') is preserved in Abū Ma'shar, it is rather volitional. This aspect is peculiar to the Kindī-circle Alexander's cosmology: there, however, one can only find the seminal elements for rethinking astral agency, but not a thorough exploration of the subject. In contrast, Abū Ma'shar elaborates an ordering of astral causation based on the analogy with medicine.⁴⁶ The first bodies are indeed responsible for the *imtizāj* ('mixture'), namely, the blending of the four simple natures in the sublunar bodies;⁴⁷ they are the informing principles of the various souls entering the sublunar bodies but even more:

We know that all the stars share with the Sun in the indications for atmospheric conditions, the differentiation of individuals from species, the composition and bringing-into-being of each individual, the natures of the cities, the conditions of their inhabitants, and the things which are in them, but the Sun has the most general indication for atmospheric conditions, the composition of individuals, animal souls, their mixture with the body, nature, characters, religions, sects, minerals, plants, and growth, God willing. As for the planets, their indications are most general for the dress of their inhabitants and their other conditions.⁴⁸

government of the world which is under the Moon's sphere. As for the government of the first bodies, it comes from the First Agent [*al-fā'il al-awwal*]; whereas as for the government of the earthly world, it comes from the first bodies, because of what they receive from the First Power ».

⁴⁶ Cf. ABŪ MA'SHAR AL-BALKHĪ, *Kitāb al-mudkhal al-kabīr*, ed. YAMAMOTO, BURNETT, I.2.23c–2.24b; I.2.25a; I.5.36b; III.9.3.

⁴⁷ This is the Latin *complexio* (*mizāj*), cf. CHIARA BENEDEUCE, « Complexio. Across Disciplines – Introduction to this Special Issue », *Early Science and Medicine*, 28 (2023), p. 257–269.

⁴⁸ ABŪ MA'SHAR AL-BALKHĪ, *Kitāb al-mudkhal al-kabīr*, ed. YAMAMOTO, BURNETT, III.3.12.

The heavenly bodies are signs of meteorology and life in the sublunar realm: they can indicate the course of nature, weather events, and social history, as well as the possible developments of human individual lives. The first and most important role as an indicator is that of the Sun, followed by the configurations of the Moon and the other planets. Moreover, the heavenly bodies are causes of the composition and generation of bodies and souls in this world (always: God willing). As we have seen, the receiving principle is as important as the informing principle, so that matter in the sublunar world has a receptive attitude which allows it to be ordered either as a mineral, or as a plant, or as an animal, or as a human being.⁴⁹

In Kindī-circle Alexander's *maqālah*, the heavenly power, although unique and acting for its own sake, turns out to carry out a variety of activities:

Therefore, if it is so, we <can> say that *nature, which is the celestial power, governs the things subject to generation and dissolution until it [nature] reaches their completion and purpose, distinguishes between things, separates them from one another, and preserves their forms also through reproduction and generation of one from another.*⁵⁰

Both the composition of the sublunar bodies and the informing of the different souls depend on the emanation of divine power from the First Cause, mediated by the heavenly bodies, which are the proximate causes of the order of nature. As such, the heavenly bodies are responsible for the generation, becoming and dissolution of the sublunar bodies, a point emphasized in Abū Ma'shar's *Al-mudkhal*

⁴⁹ [ALEX. APHROD.], *Fī l-tadbīrāt al-falakīyyah*, ms. E, f. 80v 17–23:

فإن كان هذا هكذا، قلنا أن الأجرام السماوية تفيض قواها على جميع الأجرام الأرضية المستحيلة على نحو تهبؤ قبول كل واحد منها. أعني أن كل جرم، يقوى <على> أن يكون متنفساً، فإتما يكون متنفساً من تلك القوة. وكل جرم، يقوى على أن يكون حيواناً، فإتما يكون حيواناً من تلك القوة. وكل جرم، يقوى على أن يكون ذا عقل، فإتما يكون ذا عقل من قبل قوة ذلك الجرم. فإن هذه الأجرام المستحيلة تختلف اختلافاً كثيراً، فعلى حسب قبولها لتلك القوة، كذلك تفيض تلك القوة فيها. والأجرام السماوية مختلفة أيضاً.

« We say that the celestial bodies spread their power upon all the earthly changing bodies in conformity with the receptive attitude of each and every one of them, that is to say that every single body has the potency to be ensouled from that power, and that every single body that has the potency to be an animal, indeed becomes an animal because of that power, and every single body that has the potency to be endowed with the intellect, indeed becomes a body endowed with the intellect because of the reception of the power of that body. Indeed, these bodies subject to change differ greatly from each other, and this depends on the reception of that power to the extent that that power flows upon them and the heavenly bodies also differ ».

⁵⁰ [ALEX. APHROD.], *Fī l-tadbīrāt al-falakīyyah*, ms. E, 81v 12–15:

فإن كان هذا هكذا، قلنا إن الطبيعة، وهي القوة السماوية، إنما تدبر الأشياء الواقعة تحت الكون والفساد إلى أن تبلغ تمامها وغايتها وتفصل فيما بين الأشياء وتميز بعضها من بعض وتحفظ صورها أيضاً بالنسل والتكوين بعضها من بعض.

al-kabīr.⁵¹ Here, the astrologer asserts that the heavenly bodies move, change and are involved in the generation and corruption of earthly beings.⁵² These sublunar beings are naturally inclined towards the astral agents, such that the elemental qualities are shared between both cosmic realms, yet they apply independently to sublunar bodies as well.⁵³

Given this framework, the alignment of effects with their causes when describing astral influences might suggest determinism. The sympathetic or antipathetic correspondence between the configuration of the heavenly bodies and the elemental qualities manifested in the individuals could imply a rigid causal structure. Indeed, the 'natal chart' is used to define an individual's characteristics and dispositions from the moment of birth, and practices like nativities and genethliac astrology operate on these principles, thereby risking a deterministic interpretation.

This deterministic reading might emerge from the *maqālah* of the Kindī circle, where the will of the heavenly bodies is asserted as the direct cause of earthly event. Abū Ma'shar, instead, does not allow for doubts on determinism, not only by considering contingency as the mark of earthly events, but also by distinguishing between a general signification of the planet, pertaining to external conditions, and a specific signification, which pertains to individual conditions and aspects. In other words, the configurations of the heavenly bodies may only indicate the possibilities that could arise under certain external conditions. The transition from potentiality to actuality excludes a set of possibilities that become impossible and realizes one that becomes necessary. This is how Abū Ma'shar frees rational souls from determinism to preserve human free will.⁵⁴ Thus, far from being deterministic, astrology can present itself as a science of the possible and the contingent, sharing doctrinal elements with natural philosophy and medicine as well.

Another factor indicating the absence of astrological determinism in Abū Ma'shar's model is the repeated invocation to God's permission when discussing the will of the heavenly bodies. Their volition aligns entirely with God's will and is nothing beyond that. This is not merely a conventional expression of Islam but an integral part of Abū Ma'shar's model in *Al-mudkhal al-kabīr*. Once God's permission is acknowledged and affirmed, the cosmic order functions as a dual governance of

⁵¹ SAIF, *The Arabic Influences*, p. 18.

⁵² Cf. ABŪ MA'SHAR AL-BALKHĪ, *Kitāb al-mudkhal al-kabīr*, ed. YAMAMOTO, BURNETT, III.3.3a–b.

⁵³ Cf. ABŪ MA'SHAR AL-BALKHĪ, *Kitāb al-mudkhal al-kabīr*, ed. YAMAMOTO, BURNETT, I.3.7d–3.8

⁵⁴ On the position of Abū Ma'shar as determinist (Richard Lemay) or compatibilist (Peter Adamson), cf. LEMAY, *Abū Ma'shar and Latin Aristotelianism*; ADAMSON, « Abū Ma'shar, Al-Kindī », p. 245–270. Here, I follow Liana Saif's analysis of Abū Ma'shar's terminology which allows to interpret the 'indications' or 'sings' outlined by the heavenly bodies not as causal connections, but rather as the order of things towards which the individual rational soul is inclined.

the universe.⁵⁵ Within this framework, the astrologer can forecast future events, as they are part of the already-established order determined by divine providence. In this sense, forecasting is not merely predicting; it is akin to reading and discovering God's will as it is manifested through the movements and positions of the heavenly bodies.

V. Al-Kindī, the Astrologer

The missing piece here is al-Kindī's personal production on astrology. In fact, we know that the 'father' of Arabic-Islamic philosophy wrote several works in a wide range of fields, from mathematics to medicine, from logic, psychology and philosophy to music, and of course astronomy and astrology. In the reconstruction I am providing, al-Kindī plays a pivotal role in the reception and development of astrology. His contributions helped integrate astrological thought into the broader intellectual landscape of the Islamic world, bridging Persian, Ḥarrānian and Hellenistic knowledge with the nascent Islamic philosophy, and framing astrology as a legitimate science tied to natural philosophy and divine providence. A section of Ibn al-Nadīm's *Fihrist* on al-Kindī is about « his books on the judgments of the stars (*kutubu-hu al-aḥkāmiyyāt*) ». I will not dwell on the astrological works of al-Kindī that have come down to us,⁵⁶ but I will focus on two epistles on weather

⁵⁵ SAIF, *The Arabic Influences*, p. 19.

⁵⁶ A controversial work, surviving only in Latin as *De radiis*, has been attributed to al-Kindī. A text titled *Risālah fī l-shu'ā'āt* (*Epistle on Rays*) is listed in Ibn al-Nadīm's *Fihrist* among al-Kindī's astronomical works (ed. FLÜGEL, p. 257.11). However, it is not primarily astrological, but rather a treatise on magical arts, as reflected in its alternative Latin title *Theorica artium magicarum*. It explores the influence of astral rays on the elemental world and mutual influences within the elemental realm, merging scientific and occult traditions in both Islamic and Latin contexts. Although the work reflects al-Kindī's interest in natural philosophy, it stands as a hapax in his corpus and has recently been attributed to an anonymous Oxonian author from the 1250s or 1260s by Sylvain Matton. The strong defence of determinism, the radical appropriation of Stoic doctrines, and the specific terminology lead Matton to argue that the work is unlikely to be by al-Kindī. Cf. SYLVAIN MATTON, « D'un rayonnement des grammairiens latins, ou le *De radiis* n'est pas d'al-Kindi », *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age*, 89 (2022), p. 443–456 (Engl. Version: SYLVAIN MATTON (b), « An Irradiation of Latin Grammarians, or The *De radiis* is not by al-Kindī », *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft*, 17 (2023), p. 437–455. See also: JEAN-PATRICE BOUDET, « L'harmonie du monde dans le *De radiis* attribué à al-Kindī », *Micrologus*, 25 (2017), p. 67–85. However, while not a direct translation, many scholars have endeavoured that it could still be considered a later work attributed to the Arab philosopher, incorporating revisions by translators or editors over time, as the doctrines are not far removed from his *De aspectibus* (on optics) and *De gradibus* (on medicaments). Cf. PETER ADAMSON, *Al-Kindī*, Oxford U.P., Oxford 2007, p. 188–206; PINELLA TRAVAGLIA, *Magic, Causality and Intentionality: The Doctrine of Rays in al-Kindī*, SISMEL-Edizioni del Galluzzo, Firenze 1999; GRAZIELLA FEDERICI VESCOVINI, « La tradizione stoica e il

forecasting (astrometeorology), which are particularly relevant as they significantly contributed to the foundation of this genre of astrology in the medieval world.⁵⁷ It is also noteworthy that al-Kindī wrote a *Risālah fī mudkhal al-aḥkām ‘alā al-masā’il* (Introduction to Astrology in accordance with Questions)⁵⁸ and a *Kitāb fī mudkhal ilā ‘ilm al-nujūm* (Book on the Introduction to the Science of the Stars), which was also transmitted under the title *Al-arba‘ūna bāban* (The Forty Chapters). The latter was known in the Latin West through two 12th-century translations: the first titled *De iudiciis* by Robert of Ketton, the other as part of the *Liber trium iudicum* and in the *Liber novem iudicum* by Hugo Sanctelliensis.⁵⁹ Since the former has not come to us, I will focus later on the theoretical background of *The Forty Chapters*.

Both the epistles on weather forecasting are based on Kindian cosmology as developed in his surviving works titled *Risālah fī l-ibānah ‘an al-‘illat al-fā‘ilat al-qarībah li-l-kawn wa-l-fasād* (On the Proximate Agent Cause of Generation and Dissolution),⁶⁰ and *Risālah fī l-ibānah ‘an sujūd al-jirm al-aqṣā wa ta‘āti-hi li-llāh* (On the Prostration of the Outermost Body and Its Obedience to God).⁶¹ The latter work is a *tafsīr* of the Qur’anic Sura 55, āyat (verses) 1–7.

pensiero di Alkindi », in EAD., *Studi sulla prospettiva medievale*, Giappichelli, Torino 1965. Although hardly attributable entirely to al-Kindī, the *De radiis* shows important doctrinal elements that align with his metaphysical and astrological elaboration. It can, in fact, be considered a translation interpolated with various heterogeneous elements, strongly influenced by Stoicism and closely related to *Picatrix* and the Kindī-circle’s adaptations. I am grateful to Dag Hasse for discussing this point with me.

⁵⁷ GERRIT BOS, CHARLES BURNETT, *Scientific Weather Forecasting in the Middle Ages: The Writings of Al-Kindī. Studies, Editions, and Translations of the Arabic, Hebrew and Latin Texts*, London, Routledge, London 2000.

⁵⁸ IBN AL-NADīm, *Fihrist*, ed. FLÜGEL, p. 259.7–8.

⁵⁹ CHARLES BURNETT, « Al-Kindī on Judicial Astrology. ‘The Forty Chapters’ », *Arabic Sciences and Philosophy*, 3 (1993), p. 77–117. Edition of the two Latin translations by Robert of Ketton (probably late 1130s or early 1140s) and Hugo Sanctelliensis (probably between 1119 and 1150) in: CHARLES BURNETT, *Al-Kindī. De iudiciis. The Two Latin Versions*, London 1989 (I am grateful to Charles Burnett for kindly providing me with his personal copy of the work). The section *On the phenomena of the atmosphere* of *The Forty Chapters* (*De iudiciis*) is preserved in Arabic and Latin and translated in: BOS, BURNETT, p. 397–408 (Arabic: ms. Jerusalem, Khālidi Library, 21(2)-Astr. 2; Latin: Robert of Ketton’s and Hugo Sanctelliensis’ translations).

⁶⁰ AL-KINDī, *Risālah fī l-ibānah ‘an al-‘illat al-fā‘ilat al-qarībah li-l-kawn wa-l-fasād*, ed. MUḤAMMAD A. ABŪ RĪDĀ, Dār al-Fikr, Cairo 1950–1953, vol. I, p. 214–237; Eng. transl. by PETER ADAMSON, PETER E. PORMANN, *The Philosophical Works of al-Kindī*, Oxford University Press, Karachi 2012, p. 155–172.

⁶¹ AL-KINDī, *Risālah fī l-ibānah ‘an sujūd al-jirm al-aqṣā wa ta‘āti-hi li-llāh*, ed. MUḤAMMAD A. ABŪ RĪDĀ, Dār al-Fikr, Cairo 1950–1953, vol. I, p. 244–261; Eng. transl. by ADAMSON, PORMANN, *The Philosophical Works of al-Kindī*, p. 174–186.

Both al-Kindī's *Letters* on weather forecasting come to us in two Hebrew translations and various revised Latin versions,⁶² since the original Arabic is lost.⁶³ These epistles are entitled *On Moistures and Rain* (Letter I) and *On the Causes of Forces Related to the Heavenly Bodies Which Indicate Rain* (Letter II, in Arabic: *K. Risālati-hi fī 'ilal al-qūwāt al-mansūbati ilā-l-ishkhāṣ al-'āliyyati al-dāllati 'alā maṭari*, as listed among al-Kindī's astronomical works in Ibn al-Nadīm's *Fihrist*).⁶⁴

In both the epistles, al-Kindī begins by discussing the knowledge required to become an astrologer. According to al-Kindī, one cannot be an astrologer without being a philosopher and acquiring knowledge in the four mathematical sciences and meteorology, in line with his *On the Quantity of Aristotle's Books and What is Required to Attain Philosophy* (*Risālah fī kammiyyāt kutub Aristūṭālīs wa-mā yuḥṭāj ilayhi fī taḥṣīl al-falsafah*).⁶⁵ Thus, he transitions from reflecting on meteorology to addressing technical astrological matters. In addition to highlighting the impact of Ibn al-Biṭrīq's translations of Aristotle's *Meteorology* and *On the Heavens*, these astrological texts clearly anchor the science of the stars in Aristotelian physics, demonstrating the practical application of astrology. On this, al-Kindī aligns with his pupil, Abū Ma'shar. As outlined by Peter Adamson, the core of this meteorological study is the phenomenon of the exhalations from heated water and earth which causes a series of meteorological events, including clouds and rainfall.⁶⁶

⁶² Alkindi Latinus' *De mutatione temporum* (hereafter *DMT*) has also been transmitted under the title *De pluviis*. Together with other works attributed to al-Kindī, the *DMT* includes technical extracts that appear to originate from a collection of sentences by various authors. Al-Kindī is a key contributor, alongside figures such as Abū Ḥaṣṣ 'Umar ibn al-Farrukhān al-Ṭabarī (also known as Omar Tiberiades, d. ca. 815), Abū 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī ibn Abī 'l-Rijāl al-Shaibānī (i.e., Albohazen filii Haly Abenragel, an 11th-century astrologer from Qairouan), and even Hippocrates. Given the Latin tradition of the *DMT*, it is more plausible to consider it as part of a collection of astrological writings circulated under the name of 'Alkindi/Alkyndus'. Editions and commentaries of these texts can be found in: BOS, BURNETT, 2000 (see especially p. 12–39).

⁶³ BOS, BURNETT, 2000, p. 29–95.

⁶⁴ IBN AL-NADĪM, *Fihrist*, ed. FLÜGEL, p. 257.19–20.

⁶⁵ AL-KINDĪ, *Risālah fī kammiyyāt kutub Aristūṭālīs*, ed. MUḤAMMAD A. ABŪ RĪDĀ, Dār al-Fikr, Cairo 1950–1953, vol. I, p. 363–384. Another edition: MICHELANGELO GUIDI, RICHARD WALZER, « Studi su al-Kindī, I: Uno scritto introduttivo allo studio di Aristotele », *Memorie della R. Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei. Classe di Scienze Morali, Storiche e Filosofiche*, ser. VI, 6/5 (1940), p. 373–419 (reprinted in FUAT SEZGIN, MĀZIN 'AMĀWĪ, CARL EHRRIG-EGGERT, ECKHARD NEUBAUER (eds.), *Abū Yūsuf Ya'qūb ibn Ishāq al-Kindī (d. after 256/870). Texts and Studies*, Institut für Geschichte der Arabisch-Islamischen Wissenschaften, Frankfurt a.M. 1999 (Islamic Studies, 5), p. 285–329.) Cf. AL-KINDĪ, *Letter I*, ed. BOS, BURNETT, 2000, p. 97–98, Eng. transl. p. 161–162; ID., *Letter II*, ed. BOS, BURNETT, p. 203–205, Eng. transl. p. 243–245.

⁶⁶ It is noteworthy that a similar conception on the Moon's influence on rainfall is present in both *Letter I* and *On the Proximate Agent Cause*, as well as in the Kindī-circle's *Fi l-tadbīrāt al-falakiyyah*. The Moon is described as having a moist nature, which leads to moisture in the earthly realm. By gathering and condensing vapours, it contributes to the formation of clouds and rainfall. Rainfall

In *Letter I*, as in the Kindī-circle's *On the Governments of the Spheres*, there is a series of *reductiones ad absurdum* aimed at demonstrating the roles of the Sun, the Moon, and other planets, as well as their relationships with the Zodiac signs, their motions, and distances, in influencing life on the sublunary world. After establishing the meteorological foundation for astrology, the author delves into technical astrological details to illustrate how each connection, motion, and disposition of the planets affects the earthly realm. In *Letter II*, translated by Kalonymus ben Kalonymus (d. after 1328), al-Kindī discusses the effects of each planet on Earth, the lunar mansions, and the methods for calculating rainfall.

In his *The Forty Chapters*, al-Kindī introduces the basics of cosmology and then develops each single chapter of judicial astrology: Nativities, Commencements, Interrogations, and Choices, such as when to undertake a journey, when to besiege a city or begin a war, whether or not to support an uprising against the king, when to irrigate the fields and proceed with specific agricultural activities, etc.⁶⁷ These are just a few examples from a rich list of events that people have historically sought guidance for from the stars. At the end of Robert of Ketton's translation (1130s–1140s), we read:

It is established among wise men that the comings-to-be and the passings-away of things happen by the perpetual movement of the heavenly bodies, whose effect principally proceeds from the nature, condition and order of the luminaries, the other planets and the heavenly sphere when the luminaries are in conjunction and opposition.⁶⁸

This framework represents a non-determinist approach to judicial astrology, based on Aristotelian meteorology, likely shared by both Abū Ma'shar and the author of the *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm*. It posits that earthly events, including generation

is said to be heaviest during the Moon's waning phase, while it decreases significantly as the Moon waxes, ceasing altogether at the full Moon. Cf. AL-KINDĪ, *Risālah fī l-ibānah 'an al-'illat al-fā'ilat al-qarībah*, ed. ABŪ RĪDA, p. 231–232, Eng. transl. ADAMSON, PORMANN, 2012, p. 168 (IX.1–2); ID., *On Moistures and Rain*, ed. BOS, BURNETT, 2002, p. 182, 44–45; [ALEX. APHROD.], *Fī l-tadbīrāt al-falakiyyah*, ms. E, f. 78v. The same conception, probably starting from the Kindī-circle's *maqālah*, is in Averroes' *Epitome of the Metaphysics*, ed. CARLOS Q. RODRIGUEZ (Estanislao Maestre, Madrid 1919); *Compendio de Metafísica*, ed. PUIG MONTADA (Universidad de Córdoba, Córdoba 1998), p. 166–168 (§ 74–77); German translations: *Metaphysik des Averroes*, transl. MAX HORTEN, Max Niemer Verlag, Halle an der Saale 1912 (Abhandlungen zur Philosophie und ihrer Geschichte), p. 201–203 and *Die Epitome der Metaphysik des Averroes*, transl. SIMON VAN DER BERGH, Brill, Leiden, 1924, p. 141–143. Cf. FREUDENTHAL, « The Medieval Astrologization », p. 242.

⁶⁷ All of these are chapters of the *De iudiciis*.

⁶⁸ BURNETT, « Al-Kindī on Judicial Astrology », p. 79. Latin text (§ 699): « Constat apud sapientes rerum generationes corruptionesque motu perpetuo celestium corporum contingere, quarum effectus ex luminum et ceterorum planetarum celi que natura, modo simul et ordine, in luminum coniunctione oppositioneque principaliter procedit ».

and dissolution, are influenced by the continuous movement of celestial bodies. Key factors determining these influences include the nature, condition, and alignment of the luminaries (the Sun and Moon), other planets, and the celestial sphere, particularly during significant alignments like conjunctions and oppositions. The work begins with a detailed description of the cosmos and the Zodiac signs, highlighting their natures, properties, mutual relationships, and effects. This underscores a belief in the interconnectedness of heavenly phenomena and earthly events, which is foundational to judicial astrology and constitutes the core of Al-Kindī's *The Forty Chapters* (*De iudiciis*). Through this lens, and similarly to Abū Ma'shar, astrology is viewed not merely as a predictive tool but as a science grounded in the natural order and the dynamics of the cosmos, built on the entire spectrum of knowledge that leads to wisdom, from exploring the deep nature of the cosmos to predicting the development of divine providence and God's will.⁶⁹ The influence of the Kindī-circle Alexander's *maqālah* is not only related to its contents but also foundational, as the theme of providence is closely tied to astrological (or astro-meteorological) prediction.

Consequently, Kindian astrological writings represent another stage in the process of the 'astrologization of the Aristotelian cosmos', in that they place astrology at the pinnacle of scientific knowledge and, even more, inextricably link it to metaphysics, thus bringing it out of a twilight zone in which it had been mixed with the vulgar superstition. This perspective would profoundly impact 13th- and 14th-century Latin thinkers and astrologers, including Daniel of Morley (d. 1210 circa), Michael Scot (d. 1235 circa), and Henry Bate of Mechelen (d. after 1310). They not only regarded astrology as the highest form of science but also championed a form of wisdom that seeks to question, experiment with, and transform nature.⁷⁰

VI. Conclusions

To conclude, the integration of astrology within the Aristotelian cosmological framework in the Islamic world reflects a unique fusion of philosophical and scientific traditions. By grounding astrology in meteorology and physics, Arabic-

⁶⁹ Cf. ADAMSON, *Al-Kindī*, p. 197.

⁷⁰ Crucial works: TULLIO GREGORY, « Astrologia e teologia nella cultura medievale », in ID., *Mundana Sapientia*, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, Roma 1992, p. 291–328; CHARLES BURNETT, « Michael Scot and the Transmission of Scientific Culture from Toledo to Bologna via the Court of Frederick II Hohenstaufen », *Micrologus*, 2 (1994), p. 101–126 (repr. in ID., *Arabic into Latin in the Middle Ages. The Translators and their Intellectual and Social Context*, Routledge, Farnham 2009); CARLOS STEEL, STEVEN VANDEN BROECKE, DAVID JUSTE, SHLOMO SELA (eds.), *The Astrological Autobiography of a Medieval Philosopher: Henry Bate's Nativitas (1280–81)*, Leuven U.P., Leuven 2018, p. 31–43.

speaking astrologers and philosophers established a scientific framework for this art while preserving its practical aspects. The cosmological framework found in the Kindī-circle Alexander's *Fī l-tadbīrāt al-falakiyyah*, al-Kindī's *Letters* on weather forecasting, and his introduction to judicial astrology (*The Forty Chapters*) was preserved and further developed by Abū Ma'shar's *Al-mudkhal al-kabīr* and al-Qurṭubī's *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm*, though technical issues sometimes differ. Collectively, these contributions bridged cultural and intellectual traditions, solidifying the scientific status of astrology in Islamic lands and ensuring its influence in the Latin West.

The 'astrologization of the Aristotelian cosmos' partially coincides with the foundation of the 'science of the stars' on Aristotle's *Meteorologica* and *De generatione et corruptione*. Although the *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm* is a more technical work focused on magical practices – where each planet has specific effects on individuals in conjunction with others – the underlying theoretical background is shared among all these texts. A key distinction, however, must be made between astrological judgments, which interpret celestial signs as indicators of events, and astral magic, as presented in the *Ghāyat al-Ḥakīm*, which involves the invocation of stars as active participants in summoning rituals. This distinction underscores the dual role of celestial bodies as mediators of divine governance and as active agents in magical practices. In addition to this distinction, it is essential to highlight that astrology possesses a high-level mathematical and geometric component, which sets it apart from astral magic and other comparable disciplines. Unlike astral magic, which relies on symbolic and ritualistic practices, astrology is deeply rooted in precise computational methods, involving intricate astronomical calculations, trigonometric models, and geometric frameworks. The mathematical foundations of astrology enhance its scientific credibility by establishing it as a structured discipline with predictive and analytical rigor. These foundations are embedded within a broader theoretical foundation that integrates celestial and terrestrial dynamics, shaping astrology into an advanced system of knowledge characterized by several key features:

- Planetary positions and secondary causality: The study of planetary positions, motions, and alignments frames the stars as both actors and signs, operating as secondary causes within the overarching framework of divine providence. This duality blurs the dichotomy of determinism and anti-determinism, as celestial bodies influence earthly events while remaining subject to God's primary causality.
- Astrology and astronomy in Ptolemy's framework: Ptolemy's view of astrology as a prognostic science highlights its focus on predicting the effects of celestial influences, distinguishing it from astronomy, which

focuses on the mathematical prediction of astral motions. Astrology thereby serves as a bridge, linking natural phenomena with human understanding of divine order.

- Aristotelianism in the Islamic thought: The conceptual framework of Aristotelian meteorology and physics, as interpreted by Alexander of Aphrodisias, were further recontextualized by the Kindī-circle to align with the Islamic worldview. This adaptation integrated celestial influences into a metaphysical structure that accounted for divine causality and cosmic order.
- Cosmic harmony: The concept of cosmic harmony captures the interconnected relationships between the qualities of the heavenly bodies, the properties of the sublunar elements, and the hierarchical structure of causality. This harmony reflects the integration of celestial and terrestrial realms into a unified and coherent system.
- Divine power and cosmic interactions: The divine force that pervades the cosmos manifests through multiple active influences emanating from the stars. These forces interact with earthly matter, producing a variety of reactions and effects, which illustrates the intricate interplay between celestial and terrestrial realms.

These elements mark a significant evolution in the medieval reception of Aristotelian cosmology within the Islamic context, laying the groundwork for subsequent developments in both astrology and natural philosophy.

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THEMATIC SECTION

ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN'S TRAVELS TO THE MIDDLE EAST

WAYS OF KNOWING AND TRANSLATION

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When, in 1802, Ulrich Jasper Seetzen left the German Lands heading towards the Middle East, he did not know what to expect. As many of his far travelling contemporaries, Seetzen aimed at exploring a region that was mostly unknown to the European world of scholars. Advised by other explorers, who had previously also moved way beyond the southeastern parts of Europe, like Carsten Niebuhr, as well as by those who had assiduously studied the region from afar, like Friedrich Blumenbach, Seetzen sketched out the ambitious plan to go to 'the Orient', the lands that would become the Middle East later on.¹ Adding to this already highly demanding objective, Seetzen boldly proposed to continue his journey and also to cross the African continent from east to west.² Without any doubt, Seetzen left his homeland knowing that he would be exploring parts of the world that would be most foreign to him, including many routes that would be dangerous for any foreigner. Envisioning to move this far away from central Europe, moreover, also

* This thematic section originates from a workshop held in Gotha in 2019 on « Ulrich Jasper Seetzens Reisen nach Vorderasien. Neue Impulse der Reiseforschung » organized by Natalia Bachour, Julia Schmidt-Funke and Iris Schröder. We want to thank the Fritz Thyssen Foundation for its generous funding of the workshop, which, at that time, was held as the 4th Alumni Meeting of the Herzog Ernst Fellowship Programme, also funded by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation.

¹ Taking the notion of 'the Middle East' and not the historic notion of 'the Orient' as our point of reference for the thematic section we edited, we take up the suggestions put forward by Zayde Antrim, who, however, also problematizes this particular notion; see: ZAYDE ANTRIM, *Mapping the Middle East*, Reaktion Books, London 2018, esp. p. 9–11. For a rather short account concerning travels see: EVA JOHANNA HOLMBERG, « The Middle East », in CARL THOMPSON (ed.), *The Routledge Companion to Travel Writing*, Routledge, London – New York 2016, p. 372–383.

² ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Reiseplan ins innere Afrika », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmelskunde*, 6 (1802), p. 126–159; 201–232; 317–342, 401–426.

included the rather well-known uncertainty about whether there would be any chance to return back home.³

In the beginning, the story of Ulrich Jasper Seetzen's travels is linked to the many centres of learning situated in the German lands: so, the story is also about Jever, Göttingen and Gotha. It seems that, especially, the numerous scholarly conversations Seetzen had in Göttingen inspired him to work on a detailed plan for his adventurous journey. Later, during his stay at the Gotha court, Duke Ernest II of Saxe-Gotha and Altenburg, as well as his son Duke August, promoted Seetzen's overall scientific programme, enlarging the already ambitious programme considerably. While Ernest II provided Seetzen with the opportunity for a scientific training on how to use astronomic instruments, carried out by Franz Xaver von Zach, one of the most prominent contemporary astronomers, August, who followed his father on the throne in 1804, promoted a different research agenda: he asked Seetzen to buy valuable objects for one of his most cherished projects: the soon to be founded prestigious 'Oriental Museum'.⁴ Leaving Europe with such a research agenda, Seetzen might have undertaken his travels as an impossible challenge. Yet, it seems as if, by that time, travelling, as well as exploring far-off places, was often linked to such a type of high aspirations.⁵

Therefore, the ambitions like the ones Seetzen cherished were shared by many members of the European republic of letters. Around 1800, in their view, the scientific traveller who was to head off for far away regions of the world was expected to be as open-minded as possible, collecting data and objects in order to make sense of those parts of the world that had hitherto been unknown to them.⁶ Many of the other contemporary travelling endeavours often followed similar exigent objectives. In hindsight, there seems to have been some kind of megalomania at stake when, for instance, the 'Association for Promoting the

³ Knowledge and its opposite, non-knowledge, have turned into a widely discussed topics, yet, uncertainty, which is in a way in between the two antagonistic poles has not emerged as a point of reference for further research. For some first approach see: JOHANNES PAUSE, « Reisen und Nicht-Wissen. Ein Aufbruch », in JOHANNES PAUSE, IRINA GRADINARI, DORIT MÜLLER (eds.), *Versteckt – Verirrt – Verschollen. Reisen und Nicht-Wissen*, Reichert Verlag, Wiesbaden 2016, p. 85–106; MORITZ EPPLER, ANNETTE IMHAUSEN, FALK MÜLLER (eds.), *Weak Knowledge: Forms, Functions, and Dynamics*, Campus Verlag, Frankfurt a.M. 2019. For an overall discussion of the many aspects of travel see ALASDAIR PETTINGER, TIM YOUNGS (eds.), *The Routledge Research Companion to Travel Writing*, Routledge, London – New York 2020.

⁴ See FRIEDEGUND FREITAG (ed.), *Luxus, Kunst und Phantasie. Herzog August von Sachsen-Gotha-Altenburg als Sammler*, Sandstein Verlag, Dresden 2022.

⁵ For an essay to grasp this type of exploratory endeavor see the contributions taken together in DANE KENNEDY (ed.), *Reinterpreting Exploration: The West in the World*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2014.

⁶ For this persona see: ANGELY BYRNE, « The Scientific Traveller », in ALASDAIR PETTINGER, TIM YOUNGS (eds.), *The Routledge Research Companion to Travel Writing*, Routledge, London – New York 2020, p. 17–29.

Discovery of the Interior Parts of Africa' that was founded in London in 1788, would send John Ledyard off to cross the African continent from the Red Sea to the Atlantic. Similar ambitions also shaped the work of the 'Syrian Society', that was founded also in London in 1805; this rather little-known society was later renamed the 'Palestine Association' – following the model of the aforementioned association that promoted the exploration of Africa.⁷ Both associations reflected the desire to get to know larger world regions by sending out European travelling researchers who always were obliged to follow a large set of instructions.⁸ Nevertheless, after all, most of the travels from home, projected by these associations, were highly risky, as there was a total lack of knowledge concerning the particular regions and as there was no experience of these regions either that could possibly be shared before starting off. Thus, far-reaching ambitions largely prevailed: they were inspired by an imaginary ideal that included getting to know every possible place in the world despite the many unforeseeable difficulties for any European traveller to reach it and also return.⁹

According to his personal taste and his educational upbringing, Seetzen set out most probably first and foremost as what would later be called a natural scientist.¹⁰ Having been trained as a physician, many of his scientific goals were linked to the idea of getting to know the natural world. Following the footsteps of early modern naturalists who had previously explored far-off lands, observing natural phenomena, recording astronomical and meteorological data, collecting plant and animal specimens as well as stones, earths and minerals was part of Seetzen's day to day travelling routine that he recorded in his diaries and letters.¹¹ However,

⁷ For the short-lived Syrian Society see: RUTH KARK, HAIM GOREN (eds.), «Pioneering British Exploration and Scriptural Geography: The Syrian Society/The Palestine Association», *The Geographical Journal*, 177 (2011), p. 264–274.

⁸ See ALASDAIR PETTINGER, «Guidance and Advice», in ALASDAIR PETTINGER, TIM YOUNGS (eds.), *The Routledge Research Companion to Travel Writing*, Routledge, London – New York 2020, p. 139–152.

⁹ For this most ambitious time-period in the history of exploration see IRIS SCHRÖDER, *Das Wissen von der ganzen Welt. Globale Geographien und räumliche Ordnungen Afrikas und Europas 1790–1870*, Schöningh, Paderborn, 2011, p. 132.

¹⁰ For two brief biographical accounts see NORBERT NEBES, «Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811), Forschungsreisender und Sammler im Auftrag der Gothaer Herzöge», in ANGELIKA GEYER (ed.), *1846–2006, 160 Jahre Archäologisches Museum der Universität Jena, Thüringer Sammlungen im Kontext internationaler Netzwerke*, Logos Verlag, Jena 2008 (Jenaer Hefte zur Klassischen Archäologie 7), p. 76–94; BIRGIT SCHÄBLER, «Seetzen, Ulrich Jasper», *Neue Deutsche Biographie (NDB)*, 24 (2010), p. 155–156.

¹¹ For Seetzen's collection of minerals see the brief account by CARSTEN ECKERT, «Die naturkundlichen Sammlungen», in FRIEDEGUND FREITAG (ed.), *Luxus, Kunst und Phantasie. Herzog August von Sachsen-Gotha-Altenburg als Sammler*, Sandstein Verlag, Dresden 2022, p. 231–237. For early modern naturalists' travelling and observation practices see JULIA CARINA BÖTTCHER, *Beobachtung als Lebensart. Praktiken der Wissensproduktion bei Forschungsreisen im 18. Jahrhundert*, Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart 2020; furthermore, more recently, JULIA CARINA BÖTTCHER, «Alles

over time, being on the road, Seetzen might have considerably expanded these tasks. So, it seems as if he turned into an encyclopaedic traveller ‘avant la lettre’; in accordance with the ideas that he shared with many of his scholarly contemporaries, his gaze tried to capture the natural as well as the social and the cultural world that he conscientiously kept documenting in as many respects as possible.

Over the last three decades, Seetzen’s travels have been researched especially in German-speaking lands.¹² This research boom is linked to the fact that large parts of Seetzen’s writings are relatively easy to access by now in a printed version. His diaries, which had already been edited by Friedrich Kruse in the 1850s, were reprinted in 2004 and partially edited anew in 2011/12. These endeavours have been supplemented by an edition of Seetzen’s printed works, from 2017 onwards.¹³ A lot of attention has been paid to Seetzen’s biography, focusing on the traveller as well as the scholar – including a detailed discussion of his journey as such.¹⁴ In this respect, quite a few aspects have already been addressed.¹⁵ Yet, numerous elements still call for further exploration.¹⁶ This holds even more true once we

Bemerkenswerte Sammeln. Auf Forschungsreise in der Frühen Neuzeit », in SUSANNE FRIEDRICH, JANA MANGOLD, SUSANNE RAU (eds.) *Wandlungen des Sammelns. Praktiken, Wissen, Anordnungen – Ein Reader*, Transcript, Bielefeld 2024, p. 45–53. For some critical notes on the genre of letters and diaries written by travelers see the short articles EVE TAVOR BANNET, « Letters », in ALASDAIR PETTINGER, TIM YOUNGS (eds.), *The Routledge Research Companion to Travel Writing*, Routledge, London – New York 2020, p. 115–127 as well as CHRISTINA LAFFIN, « Diaries and Journals », in ALASDAIR PETTINGER, TIM YOUNGS (eds.), *The Routledge Research Companion to Travel Writing*, Routledge, London – New York 2020, p. 128–138.

¹² The start was made by HANS STEIN (ed.), *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811). Leben und Werk. Die arabischen Länder und die Nahostforschung im napoleonischen Zeitalter. Vorträge des Kolloquiums vom 23. und 24. September in der Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek Gotha*, Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek Gotha, Gotha 1995.

¹³ ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen’s Reisen durch Syrien, Palästina, Phönicien, die Transjordan-Länder, Arabia Petraea und Unterägypten*, ed. FRIEDRICH KRUSE, 4 vols., Reimer, Berlin 1854–1859, Reprint Olms, Hildesheim 2004; ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *Sämtliche gedruckte Schriften*, ed. by Detlef Haberland, 6 vols., Isensee Verlag, Oldenburg 2017.

¹⁴ See DETLEF HABERLAND (ed.), *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811): Jevevaner – aufgeklärter Unternehmer – wissenschaftlicher Orientreisender*, Isensee Verlag, Oldenburg 2014; Id. (ed.), *Der Orientreisende Ulrich Jasper Seetzen und die Wissenschaften*, Isensee Verlag, Oldenburg 2019.

¹⁵ GIOVANNI BONACINA, *The Wahhabis Seen Through European Eyes (1772–1830): Deists and Puritans of Islam*, Brill, Leiden 2015.

¹⁶ One might draw the attention particularly to Seetzen geographical and cartographical works in particular, as a few first attempts have already highlighted some of future potentials for further research: See Petra Weigel’s contributions on Seetzen’s maps: PETRA WEIGEL (ed.), *Das Heilige Land in Gotha. Der Verlag Justus Perthes und die Palästina-kartographie im 19. Jahrhundert*, Forschungsbibliothek Gotha – Universität Erfurt, Gotha – Erfurt 2014, p. 34–37; EAD., « Erste Kartenskizzen von Syrien und Palästina von der Hand Ulrich Jasper Seetzens », in FERAS KRIMSTI (ed.), *Der Orient in Gotha. Katalog zur Ausstellung der Forschungsbibliothek Gotha auf Schloss Friedenstein*

start discussing Seetzen's oeuvre in relation to other contemporary travelling research endeavours.¹⁷

The so called 'oriental' manuscripts Seetzen collected are now part of today's Gotha Research Library. They have mostly been researched in this context,¹⁸ whereas the collection of Egyptian treasures that Seetzen amassed in Cairo and successfully sent to Gotha is today part of the holdings of the Gotha Friedenstein collection. The latter have been presented to the larger public already for quite a while as part of the permanent exhibition of the Gotha Ducal Museum.¹⁹ Nevertheless, the collection of ethnographical objects has been researched in depth only most recently; since 2023 it is also available online.²⁰ Most of the ongoing research has been pursued starting out from the two places that keep the most valuable holdings of Seetzeniana: Oldenburg and Gotha.²¹ Besides the treasures already mentioned, held in Gotha, the Oldenburg holdings particularly include the diaries and the letters, as well as many the manuscripts. Moreover, there are also numerous printed articles as well as other different collections that have been overlooked for a long time from the nineteenth century onward. Still, despite all the efforts of the past few years, following the above suggestion to tackle Seetzen as an encyclopaedic traveller calls for of a larger array of topics for future research. The following thematic section will certainly not fill this gap. Yet it is meant to invite further scholarly enterprises in order to historically relocate

vom 8. September bis 3. November 2024, Forschungsbibliothek Gotha der Universität Erfurt, Gotha 2024, p. 102–103. Furthermore STEFANIE ZEHNLE, «... das geographische Chaos der innerafrikanischen Länder zu studieren ...», in DETLEF HABERLAND (ed.), *Der Orientreisende Ulrich Jasper Seetzen und die Wissenschaften*, Isensee Verlag, Oldenburg 2019, p. 299–325.

¹⁷ See e.g. ANNE MARISS, «A World of New Things», *Praktiken der Naturgeschichte bei Johann Reinhold Forster*, Campus Verlag, Frankfurt a.M. 2015; SCHRÖDER, *Das Wissen von der ganzen Welt*, esp. p. 41; p. 125–127.

¹⁸ For the Gotha holdings, we might follow the research of Feras Krimsti and Monika Hasenmüller, who both portrayed Seetzen as a firsthand connoisseur when he began acquiring historical manuscripts during his travels: See MONIKA HASENMÜLLER, «Ulrich Jasper Seetzen als Sammler orientalischer Handschriften», in DETLEF HABERLAND (ed.), *Der Orientreisende Ulrich Jasper Seetzen und die Wissenschaften*, Isensee Verlag, Oldenburg 2019, p. 459–476; FERAS KRIMSTI, «Die Sammlung orientalischer Handschriften», in FRIEDEGUND FREITAG (ed.), *Luxus, Kunst und Phantasie. Herzog August von Sachsen-Gotha-Altenburg als Sammler*, Sandstein Verlag, Dresden 2022, p. 149–155.

¹⁹ For a recent appraisal see UTA WALLENSTEIN, «Ein Freimaurer im Orient – Ulrich Jasper Seetzen und die Aegyptiaca für den Gothaer Hof», in UTA WALLENSTEIN, MARKUS MEUMANN (eds.), *Freimaurer und Mysterien Ägyptens in Gotha*, Michael Imhof Verlag, Petersberg 2023, p. 262–275.

²⁰ See KERSTIN VOLKER-SAAD, «Seetzens Ethnographica als enzyklopädische Belege fremder Welten», in FRIEDEGUND FREITAG (ed.), *Luxus, Kunst und Phantasie. Herzog August von Sachsen-Gotha-Altenburg als Sammler*, Sandstein Verlag, Dresden 2022, p. 156–163. From 2024, the collection of Seetzen's Ethnographica has also been online, see GOTH.DIGITAL, <https://gotha.digital/suchtreffer?add=1&ceid=13&no_cache=1&tx_jomuseo_pi1009_list%5BclassificationTopic%5D=Sammlung%20Seetzen&tx_jomuseo_pi1009_list%5Bcontroller%5D=Museo&cHash=3cf45c3a9c1e6aaab84a38ff3b885455> (Accessed April 2025).

²¹ See the references mentioned above.

an early nineteenth-century traveller whose impressive written as well as material legacies have for a long time been largely neglected.

Reassessing Seetzen implies developing a more nuanced understanding of the story of the European scholarly and literary encounter with the region that was historically taken as ‘the Orient’. With this in mind, we should pay some attention to the fact that the aforementioned ‘Palestine Association’ of London also eagerly published Seetzen’s geography of the Dead Sea, while French journals, too, tried to keep track of Seetzen’s works during his travels.²² Seetzen’s travels have to be studied in a European context; they were by no means an isolated German endeavour. However, following the Palestinian-American literary scholar Edward Said, the overall European engagement with the historic ‘Orient’ has for quite some time been qualified as a mere projection. Said concisely studied the ‘imaginative geographies’ that add up to what he called ‘Orientalism’. In a critical vein, he thus underscored the need to further acknowledge in how far these images should not be conflated with the area itself.²³ Taking Said’s stances into account, nevertheless, does not mean totally dismissing the many historic attempts to get to know the region by travelling. By contrast, from our point of view, reading and studying the written as well as the material legacies of travelling researchers like Ulrich Jasper Seetzen could also serve as an invitation to achieve a better understanding of an entangled history that is linked to questions of knowledge and translation.²⁴ In this respect, we suggest investigating in more detail to what extent Seetzen might be taken as a ‘go-between’. In this vein, we ask: to what extent did Seetzen, during his travels, at least partially and quite gradually start to ‘go native’, learning the language while also openly appreciating, if not admiring, many of the different social settings he visited during his journey.²⁵ As we shall show, Seetzen was on site, studying the field, like today’s

²² For the often-overlooked attention of the Syrian Society concerning Seetzen’s geographical assessment of the regions he travelled, see: ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *A Brief Account of the Countries Adjoining the Lake of Tiberias, the Jordan and the Dead Sea*, ed. Palestine Association, Meyler & Son – Hatchard, Bath – London 1810. For the French reading of Seetzen’s letters see the contribution by Clarisse Roche.

²³ See EDWARD W. SAID, *Orientalism*, Penguin Books, London 2003; for a critical appraisal dealing with the German case see: SABINE MANGOLD-WILL, *Eine « weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft » – Die deutsche Orientalistik im 19. Jahrhundert*, Steiner, Stuttgart 2004; for a more recent short but also critical reappraisal, see BIRGIT SCHÄBLER, « Orientalismus », in PIM DEN BOER (eds.), *Europäische Erinnerungsorte*, vol. 3: *Europa und die Welt*, Oldenbourg Verlag, München 2012, p. 39–44.

²⁴ In this vein, see FERAS KRIMSTI, « Zur Geschichte der Orient-Studien in Gotha: Eine Skizze », in ID. (ed.), *Der Orient in Gotha. Katalog zur Ausstellung der Forschungsbibliothek Gotha auf Schloss Friedenstein vom 8. September bis 3. November 2024*, Forschungsbibliothek Gotha der Universität Erfurt, Gotha 2024, p. 11–23.

²⁵ See KAPIL RAJ, « Go-Betweens, Travellers, and Cultural Translators », in BERNARD LIGHTMAN (ed.), *A Companion to the History of Science*, Wiley Blackwell, Oxford 2016, p. 39–57; for a couple of case

ethnologists – including all the many pitfalls that are, as we know by now, part of the ethnological enterprise.²⁶ Following this general stance, we take Seetzen as a knowledge broker, an intermediary in his own right, linking his travels to the necessity of knowledge circulation and translation.²⁷ This certainly does not exclude also studying the many failed translations, the many possible misunderstandings as well as the many disruptions that arise once knowledge is being transferred over large distances.²⁸ Moreover and finally, studying travellers like Seetzen also calls for taking into account the unknown – a most often neglected realm. These stories of non-knowledge – the so-called ‘dark side of knowledge’ – also add to a more nuanced understanding of what is being transferred and what is left out because of ignorance. This also includes ‘agnotology’, the practice of leaving out knowledge that is not wanted.²⁹

The contributions in the following section try to shed new light on the European scholarly endeavour that inspired Ulrich Jasper Seetzen to travel to the Middle East. In this regard, in her contribution, Natalia Bachour discusses Seetzen’s perception of the various strata of physicians practicing in the Ottoman Empire at the end of the eighteenth century. All in all, Bachour critically engages with Seetzen’s observations of medical practices. These practices, she claims in her reading, were first and foremost filtered by newly emerging European concepts of medicalisation which certainly pushed other non-European medical practices rather aside.

Following in Seetzen’s footsteps in some ways, Henning Sievert also focuses his reading on Seetzen’s diaries: He examines how Seetzen portrayed ‘renegades’ which he encountered in person, i.e. immigrants to the Ottoman Empire from

studies see SIMON SCHAFFER et al. (eds.), *The Brokered World: Go-Betweens and Global Intelligence, 1770–1820*, Science History Publications, Sagamore Beach (Mass.) 2009.

²⁶ See MICH KNECHT, « ‘Vor Ort im Feld?’ Zur Kritik und Reakzentuierung des Lokalen als europäisch-ethnologischer Schlüsselkategorie », *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Volkskunde*, 113/1 (2010), p. 23–49.

²⁷ For this approach see also: STEFAN ROHDEWALD et al., « Wissenszirkulation », in STEFAN ROHDEWALD, STEPHAN CONERMANN, ALBRECHT FUESS (eds.), *Transottomanica – Osteuropäisch-osmanisch-persische Mobilitätsdynamiken. Perspektiven und Forschungsstand*, V&R unipress, Göttingen 2019, p. 83–103.

²⁸ See BRUNO LATOUR, « Der Pedologenfaden von Boa-Vista. Eine photo-philosophische Montage », in HANS-JÖRG RHEINBERGER, MICHAEL HAGNER, BETTINA WAHRIG (eds.), *Räume des Wissens. Repräsentation, Codierung, Spur*, De Gruyter, Berlin – Boston 1996, p. 213–264.

²⁹ See CORNEL ZWIERLEIN (ed.), *The Dark Side of Knowledge: Histories of Ignorance, 1400 to 1800*, Brill, Leiden 2016, for an approach that stresses the need to tackle the politics of knowing and not-knowing, drawing on the notion of agnotology, see: ROBERT N. PROCTOR, LONDA SCHIEBINGER (eds.), *Agnotology. The Making and Unmaking of Ignorance*, Stanford University Press, Stanford 2008, for an attempt to use this concept in order to better understand European knowledge production in respect to the non-European world, see: REBEKKA HABERMAS, ALEXANDRA PRZYREMBEL, « Einleitung », in EAD. (eds.), *Von Käfern, Märkten und Menschen. Kolonialismus und Wissen in der Moderne*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 2013, p. 9–26.

Western and Central Europe. This contribution, thus, contextualizes and interprets the colourful if not dubious instances of border-crossing between religions and empires that have often been overlooked.

Then, Giovanni Bonacina, opens the debate on Seetzen as an observer of contemporary religious quarrels in a more particular way, focussing again on Seetzen's encounters with the Wahhabis. In a nutshell, his article highlights the necessity of critically exploring the travelling researcher's important contribution to the early nineteenth-century European understanding of Wahhabism.

All three contributions take Seetzen as a keen observer of the surrounding social and cultural worlds of the Middle Eastern lands that he kept describing in his diaries and in his letters. Against this background, Clarisse Roche takes a different approach, explicitly researching Seetzen's treatises on Bedouin and Arabian horses. Seetzen chose this rather uncommon subject for some of the articles he sent to European scholarly journals. While choosing this approach, Roche tentatively also explores the mechanisms of knowledge-making about Arabia at the turn of the nineteenth century.

Making knowledge is often linked to practices of collecting. The following contribution by Wolbert Smidt portrays Seetzen as a collector of languages during his stay in Cairo. Smidt takes Seetzen's rather self-made linguistic way of transcribing what he heard as a case in point that should not too easily be dismissed. By contrast, he convincingly highlights the extent to which Seetzen's linguistic notes leave some valuable insights into the multilingual setting of an early nineteenth-century centre of learning as well as on the ensuing transcultural encounters on site that merit our attention.

Taken together, all the contributions open up new questionnaires as they argue for a renewed interest in rereading the legacies that have linked and, in a way, also intertwined two world regions with one another. The last contribution by Christoph Schmitt-Maaß, again, puts this larger legacy on display by discussing a recently published novel by Michael Roes. In a nutshell, Schmitt-Maaß proposes that Roes retells the story of Seetzen trying to illuminate today's readers in several respects. Searching for the western self, he claims, while travelling in space and time, admissibly calls for a further reflection of still prevailing forms of othering that are informed by orientalist stereotypes. Moreover, and this is rather a subtext, the way travel accounts are still being read for entertainment and the pleasure of discovery even until today, sheds a different and new light on the historical Seetzen and his contemporaries. Yet, all of these stories, we might conclude, call for a critical reappraisal and sometimes maybe even need to be

dismissed as they should be further informed by the many different competing viewpoints that are at stake while at the same time most often being hidden.³⁰

Without any doubt, taken together, research on the many historical European travels to far-off lands and the ensuing scholarly studies remains certainly unfinished, as it is most partial and patchy even until today.³¹ This does not only hold true for the case of Ulrich Jasper Seetzen, whose collections offer numerous topics for future research. Moreover, Seetzen is not to be tackled as a single traveller, but, by contrast, should be rather seen as part of a larger European enterprise of getting to know the world outside of Europe.³² So, the story is not only about the German lands, including Jever, Göttingen and Gotha; instead, for the greater story other places have to be taken into account: Vienna, Constantinople, Aleppo, Jerusalem, Cairo, as well as London and Paris – just to mention a few.³³ The following contributions of the thematic issue do not succeed in filling this gap. If they have introduced some new questions and problems into an ongoing debate on the many travellers whose accomplishments have for a long time been underestimated, we might have accomplished what we had hoped for. This is all the more true given that many of these endeavours that we have touched upon have also shaped in one way or another the knowledge that would later on contribute to the making of the larger European colonial project.

³⁰ See also CLAUDIA ULBRICH, HANS MEDICK, ANGELIKA SCHASER, « Selbstzeugnis und Person. Transkulturelle Perspektiven », in EAD. (eds.), *Selbstzeugnis und Person. Transkulturelle Perspektiven*, Böhlau Verlag, Köln – Weimar – Wien 2012, p. 1–19.

³¹ For an essay to develop new critical readings see also: CLAIRE LINDSAY, « Travel Writing and Postcolonial Studies », in CARL THOMPSON (ed.), *The Routledge Companion to Travel Writing*, Routledge, London–New York 2016, p. 25–34.

³² In this vein, see: BRUNO LATOUR, « Centres of Calculation », in ID. (ed.), *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge (Mass.) 1987, 215–257; ID., « Drawing Things Together », in MICHAEL LYNCH, STEVE WOOLGAR (eds.), *Representation in Scientific Practice*, The MIT Press, Cambridge (Mass.) 1990, p. 19–68.

³³ DAVID N. LIVINGSTONE, CHARLES W. J. WITHERS, « Thinking Geographically about Nineteenth-Century Science », in EAD. (eds.), *Geographies of Nineteenth Century Science*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2011, p. 1–20.

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DIE ÄRZTE IM OSMANISCHEN REICH UM 1800 NACH DER BESCHREIBUNG ULRICH JASPER SEETZENS (1767–1811)

VON DOCTOREN, WUNDÄRZTEN UND PFUSCHERN

PHYSICIANS IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AROUND 1800 ACCORDING TO THE DESCRIPTIONS
BY ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN (1767–1811): ON DOCTORS, SURGEONS, AND BOTCHERS

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Abstract

Der Mediziner und Naturforscher Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811) bereiste zwischen 1802 und 18011 mehrere Städte und Regionen des Osmanischen Reiches und führte dabei Tagebücher, in denen er seine naturwissenschaftlichen, völkerkundlichen und alltagsbezogenen Beobachtungen ausführlich niederschrieb. Das von Seetzen gezeichnete Bild der Ärzte untersucht dieser Beitrag hinsichtlich der Darstellung von 'Eigenem' und 'Anderem' bei den Beschreibungen der europäischen und einheimischen Ärzte. Außerdem betrachtet er die Frage von Wissenstransfer sowie die Rolle Seetzens als Vermittler zwischen verschiedenen Kulturen. Die Studie zeigt die markante Trennlinie zwischen einheimischen und fränkischen Ärzten, Seetzens geringes Wissen über jüdische und muslimische Mediziner sowie die Übertragung der europäischen Typologie von akademischen Doctoren und handwerklichen Heilern auf Ärzte im Osmanischen Reich.

Schlagwörter

Ärzte im Osmanischen Reich um 1800; Orientreisende; Renegaten;
Wissenstransfer; Anatomie; Pockenimpfung; Aderlass

Abstract

Between 1802 and 18011, Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811), an explorer and medical doctor, travelled to several cities and regions of the Ottoman Empire, keeping diaries in which he detailed his scientific, ethnological, and quotidian observations. This article examines the image of physicians drawn by Seetzen with regard to the representation of the 'own' and the 'other' in the descriptions European and local doctors. It also considers the modalities of knowledge transfer and Seetzen's role as a mediator between different cultures. The study shows the striking dividing line between native and Frankish physicians, Seetzen's limited

knowledge of Jewish and Muslim physicians, and the transfer of the European typology of academic doctors and medical practitioners to physicians in the Ottoman Empire.

Key Words

Physicians in the Ottoman Empire around 1800; Orient travellers; Renegades; Transfer of knowledge; Anatomy; Smallpox vaccination; Bloodletting



I. Einleitung

Das 18. Jahrhundert bescherte der akademischen Medizin und dem Medizinalwesen in den europäischen Ländern zahlreiche Neuerungen. Neue Konzepte von Gesundheit, Krankheit und Behandlung wurden entwickelt und manifestierten sich in neuen Lehren wie Animismus, Vitalismus, Brownianismus und Solidarpathologie. In der klinischen Medizin am Krankenbett lebte allerdings die Humoralpathologie in unterschiedlichen synkretistischen Gestalten fort. Als Therapeutika waren bis auf wenige neu entdeckte Drogen pflanzlicher Herkunft die aus früheren Jahrhunderten bekannten Arzneimittel im Einsatz. Eine weitere Entwicklungslinie stellt die Emanzipation der Chirurgie dar, die von einer Tätigkeit mit handwerklichem Status zu einem akademischen, der Medizin gleichberechtigten Fachgebiet aufstieg, indem entweder besondere Schulen für die Ausbildung von Chirurgen mit naturwissenschaftlichem und anatomischem Unterricht eingerichtet wurden oder das Fach als Teildisziplin der akademischen Medizin Anerkennung fand. Die Praxis als Arzt oder Chirurg war nun staatlich kontrolliert und setzte ein akademisches Examen voraus. Ab Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts verstärkte sich der Prozess der 'Medikalisierung', der die Medizin in den Dienst des Staates stellte. Öffentliche Gesundheitspflege wurde durch die Anstellung von Stadtärzten, durch die Einführung präventivmedizinischer Maßnahmen wie der Pockenimpfung, aber auch durch die Errichtung moderner Krankenhäuser gefördert.¹ Die obrigkeitliche Gesundheitsfürsorge mit all ihren Aufgaben und Instrumenten manifestierte sich im Begriff der Medizinalpolizei, die nicht nur die Krankheitsbekämpfung, sondern auch den Gesundheitsschutz der Bevölkerung zum Ziel hatte, etwa durch die Überwachung der medizinischen

¹ Zur Entwicklung der Medizin im 18. Jhd., Cf. ROY PORTER, *The Greatest Benefit to Mankind: A Medical History of Humanity*, Fontana Press, London 1999, p. 245–287; UWE WOLFGANG ECKART, *Geschichte der Medizin*, Springer Medizin Verlag, Heidelberg 2005, p. 148–177.

Ausbildung und der Niederlassung von Ärzten sowie durch die Verbesserung des Wohnungs- und Städtebaus.²

Für das Osmanische Reich des 18. Jahrhunderts, und vor allem für dessen arabische Provinzen, prägten medizinhistorische Werke des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts ein Niedergangsnarrativ, dessen Wurzeln auf eine europäische Deutung des 18. Jahrhunderts zurückgehen.³ In Reiseberichten europäischer Mediziner kommen die Rückständigkeit lokaler Ärzte und die korrupte Medizinalverwaltung osmanischer Machthaber immer wieder zur Sprache. So entwarfen der englische Arzt Alexander Russell (1714–1768), der 14 Jahre lang in der englischen Faktorei in Aleppo als Arzt angestellt war,⁴ und sein Halbbruder Patrick Russell (1727–1805), der dort sogar 21 Jahre in als Mediziner praktizierte,⁵ in ihrem Werk *The Natural History of Aleppo* im Kapitel « Of The State of Physic, at Aleppo » mit den prägnanten Worten ein pessimistisches Bild der medizinischen Situation:

From the foregoing Sketch it will sufficiently appear, that physic (as well as other sciences) is at a very low ebb in Syria, and that in the present circumstances of that country, there is little prospect, of those who profess it being roused from indolence

² Cf. LOUIS PAHLOW, ANTJE ZARE, « Medizinalpolizei », in FRIEDRICH JAEGER et al. (eds.), *Enzyklopädie der Neuzeit Online*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2352-0248_edn_COM_309529> (Accessed July 2023); UWE WOLFGANG ECKART, « Gesundheitswesen, öffentliches », in FRIEDRICH JAEGER et al. (eds.), *Enzyklopädie der Neuzeit Online*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2352-0248_edn_COM_273254> (Accessed July 2023).

³ Cf. MANFRED ULLMANN, *Die Medizin im Islam*, Brill, Leiden – Köln 1970, p. 184; AḤMAD AHAWKAT AL-SHAṬṬĪ, *Tārīḥ aṭ-ṭibb ʿinda l-ʿarab fi l-qurūn al-ʿaḥira*, Maṭbaʿat ḡāmiʿat Dimašq, Damascus 1961, p. 8–10; KĀMIL ĠAMĪL AL-ʿASALĪ, *Muqaddima fi tārīḥ aṭ-ṭibb fi l-Quds mundu ʿaqdam al-ʿazmina ḥattā sanat 1918 milādiyya*, Maṣṣūrāt al-Ġāmiʿa al-Urdunnīya, ʿAmmān 1994, p. 202; AYMAN TAWFĪQ, *Tārīḥ al-ġirāḥa mundu ʿaqdam al-ʿuṣūr*, al-Hayʿa al-Miṣriyya al-ʿĀmma li-l-Kitāb, Cairo 2008, p. 783–786.

⁴ Alexander Russell studierte Medizin an der Universität Edinburgh und arbeitete von 1740 bis 1754 als Arzt in der englischen Faktorei in Aleppo. Er lernte dort Arabisch und soll die Sprache fließend gesprochen haben. Sein Buch *The Natural History of Aleppo* publizierte er 1756 in London (Cf. GEORGE SIMONDS BOUGLER, PATRICK WALLIS, « Russell, Alexander (1714–1768), physician and naturalist », in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <<https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-24298>> (Accessed February 2023)).

⁵ Patrick Russell studierte wie sein Halbbruder Medizin an der Universität Edinburgh. Er praktizierte ab 1750 in Aleppo und war zwischen 1753 und 1771 Alexanders Nachfolger als Arzt der englischen Handelsgesellschaft (Levant Company). 1794 brachte Patrick eine umfangreichere zweite Ausgabe von *The Natural History of Aleppo* in zwei Bänden heraus (ALEXANDER RUSSELL, *The Natural History of Aleppo. Containing a Description of the City, and the Principal Natural Productions in Its Neighbourhood. Together with an Account of the Climate, Inhabitants, and Diseases, Particularly of the Plague*, 2 vols., Robinson, London 1794. (Cf. GEORGE BOUGLER, MARK HARRISON, « Russell, Patrick (1727–1805), physician and naturalist », in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <<https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-24334>> (Accessed February 2023)).

by due encouragement, or excited to attempt improvements by liberal spirit of emulation.⁶

Der französische Militärarzt und Chirurg Dominique Jean Larrey (1766–1842),⁷ der 1798 als *Officier de santé en chef* an Napoleons Ägyptenfeldzug teilnahm und in der *Déscription de l'Égypte* mehrere Beiträge über verbreitete Krankheiten und deren Behandlungsmethoden verfasste, beschrieb die dortigen Ärzte im Kapitel « La Chirurgie et la médecine des Égyptiens » als rein handwerklich tätige Praktiker mit uraltem tradiertem Wissen. So lautet sein Urteil:

Malgré l'état actuel de décadence presque absolue des sciences et des arts en Égypte, on trouve encore dans les mains d'une classe particulière d'hommes portant le nom de *hakym* (médecins) une suite de moyens énergiques pour le traitement de quelques maladies externes et que nous avons peut-être trop négligés en Europe [...] L'application de ces moyens, et les préceptes judicieux dont ces médecins ont hérité de leurs ancêtres par une tradition immémoriale, prouvent l'ancienneté et l'utilité de la chirurgie.⁸

Der Rückständigkeitsdiskurs führte zu einem Desinteresse der Medizingeschichte an dieser Epoche. Ausführliche Studien, die unter Einbeziehung arabischer und osmanischer Quellen das medizinische Denken und Handeln von Ärzten sowie die sozialen und administrativen Facetten medizinischer Versorgung in den Städten des Osmanischen Reiches im 18. Jahrhundert rekonstruieren, fehlen weitgehend. Zwar enthalten Arbeiten zu früheren Jahrhunderten, wie die Studie von Shefer-Mossensohn,⁹ Überblicksdarstellungen über osmanische Medizingeschichte¹⁰

⁶ RUSSEL, *The Natural History of Aleppo*, p. 143.

⁷ Dominique Jean Larrey (1766–1842) studierte Chirurgie an der Akademie l'École Spéciale de Chirurgie in Toulouse, die von seinem Onkel Alexis Larry gegründet worden war. Nach mehreren Einsätzen als Militärarzt und Chirurg begleitete er Napoleon auf seiner Ägyptenexpedition, wo er die medizinische Versorgung auf den Schlachtfeldern von Abukir und Alexandria leitete und dabei mehrfach verwundet wurde. Im Jahr 1802 kehrte er nach Frankreich zurück und wurde 1805 Napoleons Militärgesundheitsinspektor (*inspecteur du service de santé des armées*), nahm allerdings weiterhin an Feldzügen teil und führte Amputationen durch. Jedoch kehrte er nie wieder nach Ägypten zurück. Cf. FERDINAND HOEFER (ed.), *Nouvelle Biographie Générale, depuis les temps les plus reculés jusqu'à nos jours, avec les renseignements bibliographiques et l'indication des sources à consulter*, vol. XXIX, F. Didot, Paris 1852–1866, p. 686–694.

⁸ CHARLES LOUIS FLEURY PANCKOUCKE, *Description de l'Égypte ou recueil des observations et des recherches qui ont été faites en Égypte pendant l'expédition de l'armée Française*, vol. XIII, Imprimerie de C.L.F. Panckoucke, Paris 1823, p. 206.

⁹ MIRI SHEFER-MOSSENSOHN, *Ottoman Medicine: Healing and Medical Institutions, 1500–1700*, State University of New York Press, Albany, New York 2009.

¹⁰ Die jüngsten Untersuchungen von COŞKUN YILMAZ, NECDET YILMAZ, *Osmanlılarda Sağlık: Health in the Ottomans*, 2 vols., Biofarma, Istanbul 2006 sowie NURAN YILDIRIM, *A History Of Healthcare in Istanbul: Health Organizations, Epidemics, Infections and Disease Control, Preventive Health Institutions, Hospitals, Medical Education*, transl. RAINER BRÖMER, The Istanbul 2010 European Capital of Culture Agency

sowie die Nachschlagewerke von Ekmeleddin İhsanoğlu¹¹ wichtige Erkenntnisse zum 18. Jahrhundert, jedoch widmen sich die Beiträge in erster Linie der Hauptstadt Istanbul. Außerdem untersuchen mehrere Studien die Phase nach Gründung der von europäischen Vorbildern inspirierten Medizinhochschulen in Kairo (Anfang der 1820er-Jahre) und Istanbul (1827) und liefern aufschlussreiche Informationen über die Zeit um die Wende vom 18. zum 19. Jahrhundert. Vor allem auf die Studien von Marcel Chahrour,¹² Philippe Bourmaud¹³ und Amira el-Azhary Sonbol¹⁴ sowie der Artikel von Carsten Walbinder¹⁵ konnte der vorliegende Beitrag aufbauen.

In Hinblick auf die geschilderte Forschungslücke stellen die Tagebücher Ulrich Jasper Seetzens und seine Publikationen in Fachzeitschriften wichtige Quellen dar, die es ermöglichen, zur Erforschung der medizinischen Kultur in den von ihm bereisten Gebieten des Osmanischen Reiches beizutragen, vor allem weil er seine Reise vor der Gründung der nach europäischen Vorbild errichteten Medizinhochschulen unternahm und weil er selbst ein Medizinstudium absolvierte, in mehreren Städten vergleichsweise lange Zeit verweilte und zeitweise als Arzt praktizierte. Da nicht alle Aspekte einer Medizinkultur in diesem Beitrag herausgearbeitet werden können, liegt der Fokus auf der Darstellung der Ärzte. In Seetzens Tagebüchern finden sich zwar Hinweise auf weitere Heilberufe

and Istanbul University Project, Istanbul 2010 enthalten sogar Quellenmaterial mit weiterführenden Hinweisen.

¹¹ Cf. EKMELEDDIN İHSANOĞLU et al. (eds.), *Osmanlı tabii ve tatbiki bilimler literatürü tarihi* [History of the Literature of Natural and Applied Sciences during the Ottoman period], 2 vols., IRCICA, Istanbul 2006; EKMELEDDIN İHSANOĞLU et al. (eds.), *Osmanlı Tıbbi Bilimler Literatürü Tarihi* [History of the Literature of Medical Sciences during the Ottoman Period], 4 vols., IRCICA, Istanbul 2008.

¹² MARCEL CHAHROUR, *Der Medizinische Orient. Wien und die Begegnung der europäischen Medizin mit dem Osmanischen Reich (1800–1860)*, Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart 2022 (Medizin, Gesellschaft und Geschichte 81).

¹³ PHILIPPE BOURMAUD, « 'Ya doktor': Devenir médecin et exercer son art en 'Terre sainte', une expérience du pluralisme médical dans l'Empire ottoman finissant (1871–1918) », Ph.D. Diss., Université Aix Marseille 2007.

¹⁴ AMIRA EL-AZHARY SONBOL, *The Creation of a Medical Profession in Egypt, 1800–1922*, Syracuse University Press, Syracuse, New York 1991.

¹⁵ CARSTEN WALBINDER, « Monastic Medicine in Eighteenth-Century Bilād al-Shām: Some Preliminary Observations », *Parole de l'Orient*, 42 (2016), p. 489–509.

wie Hebammen (*dāya*),¹⁶ Gewürzkrämer,¹⁷ Barbieri,¹⁸ die die Beschneidung von Knaben vollzogen, sowie Scheiche,¹⁹ die als Heilige von Kranken aufgesucht wurden und Knabenbeschneidung segneten, jedoch müssen die Angehörigen dieser Gruppierungen in der vorliegenden Studie unberücksichtigt bleiben.

Durch seine Beschreibungen der Ärzte zeichnet Seetzen sozusagen ein Gemälde der Ärztelandschaft, dessen Prinzipien und Gesetzmäßigkeiten im Folgenden dargelegt werden sollen. Welche Ärzte treten in Seetzens Beschreibungen auf und welche werden nicht abgebildet? Welche Kategorien von Ärzten arbeitet Seetzen heraus? Nach welchen Kriterien erfolgt diese Differenzierung? Welche Aspekte ihres medizinischen Handelns werden in den Vordergrund gestellt und welche treten in den Hintergrund? Daraus ergibt sich die Frage nach der Darstellung von 'Eigenem' und 'Anderem' in Seetzens Beschreibungen der europäischen und einheimischen Ärzte.

Darüber hinaus widmet sich der Beitrag der normativen Ebene im Sinne der Bewertung der Medizin in den von Seetzen bereisten Gebieten des Osmanischen Reichs. Da die Organisation der Ärzteschaft, hinsichtlich ihrer Ausbildung und Fachkenntnisse, staatlicher Überwachung und Niederlassung sowie ihrer Tätigkeit bei Seuchenvorbeugung und Aufrechterhaltung der Bevölkerungsgesundheit, einen integralen Teil des sich in Europa etablierenden Medikalisierungsprozesses und der Medizinalpolizei darstellt, ist die Behandlung dieser Aspekte unabdingbar. Dabei fußt die Untersuchung auf der Annahme, dass die Wahrnehmung des 'Anderen' immer von der Vorstellung des 'Eigenen' ausgeht,²⁰ und versucht, die zugrundeliegenden Stereotype und Wertvorstellungen bei der Repräsentation und Bewertung des 'Anderen' nachvollziehbar zu machen.

¹⁶ ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo 1803–1805*, ed. JUDITH ZEPTER et al., Georg Olms Verlag, Hildesheim 2011 (Schriftenreihe des Landesmuseums Natur und Mensch, 87; Schriften der Landesbibliothek Oldenburg, 53; Documenta Arabica, 1), p. 99.

¹⁷ Cf. ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien, Palästina, Phönicien, die Trans-Jordan-Länder, Arabia Petraea und Unter-Ägypten* [1854], vol. I, Georg Olms Verlag, Hildesheim – Zürich – New York 2004, p. 424; ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien, Palästina, Phönicien, die Trans-Jordan-Länder, Arabia Petraea und Unter-Ägypten* [1854], vol. II, Olms Verlag, Hildesheim – Zürich – New York 2004, p. 23. Vermutlich meint Seetzen damit 'Aṭṭārūn (Drogisten), die in ihren Läden Kräuter, Heilpflanzen und alle möglichen tierischen und mineralischen Drogen verkauften.

¹⁸ Cf. SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. II, p. 88, 102–103, ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien, Palästina, Phönicien, die Trans-Jordan-Länder, Arabia Petraea und Unter-Ägypten* [1855], vol. III, Georg Olms Verlag, Hildesheim – Zürich – New York 2004, p. 34.

¹⁹ Cf. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 149.

²⁰ Vgl. JOACHIM EIBACH, CLAUDIA OPITZ-BELAKHAL (eds.), *Zwischen Kulturen. Mittler und Grenzgänger vom 17. bis 19. Jahrhundert*, Wehrhahn Verlag, Hannover 2018 (Historische Formationen Europas 9), p. 7–14; HANS-JOACHIM GEHRKE, « Grenzgänger im Spannungsfeld von Identität und Alterität » in MONIKA FLUDERNIK, HANS-JOACHIM GEHRKE, *Grenzgänger zwischen Kulturen*, Ergon Verlag, Würzburg 1999 (Identitäten und Alteritäten, 1), p. 18–21.

Daneben stellt sich die Frage, inwieweit Seetzen vor allem aufgrund seiner Arabischkenntnisse und möglicher direkter Kommunikation mit Einheimischen als Vermittler im Sinne eines 'Go-Between' wirkte. Der Begriff 'Go-Between' kennzeichnet das Verständnis von Vermittlung als « interaction between mobile figures ». ²¹ Ein Reisender ist entsprechend nicht automatisch ein Vermittler, sondern wird erst dazu, wenn er mit 'anderen' Kulturen interagiert und zwischen den verschiedenen Kulturen vermittelt. Inwieweit hatte Seetzen eine solche Rolle inne, vor allem im Hinblick auf medizinisches Wissen? Bei der Beantwortung dieser Frage gehen wir davon aus, dass Wissenstransfer und Vermittlung nicht als bipolare Beziehung, als Diffusion von einem europäischen Zentrum in eine koloniale Peripherie, zu verstehen, sondern als ein Prozess, der durch Mechanismen von « global *interconnections* », « intercultural encounters » und « negotiation » bestimmt wird. ²² Folglich müssen mehrere Akteure an diesem Prozess beteiligt sein. ²³ Im Sinne eines mehrgliedrigen und polyfunktionalen Vermittlungsprozesses unter Beteiligung von Vermittler-Ketten will sich dieser Beitrag die Wissenstransfermechanismen zwischen Europa und dem Osmanischen Reich basierend auf Seetzens Schilderungen annähern.

Ulrich Jasper Seetzen studierte an der Universität Göttingen Medizin, legte aber den Schwerpunkt seines Studiums auf die Naturkunde. Er gehörte dem Göttinger akademischen Kreis um den Anthropologen Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752–1840) und den Theologen Johann David Michaelis (1717–1791) an, dem auch namhafte Gelehrte und Forschungsreisende wie Alexander von Humboldt (1769–1859) zugerechnet werden. Obwohl er 1789 durch eine Dissertation über Pflanzenkrankheiten (*Systematum de morbis plantarum brevis*

²¹ Vgl. KAPIL RAJ et al., « Introduction », in SIMON SCHAFFER et al. (eds.), *The Brokered World: Go-Betweens and Global Intelligence, 1770–1820*, Science History Publications, Sagamore Beach, Mass. 2009, p. xiv.

²² RAJ et al., « Introduction », p. xv–xx; KAPIL RAJ, « Go-Betweens, Travellers, and Cultural Translators », in BERNARD LIGHTMAN (ed.), *A Companion to the History of Science*, Wiley Blackwell, Oxford 2016, p. 39–40.

²³ Diese mehrgliedrigen polyfunktionalen Vermittlungsprozesse sind aus historischer Perspektive mehrfach analysiert worden, beispielsweise in Kapil Rajs Studie zu Handelsnetzwerken im Indischen Ozean, anhand derer er vier Haupttypen von Go-Betweens unterscheidet: « The interpreter-translator, the merchant banker, the comprador and the cultural broker » (RAJ, « Go-Betweens », p. 41). Auch Alida Metcalf erarbeitet eine Typologie von Go-Betweens im lusobrazilianischen Kontext und differenziert drei hierarchisch geordnete Typen von Vermittlung und Vermittlern: Der physikalische oder biologische Vermittlungstyp schafft « material links » zwischen Weltgegenden (z. B. Segler, Passagiere, Sklaven), der transaktionale stellt die Kommunikation her und erleichtert die soziale Interaktion (z. B. Dolmetscher, Händler) und der repräsentierende Typ stellt die 'andere' Kultur durch Text, Bild oder Karten dar (z. B. Schriftsteller, Kartenzeichner, Künstler). Die Vermittlungstypen überlappen sich und können mehr oder weniger in ein und derselben Person zusammenfallen (Cf. ALIDA C. METCALF, *Go-Betweens and the Colonization of Brazil, 1500–1600*, University of Texas Press, Austin 2005, p. 9–12; RAJ, « Go-Betweens », p. 42).

dijudicatio) die Doktorwürde erlangte, praktizierte er in seiner Heimat nie als Arzt, sondern verfolgte seine naturwissenschaftlichen Interessen.²⁴ Beeinflusst durch die Lektüre von Reisebeschreibungen früherer Orientreisender fasste Seetzen allerdings bereits vor Antritt seiner Reise ins Osmanische Reich den Plan, sich aus Sicherheitsgründen unterwegs als Arzt auszugeben.²⁵ Tatsächlich bot Seetzen auf einigen Ausflügen medizinische Konsultationen an und praktizierte während seines Aufenthalts in Aleppo aus finanziellen Gründen als Arzt.²⁶

Seetzen zählte durch seine akademische Ausbildung zu den gelehrten Ärzten. In Preußen und weiteren deutschsprachigen Ländern hatte sich Ende des 18. Jahrhundert noch keine einheitliche Ärzteschaft herausgebildet.²⁷ Die gelehrten Ärzte absolvierten ein theoretisches Studium an der medizinischen Fakultät einer

²⁴ Zum Leben Seetzens cf. JUTTA SCHIENERL, *Der Weg in den Orient: der Forscher Ulrich Jasper Seetzen. Von Jever in den Jemen (1802–1811)*, Isensee Verlag, Oldenburg 2000; DETLEF HABERLAND et al. (eds.), *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen. Sämtliche gedruckte Schriften*, vol. VI, Isensee Verlag, Oldenburg 2017, p. 461–491.

²⁵ In seinem Artikel « Reiseplan ins Innere Afrika » beschreibt Seetzen die « Vorsichtsregeln in Absicht des Verhaltens gegen Reisegefährten und die Bewohner der zu bereisenden Länder » (ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Reiseplan ins innere Afrika », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmels-Kunde*, 6 (1802), p. 126–159; 201–232; 317–342; 401–426. Das Bild des Arztes, das in diesem Artikel gezeichnet wird, ist das eines hochangesehenen, beliebten, um seine Gunst gebetenen Fachmannes. Daher entscheidet Seetzen, sich auf seiner Reise als Arzt darzustellen (Vgl. den Abschnitt « Seetzen als Arzt auf Reisen » in meinem voraussichtlich 2025 erscheinenden Artikel: « 'Ich reise ... als Muhammedaner und als Arzt': Ulrich Jasper Seetzen, Mediziner und Orientreisender zwischen Fremdenhass und Forscherdrang » in ELKE HARTMANN et al. (eds.), *Fremde schreiben. Konstruktionen von Fremdheit und Vertrautheit in Reisetexten zwischen Orient und Okzident*, Bamberg University Press, Bamberg [2025]).

²⁶ Seetzen reiste über Istanbul, wo er sechs Monate verbrachte und zahlreiche Ausflüge in die Umgebung unternahm (12.12.1802–06.06.1803), über Bursa, Smyrna und Antiochia bis nach Aleppo, wo er knapp anderthalb Jahre blieb und als Arzt und Assistent des betagten italienischen Arztes Dr. Salina die medizinische Kunst zum ersten Mal in seinem Leben praktizierte (23.11.1803–09.04.1805) und das Arabische erlernte. Danach setzte er seine Reise nach Damaskus fort, von wo er während eines Jahres (09.04.1805–10.04.1806) Ausflüge in den Hauran, Libanon und Antilibanon sowie nach Jerusalem unternahm. Anschließend zog er nach Jerusalem weiter, von wo aus er mehrere Expeditionen nach Palästina, um das Tote Meer herum und in das Jordantal (10.04.1806–12.03.1807) unternahm. Darauf ging er über Hebron, den Sinai und Sues nach Kairo, wo er sich knapp zwei Jahre aufhielt (24.05.1807–23.03.1809). Im März 1809 verließ er Kairo und reiste als muslimischer Pilger unter dem Namen Mūsā aṭ-Ṭabīb (Arzt Moses) nach Mekka und Medina, das er im Oktober 1809 erreichte. Nach etwa sechs Monaten reiste er am 23. März 1810 nach Dschidda zurück und setzte per Schiff über das Rote Meer in den Jemen über, wo er mehrere Erkundungstouren unternahm. Im September 1811 wurde er bei Ta'izz im Süden des Landes tot aufgefunden; er hatte sich mit 17 schwer beladenen Kamelen auf dem Weg zur Hafenstadt Mokka befunden (Vgl. SCHIENERL, *Der Weg in den Orient*, p. 17–93).

²⁷ Zur Professionalisierung des Arztberufes im 19. Jahrhundert, Cf. CLAUDIA HUERKAMP, *Der Aufstieg der Ärzte im 19. Jahrhundert: vom gelehrten Stand zum professionellen Experten. Das Beispiel Preussens*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1985 (Kritische Studien zur Geschichtswissenschaft, 68); ANETTE DREES, *Die Ärzte auf dem Weg zu Prestige und Wohlstand. Sozialgeschichte der württembergischen Ärzte im 19. Jahrhundert*, F. Coppenrath, Münster 1988 (Studien zur Geschichte des Alltags, p. 9).

Universität, das zusätzlich zu den medizinischen auch naturkundliche Fächer wie Biologie, Zoologie und Botanik, aber auch Philosophie umfasste. Sie spezialisierten sich auf die Therapie innerer Leiden durch Verschreibung von Arzneien oder diätetischen Maßnahmen. Die Behandlung von Verletzungen, Brüchen, Verrenkungen usw. gehörte dementsprechend nicht zum Kompetenzbereich eines gelehrten Arztes und wurde mit einer gewissen Herablassung betrachtet. Die gelehrten Ärzte bildeten eine kleine Gruppe, die sich in großen Städten niederließ, eine wohlhabende Klientel behandelte, als Teil der Gelehrtenwelt einen hohen sozialen Status genoss und wissenschaftlichen Interessen nachging.²⁸ Trotz der graduellen Emanzipation der Chirurgie legten nicht viele akademische Ärzte zusätzlich eine chirurgische Prüfung ab, sodass nur wenige den Titel « doctor medicinae et chirurgiae » trugen.²⁹ Darüber hinaus existierten weitere therapeutisch tätige Gruppierungen wie Chirurgen, Wundärzte, Bader, Barbieri, die eine handwerkliche Ausbildung absolvierten, äußere Leiden behandelten und ihre Dienste den unteren Bevölkerungsschichten anboten.³⁰ Schließlich waren für die medizinische Versorgung der Landbevölkerung die nicht approbierten Laienheiler bedeutsam, seien es Kräuterkundige oder Heiler, die magische Praktiken verrichteten.³¹ Diese verschiedenen Gruppierungen sind also primär aufgrund ihrer Ausbildung und staatlichen Zulassung zu differenzieren, da diese Auswirkungen auf ihre Behandlungsspezialisierung, ihre Klientel, ihren sozialen Status, ihre ökonomische Lage usw. hatten. Seetzen gehörte dementsprechend zu der hochangesehenen Gruppe der gelehrten bzw. akademisch ausgebildeten Ärzte und muss mit einer gewissen Geringschätzung auf die handwerklich tätigen Heiler herabgeblickt haben. Inwieweit übertrug er aber diese Einstellung auf seine Beurteilung der ihm bezeugenden Ärzte im Osmanischen Reich?

Seetzen erwähnt in seinen Tagebüchern zahlreiche Ärzte, die in zwei Hauptkategorien einzuordnen sind: Franken, d. h. Westeuropäische,³² und Einheimische. Das Wort 'Arzt' verwendete Seetzen zur Bezeichnung aller Personen, die medizinische Behandlungen anboten, seien es Missionare, Wundärzte, Volksheiler bei Beduinenstämmen oder akademisch ausgebildete

²⁸ Vgl. HUERKAMP, *Der Aufstieg der Ärzte*, p. 22–34; DREES, *Die Ärzte*, p. 38–46.

²⁹ Vgl. HUERKAMP, *Der Aufstieg der Ärzte*, p. 30–32.

³⁰ Vgl. HUERKAMP, *Der Aufstieg der Ärzte*, p. 30–32; DREES, *Die Ärzte*, p. 46–47.

³¹ Vgl. HUERKAMP, *Der Aufstieg der Ärzte*, p. 36–38; DREES, *Die Ärzte*, p. 46–49.

³² Das Wort « Franken » ist die Übersetzung des arabischen Worts « 'ifranġ » (Pl. von 'ifranġi), das bereits im frühen Mittelalter zur Bezeichnung der Einwohner des Reichs Karls des Großen Verwendung fand und später auf alle Europäer übertragen wurde. Im Osmanischen Reich bezeichnete das Wort christlich-westliche Europäer. Diese waren nicht nur als Feinde präsent, sondern spielten auch als Diplomaten, Händler und Nachbarn eine wichtige Rolle. Christen, die im Osmanischen Reich lebten, wurden hingegen nicht « 'ifranġ » genannt (Vgl. BERNARD LEWIS, JOHN FRANCIS PRICE HOPKINS, « Ifrandj », in P. BEARMAN et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_0353> (Accessed July 2023)).

Mediziner. Für akademische Ärzte verwendet er die Ausdrücke 'Dr.', 'Dr. med.', 'Doctor', 'Doctor der Medizin' oder 'promovierter Arzt'. Weibliche Personen oder Ärztinnen kommen in Seetzens Schilderungen nicht vor. Nur Hebammen (*dāya*) erwähnt Seetzen als Geburtshelferinnen.³³

II. Fränkische Ärzte

Die fränkischen bzw. europäischen Ärzte, denen Seetzen auf seiner Reise begegnete, waren unterschiedlicher Herkunft; meist handelte es sich um Italiener, Franzosen, Engländer und Deutsche. Sie hatten ihr Studium an einer europäischen Ausbildungsstätte absolviert und siedelten im Erwachsenenalter in das Osmanische Reich über, um sich dort vorübergehend oder permanent niederzulassen. Einige waren allerdings schon dort geboren worden und erlernten den Arztberuf in der Familie oder ebenfalls an einer europäischen Universität.³⁴

Am lukrativsten waren für fränkische Mediziner Anstellungen als Leibärzte hoher Würdenträger, seien es europäische Botschafter oder osmanische Herrscher und Notabeln. Seetzen erwähnt sie insbesondere bei seinem Besuch in Konstantinopel und gelegentlich entlang seiner Reiseroute durch die levantinischen Küstenstädte, die europäischen Mächten als Handelsposten dienten.

Bereits auf der Reise durch Bulgarien nach Konstantinopel lernte Seetzen den italienischen Mediziner Dr. de Tibaldo³⁵ kennen, einen Bruder des türkischen Chargé d'Affaires in Wien und Leibarzt des Fürsten der Moldau, Struzzo.³⁶ Einem

³³ Vgl. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 99.

³⁴ In Europa ausgebildeten Ärzten boten sich Ende des 18. und Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts im Osmanischen Reich sowie bei der East India Company gute Arbeitsgelegenheiten. Im Gegensatz dazu war der Arbeitsmarkt in den europäischen Ländern durch die hohe Zahl von Medizinabsolventen und die hohen Kosten bei der Eröffnung oder Übernahme einer eigenen Praxis gesättigt. (Vgl. PHILIPP TEICHFISCHER, « Transnational Entanglements in Colonial Medicine: German Medical Practitioners as Members of the Health Service in the Dutch East Indies (1816–1884) », *Histoire, médecine et santé*, 10 (2016), p. 69–74, <<https://doi.org/10.4000/hms.1035>> (Accessed February 2023).

³⁵ Dr. de Tibaldo konnte nicht identifiziert werden.

³⁶ Es handelt sich um Alexandros Soutsos oder Alexandru Suțu (1758–1821), einen griechischen Phanarioten, der zwischen 1800 und 1802 als Fürst (Woiwode) der Moldau und von 1806 bis 1812 sowie von 1818 bis 1821 als Fürst der Walachai amtierte (MATTHIAS BERNATH, FELIX VON SCHROEDER, « Alexandru Suțu », in MATTHIAS BERNATH, KARL NEHRING (eds.), *Biographisches Lexikon zur Geschichte Südosteuropas*, vol. IV, p. 400, <<https://wbis-degruyter-com.ezproxy.uzh.ch/biographic-document/SE078-483-X>> (Accessed July 2023). Vgl. ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Reise-Nachrichten des Russischen Kaiserlichen Kammer-Assessors Dr. U. J. Seetzens. [Constantinopel, 24. Februar 1803] », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmelskunde*, 7 (1803), p. 476–477; ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Aus einem Schreiben des Russisch-Kaiserlichen Kammer-Assessors

weiteren Fürsten der Moldau, Morusi,³⁷ diente hingegen ein deutscher Arzt, Doctor Hesse.³⁸ Dieser habe « einen ansehnlich Gehalt » vom Fürsten erhalten und darüber hinaus Bojaren³⁹ behandelt, die seine Dienste genauso gut entlohnt hätten. Die Einkünfte sollten ihm nach ein paar Jahren Arbeit ermöglichen, in die Heimat zurückzukehren und ein « anständig leben » zu führen.⁴⁰

Dr. U. J. Seetzen. [Smyrna den 27 Jul. 1803] », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmelskunde*, 8 (1803), p. 443.

³⁷ Es handelt sich um Alexandru Moruzi (1758–1816), ein Mitglied der phanariotischen Familie Moruzi. Er fungierte dreimal als Fürst der Moldau– (1792, 1802 bis 1806 und 1806 bis 1807) sowie zweimal als Fürst der Walachei –(1793 bis 1796 und 1799 bis 1801). (MATTHIAS BERNATH, FELIX VON SCHROEDER, « Alexandru Moruzi », in MATTHIAS BERNATH, FELIX VON SCHROEDER (eds.), *Biographisches Lexikon zur Geschichte Südosteuropas*, vol. III, p. 250, <<https://wbis-degruyter-com.ezproxy.uzh.ch/biographic-document/Q51353>> (Accessed July 2023).

³⁸ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 150–151. Es handelt sich um Friedrich Karl Heinrich Hesse (1768–1812). Hesse studierte Jura und anschließend Medizin in Jena, Göttingen und Wien. Im Jahr 1800 praktizierte er in Jena als Augenarzt. Anschließend ging er nach Konstantinopel, wo er unter dem Schutz des schwedischen Gesandten stand. Dann zog er nach Jassy (Iasi im heutigen Rumänien), wo er als Leibarzt des Fürsten der Moldau Morusi diente. Er ließ sich 1805 als praktischer Arzt in Riga nieder. Während der Behandlung von Kranken in einem Feldhospital infizierte er sich allerdings mit einer tödlichen Fiebererkrankung und verstarb 1812 (JOHANN FRIEDRICH RECKE, KARL EDWARD NAPIERSKY, *Allgemeines Schriftsteller- und Gelehrtenlexikon der Provinzen Livland Esthland und Kurland*, vol. II, Steffenhagen, Mitau 1829, p. 268, <<https://www.digitale-sammlungen.de/de/view/bsb00000341?page=270,271>> (Accessed July 2023).

³⁹ Über Landgüter verfügende Adlige in Altrussland, Bulgarien, Litauen, der Walachei und Moldau (Vgl. MANFRED HELLMANN, « Bojaren, II. Großfürstentum Litauen », in ROBERT AUTY et al. (eds.), *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, 10 vols., Metzler, Stuttgart [1977]–1999, vol. II, col. 354, Brepolis Medieval Encyclopaedias – Lexikon des Mittelalters Online, <<https://apps.brepolis.net/lexiema/test/Default2.aspx>> [Accessed February 2023]).

⁴⁰ Seetzen traf Dr. Hesse nicht persönlich, erhielt aber durch Herrn Dändler, einen guten Freund des Arztes und Hofmeister des Sohnes des preußischen Gesandten, ausführliche Auskunft über ihn. « Herr Hesse sey vor einiger Zeit mit dem Fürsten der Moldau Morusi (Morüsi) nach Jossgö (Jass) abgereist. Als Leibarzt desselben erhält er einen ansehnlichen Gehalt und außerdem werden ihm die Bojären dort gut bezahlen. Er hatte hier schon ziemlich viele Praxis und war hier sehr geachtet. Allein es kostet hier viel auf einem anständigen Fuß hier zu leben. Vielleicht verdient er ietzt in ein paar Jahren so viel, daß er nachher [in] seinem Vaterlande anständig leben kann. » (SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 150–151). Herr Dändler ist Georg Andreas Dendler (1776–1849). Er studierte an der Universität Jena und begab sich nach Abschluss seiner theologischen Studien 1800 auf Verlangen des kurfürstlichen österreichischen Gesandten Herbert nach Konstantinopel, um als Lehrer im Haus des königlichen preußischen Gesandten Baron Knobelsdorf zu dienen. Bereits 1807 verließ er Konstantinopel und wurde Prediger und Pfarrer in mehreren Städtchen im heutigen Siebenbürgen in Rumänien (Herrmannstadt, Holzmengen, Grossscheuern) (Vgl. JOSEPH TRAUSSCH, *Schriftsteller-Lexikon oder biographisch-literarische Denk-Blätter der Siebenbürger Deutschen*, vol. I, J. Gött & Sohn Heinrich, Kronstadt 1868, p. 254).

Der osmanische Sultan⁴¹ selbst engagierte fränkische Mediziner als Palast- und Leibärzte, die nicht weniger gut bezahlt worden sein dürften. So besaß der italienische Arzt Lorenzo, « der wirkliche türkische Kaiserliche Leibarzt », ein Landhaus in Kurutschesma (Kuruçeşme) in der Umgebung von Istanbul, welches Seetzen auf einem Ausflug besichtigte. Der Palastarzt habe sich durch seine Fachkenntnisse ausgezeichnet, jedoch sei er kein Obermedicus (Hâkim Baschi) gewesen, da das Amt von einem Türken bekleidet werden müsse.⁴²

In Seetzens Beschreibung werden die Leibärzte hoher Würdenträger als bessere Angestellte dargestellt, die ihre Dienste auf den Herrscher und die hohen Würdenträger beschränkten und eine dementsprechend kaum sichtbare Rolle beim Wissenstransfer verrichteten. Weniger lukrative Positionen als diese hatten allerdings fränkische Ärzte inne, die in den europäischen Handelsniederlassungen tätig waren. Sie verfügten jedoch über ein breiteres Wirkungsspektrum sowohl unter Franken als auch unter Einheimischen.

Im 18. Jahrhundert waren Handelsniederlassungen europäischer Staaten, vor allem Frankreichs und Englands, in vielen Städten des östlichen Mittelmeerraums etabliert.⁴³ Die Konsulate stellten Ärzte ein, die vor allem in Seuchenzeiten für die Gesundheit des jeweiligen Konsuls und seiner Gemeindemitglieder sorgten.⁴⁴ Allerdings erhielten die Ärzte der englischen Levant Company im Unterschied zu

⁴¹ Seetzen hielt sich zwischen dem 12. Dezember 1802 und dem 22. Juni 1803 in Konstantinopel auf, d. h. zur Amtszeit des Sultans Selim III. (reg. 1789–1807).

⁴² SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 342. Lorenzo war offenbar einer der Palastärzte. Der *hekîmbaşı* bekleidete ein hohes Amt in der Hierarchie der religiösen Gelehrten (*‘ilmiyye*); daher musste er ein Muslim sein. Als Oberhaupt der Palastärzte (*aṭıbbā-ı hāṣṣa*) war er verantwortlich für die Gesundheit des Herrschers und seiner Familie. Darüber hinaus war der *hekîmbaşı* als Oberhaupt der osmanischen Ärzte für die Ernennung und Entlassung der Hospitalärzte zuständig. (Vgl. ALI HAYDAR BAYAT, *Osmanlı devleti’nde hekimbaşılık kurumu ve hekimbaşılar*, Atatürk Kültür Merkezi Yayınları, Ankara 1999, p. 7–8). Die Zahl der Palastärzte betrug mehrere Dutzend, z. B. 95 (1786), 94 (1787), 97 (1788–1789), 103 (1801) und während Seetzens Besuch in den Jahren 1802–1803 95. Nachdem Anfang des 17. Jahrhunderts die meisten Palastärzte Juden gewesen waren (z. B. 33 von 50 im Jahr 1625), dominierten seit 1645 Muslime (im Jahr 1645 waren 14 der insgesamt 25 Palastärzte Muslime) (ERHAN AFYONCU, « Osmanlı Hekimbaşılıarı ve Hassa Hekimleri » in COŞKUN YILMAZ, NECDET YILMAZ, *Osmanlılarda Sağlık: Health in the Ottomans*, vol. I, Biofarma, Istanbul 2006, p. 95–96).

⁴³ Zu Geschichte europäischer Gemeinden in der Levante unter osmanischer Herrschaft, vor allem hinsichtlich der Interaktion zwischen den verschiedenen religiösen Gruppierungen, siehe: LAYLĀ AL-ŞABBĀGH, *Al-Ġaliyāt al-‘urubiyya fī Bilād aš-Šām fī l-‘ahd al-‘uṡmānī fī l-qarnayn as-sādis ‘ašar wa-s-sābi‘ ‘ašar*, 2 vols., Mu‘assasat ar-Risāla, Beirut 1989; YORAM SHALIT, *Nicht-Muslime und Fremde in Aleppo und Damaskus im 18. und in der ersten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Klaus Schwarz Verlag, Berlin 2021; ANAİS MASSOT, « Socio-political Changes, Confessionalization, and Inter-confessional Relations in Ottoman Damascus from 1760 to 1860 », Ph.D. Diss., Universiteit Leiden 2021; HEATHER J. SHARKEY, *A History of Muslims, Christians, and Jews in the Middle East*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2017 (Contemporary Middle East, 6).

⁴⁴ Vgl. AL-ŞABBĀGH, *Al-Ġaliyāt al-‘urubiyya*, vol. I, p. 225, 229; AL-ŞABBĀGH, *Al-Ġaliyāt al-‘urubiyya*, vol. II, p. 720, 725; BOURMAUD, « ‘Ya doktor » », p. 99–102.

den für die East Indian Company tätigen Medizinern kein festes jährliches Einkommen, sondern agierten auf freiberuflicher Basis (free lance) und dürften dementsprechend ihre Dienste einem breiteren Patientenkreis angeboten haben.⁴⁵ Folglich versorgten diese Ärzte auch Franken aus anderen Nationen und wohlhabende Einheimische. Diese bei den Handelskompanien angestellten Ärzte zogen entweder aus ihrer Heimat in das neue Arbeitsland, wo sie einige Jahre verbrachten, wie die Brüder Russel,⁴⁶ oder waren als Nachkommen von Franken, die sich im östlichen Mittelmeerraum niedergelassen hatten, bereits dort geboren, wie die Beispiele weiter unten bezeugen.

Ausführlich berichtet Seetzen von Dr. Balthasar Salina, dem Leibarzt des russischen Konsuls in Aleppo, mit dem er während seines zweijährigen Aufenthalts dort in engem Kontakt stand, da er ihm bei seinen Krankenbesuchen assistierte. Der in Rom geborene Arzt sei damals 86 Jahre alt gewesen und habe sowohl die in Aleppo ansässigen Franken als auch christliche Einheimische behandelt.⁴⁷ Er sei ein Brownianer⁴⁸ und botanisch sehr interessiert gewesen, was sein sechsbändiges *herbarium vivum* bezeuge.⁴⁹ Da er mit Unterstützung des englischen Konsuls John Barker⁵⁰ die Schutzimpfung gegen Blattern in Aleppo

⁴⁵ Vgl. CHRISTINE LAIDLAW, *The British in the Levant: Trade and Perceptions of the Ottoman Empire in the Eighteenth Century*, I.B.Tauris, London – New York 2010, p. 4, 117–119. Zu den Anstellungsmodalitäten und Tätigkeiten der Ärzte der Levant Company in den Faktoreien siehe LAIDLAW, *The British in the Levant*, p. 117–161.

⁴⁶ Nach seiner Tätigkeit als Arzt in Aleppo (1740–1753) kehrte Alexander Russell über mehrere Stationen in Italien nach England zurück, wo er u. a. in St. Thomas's Hospital in London arbeitete (Vgl. BOUGLER, « Russel, Alexander »). Sein Bruder Patrick arbeitete hingegen zwischen 1750 und 1771 in Aleppo. Ab 1772 praktizierte er als Arzt in Edinburgh und wurde schließlich 1775 von der East India Company damit beauftragt, die Flora und Fauna Indiens zu untersuchen, Zeichnungen davon anzufertigen und Proben zu sammeln (Vgl. BOUGLER, HARRISON, « Russell, Patrick »).

⁴⁷ Vgl. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 11, 84, 66.

⁴⁸ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 57. Ein Brownianer ist ein Anhänger des Brownianismus, einer von John Brown (1735–1788) entwickelten Lebens- und Krankheitslehre, die von der Annahme ausgeht, dass das Leben auf einem Erregbarkeitspotential basiert. Durch die erhöhte Erregbarkeit des Organismus oder durch die Abnahme der Reaktion auf Reize entstehen Krankheiten, sodass durch Beeinflussung der Reizbarkeit wieder ein erstrebenswerter mittlerer Erregungszustand hergestellt werden kann (ECKART, *Geschichte der Medizin*, p. 156–156; PORTER, *The Greatest Benefit*, p. 262, 314).

⁴⁹ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 18. Ein *herbarium vivum* ist eine Sammlung lokaler getrockneter Pflanzen (Vgl. JÖRN SIEGLERSCHMIDT, « Herbarium », in FRIEDRICH JAEGER et al. (eds.), *Enzyklopädie der Neuzeit Online*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2352-0248_edn_COM_279662> (Accessed July 2023)).

⁵⁰ John Barker (1771–1849) wurde in Smyrna geboren, wo sein Vater William Barker (1731–1825) 65 Jahre, bis zu seinem Tod, als Angestellter der Levant Company verbrachte (zu William Barker siehe MIYASE KOYUNCU KAYA, « An English Merchant in Ottoman İzmir (Smyrna): William Barker (1731–1825) », *Belleten Türk Tarih Kurumu*, 84/300 (2020), p. 717–744; MARJORIE REAR, « William Barker Member of The Right Worshipful Levant Company 1731–1825. A Life in Smyrna », *Levantine Heritage Foundation* (2015), p. 1–64, <<http://www.levantineheritage.com/pdf/Biogra>

einführte, wurde Salina in der *Medicinish-chirurgischen Zeitung* in der Ausgabe vom April 1806⁵¹ sowie im *Allgemeinen Real-Wörterbuch aller Künste und Wissenschaften* im Eintrag über Pockenimpfung lobend erwähnt.⁵² Dort ist zu erfahren, dass er die Impfung in Aleppo mit einem Wundarzt namens Lieutaud durchgeführt habe.⁵³

Fränkische Ärzte setzten sich ebenfalls in weiteren levantinischen Städten für eine Pockenimpfung ein. In Manisa sei die Impfung von einem französischen Arzt namens Ferrand eingeführt worden, der einst bei der Marine in Toulon als Wundarzt gedient habe.⁵⁴ In Kairo habe sich ein deutscher Arzt, Herr Ritz, um die Pockenimpfung bemüht, jedoch sei er am 27. August 1808 im Alter von 40 Jahren nach einer langen Nervenkrankheit verstorben und habe eine Witwe, eine in Alexandrien gebürtige « Europäerin » aus der Handelsfamilie Fantocci, mit drei Kindern hinterlassen.⁵⁵

Die Impfungen und die diesbezüglichen Berichte in europäischen Zeitschriften bezeugen einerseits die Ausdehnung der Medikalisierung auf europäische Gemeinschaften in der Levante und andererseits die Verflechtung der in den Handelsniederlassungen tätigen Ärzte mit dem europäischen Gelehrtennetzwerken.

Während Dr. Salina, Dr. Ferrand und Dr. Ritz die Verflechtung fränkischer Ärzte im wissenschaftlichen europäischen Kontext demonstrieren, wird am Beispiel des französischen Arztes Chaboceau ihre wichtige Rolle als kulturelle Vermittler und bedeutende Akteure im Handelsgeflecht mit dem Osmanischen Reich sichtbar.⁵⁶ Chaboceau nahm Seetzen auf Empfehlung des Mitarbeiters (Kommis) des russischen Konsuls in Aleppo in seinem Haus in Damaskus auf, da

phy-of-William-Barker-Levant-Company-Merchant-Marjorie-Rear.pdf> (Accessed July 2023). John absolvierte seine Ausbildung in England und wurde 1799 in Aleppo zum Prokonsul und 'Agent for the Levant Company and the East India Company' ernannt. 1803 wurde er Vollkonsul der Levante Company, jedoch musste er 1807 aufgrund von Spannungen zwischen der Hohen Pforte und England Aleppo verlassen und fand Zuflucht in Haris bei dem Fürsten der Drusen im Libanon. 1809 kehrte er nach Aleppo zurück. 1818 reiste er nach England, kehrte 1820 nach Ägypten zurück, wo er als britischer Konsul in Alexandria und anschließend bis 1833 als Generalkonsul für ganz Ägypten fungierte. Danach zog er nach Suediah in der Nähe von Antiochia, wo er einen Garten anlegte und neue Pflanzenarten nach Syrien einführte. Er verstarb 1849 in der Levante (Vgl. ARTHUR GRANT, LYNN MILNE, « Barker, John (1771–1849), Diplomatist and <Horticulturist, » in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/1405>> (Accessed July 2023).

⁵¹ JOHANN JAKOB HARTENKEIL (ed.), *Medicinish-chirurgische Zeitung*, 4/81 (1806), p. 63.

⁵² LUDWIG JULIUS FRIEDRICH HÖPFNER (ed.), *Deutsche Encyclopädie oder Allgemeines Real-Wörterbuch aller Künste und Wissenschaften*, vol. XXIII, Varrentrap & Wenner, Frankfurt am Main 1804, p. 610.

⁵³ Seetzen erwähnt, dass ein französischer Wundarzt in Aleppo ansässig gewesen sei, nennt aber dessen Namen nicht (Vgl. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 34).

⁵⁴ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 457. Dr. Ferrand konnte nicht identifiziert werden.

⁵⁵ Vgl. SEETZEN *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. III, p. 363.

⁵⁶ SEETZEN *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 32, 33.

dem Kommissar zufolge nur wenige Europäer in Damaskus ansässig und die Einwohner gegenüber Europäern feindselig eingestellt seien,⁵⁷ und gewährte ihm durch Begleitung auf Krankenbesuchen Zugang zu Häusern der Einheimischen.⁵⁸ Chaboceau war auch Geschäftsmann, setzte sich für die Förderung des Handels in Syrien und für die Etablierung eines französischen Handelspostens in Damaskus ein. Diese Pläne erläuterte er in einem *Mémoire über Damask und Syrien*, das er 1795 an den französischen Botschafter in Istanbul schickte.⁵⁹

Fränkische Ärzte praktizierten in levantinischen Städten auch ohne Anstellung bei einem Konsulat. In kleinen Städten fungierten sie gleichzeitig als Arzt, Wundarzt und Apotheker. Häufig begegnet Seetzen italienische Ärzte, die hauptsächlich griechisch-orthodoxe Patienten behandelt zu haben scheinen. So seien Seetzen zufolge in Bursa zwei italienische Ärzte tätig gewesen: Einer, aus Livorno stammend, habe unter spanischem Schutz gestanden und sei vom Katholizismus zum griechisch-orthodoxen Glauben konvertiert, um sich der

⁵⁷ Vgl. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 18. Unter Europäern standen die Damaszener im Ruf, gegenüber Franken feindselig zu sein, im Gegensatz zu den Aleppinern, die als offen wahrgenommen wurden. Shalit kann allerdings in dieser Hinsicht keinen Unterschied feststellen und führt die geringe Präsenz der Franken in Damaskus auf Handelskonstellationen und nicht auf den Fanatismus der Damaszener zurück (Vgl. SHALIT, *Nicht-Muslime und Fremde*, p. 361).

⁵⁸ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 33, 133. Chaboceau war verheiratet und lebte mit seiner Frau in Damaskus. Er engagierte einen Maroniten namens Ibrahim Anton als Dragoman (Vgl. SEETZEN *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 284, 291, 294). In Damaskus lebte ein weiterer französischer Arzt namens Francis, den Seetzen ohne Ausführungen erwähnt (Vgl. SEETZEN *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 30, 294, 314, 373).

⁵⁹ « Mr. Chaboceau theilte mir seine Mémoire über Damask und Syrien mit. Es ist nicht gross, aber lesenswürdig, indem ihm sein vieljähriger Aufenthalt in Syrien, zumal in Damask, Gelegenheit gab, mit dem Handel dieses Landes bekannt zu werden. Er schrieb dasselbe 1795 und theilte es dem damaligen republikanischen französischen Gesandten in Constantinopel mit. Er thut darin den Vorschlag, dass Frankreich ein Handels-Etablissement in Damask anlege, und zeigt die vortheilhafte Lage, den ausgedehnten Handel, die zahlreichen Fabriken, die Fruchtbarkeit der Umgegend, die Geneigtheit der Einwohner zum Handel und Gewerbfleiss u. s. w., zwar kurz und ohne specielle Erläuterungen, aber interessant » (SEETZEN *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 298). Ein ausführlicher Auszug aus diesen Memoiren ist zu finden bei: HENRI GUYS, *Relation d'un séjour de plusieurs années à Beyrout et dans le Liban*, vol. I, Librairie française et étrangère Paris 1847, p. 234–241. Henri Guys war französischer Konsul in mehreren levantinischen Städten, darunter in Beirut, und erhielt den Text des Herrn Chaboceau von seinem Vater Pierre Alphonse Guys, ehemaliger Konsul von Tripoli, der eine Kopie des Briefes besessen hatte, den Chaboceau 1804 an den Botschafter in Konstantinopel geschickt hatte. Zum Zeitpunkt als Chaboceau diese Schrift abfasste, war er bereits seit zwölf Jahren in Damaskus ansässig. Seetzen traf übrigens Pierre Alphonse Guys in Tripoli, wie unten im Zusammenhang mit der Erkrankung des Statthalters von Tripolis besprochen wird. Chaboceau war 1815 mit 73 Jahren immer noch als Arzt in Damaskus tätig. Die Ernennungsurkunde stellte das französische Konsulat in Akkon (le consulat de France à St Jean d'Acre) aus (MAE Quai d'Orsay, CCC, St Jean d'Acre, 2: Tableau des Français établis dans le département de St Jean d'Acre. 31. décembre 1813, zitiert nach BOURMAUD, « 'Ya doktor' », p. 100–101).

griechischen Klientel anzupassen.⁶⁰ Der andere, aus dem päpstlichen Herrschaftsgebiet kommend, habe hingegen unter englischer Protektion gestanden.⁶¹ In Manisa hätten zwei weitere italienische Ärzte praktiziert. Ein ebenfalls aus Livorno Stammender habe unter spanischem Schutz gestanden, der andere sei aus Venedig gewesen. Beide Ärzte hätten kleine Apotheken betrieben.⁶² Darüber hinaus lernte Seetzen in Akkon den neapolitanischen Arzt Dr. Adamo Mongelly kennen und begleitete ihn beim Besuch eines erkrankten griechisch-katholischen Zollinspektors in Tyros.⁶³

Die Erwähnung zahlreicher fränkischer Ärzte im Osmanischen Reich darf aber nicht über die verschiedenen Herausforderungen und teils auch schlechten Berufsaussichten hinwegtäuschen. So schrieb Seetzen am 4. Februar 1804 in Aleppo:

Es kommen hier nicht wenige Avanturiers an, welche aber selten ihr Glück finden. Vor einiger Zeit kam ein Teutscher Namens Hofmann hierher. Er war ein Arzt oder Wundarzt, fand aber hier so wenig seinen Unterhalt, dass er nach etwa 2 Monaten, nachdem man zuvor unter den Franken eine Collection für ihn gemacht hatte, zurückzukehren genöthigt war.⁶⁴

Bessere Chancen hatten die Nachkommen von Europäern, die in den Städten des östlichen Mittelmeerraums geboren und aufgewachsen waren. Darunter befanden sich Ärzte, die entweder im Erwachsenenalter an einer europäischen Universität Medizin studiert oder den Beruf vom Vater erlernt hatten. Durch ihre Mehrsprachigkeit und ihre zusätzliche Tätigkeit als Konsuln oder Handelsagenten (Negotianten) stellten sie wichtige Akteure bei Geschäften europäischer Mächte im Osmanischen Reich dar. Seetzen bezeichnet sie allerdings nicht als « Levantiner », sondern als « Europäer ».⁶⁵

Seetzen machte Bekanntschaft mit mehreren dieser in der Levante gebürtigen fränkischen Ärzten. In Smyrna (Izmir) lernte Seetzen zwei Nachkommen

⁶⁰ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 390.

⁶¹ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 390.

⁶² SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 436.

⁶³ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. II, p. 103, 108, 111, 118–119.

⁶⁴ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 75. Hofmann konnte nicht identifiziert werden.

⁶⁵ Der Terminus « Levantiner » bezeichnete erst im 19. Jahrhundert die im Osmanischen Reich lebenden katholischen Europäer und ihre Nachkommenschaft. Im 18. Jahrhundert bezeichneten sich die Angehörigen dieser Gruppe selbst als « Europäer », wie es auch Seetzen tut. Die Griechisch-Orthodoxen nannten ihre Nachbarn « Franken » oder « Frankolevantiner » und die Türken nannten sie « Süßwasserfranken » (tatlı su frengi) (Vgl. OLIVER JENS SCHMITT, « Levantines in the Ottoman Empire and in the Eastern Mediterranean since the 19th Century », in KLAUS J. BADE et al. (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of European Migration and Minorities from the 17th Century to the Present*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge – New York 2011, p. 556).

fränkischer Konsuln kennen. Der eine war Dr. med. Zimmermann,⁶⁶ ein gebürtiger « Smyrniater », Schwager des dänischen und schwedischen Generalkonsuls Wilkinson⁶⁷ und einziger promovierter Arzt in der Stadt. Sein Vater sei Deutscher gewesen. Zimmermann habe in Montpellier studiert und promoviert und sei dann in seine Geburtsstadt zurückgekehrt, wo er mit einem Partner eine Apotheke betrieben habe.⁶⁸ Aufgrund seiner botanischen Interessen habe er eine ansehnliche Sammlung aus lokalen Pflanzen zusammengetragen.⁶⁹ Der zweite sei ein junger Arzt aus Latakia namens Vitali⁷⁰ gewesen, der in Italien studiert und arabische, türkische, griechische und italienische medizinische Werke mit sich geführt habe.⁷¹ Wie zuvor schon sein Vater sei Vitali zusätzlich zu seiner medizinischen Tätigkeit auch schwedischer Konsul von Latakia gewesen.⁷²

Auf seiner Reise im Libanongebirge (Juli bis September 1805) lernte Seetzen die Familie eines Mr. Bertrand in Bscherre (Bischarri) kennen.⁷³ Die Familie sei in Sidon ansässig gewesen und als die Franzosen in Ägypten einfielen aus Angst vor

⁶⁶ Eine Tochter von Dr. Zimmermann aus Smyrna namens Henrietta Elizabeth wurde am 18. Februar 1800 mit dem Pfarrer John Frederick (Francis) Usko vermählt. Dieser kam 1782 als Pfarrer für die deutsche Nation nach Smyrna und blieb dort bis 1807 (Vgl. DAVID WILSON, « List of British Consular Officials in the Ottoman Empire and its former territories, from the sixteenth century to about 1860 », *Levantine Heritage Foundation* (2011), p. 18, <[http://www.levantineheritage.com/pdf/List_of_British_Consular_Officials_Turkey\(1581-1860\)-D_Wilson.pdf](http://www.levantineheritage.com/pdf/List_of_British_Consular_Officials_Turkey(1581-1860)-D_Wilson.pdf)> [Accessed July 2023]).

⁶⁷ Um 1800 waren mehrere Mitglieder der Familie Wilkinson in der Levante tätig. Vermutlich handelt es sich bei dem von Seetzen erwähnten Familienmitglied um Richard Wilkinson, der in Smyrna bereits als Schatzmeister der Levant Company arbeitete, als er 1803 zusätzlich zum konsularischen Agenten für die USA ernannt wurde. Er wurde ebenfalls dänischer Generalkonsul in Smyrna und 1833 Konsul in Syros (Vgl. WILSON, « List of British Consular Officials », p. 17). Sein Bruder John G. Wilkinson war 1840 Konsul auf Rhodos (Vgl. *Ibid.*, p. 31); ein weiterer G. F. Wilkinson wurde dort bereits 1827 Vizekonsul. Ein gewisser William Wilkinson wurde 1813 zum britischen Konsul in Bucharest ernannt und publizierte 1820 das Werk *An Account of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia with Various Political Observations Relating to Them*, London 1820 (WILSON, « List of British Consular Officials », p. 24; SORINA GEORGESCU, « Wallachia and Moldavia as Seen by William Wilkinson, Late British Consul Resident at Bukarest (1820) », *Linguaculture*, 2 (2015), p. 64–77).

⁶⁸ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 466.

⁶⁹ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 635.

⁷⁰ Ein gewisser Antonio S. Vitalis amtierte 1817 als britischer Konsul in Syros. Im Jahr 1835 war er als unbezahlter Vizekonsul in Syros tätig (Vgl. WILSON, « List of British Consular Officials », p. 32). Ein weiterer Antonio N. Vitalis bekleidete 1835 und 1848 das Amt des Vizekonsuls auf Tinos. Letzterer schreibt in einem Brief, dass seine Familie durch das Konsulatsamt seit 53 Jahren in englischen Diensten stehe und dass er selber 1800 zum Konsul der Inseln Tinos, Syra, Mikani und Andros ernannt worden sei (Vgl. *Ibid.*, p. 33). Die Tochter von Antonio N. Vitalis, Caroline, heiratete 1831 in Konstantinopel Charles Blunt, der 1856 zum britischen Konsul in Smyrna ernannt wurde (Vgl. *Ibid.*, p. 16).

⁷¹ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 505.

⁷² SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 509.

⁷³ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 140–264.

Lynchmord geflüchtet.⁷⁴ Der ältere Bruder von Mr. Bertrand habe sich mit Arzneikunde beschäftigt. Vermutlich erfolgte die Tradierung medizinischen Wissens in der Familie, sodass mehrere Familienangehörige Ärzte wurden. Das französische Konsulat in Akkon ernannte 1815 drei Mitglieder einer Familie Bertrand zu Ärzten in Sidon: Joseph Bertrand (51 Jahre alt), seinen Sohn Louis Bertrand (32 Jahre alt) sowie Antoine Bertrand (33 Jahre alt).⁷⁵ Vermutlich handelt es sich um Mitglieder derselben Familie Bertrand, denen Seetzen in Bischarri begegnet war.

Auf derselben Reise traf Seetzen im Karmeliterkloster Mār Sarkīs in der Nähe von Bischarri eine weitere geflüchtete französische Familie, die des « Negotianten » Mr. Giraudin.⁷⁶ Seetzen beschrieb ihn als einen « wohlunterrichteten Mann »,⁷⁷ der über zoologische, mineralogische, botanische und pharmazeutische Kenntnisse verfügte. Er führte Seetzen durch die Gegend und erklärte ihm nicht nur die Besonderheiten der einheimischen Pflanzen,⁷⁸ Tiere,⁷⁹ Mineralien⁸⁰ und Nahrungsmittel,⁸¹ sondern auch die geographischen Gegebenheiten der Gegend⁸² und die politische Lage.⁸³

Die Nachkommen der in der Levante ansässigen fränkischen Familien waren aufgrund ihrer Mehrsprachigkeit und ihre Vertrautheit mit den Sitten der Einheimischen vermutlich wichtige politische und kulturelle Vermittler. Sie scheinen allerdings kaum literarisch produktiv gewesen zu sein und dementsprechend keine repräsentative Funktion übernommen zu haben, bei der sie das Bild des 'Orients' in europäischen Publikationen direkt mitbestimmt

⁷⁴ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 160.

⁷⁵ « MAE Quai d'Orsay, CCC, St Jean d'Acre, 2: Tableau des Français établis dans le département de St Jean d'Acre. 31. décembre 1813 », zitiert nach BOURMAUD, « 'Ya doktor' », p. 100–101.

⁷⁶ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 158.

⁷⁷ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 159.

⁷⁸ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, Erklärungen zur Kartoffelpflanze (p. 164), zu einer Art Centaurea, aus der Tinte hergestellt wird (p. 165), zu Fundorten von Weihrauch und Manna (p. 171), zu Ribas (*Rheum ribes* L.), aus der die Einheimischen eine Latwerge als Leckerei oder gegen Blutschwämme von Kindern herstellten (p. 184–185), zur Indigopflanze (p. 244).

⁷⁹ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, Erklärungen zu verschiedenen Vogelarten (p. 163), zur Purpurnuschel (p. 205).

⁸⁰ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, Erklärungen zum Judenpech (p. 168), lokale Fundstelle von Bernstein (p. 171), mosaikartiges Gestein (p. 180).

⁸¹ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 211.

⁸² SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 212.

⁸³ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 205–206. Ein gewisser Giraudin, der im Jahr 1813 33 Jahre alt war, wird in demselben Dokument des französischen Konsulats zum Arzt in Sidon ernannt, und verliert seine Lizenz als Negotiant[?]. Eventuell handelte es sich um einen Nachkommen des von Seetzen erwähnten Giraudin (Vgl. BOURMAUD, « 'Ya doktor' », p. 100–101. Im Dokument des französischen Konsulats werden weiterhin Mr. Chaboceau (73 Jahre alt) zum Arzt in Damaskus sowie ein gewisser Béraud (65 Jahre alt) und sein Sohn Joseph Béraud (41 Jahre alt) zu Ärzten in Beirut ernannt.

hätten. Die meisten Länderbeschreibungen und Reiseberichte stammen aus der Feder europäischer 'Entdeckungsreisender'.

Als solche 'Entdeckungsreisende' besuchten wiederholt europäische Mediziner den östlichen Mittelmeerraum. Da einige die Kosten ihrer Reise nicht vollständig durch Förderung eines Mäzens bzw. einer Institution oder aus eigenem Vermögen decken konnten, boten sie unterwegs medizinische Dienste gegen Bezahlung an. Seetzens eigene Biographie und die des von ihm erwähnten Dr. Marburg veranschaulichen diesen Typus des Mediziners.

Diesen Dr. Marburg oder Dr. Marpurgo lernte Seetzen in Kairo kennen.⁸⁴ Der einer jüdischen Familie aus Görz entstammende Marburg habe in Budapest, Italien und Wien Medizin studiert. Trotz finanzieller Not, die aus einem Erbschaftsverlust resultierte, habe Marburg anschließend eine große Reise über Kairo nach Indien geplant, die er sich durch seine ärztliche Tätigkeit finanzieren musste und deshalb nur in Etappen ausführen konnte. Aufgrund eines Schiffbruchs kurz vor Kairo und des Verlustes seiner Arzneien, Bücher und Landkarten habe er eine Anstellung bei den Engländern angenommen, die ihn nach dem Überfall auf Rosetta (Rosette, Rašīd) 1801 mit der Gründung und Leitung eines Lazaretts zur Versorgung ihrer verletzten Soldaten beauftragt hätten. Dank großzügiger Entlohnung habe er wieder über genügend Geld verfügt, um seinen Reiseplan weiterzuverfolgen:⁸⁵ von Kairo nach Aleppo, dann nach Bagdad und weiter nach Goa an der Westküste Indiens; von dort quer über die Halbinsel nach Kalkutta im Osten, anschließend von Kalkutta durch Tibet, das Land der Kalmücken und die asiatischen Teile Russlands nach Petersburg.⁸⁶

Tatsächlich sei Dr. Marburg am 31. August 1807 in Kairo aufgebrochen.⁸⁷ In einem Nachtrag vom 23. Juli 1808 berichtet Seetzen basierend auf seiner Korrespondenz mit Marburg, dass dieser über Damiat (Damiette, Dumyāt), Akkon und Latakia nach Aleppo gelangt sei. Nach einem sechsmonatigen Aufenthalt in Aleppo sei er bei der jüdischen Gemeinde in Misskredit geraten, habe Aleppo aus Angst um sein Leben verlassen müssen und sich über Latakia nach Baalbek begeben. Danach seien keine Nachrichten mehr von ihm eingetroffen. Seetzen vermutet, dass Dr. Marburg nach Kairo zurückgekehrt sein könnte, thematisiert dies aber später nicht mehr.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ Vgl. SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. III, p. 205–206. Dr. Marburg konnte nicht identifiziert werden.

⁸⁵ ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Schreiben des Russischen Kaiserlichen Cammer-Assessors, Dr. U. J. Seetzen. [Kahira, den 22. September 1807] », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmelskunde*, 17 (1807), p. 160–161.

⁸⁶ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Schreiben des Russischen Kaiserlichen Cammer-Assessors, Dr. U. J. Seetzen. [Kahira, den 22. September 1807] », p. 161.

⁸⁷ Vgl. SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. III, p. 205.

⁸⁸ Vgl. SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. III, p. 206.

Auch Seetzen selbst praktizierte in Aleppo aus finanziellen Gründen als Arzt, da die Förderung durch die Fürstin Friederike Auguste Sophie von Anhalt-Zerbst, geborene von Anhalt-Bernburg (1744–1827), und durch den Erbprinzen Emil Leopold August von Sachsen-Gotha und Altenburg (1772–1822) seine Reisekosten nur ansatzweise deckte.⁸⁹ Wenn er Ausflüge in von Beduinen bewohnte Gebiete machte, gab er sich zudem aus Sicherheitsgründen als Arzt aus. Auf der Reise von Damaskus in den Hauran im Mai 1805 reiste er als « Mūsā aṭ-ṭabīb » (Arzt Moses) und führte einige Arzneien wie Rhabarberpillen, Honig und Mehl mit sich.⁹⁰ Sein Begleiter, der Maronit Hanna Abu Ibrahim (Ḥannā Abū Ibrāhīm), verkaufte die Rhabarberpillen, während Seetzen selbst medizinische Konsultationen anbot.⁹¹ Der Ansturm von Patienten sei dermaßen groß gewesen, dass er in Chabab schrieb: « Unser Zimmer war ein Hospital ». ⁹² Allerdings hören Seetzens Berichte über die eigene medizinische Praxis nach seinem Ausflug in den Libanon Ende 1806 auf. Weder in Jerusalem noch in Kairo scheint er als Arzt praktiziert zu haben. Eventuell wurde Seetzen nach dem Herrschaftsantritt Emil August Leopolds von Sachsen-Gotha und Altenburg am 21. April 1804 eine größere finanzielle Unterstützung zuteil, sodass er auf diese ungern ausgeübte Tätigkeit verzichten konnte.⁹³

Beide Entdeckungsreisenden, sowohl Marburg als auch Seetzen, verrichteten ihre medizinischen Tätigkeiten aus pragmatischen und pekuniären Gründen, um ihre höheren Ziele zu verfolgen, die darinnen bestanden, noch nicht entdeckte geographische Gebiete zu bereisen und der Weltgemeinschaft bekannt zu machen.

Eine weitere Gruppe medizinisch tätiger Franken, deren Ausbildung Seetzen allerdings als zweifelhaft darstellte, sind die Renegaten. Ein Renegat bezeichnete

⁸⁹ Vgl. den Abschnitt « Seetzen als Arzt auf Reisen » im voraussichtlich 2025 erscheinenden Artikel: BACHOUR, « 'Ich reise...' ».

⁹⁰ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 34. « Ich nahm den Namen Mūsā an, und versah mich mit Ferman, Briefen, mit einigen Medicamenten, Pillen von Rhabarber, Honig, Mehl etc. ». Bei Rhabarber handelt es sich um *Rheum palmatum*. Seine Wurzel wird aufgrund ihres Gehalts an Anthranoiden innerlich zur kurzfristigen Behandlung der Verstopfung und äußerlich bei Erkrankungen der Haut und Schleimhaut angewendet (Vgl. WOLFGANG SCHNEIDER, *Lexikon zur Arzneimittelgeschichte. Sachwörterbuch zur Geschichte der pharmazeutischen Botanik, Chemie, Mineralogie, Pharmakologie, Zoologie*, vol. V, Govi-Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 1974, p. 167–168). Honig (Mel) wurde als Arznei zur Behandlung von Geschwüren und Fisteln, gegen Ohrenschmerzen, bei Augen- und Halsbeschwerden und gegen Husten und Tollwut appliziert. Als Hilfsstoff wurde Honig bei der Zubereitung von Elektuarien, Confectiones und Conditia verwendet (Vgl. WOLFGANG SCHNEIDER, *Lexikon zur Arzneimittelgeschichte*, vol. I, Govi-Verlag, Frankfurt am Main 1968, p. 51–52). Mehl (Amylum tritici) wird gekaut auf Bisse tollwütiger Hunde aufgelegt, wirkt zudem mit Sauerhonig vermischt gegen Leberflecke, als Kochung gegen Blutspeien, Husten und rauen Hals und äußerlich gegen Aussatz und Entzündungen (Vgl. SCHNEIDER, *Lexikon zur Arzneimittelgeschichte*, vol. V, p. 358–360).

⁹¹ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 41.

⁹² SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 45.

⁹³ Vgl. BACHOUR, « 'Ich reise...' ».

im osmanischen Kontext einen zum Islam übergetretenen Franken.⁹⁴ In diesem Sinne verwendete auch Seetzen das Wort. Christliche und jüdische Untertanen, die zum Islam übertraten, wurden von ihm als konvertierte Mohammedaner bezeichnet. Im Dorf Urganny,⁹⁵ das bis auf drei griechische Familien von Muslimen bewohnt war, berichtete Seetzen am 8. Oktober 1803 von einem griechischen Arzt, der zum Islam konvertiert sei, und vermerkte dazu: « Ein Grieche, der Mohammedaner geworden war, machte hier den Arzt. Es ist eine Seltenheit, dass ein Rajàh⁹⁶ ein Türke wird ». ⁹⁷ « Türke » verwendete Seetzen also losgelöst von der ethnischen oder sprachlichen Komponente als Synonym für Muslim, wie es im osmanischen Kontext jener Zeit üblich war.⁹⁸

Seetzen berichtete über zwei ärztlich tätige Renegaten. Beide waren aufgrund juristischer Verfolgung in das Osmanische Reich geflüchtete Deutsche. Die Renegaten wurden zwar von den Osmanen großzügig aufgenommen und erhielten « bessere Chargen », jedoch wurde ihnen misstraut. Da die « Türken » oft die Erfahrung machten, dass Renegaten das Land wieder verließen, entlohnnten sie diese selten mit Bargeld oder Geschenken, die gegen Geld getauscht werden konnten.⁹⁹

Der erste dieser beiden Renegaten war Baron von Linden aus Mainz, ein Sohn des kurmainzischen Finanzministers, von dem Seetzen im März 1803 während seines Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel hörte. ¹⁰⁰ Aufgrund vielfältiger strafrechtlicher und politischer Schwierigkeiten sei er 5 bis 6 Jahre vor Seetzens Bericht in das Osmanische Reich geflüchtet und zum Islam konvertiert. Unter dem Namen Ömer Efendi sei er aufgrund seiner medizinischen Kenntnisse bei dem « regulären Corps » in den Kasernen von Lewend-Tschiflick¹⁰¹ als Arzt angestellt

⁹⁴ Siehe den Abschnitt 'Islam' in KIM SIEBENHÜNER et al., « Konversion », in FRIEDRICH JAEGER et al. (eds.), *Enzyklopädie der Neuzeit Online*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2352-0248_edn_COM_296731> (Accessed July 2023). Zu Begriffsentwicklungen und Nuancen siehe: HENNING SIEVERT, « Work migration from 'the West' into the Ottoman Empire? Ulrich Jasper Seetzen and the Renegades », in dieser Ausgabe.

⁹⁵ Möglicherweise handelt es sich um das Dorf Ürgüp in der Nähe von Devrent vadisi.

⁹⁶ Rajàh (re'āyā) hießen nichtmuslimische Untertanen. Nach Seetzens Erklärung waren dies levantinische Christen und Juden (Vgl. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 56).

⁹⁷ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 644.

⁹⁸ Vgl. SHARKEY, *A History of Muslims*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2017, p. 74.

⁹⁹ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 208.

¹⁰⁰ Der Renegat Baron von Linden ist vermutlich ein Sohn des 1817 gestorbenen kurmainzischen Geheimrates und Vorstehers der Mainzer Finanzverwaltung Joh[ann] Ge[org] Freiherr von Linden und Bruder von Franz Joseph von Linden (1760–1836) (Vgl. HEINRICH EDUARD SCRIBA (ed.), *Biographisch-literarisches Lexikon der Schriftsteller des Großherzogtums Hessen im ersten Viertel des neunzehnten Jahrhunderts*, Leske, Darmstadt 1843, p. 453. Für weitere Details über das Leben des Renegaten siehe den Beitrag von Henning Sievert.

¹⁰¹ Lewend-Tschiflick (levend çiftliği) waren die Kasernen osmanischer Truppen zwischen Rumeli Hisar am Bosphorus und Kjathanäh (kâğıdhâne) im Landesinneren (Vgl. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 790).

worden, nach etwa zwei bis dreieinhalb Jahren allerdings spurlos verschwunden.¹⁰² Seetzens Darstellung hebt die bevorzugte Behandlung des Renegaten hervor, denn obwohl dieser lediglich über theoretische medizinische Kenntnisse, aber keine zusammenhängende Ausbildung oder berufliche Erfahrung verfügte, gewährte man ihm eine Anstellung bei der Armee.

Den anderen deutschen Renegaten lernte Seetzen in Manisa kennen. Er habe vor seinem Übertritt zum Islam Johann Christian Friedrich Bieberstein geheißen und sei in Sachsen geborener Protestant. Nach Tätigkeiten als Chirurg in Frankreich und anschließend in Algier sei er mit einer Geliebten in das Osmanische Reich geflüchtet, wo die beiden zum Islam konvertiert seien, um der Verfolgung durch Biebersteins Ehefrau zu entkommen. Unter dem Namen Mechmed Efendi sei er Leibarzt eines Melek Paşa in Manisa geworden, wo er eine Apotheke betrieben habe.¹⁰³ Interessanterweise bezeichnet Seetzen ihn als « türkischen Arzt »¹⁰⁴ und nicht mehr als « europäischen », was seine Exklusion aus der europäischen und christlichen Gemeinschaft offen legt.

Offensichtlich war die Stellung der Renegaten prekär. Zwar genossen sie die Unterstützung der osmanischen Obrigkeit und konnten im Osmanischen Reich unter günstigen Bedingungen als Ärzte praktizieren,¹⁰⁵ jedoch misstraute ihnen die Obrigkeit und die Europäer betrachteten sie als Abtrünnige. Daher scheint ihre Rolle als wissenschaftliche und kulturelle Vermittler zwiespältig gewesen zu sein und müsste anhand weiterer medizinisch tätiger Renegaten untersucht werden.

Im Gegensatz zu den skeptisch beäugten Renegaten genossen Mönche und Missionare in Seetzens Wahrnehmung hohes Ansehen und spielten eine wichtige Rolle bei der medizinischen Versorgung christlicher Patienten. Katholische Missionare waren besonders im 17. Jahrhundert im Nahen Osten aktiv. Da ihnen die Missionstätigkeit unter Muslimen verboten war, richtete sich ihre Botschaft primär an die Anhänger der aus Sicht Roms durch Abspaltung vom echten Glauben entstandenen orientalistisch-christlicher Kirchen. Durch ihre Bekehrung und Wiedervereinigung mit Rom entstanden die sog. katholischen Ostkirchen oder unierten Kirchen.¹⁰⁶ Darüber hinaus zielten die Aktivitäten der Missionare auf die

¹⁰² SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 208–209.

¹⁰³ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 437–438. Für weitere Details über das Leben des Renegaten siehe den Beitrag von Henning Sievert.

¹⁰⁴ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 436.

¹⁰⁵ Renegaten und Juden hätten ihre handwerklichen medizinischen Dienstleistungen, wie Schröpfen, Moxa und Aderlass, in Konstantinopel auf dem Markt angeboten (Vgl. LEONHARD LUDWIG FINKE, *Versuch einer allgemeinen medicinisch-praktischen Geographie worin der historische Theil der einheimischen Völker- und Staaten-Arzeneykunde vorgetragen wird*, vol. I, Weidmann, Leipzig 1792, p. 134–135).

¹⁰⁶ Vgl. JOHANNES MADEY, « Die Dynamik des Christentums in den Kontinenten: Der Nahe Osten », in KARL MÜLLER, WERNER USTORF (eds.), *Einleitung in die Missionsgeschichte. Tradition, Situation und Dynamik des Christentums*, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart 1995 (Theologische Wissenschaft, 18), p. 50;

bereits unierten Christen und katholischen Maroniten, die in ihrem Glauben bestärkt werden sollten, zumal sie unter ungünstigen Bedingungen umgeben von Ungläubigen und Schismatikern lebten.¹⁰⁷ Die Missionare wurden von der osmanischen Obrigkeit toleriert, weil sie sich um die Seelsorge katholischer Europäer kümmern sollten, die sich in den Städten des Osmanischen Reiches niedergelassen hatten. Sie genossen den Rechtsstatus von Schutzbefohlenen (*musta'min*), der den auf islamischem Gebiet vorübergehend wohnenden Nichtmuslimen eine Schutzgarantie (*amān*) gewährte.¹⁰⁸ Lazaristen, Dominikaner, Franziskaner, Karmeliten und vor allem die Jesuiten beschränkten sich bei ihrer Arbeit allerdings nicht nur auf die Seelsorge der Gläubigen, sondern leisteten auch pflegerische, pharmazeutische und medizinische Dienste, was die Betreuung Kranker und Gebrechlicher einschloss.¹⁰⁹ Im Gegensatz zu den Missionen der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts, die mit Ärzten und medizinischem Fachpersonal ausgestattet waren, gewährten in früheren Jahrhunderten Laien-Missionare medizinische Hilfe. Darauf wurden sie durch speziell für die Missionsarbeit angefertigte Handbücher vorbereitet.¹¹⁰ Seetzen legte in seinen Tagebüchern Zeugnis von einigen medizinischen Dienstleistungen verschiedener Ordensbrüder ab.

Seetzen zufolge existierten im Juli 1803 in Smyrna neun Hospitäler: drei armenische, zwei griechische, ein französisches, ein englisches, ein holländisches

GOTTFRIED SEEBAR, *Geschichte des Christentums III: Spätmittelalter, Reformation, Konfessionalisierung*, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart 2005, p. 322–324.

¹⁰⁷ Vgl. PATRICIUS WITTMANN, *Die Herrlichkeit der Kirche in ihren Missionen seit der Glaubensspaltung. Eine allgemeine Geschichte der katholischen Missionen in den letzten drei Jahrhunderten*, vol. II, Kollmann, Augsburg 1841, p. 346–347. Für eine allgemeine Darstellung der Missionsarbeit im östlichen Mittelmeerraum siehe WITTMANN, *Die Herrlichkeit der Kirche*, vol. II, p. 320–384.

¹⁰⁸ Vgl. FELICITA TRAMONTANA, « Trading in Spiritual and Earthly Goods: Franciscans in Semi-rural Palestine », in NADINE AMSLER et al. (eds.), *Catholic Missionaries in Early Modern Asia: Patterns of Localization*, Routledge, Abingdon 2020, p. 127; BERNARD HEYBERGER, « Missionaries and Women: Domestic Catholicism in the Middle East », in AMSLER et al. (eds.), *Catholic Missionaries*, p. 191; CESARE SANTUS, « Conflicting Views: Catholic Missionaries in Ottoman Cities between Accommodation and Latinization », in AMSLER et al. (eds.), *Catholic Missionaries*, p. 97–99.

¹⁰⁹ Vgl. WITTMANN, *Die Herrlichkeit der Kirche*, vol. II, p. 334, 349, 352, 365; STEFANO SARACINO, « Accessing the Bodies and Souls of the Greeks with Medicine and Music: A Comparison of Jesuit and Pietist Missionary Practices in the Ottoman Empire », in MARKUS FRIEDRICH, HOLGER ZAUNSTÖCK (eds.), *Jesuit and Pietist Missions in the Eighteenth Century: Cross-Confessional Perspectives*, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2020, p. 84, 88–93.

¹¹⁰ Zu den medizinischen Missionen des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts, Cf. CHRISTOFFER H. GRUNDMANN, *Gesandt zu heilen! Aufkommen und Entwicklung der ärztlichen Mission im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, Gütersloher Verlagshaus, Gütersloh 1992 (Missionswissenschaftliche Forschungen, 26); Eine Bibliographie der medizinischen Handbücher für die Missionsarbeit aus der Feder katholischer Missionare stellte Peter Louis in seiner Studie « Missionsärztliche Bestrebungen in früheren Jahrhunderten » zusammen (Vgl. PETER LOUIS, « Missionsärztliche Bestrebungen in früheren Jahrhunderten », *Katholische missionsärztliche Fürsorge*, 3 (1926) p. 90–93).

und ein römisch-kaiserliches (vorher venezianisches) – das « ansehnlichste » Hospital.¹¹¹ In diesem sei der Franziskaner Pater Luigi, von Seetzen der « Pest-Geistliche » genannt, tätig gewesen. Der Mönch habe sich unter Gefährdung des eigenen Lebens für die Behandlung von Pestpatienten eingesetzt und mit Erfolg ein neues Heilmittel gegen die Pest angewandt, das vom britischen Generalkonsul George Baldwin¹¹² in seiner Schrift *Osservazione circa un nuovo specifico contra la peste* beschrieben worden sei.¹¹³

In Jerusalem besuchte Seetzen am 13. April 1806 das Franziskaner-Kloster St. Salvator, in dem 20 Mönche sowie drei portugiesische und 21 levantinische Kirchendiener (*šammās*) lebten.¹¹⁴ Der franziskanische Klosterarzt Fra Francisco sei ein Spanier gewesen, der seit vielen Jahren in St. Salvator gelebt habe.¹¹⁵ Er betreute Seetzen während seiner Erkrankung in Jerusalem im Mai 1806, als dieser im Kloster wohnte.¹¹⁶ Das Kloster verfügte über eine Apotheke und einen Heilpflanzengarten, jedoch kamen die meisten Medikamente, abgesehen von einigen lokal beschafften Zutaten, als Spende aus Europa. In der Apotheke wurde laut Seetzen der sog. Balsam von Jerusalem zubereitet, der innerlich und äußerlich gegen alle Gebrechen und Beschwerden helfe.¹¹⁷ Die ärztlichen Dienste seien von den Mönchen zwar aus Wohltätigkeit ohne Honorar angeboten worden, jedoch hätte eine gewisse moralische Verpflichtung zum Spenden bestanden. So berichtete Seetzen: « Alle Medikamente und aller ärztlicher Rath werden

¹¹¹ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 445, 503. Das niederländische Krankenhaus in Smyrna wurde 1675 gegründet, das katholische 1710 und das griechische Hospital des Heiligen Charalambos (Graekikon Nosokomion o Agios Haralampos) im Jahr 1723. Die Engländer und die Franzosen hatten ebenfalls ihre Hospitäler in Smyrna (Vgl. SPYROS N. MICHAELAS et al., « The Greek Hospital and Pharmacies of Smyrna (1723–1922) », *Acta medico-historica Adriatica*, 19/2 (2021), p. 271; Cf. ÇINAR ATAY, *Tarih içinde İzmir*, Tifset Basım ve Yayın Sanayii, İzmir 1978.). John Howard besuchte 1786 İzmir und berichtete von dem neu gebautem Hospital der englischen Faktorei direkt gegenüber dem niederländischen Hospital. Darüber hinaus gebe es Krankenhäuser der Venezianer, Franzosen, Juden und Griechisch-Orthodoxen (Vgl. JOHN HOWARD, *An Account of the Principal Lazarettos in Europe: with Various Papers Relative to the Plague: Together with Further Observations on Some Foreign Prisons and Hospitals; and Additional Remarks on the Present State of Those in Great Britain and Ireland*, J. Johnson, C. Dilly, and T. Cadell, London 1791, p. 28–29, 62–63).

¹¹² George Baldwin (1744–1828) war ein britischer Geschäftsmann, der hauptsächlich in Ägypten wirkte und zwischen der East India Company und den osmanischen Gouverneuren bezüglich Handelswege über das Rote Meer vermittelte. Er interessierte sich für den tierischen Magnetismus und experimentierte mit Olivenöl als Mittel gegen die Pest (JAMES MEW, DEBORAH MENLEY, « Baldwin, George (1744–1826), Diplomatist and Writer », in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/1165>> (Accessed July 2023)).

¹¹³ Vgl. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 470, 474–475, 504. Der vollständige Titel lautet: *Osservazione circa un nuovo specifico contra la peste, ritrovato e fatto sperimentare da Giorgio Baldwin, Console generale per la Sua Maestà britannica per molti anni in Egitto*, Firenze 1800.

¹¹⁴ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 9–10.

¹¹⁵ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. II, p. 205.

¹¹⁶ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. II, p. 58–59.

¹¹⁷ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. II, p. 205.

unentgeltlich erteilt. Indessen erwartet man von Jedem, der es vermag, ein Geschenk für das Kloster oder für den Arzt ».¹¹⁸

Die Karmeliter finden ebenfalls Erwähnung in Seetzens Tagebüchern. Im Kloster Mār Sarkīs in der Nähe des Dorfes Bscherre im Libanongebirge, wo sich Seetzen zwischen dem 15. und dem 20. Juli 1805 aufhielt, lernte er den Karmelitermönch Pater Louis kennen. Der 60-jährige hochgebildete und mehrsprachige Mönch sei seit 30 Jahren Missionar, habe Indien, die « Barbarei » (Nordafrika) und andere Teile der Levante besucht, besitze nun eine Bibliothek mit europäischen Werken und praktiziere die Heilkunst. Als Gegenleistung für seine medizinische Tätigkeit habe er allerdings kein Geld, sondern Lebensmittel, wie Eier, Käse, Milch und Früchte, erhalten.¹¹⁹

Während seines Aufenthalts in Aleppo traf Seetzen am 23. Juli 1804 einen katholischen Missionar aus Mailand, der aufgrund seiner schlechten Gesundheit gezwungen gewesen sei, in seine Heimat zurückzukehren. Der Orden des Geistlichen wurde nicht erwähnt, doch sei er mit einem weiteren Mönch in Mosul tätig gewesen. « Dort tragen die Missionare nie Ordenshabite, sondern leben dort in Landestracht unter dem Titel von Aerzten. Und in der That, sie legen sich in Europa ein Wenig auf die Arzneykunst. »¹²⁰ Das Nichttragen der Ordenstracht deutet auf die Zugehörigkeit zu den Jesuiten hin, da diese im Gegensatz zu den Franziskanern und Kapuzinern in dem « ganzen türkischen Reiche » kein Habit trügen, wie Carsten Niebuhr in seinem Reisebericht schreibt.¹²¹ Für diese Vermutung spricht ebenfalls die erwähnenswerten intensive Beschäftigung mit der ärztlichen Kunst, die charakteristisch für die Missionierungsarbeit der Jesuiten war.¹²²

Deutlich wird, dass die erwähnten europäischen Missionare und Mönche, seien sie Franziskaner, Karmeliter oder Jesuiten, keine akademischen Ärzte waren, sondern über passable pharmazeutische und medizinische Kenntnisse verfügten, die sie Einheimischen im Grunde aus Wohltätigkeit und zur Selbstversorgung zur Verfügung stellten. Da sie ihre Missionierungsarbeit nicht auf Muslime ausdehnen

¹¹⁸ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. II, p. 205–206. Zur Interaktion der Franziskaner mit den Einheimischen in Jerusalem und Umgebung durch landwirtschaftliche Geschäfte und die Produktion von Devotionalien siehe: TRAMONTANA, « Trading in Spiritual and Earthly Goods ».

¹¹⁹ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 159–160.

¹²⁰ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 148. Bereits 1730 missionierten Karmeliter in Bagdad. Anschließend wirkten weitere Ordensangehörige (Dominikaner, Kapuziner, Theatiner, Jesuiten) in mehreren Städten des Iraks. Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts geriet die Missionsarbeit im Irak aufgrund ausbleibender finanzieller Unterstützung in eine Krise. Jedoch konnte sie durch den Beistand einheimischer Geistlicher, wie dem bekehrten syrischen Bischof von Mosul, fortgesetzt werden (Vgl. WITTMANN, *Die Herrlichkeit der Kirche*, vol. II, p. 378–381).

¹²¹ CARSTEN NIEBUHR, *Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien und andern umliegenden Ländern*, Manesse Verlag, Zürich 1997, p. 173.

¹²² Vgl. SARACINO, « Accessing the Bodies and Souls », p. 77–82.

durften, beschränkte sich wahrscheinlich ihre Wirkung auf christliche Bevölkerungsgruppen.¹²³

Fränkische bzw. europäische Ärzte waren Seetzens Darstellung zufolge wichtige Akteure in der medizinischen Versorgung der fränkischen und einheimischen Bevölkerung. Offenbar kam dabei finanziellen Aspekten eine maßgebliche Bedeutung zu. Die ärztliche Tätigkeit verschaffte den europäischen Medizinern gute Einkünfte, ganz gleich ob sie dauerhaft, über mehrere Jahre oder auch nur auf Reisen praktizierten. Die Positionen als Leibärzte hoher Würdenträger waren gar so gut dotiert, dass sie bei mehrjähriger Tätigkeit genügend Ersparnisse für eine standesgemäße Existenz in ihrer Heimat anlegen konnten. Weiterhin praktizierten europäische Mediziner in Handelsniederlassungen als Konsulatsangestellte oder freiberuflich und versorgten Mitglieder der fränkischen Gemeinden sowie ihnen nahestehende oder wohlhabende Einheimische. Ebenso trugen europäische Missionare durch ihre pharmazeutischen Kenntnisse und pflegerischen Aktivitäten zur Versorgung der christlichen Bevölkerung bei.

III. *Einheimische Ärzte: Juden, Levantiner und Türken*

Als einheimische Ärzte bezeichnete Seetzen osmanische Untertanen, die unterschiedlichen religiösen, konfessionellen oder ethnischen Gruppierungen angehörten. Das Attribut « Türkisch » verwendet er allerdings ausschließlich im Zusammenhang mit Muslimen und Renegaten. Christliche Untertanen nennt er hingegen je nach Konfession Griechen, Armenier, Kopten, Maroniten usw. Alle orientalischen Christen bezeichnet er hingegen einheitlich als « Levantiner », überträgt den Begriff aber nicht auf die Nachkommen von Europäern, die in den Städten des östlichen Mittelmeerraums geboren und aufgewachsen sind.

Im Gegensatz zu levantinischen Ärzten erwähnt Seetzen jüdische Ärzte nur ganz am Rande, was auf das Fehlen eines direkten Kontaktes zu jüdischen Gemeinden hinweist. So schreibt er bei seinem Besuch in Jerusalem am 16. April 1806, dass drei jüdische Ärzte in der Stadt tätig seien.¹²⁴ Diesen Ärzten begegnete er allerdings nicht, sondern erfuhr von ihnen aus zweiter Hand. Im Verhältnis zur Einwohnerzahl Jerusalems und der Zusammensetzung der religiösen Gruppierungen wäre die Zahl jüdischer Ärzte jedoch zu gering. Von den 8774 Einwohnern seien die Hälfte Muslime (4000), ein Viertel Juden (2000), ein Fünftel griechische Christen (1400) und ein Zehntel Katholiken (800); dazu kämen 500

¹²³ Zwar finden sich Berichte über erfolgreiche Missionierungsaktivitäten unter libanesischen Druzen, jedoch wurden diese Bemühungen aufgrund von sozialen Unruhen aufgegeben (Vgl. WITTMANN, *Die Herrlichkeit der Kirche*, vol. II, p. 340–344).

¹²⁴ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. II, p. 23.

Armenier, 50 Kopten, 13 Abessinier und 11 Syrer.¹²⁵ Seetzen selbst hielt diese Einwohnerzahlen für « beträchtlich niedriger » als die tatsächlichen. Losgelöst von der Frage, wie viele Menschen genau in der von zahlreichen Reisenden frequentierten Pilgerstadt lebten, erscheint jedoch die Zahl von drei jüdischen Ärzten für 2000 jüdische Einwohner als äußerst gering.

IV. *Levantinische oder orientalistisch-christliche Ärzte*

Levantinische, d. h. ostchristliche Ärzte und Apotheker, genossen bei Seetzen kein hohes Ansehen. Teilweise ist der abfällige Ton in seinen Erzählungen nicht zu überhören, wie die folgende Episode veranschaulicht.

Der Gouverneur von Tripolis, Mustapha Barbar,¹²⁶ litt an einer langwierigen Nierenkrankheit und bat den französischen Konsul Guys¹²⁷ darum, Seetzen zwecks medizinischer Beratung zu ihm zu schicken. Daraufhin begab sich Seetzen in Begleitung des Sohns des französischen Konsuls und zweier weiterer Franken zur Festung des Gouverneurs und verschrieb ihm ein Rezept für ein Kompositum, das zuerst ins Französische, dann ins Arabische übersetzt wurde. Seetzen vermerkte anschließend:

Ich bestand darauf, dass es [das Medikament] in Haleb oder Damask von einem fränkischen Arzte bereitet werde, weil hier nur ein paar levantinische Pfuscher befindlich sind, und dass ich nur in diesem Falle für die gute Wirkung desselben stehen könne. Ob man meinen Rath befolgen werde, weiss ich nicht, obgleich man es mir versprach.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. II, p. 18.

¹²⁶ Muṣṭafā Āgā Barbar (1767–1834) wurde 1798 im Alter von ca. 30 Jahren Statthalter von Tripolis und blieb bis zu seinem Tod mit Unterbrechungen im Amt (1798–1808, 1810–1820, ?–1826, 1831–1834). Er war ein militärisch geschickter, gefürchteter Führer, der mehrere Statthalter der benachbarten Provinzen bekriegte. Sogar die Hohe Pforte konnte ihn nur mit Mühe absetzen (Cf. ḤUSAYN SALMĀN SULAYMĀN, « Tamarrud Muṣṭafā Āgā Barbar fī qalʿat Ṭarāblus », *Tārīḥ al-ʿArab wa-l-ʿĀlam*, 17/167 (1997), p. 46–58; IĞNĀTİYŪS ṬANNŪS AL-ḤŪRĪ, *Muṣṭafā Āgā Barbar ḥākim ʿiyālat Ṭarābulus wa-Ġabla wa-Lāḍiqiyat al-ʿarab 1767–1834: Şafahāt dafīnah ḥaṭīrah wa-abwāb wajīhah min tārīḥ Lubnān bayna al-qarnayn at-tāmin ʿaṣar wa-t-tāsi ʿaṣar*, Dār al-Ḥalīl, Tripoli 1985 (Maṣādir at-Tārīḥ al-Lubnānī, 4). Als Seetzen ihn am 01.09.1806 während seiner ersten Amtszeit als Statthalter von Tripolis traf, muss er ca. 40 Jahre alt gewesen sein.

¹²⁷ Es handelt sich um den Diplomaten Pierre Alphons Guys (1755–1812). Zuerst amtierte er als Attaché an der französischen Botschaft in Konstantinopel und Lissabon, anschließend als Konsul in Sardinien, Generalkonsul in Tripolis und schließlich Chargé d’Affaires im syrischen Tripolis, wo er verstarb (Vgl. HOFER, *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*, vol. XXII, p. 963–964).

¹²⁸ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 225–226.

Zu griechischen, armenischen und maronitischen Ärzten hatte Seetzen direkten Kontakt und liefert uns in seinen Tagebüchern wertvolle Informationen über sie. Allerdings finden sich nur wenige Hinweise darauf, welche medizinische Ausbildungsstätte sie besuchten oder ob sie überhaupt eine solche Ausbildung absolvierten. Konfessionelle Krankenhäuser waren keine Seltenheit in den Städten des Osmanischen Reichs.¹²⁹ Griechische Krankenhäuser bestanden Seetzen zufolge in Smyrna,¹³⁰ Chios¹³¹ und Damaskus;¹³² ein armenisches Hospital existierte in Smyrna.¹³³ Ob diese Krankenhäuser zur Ausbildung christlich-orientalischer Mediziner dienten, kann anhand von Seetzens Schilderungen nicht beantwortet werden.

Einige griechische Ärzte studierten an einer italienischen Universität, wie Doct. Med. Wasilatyi,¹³⁴ der in Padua promovierte und dem griechischen Patriarchen in Konstantinopel als Leibarzt diente. Außerdem war er Direktor der Bibliothek und der Druckerei des griechischen Patriarchats.¹³⁵ Er führte Seetzen durch die Bibliothek und die griechische Schule und zeigte ihm interessante Bücher. Seetzen seinerseits zeigte Wasilatyi seine mitgeführten astronomischen Instrumente, da der Grieche ein Liebhaber der Astronomie gewesen sei.¹³⁶ Somit gehörte Wasilatyi zur Klasse der gelehrten Ärzte, die ihren naturwissenschaftlichen Interessen nachgingen und über höhere Bildung verfügten.

Einige griechische Ärzte standen dem Sultan zu Diensten, wie Doctor Ruini, der ein Ferienhaus im Dorf Belgrad besaß, das Seetzen auf einem Ausflug im Mai 1803

¹²⁹ In Istanbul beispielsweise existierten im 18./19. Jahrhundert das griechisch-orthodoxe Balıklı-Hospital, die armenischen Krankenhäuser Surp Pirgiç und Surp Agop sowie das jüdische Or-Ahayim Hospital (Vgl. YILDIRIM, *A History Of Healthcare in Istanbul*, p. 177–182).

¹³⁰ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 470. Das griechische Hospital in Smyrna erwähnt Howard (HOWARD, *An Account*, p. 63). Weiterhin beschreibt er das griechische Hospital in Galata (Ibid., p. 64).

¹³¹ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 610–613.

¹³² SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 307.

¹³³ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 470.

¹³⁴ Den Namen erwähnt Seetzen in mehreren Schreibvarianten: Wasilatyi, Wassiletji und Wasililyi (Vgl. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 196–197, 223). Er werde auch Basilius genannt (Vgl. Ibid., p. 196). Es handelt sich um den russischen Vornamen « Vasilij », der « König » oder « Königlicher » bedeutet.

¹³⁵ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 196–197.

¹³⁶ Vgl. SEETZEN, « Aus einem Schreiben des Russisch-Kaiserlichen Kammer-Assessors [Smyrna den 27 Jul. 1803] », p. 443; SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 223. Während Seetzens Aufenthalt in Istanbul war Neophytos VII. zum zweiten Mal griechischer Patriarch von Konstantinopel (1799–1801). Er förderte die Errichtung und Reformierung mehrerer griechischer Schulen in Konstantinopel und Umgebung. Jede dieser Schulen hatte einen Aufseher (*epitropos*). Ein Epitropos mit dem Namen Wasilatyi konnte nicht identifiziert werden (Vgl. IVAN SOKOLOV, *The Church of Constantinople in the Nineteenth Century; an Essay in Historical Research*, Peter Lang, Oxford – New York 2013 (Byzantine and Neohellenic Studies, 7), p. 501–509).

besichtigte.¹³⁷ Andere praktizierten in kleineren Ortschaften wie dem eben genannten Dorf Belgrad, wo Seetzen einen dort gebürtigen griechischen Arzt traf.¹³⁸ Der « Uhsta Hâkim (Meister Doctor) », wie er angesprochen wurde, wollte einen Patienten zu Ader lassen, musste aber die Prozedur wegen unpassender Wetterbedingungen verschieben. In der Nähe von Smyrna, in « Kala nova », ¹³⁹ erwähnt Seetzen zwei griechische Ärzte, die dort praktizierten; der eine stammte aus Zante (Zakynthos) und der andere aus Corfu (Korfu).¹⁴⁰

Armenische Ärzte spielten als Dolmetscher, Leibärzte und Wissensvermittler eine wichtige Rolle im Osmanischen Reich des 18. Jahrhunderts.¹⁴¹ In Konstantinopel lernte Seetzen Diratsu Borgh kennen, der sich durch seine musikalischen Kenntnisse auszeichnete: « [Der Doctor] hatte die Musik von einem griechischen Lehrer gelernt, und war vielleicht der Einzige Armenier in dieser Stadt, der die Musik wissenschaftlich verstand und der den Unterricht zu geben im Stande war ». ¹⁴² In Kara-Hissar (Karahisar) traf Seetzen einen armenischen Arzt, der nur « auf eine Zeitlang » in der Stadt praktizierte.¹⁴³ Die heftige Kritik des Armeniers bezüglich der Rückständigkeit der einheimischen Ärzte, die an keiner europäischen Universität Medizin studiert hatten, lässt vermuten, dass dieser selbst Absolvent eines solchen Studiums war.¹⁴⁴ Einem weiteren armenischen Arzt begegnete Seetzen in Kairo. Dieser diente dem Statthalter von Ägypten, Muḥammad 'Alī Paşa, als Leibarzt und Dolmetscher.¹⁴⁵ Alle drei Ärzte verfügten wahrscheinlich über eine medizinische Ausbildung und Fremdsprachenkenntnisse, sodass sie als Grenzgänger bezeichnet werden können.

Was maronitische Ärzte angeht, so berichtet Seetzen von Dschíbbra Asihs, einem in Aleppo ansässigen Maroniten und Bruder seiner Vermieterin Mme. Sariman. Obwohl Seetzen sich darüber wunderte, dass Dschíbbra nur Arabisch sprach und nur die arabische Medizin kannte, beschrieb er ihn als « ansehnlichen Mann » und einen der « geachtetsten unter den levantinischen Ärzten ». ¹⁴⁶ Daher

¹³⁷ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 310–311. Seetzen begegnete dem Arzt allerdings nicht persönlich.

¹³⁸ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 314, 318.

¹³⁹ Der Ort konnte nicht identifiziert werden.

¹⁴⁰ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 559.

¹⁴¹ Vgl. L. A. HUWĀNISYĀN, *Tārīḥ aṭ-ṭibb al-'armanī munḍu l-'uṣūr al-qadīma ḥattā l-qarn at-tāsi' 'aṣar : ar-ravābiṭ bayn madrasatay aṭ-ṭibb al-'arabiyya wa-l-'armaniyya*, al-Ġam'iyya al-ḥayriyya al-'Umūmiyya al-'Armaniyya, Aleppo 1968, p. 48–51; STELLA VARDANYAN, « Armenian Medicine in the 18th Century », in IDEM, *The History of Armenian Medicine: From Antiquity to the Present Day*, Regimedia, New York 2006.

¹⁴² SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 329.

¹⁴³ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 676.

¹⁴⁴ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 329; Zu seiner Kritik der einheimischen Ärzte siehe unten.

¹⁴⁵ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. III, p. 225.

¹⁴⁶ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 21, 56.

ist nicht verwunderlich, dass der Statthalter von Urfa, Tamir Pascha,¹⁴⁷ ihn als Leibarzt engagierte. Jedoch brachte ihm diese Anstellung Unglück.¹⁴⁸

Seetzens Aufzeichnungen zufolge habe sich Dschibbra Asihs samt Reiseapotheke und den besten arabischen Medizinbüchern nach Urfa begeben, wo Tamir Pascha, ein Liebhaber des nomadischen Lebens, in einem Zelt außerhalb der Stadt residierte, und sei lange Zeit an der Seite des Statthalters geblieben. Allerdings hätte Tamir Paschas Sohn eine Gruppe von Arabern überfallen und einige getötet, woraufhin das Lager Tamir Paschas aus Blutrache angegriffen worden sei. Dschibbra Asihs sei von den Beduinen gefangen genommen und aufgrund seiner Stellung als Arzt des Paschas misshandelt, beleidigt, schließlich aber freigelassen worden, nachdem man ihm seine Apotheke, Bücher, Kleider und anderen Wertsachen entwendet hätte. Daraufhin wäre er umhergeirrt und hätte nur unter großen Mühen nach Aleppo zurückkehren können. Tamir Pascha hingegen sei, nachdem er sein Vermögen und seinen Sohn im Kampf verloren hatte, nach Bagdad zurückgekehrt und außer Stande gewesen, dem Arzt seine Verluste zu kompensieren.¹⁴⁹

Diese Geschichte zeigt, dass christliche Ärzte als Leibärzte bei muslimischen Würdenträgern und Notabeln tätig waren und ihr volles Vertrauen genossen. In dieser Funktion standen sie in einem engen Klientelverhältnis zu ihrem Patron, allerdings konnten sie als Teil der engsten Gefolgschaft durch Missgunst oder Feindschaft auch direkt in Mitleidenschaft gezogen wurden.

Wenden wir uns nun der Frage zu, wo und wie levantinische Ärzte ihre medizinische Ausbildung erhielten, wenn sie nicht an einer europäischen Universität studierten: Spielten die Klöster eine Rolle bei der Tradierung medizinischen Wissens? Diese Frage stellt sich vor dem Hintergrund der Befunde von Carsten Walbinder, der durch Untersuchung von Archivalien des melkitischen bzw. griechisch-katholischen Klosters Mār aš-Šuwayr nachgewiesen hat, dass melkitische Mönche in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts ärztlich tätig waren, ihr medizinisches Wissen an weitere Brüder vermittelten und durch ihre ärztliche Praxis Einkünfte für den Orden erzielten. Interessanterweise trugen diese Mönche bereits vor ihrer Weihe den Beinamen *ṭabīb* (Arzt) und stammten allesamt aus Aleppo.¹⁵⁰

Das Kloster Mār Juḥanna Schowéier (Mār Yuḥannā aš-Šuwayr) besichtigte Seetzen auf einem Ausflug in das Libanongebirge, jedoch lassen sich in seinen

¹⁴⁷ Tamir Pascha konnte nicht identifiziert werden.

¹⁴⁸ Osmanische Notabeln engagierten auch fränkische Leibärzte, wie etwa der « Großstatthalter von Anadolu », der von einem jungen neapolitanischen Arzt medizinisch betreut wurde (Vgl. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 431). Diesem begegnete Seetzen in Axar (Akhisar) am 1. Juli 1803 auf der Reise von Konstantinopel nach Aleppo (Vgl. Ibid., 429–432).

¹⁴⁹ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 53–56.

¹⁵⁰ WALBINDER, « Monastic Medicine », p. 494–496, 498–500.

Schilderungen keine Hinweise auf ärztliche Tätigkeiten der Mönche finden. Die Mönche, mit denen er sich vermutlich nicht unterhielt, beschreibt er folgendermaßen: « Die hiesigen Mönche sind, ausser einen Beiruter, alle vom Libanon, und scheinen aus dem niedrigsten Stande genommen zu seyn, daher zeigen sie sehr wenig Lebensart, und noch weniger Kenntnisse. Sie gleichen in ihrem Betragen gemeinen Tagelöhnern ». ¹⁵¹ Seetzen gibt keinen weiteren Ausführungen zu seinem Urteil. Er besuchte das Kloster für ein paar Tage während eines Ausflugs in den Libanon, ohne dort lange Zeit zu verbringen, sodass sein Urteil vermutlich lediglich auf dem äußerlichen Erscheinungsbild oder dem mit seiner Wertvorstellung nicht konformen Benehmen und Habitus eines ausgebildeten Mediziners beruht.

Gemäß der Beschreibung der Brüder Russell beschränkte sich die medizinische Ausbildung in Aleppo in der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts auf eine Art Lehre, bei der ein Meister seinem Lehrling oder Sohn die medizinische Kunst in der Praxis beibrachte.

The actual practitioners in physic are the only medical professors, and teach the art to their sons or pupils, more in the way of example than precept. The master rarely descending to a formal explanation, leaves it to the student to discover the rationale of the practice as well as he can: hence the pupil's progress depends chiefly on his own natural sagacity, and assiduous observation, unassisted by the master, or any well conducted choice of books. ¹⁵²

Nach Russell erfolgte die Lektüre medizinischer Bücher nicht in Studienzirkeln, sondern planlos (desultory), sofern die Schriften überhaupt gelesen wurden. Nur wenige praktizierende Ärzte kannten sich Russell zufolge ausreichend mit Avicennas *Kanon der Medizin* aus. Medizinische Bücher seien demnach zwar keine Mangelware gewesen und in der Familie vererbt oder käuflich erworben worden, jedoch habe es an einer durch einen Lehrer angeleiteten (ill directed reading) systematische Lektüre dieser Bücher gefehlt, was zu oberflächlichen Kenntnissen und unkritischem Denken geführt habe. ¹⁵³

Das negative Bild, das Russell von der medizinischen Ausbildung in Aleppo zeichnet, wird indes durch einige positive Bemerkungen gemildert. Beispielsweise brachte er seine Bewunderung für die Geschicklichkeit einheimischer Ärzte beim Pulsfühlen zum Ausdruck oder gestand ein, dass einige Ärzte beim Praktizieren ihres Berufes außerordentliche Erfolge erzielten. ¹⁵⁴ So ist die Rede von einem gewissen Eben Joseph al Kebeer, wohl einem Christlichen, der um die Mitte des 18.

¹⁵¹ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 260.

¹⁵² RUSSELL, *The Natural History of Aleppo*, p. 117.

¹⁵³ Vgl. RUSSELL, *The Natural History of Aleppo*, p. 121–122.

¹⁵⁴ Vgl. RUSSELL, *The Natural History of Aleppo*, p. 123, 134–135.

Jahrhunderts verstarb. « [He] left behind him the reputation of having practiced with a success almost miraculous. His sayings were quoted as indisputable aphorisms, and it was considered as a sufficient medical qualification, to have been even for a short time, a disciple of Eben Joseph al Kebeer ».¹⁵⁵

Zudem ist auf eine griechische Medizinschule in Istanbul hinzuweisen, die ausschließlich griechisch-orthodoxe osmanische Untertanen aufnahm. Sie wurde während der Amtszeit des Obermedicus (*hekîmbaşı*) Muştafâ Behcet Efendi, also zwischen 1803 und 1807, als « Griechische Medizinschule Kuruçeşme » eröffnet. Als jedoch der Leiter der Schule Demetreus Mourouzy 1812 aufgrund von Verrat hingerichtet wurde, musste die Einrichtung nach nur wenigen Jahren wieder geschlossen werden.¹⁵⁶

Zusammenfassend lässt sich konstatieren, dass Seetzen zu levantinischen bzw. christlich-orientalischen Ärzten direkten Kontakt pflegte. Einen höheren Stellenwert genossen bei ihm offenbar diejenigen levantinischen Mediziner, die ein Studium an einer europäischen Ausbildungsstätte absolvierten. Jedoch stellten kulturelle Merkmale, vor allem Sprache und Religion, das entscheidende identitätsstiftende Substrat. Dadurch blieben die orientalistisch-christliche Mediziner, die an einer europäischen Universität studiert hatten, Angehörige der 'anderen' Gruppe.

V. Türkische oder muslimische Ärzte

Was türkische d. h. muslimische Ärzte angeht, sind die Berichte in Seetzens Tagebüchern ähnlich karg wie im Falle der jüdischen Ärzte, was auf den Mangel an direkten Kontakten zurückzuführen ist. Diese Ärzte zählten zu den religiösen Gelehrten (*ulemâ*), da sie eine Medresen-Ausbildung genossen hatten. In Istanbul war im 18. und am Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts die Medizinschule der Süleymaniye *Süleymaniye tıp medresesi* eine etablierte Ausbildungsstätte für muslimische Ärzte. Studenten, die zuvor eine Grundausbildung in religiösen Fächern absolviert hatten, belegten bei einem Professor, der gleichzeitig ein Palastarzt war, und einem Assistenten Kurse in medizinischen Fächern.¹⁵⁷ Ebenso diente das Krankenhaus *Fatih Dârüşşifa* als Ausbildungsstätte für Ärzte. Zwischen

¹⁵⁵ RUSSELL, *The Natural History of Aleppo*, p. 135.

¹⁵⁶ Vgl. YILDIRIM, *A History of Healthcare in Istanbul*, p. 135, 277–278; YILMAZ, YILMAZ, *Osmanlılarda Sağlık*, vol. I, p. 240–244; C.f. SALIM AYDUZ, « Süleymaniye Medical Madrasa (Dâr Al-Tib) in the History of Ottoman Medicine », *Foundation of Science, Technology and Civilization* (2007), p. 1–16, <https://muslimheritage.com/uploads/Suleymaniye_Medical_Madrasah.pdf> (Accessed October 2023); SOKOLOV, *The Church of Constantinople*, p. 197–198.

¹⁵⁷ Vgl. YILDIRIM, *A History of Healthcare in Istanbul*, p. 275.

1723 und 1783 standen sechs Ausbildungsstellen zur Verfügung, die mit Absolventen der Süleymaniye-Medrese besetzt wurden.¹⁵⁸

In den arabischen Provinzen existierten zwar zahlreiche Medresen, allerdings fehlen umfassende Studien, die die Rolle derselben bei der Ausbildung muslimischer Ärzten untersuchen. Laut den Beschreibungen eines Gelehrten der al-Azhar-Medrese in Kairo, Scheich Aḥmad b. ‘Abd al-Mun‘im al-Damanhūrī (1689–1778), der neben den religiösen und rechtswissenschaftlichen Fächern mehrere nichtreligiöse Fächer, darunter Medizin, studierte,¹⁵⁹ durften in Religion ausgebildete Schüler nach dem Absolvieren einer linguistischen und religiösen Grundausbildung Vorlesungen bei einem Gelehrten besuchen, der ebenfalls Medresen-Absolvent und ärztlich tätig war. Allerdings scheint diese Ausbildung rein theoretischer Natur gewesen zu sein und keine unmittelbare Vorbereitung für das Praktizieren als Arzt dargestellt zu haben.

Gemäß den Beschreibungen der Brüder Russell waren muslimische Ärzte in Aleppo tätig, die großen Respekt in der Bevölkerung und bei den Würdenträgern genossen.¹⁶⁰ Aufgrund ihres überlegenen Rechtsstatus führten sie häufiger chirurgische Eingriffe durch als christliche oder jüdische Ärzte.¹⁶¹ Ob sie in Aleppo eine Medresen-Ausbildung absolviert oder durch ein Meister-Schüler-Verhältnis die medizinische Kunst erlernt hatten, geht aus Russells Beschreibungen indes nicht hervor. Obwohl Muslimische Ärzte also offenbar wichtig für die medizinische Versorgung der Bevölkerung Aleppos waren, lassen sich keine Hinweise auf sie in Seetzens Tagebüchern finden, was sie in seiner Schilderung der Ärztelandschaft fast vollständig unsichtbar macht. Diese Auslassung betrifft nicht

¹⁵⁸ Vgl. YILDIRIM, *A History of Healthcare in Istanbul*, p. 275.

¹⁵⁹ Scheich al-Damanhūrī studierte neben den für einen Azhar-Absolventen obligatorischen linguistischen, religiösen und rechtswissenschaftlichen Fächern auf fakultativer Basis weitere Wissenschaften, wie Arithmetik, Geometrie, Astrologie, Astronomie, Magie (Numerologie, Amulettkunde, magische Quadrate) und Medizin. Eine detaillierte Auflistung seiner Lektüren, seiner Lehrer sowie seiner eigenen Kompilationen hinterließ er der Nachwelt in seinem autobiographischen Werk *al-Laṭā‘if an-nūriyya fī al-minaḥ ad-damanhūriyya* (Gottesgnaden und ad-Damanhūrī-Gaben) (AḤMAD RAGAB, *Medicine and Religion in the Life of an Ottoman Sheikh: al-Damanhūrī’s ‘Clear Statement’ on Anatomy*, Routledge, London – New York 2019, p. 17, 83–85). Medizin studierte er bei Aḥmad al-Qarāfī, einem Mediziner am benachbarten Krankenhaus al-Bīmāristān al-Manṣūrī, und las bei ihm sechs Werke teilweise oder vollständig: 1. Ibn al-Nafīs *al-Mūğāz*, 2. Einige Kommentare zum vorherigen Werk wie der des Sadīd ad-Dīn al-Kāzarūnī (gest. 1357), 3. *al-Lamḥah al-‘afīfiyya fī ‘asbāb al-‘amrāḍ wa-‘alāmātihā* von Maḥmūd b. Aḥmad b. al-Amṣaṭī (gest. 1496), 4. Teile von Ibn Sīnās *al-Qānūn*, 5. Teile von Ibn Sīnās *Urğūza fī ṭ-ṭibb* und 6. Teile von al-Mağūsīs *Kāmil aṣ-ṣinā‘a aṭ-ṭibiyya* (Ibid., p. 50, 85). Scheich al-Damanhūrī verfasste neben zahlreichen Werken in allen möglichen Wissenschaften fünf medizinische Werke: Eine Beschreibung der Anatomie des menschlichen Körpers, eine gekürzte Fassung davon, eine Abhandlung über Hämorrhoiden, eine Zusammenfassung über die Grundlagen der Medizin und eine Abhandlung über die Behandlung von Skorpionbissen (Ibid., p. 54, 87).

¹⁶⁰ Vgl. RUSSELL, *The Natural History of Aleppo*, p. 122–123.

¹⁶¹ Vgl. RUSSELL, *The Natural History of Aleppo*, p. 138.

nur Aleppo, sondern alle von Seetzen besuchten Städte und Gegenden. Die zwei einzigen Ausnahmen sind der Obermedicus (*hekîmbâşı*) des Osmanischen Reiches und ein beduinischer Heiler. Über beide Personen berichtete Seetzen allerdings nur aus zweiter Hand.

Das prestigeträchtige Amt des Oberarztes im Osmanischen Reich bekleidete ein Türke bzw. Muslim mit einer klassischen religiösen Ausbildung (*ilmiyya*).¹⁶² Reiseberichte erwecken den Eindruck, es habe sich um einen repräsentativen, hochangesehenen Posten gehandelt, der von einem hochgestellten Osmanen bekleidet wurde, der allerdings über keine herausragenden medizinischen Fertigkeiten verfügte, weshalb die Behandlung des Herrschers fränkischen Ärzten übertragen wurde. Der britische Konsul von Basra, anschließender Superintendent der Quarantäne-Abteilung in Malta und Verfasser einer Landeskunde über das Osmanische Reich William Eton¹⁶³ bringt dieses stereotypische Bild auf den Punkt:

[...] the science of medicine [...] commands a high degree of respect in Turkey, when we find that the dignity of first physician to the grand seignior is marked by the title of *hekim bachi effendi* [...] but the fact is, that the state physician is a mere nominal dignity, enjoyed by men of no skill in this science, whilst the man to whom the care of the sultan's health is entrusted is always a Greek, a Jew, or an European, and it is merely for form sake that the consent and presence of the *hekim bachi* must be obtained for the administration of remedies whose medical properties he is in general profoundly ignorant.¹⁶⁴

Seetzen berichtet, dass zum Zeitpunkt seines Besuchs in Konstantinopel (1802/1803) Nu'mân Efendi der amtierende *hekîmbâşı* gewesen sei.¹⁶⁵ Laut Angaben eines Apothekers, der sein Geschäft im griechischen Teil des Stadtviertels Fenar betrieb, habe der Sohn dieses Türken in Wien Medizin studiert, « vielleicht der erste Fall in seiner Art so lange die Welt besteht ».¹⁶⁶ Seetzens Verwunderung ist vor dem Hintergrund der zeitgenössischen Überzeugung zu verstehen, dass Christen und keine Türken (d. h. Muslime) Medizin an europäischen Universitäten studierten. Entsprechend subsumierte der Medizinprofessor Leonhard Ludwig Finke (1747–1837) in seinem universellen, globalhistorischen Werk *Versuch einer*

¹⁶² Einen Überblick über das Amt des *hekîmbâşı* gibt YILMAZ, *Osmanlılarda Sağlık*, vol. I, p. 85–98; YILDIRIM, *A History of Healthcare in Istanbul*, p. 19–21. Zu den einzelnen Personen, die das Amt bekleideten, siehe BAYAT *Osmanlı devleti'nde*.

¹⁶³ Die Lebensdaten von William Eton sind nicht bekannt. Er wirkte zwischen 1795 und 1805 (British Biographical Archive (BBA): <<https://wbis-degruyter-com.ezproxy.uzh.ch/biographic-document/B59269>, 28.7.2023>).

¹⁶⁴ WILLIAM ETON, *A Survey of the Turkish Empire*, T. Cadell and W. Davis, London 1799, p. 221–222.

¹⁶⁵ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 291, 342.

¹⁶⁶ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 342.

allgemeinen medicinisch-praktischen Geographie (Leipzig, 1792–1795), das er aus zahlreichen Reiseberichten und Länderbeschreibungen kompiliert hatte und das als Sammelbecken stereotypischer Vorstellungen par excellence diente: « Türken entschliessen sich selten zur Erlernung der Medicin, sondern es sind gemeiniglich Christen, Armenier oder Juden, welche diese Wissenschaft treiben ».¹⁶⁷ Dieses Zitat mag einen wahren Kern haben, da Muslime im 18. Jahrhundert tatsächlich kein Medizinstudium an europäischen Universitäten aufnahmen oder dies anstrebten.¹⁶⁸ Allerdings ist es Ausdruck einer eurozentristischen Perspektive, weil es impliziert, dass ein Mediziner seine Qualifikation nur durch ein Studium an einer europäischen Institution erlangen könnte, was die Ausbildung von Ärzten an Medresen, wie der Süleymaniyye-Medrese, oder die praktische Vermittlung von Lehrer zu Schüler völlig außer Acht lässt.

Der besagte *hekîmbâşı* war Nu'mân Na'îm Efendi (gest. 1806), der von März 1796 bis Mai 1803 das Amt des Obermedicus im Osmanischen Reich innehatte.¹⁶⁹ Er hatte in der Tat einen Sohn namens Muṣṭafâ Mas'ûd, den er zum Medizinstudium nach Wien schickte. Über dessen dortigen Aktivitäten zirkulierten viele Gerüchte. So wurde gemunkelt, dass er seinen zweijährigen Aufenthalt in Kneipen und Freudenhäusern verbracht habe, andere Beobachter erzählten, dass er bei einem österreichischen Arzt Medizinunterricht auf Türkisch genommen habe.¹⁷⁰ Jedenfalls beherrschte Muṣṭafâ Mas'ûd nach seiner Rückkehr in die Heimat die Sprache des Gastlandes nicht. Jedoch schaffte er es durch Beziehungen und Geschick, in die Hofärzteschaft aufgenommen zu werden und bekleidete selbst das Amt des *hekîmbâşı* von August 1808 bis Oktober 1817.¹⁷¹ Auch wenn es ihm an Fachkenntnissen mangelte, hielt er sich durch geschicktes Taktieren im Amt und überließ medizinische Tätigkeiten anderen Ärzten aus seinem Gefolge. Möglicherweise infolge einer Syphiliserkrankung, die er sich in Wien zugezogen haben mag, habe er am Ende seiner Amtszeit an neurologischen Beschwerden gelitten, sei entlassen worden und kurz darauf gestorben.¹⁷²

Die Lebensgeschichte von Muṣṭafâ Mas'ûd Efendi zeigt einerseits die Zweiteilung der Medizinkultur im Osmanischen Reich, die durch die religiöse Zugehörigkeit definiert wird, andererseits verrät sie ein vages Interesse der osmanischen Obrigkeit an medizinischen Entwicklungen in Europa, vor allem in

¹⁶⁷ FINKE, *Versuch einer allgemeinen medicinisch-praktischen Géographie*, vol. I, p. 132.

¹⁶⁸ Siehe dazu die Biographien der Ärzte im ersten Band von İHSANOĞLU et al. (eds.), *Osmanlı Tıbbi Bilimler Literatürü Tarihi*, vol. I, p. 342–462). Die Osmanen hatten offenbar kein Interesse daran, ihre Söhne zum Studium nach Europa zu schicken. Selbiges galt für den Handel, denn Osmanen richteten keine Handelsniederlassungen in europäischen Ländern ein (LAIDLAW, *The British in the Levant*, p. 15).

¹⁶⁹ Vgl. BAYAT, *Osmanlı devleti'nde*, p. 133.

¹⁷⁰ Vgl. BAYAT, *Osmanlı devleti'nde*, p. 154.

¹⁷¹ Vgl. BAYAT, *Osmanlı devleti'nde*, p. 154–156.

¹⁷² Vgl. BAYAT, *Osmanlı devleti'nde*, p. 155.

Wien. Dass Muṣṭafā Mas'ūd Efendi als gescheiterter Grenzgänger und unzureichend qualifizierter Mediziner in die Geschichte eingeht, obwohl er das höchste medizinische Amt im Osmanischen Reich innehatte, könnte so gedeutet werden, dass sein Milieu ihn ablehnte, weil er sich an europäischen Vorbildern orientierte.

Des Weiteren berichtet Seetzen von einem beduinischen Arzt, allerdings wiederum nur aus zweiter Hand. Ein Mönch im Kloster der Terra Santa in Aleppo habe ihm von drei erfolgreichen Behandlungen des Beduinen erzählt, der ein verspanntes Bein, eine lebensgefährliche fieberhafte Infektion und einen Fall von Wassersucht geschickt kuriert habe:

Auch gemeine Beduinen gibt es hier, die sich mit Menschenkuren abgeben. Der Pater Guardian des hiesigen Klosters de terra sancta, Ermenenogildo, aus Lucca gebürtig, ein wohl unterrichteter Mann, erzählte mir folgende Kuren eines solchen Beduinen. Ein Mann hatte ein *contracttes*¹⁷³ Bein, welches er nicht grade ausstrecken konnte. Der Beduin fasste es mit aller Stärke, zog es grade und band es auf einem Brette fest. Der Patient wurde besser. – Ein Kranker, der ein inflammatorisches Faulfieber¹⁷⁴ hatte und den die Aerzte aufgegeben hatten, kam auch in seine Kur. Weil er doch sterben musste, so wollte man auch dies Mittel nicht unbenutzt lassen. Er liess ein Rind schlachten [...] nam die frische warme Haut, bestreute sie dicht mit Pfeffer, Ingwer, Kaneel etc. und wickelte nun den Kranken in dieselbe ein. Der Kranke schwitzte stark, und er wurde besser. – Ein anderer Kranker hatte die allgemeine Wassersucht¹⁷⁵ im hohen Grade. Er nam ein grosses Eisen, machte es glühend, fuhr damit erst über die dicken wasservollen Beine, dass es zischte, nachher über die Lenden, dann unter den Leisten, dann unter dem Nabel, und endlich über der Brust. Der Kranke wurde wieder gesund!¹⁷⁶

Die Beschreibung ungewöhnlicher Behandlungsmethoden, im vorliegenden Fall des verspannten Beins durch Herausziehen, des Faulfiebers durch das Auflegen frischer Rindshaut und der Wassersucht durch Kauterisation, war ein beliebtes Sujet in Reiseberichten und Landesbeschreibungen, William Eton erwähnt ebenfalls die erfolgreiche Behandlung der Wassersucht mit Kauterisation.¹⁷⁷ Darüber hinaus beschreibt er die Fixierung von Knochenbrüchen mit Gips, die

¹⁷³ Unter « *contracttes Bein* » ist ein stark verspanntes Bein zu verstehen, das nur unter starken Schmerzen ausgestreckt werden kann (Vgl. STEVEN BLANCKAERT, *Lexicon medicum*, Io. Gottl. Bierwirth, Halle 1748, p. 219–220).

¹⁷⁴ « *Faulfieber* » ist ‘*putrida febris*’, ein Fieber, bei dem das Blut verdirbt und vertrocknet und das zum Tode führen kann (Vgl. BLANCKAERT, *Lexicon medicum*, p. 317, 562).

¹⁷⁵ Wassersucht oder ‘*hydrops*’ ist eine Ansammlungen von Flüssigkeiten im Fettgewebe, in den Organen oder Kavitäten des Körpers. Sie wird durch Verabreichung von trocknenden Arzneien behandelt (Vgl. BLANCKAERT, *Lexicon medicum*, p. 371).

¹⁷⁶ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 91–92.

¹⁷⁷ ETON, *A Survey of the Turkish Empire*, p. 225.

Behandlung von Schwerverwundeten durch Sandbäder und von erfrorenen Körperteilen durch Einreiben mit Gänsefett.¹⁷⁸ Diese Geschichten mögen den Reiseberichten ein Flair von Exotismus verliehen haben, mitunter stimulierten sie allerdings die Weiterentwicklung von Behandlungspraktiken in europäischem Kontext, wie Marcel Chahrour am Beispiel des Gipsverbandes und der Pockenimpfung darlegt.¹⁷⁹

Zusammenfassend lässt sich feststellen, dass Seetzen keinen Kontakt zu muslimischen Ärzten pflegte, denn seine äußerst kargen Informationen über sie stammen aus zweiter Hand. Dadurch wird der Eindruck erweckt, dass zwei parallel existierende Medizinkulturen bestanden, die sich primär durch die religiöse Zugehörigkeit definierten. Dass Seetzens Ärztelandschaft Lücken hinsichtlich muslimischer und jüdischer Ärzte aufweist, hat m. E. zwei Gründe: Einerseits war er ein wissbegieriger Reisender, der an den besuchten Orten – mit Ausnahme von Aleppo und Kairo – nicht lange verweilte. Seine Schilderungen stammen größtenteils aus zweiter Hand, von vor Ort lebenden Franken oder seinen einheimischen – meist christlichen – Reisebegleitern, Dolmetschern und Bekannten. Andererseits fielen sein rund anderthalb Jahre dauernder Aufenthalt in Aleppo und sein zweijähriger Verbleib in Kairo in eine Zeit, die durch eine Verschärfung der Fronten zwischen den religiösen Gruppierungen geprägt war.¹⁸⁰ Daher ist nachvollziehbar, dass selbst ein wissbegieriger und kosmopolitischer Mensch wie Seetzen aus Sicherheitsgründen in einem vertrauten Milieu von Franken und Levantinern verblieb.

Schließlich verdeutlichen die Beispiele von Nu'mān Efendi und dem Volksheiler die mit Abstand die wichtigste Vermittlungsfunktion Seetzens, nämlich die Repräsentation des 'Anderen' durch schriftliche Fixierung und Darstellung. Dabei agierte Seetzen als letztes Glied in einer Vermittlungskette, die mehrere Vermittler involvierte, wie seine Informationen über den beduinischen Volksheiler verdeutlichen, die er durch einen Franziskaner erhielt, welcher seinerseits über einen orientalischen Christen und eventuell noch weitere Zwischenstationen von diesem Beduinen erfuhr, oder wie die Informationen über Nu'mān Efendi, die er über den jüdischen Apotheker nach Vermittlung weitere Akteure erlangte.

¹⁷⁸ ETON, *A Survey of the Turkish Empire*, p. 225–228.

¹⁷⁹ Vgl. CHAHROUR, *Der medizinische Orient*, p. 45–61; 62–111; 197, 208.

¹⁸⁰ Die französische Besatzung Ägyptens führte zu einer nachhaltigen Erschütterung der bestehenden politischen Ordnung und zur Destabilisierung von sozialen Strukturen, was sich in religiösem Fanatismus und Gewalt zwischen Muslimen und Christen manifestierte (Vgl. HOURANI, *Die Geschichte der arabischen Völker*, p. 325–326, 329 sowie AL-ĞABARTĪ, *Bonaparte in Ägypten*, p. 93).

VI. Beurteilung einheimischer Ärzte: Das 'Andere' und das 'Eigene'

Seetzen bereitete sich auf seine 'Entdeckungsreise' durch die Lektüre aller ihm zugänglichen Reiseberichte und Landesbeschreibungen früherer Orientreisender vor.¹⁸¹ Das dadurch erworbene Vorwissen bedingte unvermeidlich gewisse stereotypische Vorstellungen, die seine Wahrnehmung, Deutung und Schilderung des auf der Reise Erlebten beeinflussten. Entsprechend hebt Mirjam Hähnle in ihrer Untersuchung zur Deutung der altägyptischen Ruinen in Niebuhrs Beschreibungen hervor: Autoren von Reiseberichten seien 'Grenzgänger' zwischen *Erfahrung* der Welt und der *Erwartung* des bereits bekannten, diskursiv vermittelten Wissens.¹⁸² Der Rückgriff Seetzens auf das 'diskursive Vorwissen' ist an mehreren Stellen in seinen Beschreibungen festzustellen. Darüber hinaus sind seine Beurteilungen größtenteils durch Rückgriff auf eigene Wertvorstellungen zu verstehen, die im aufklärerischen Denken seiner Zeit zu verorten sind.

Das Unwissen der einheimischen Ärzte, die nicht an einer europäischen Universität studiert hatten, beschreibt Seetzen auf Grundlage der Angaben des bereits erwähnten armenischen Arztes, den er in Karahisar getroffen hatte, folgendermaßen:

Die Ärzte in diesen Ländern, die nicht in Europa (gewöhnlich auf einer italienischen Universität z. B. Bologna, Padua etc.) studirt haben, sind gewöhnlich in ihren Kenntnissen wahre Stümper, bloss Empirici. Ihre Bibliothek ist sehr compendiös, und besteht aus einem halben Dutzend alter elender medicinischer und pharmazeutischer Werke – versteht sich, wenn sie eine europäische Sprache kennen – oder oft haben sie auch gar keins. Lässt ein Kranker sie kommen: so accordiren sie zuvor mit ihm um den Preis der Kur, lassen sich auch wohl die Hälfte davon voraus zahlen. Sie haben gewöhnlich eine doppelte Rechnung; einmal für die Arznei, weil es ausser [in] Constantinopel keine Apotheken giebt, und daher ieder Arzt selbst für die Bereitung der Arznei sorgen muss, und dann für ihre Besuche. Sie lassen sich nach ihren geringen Kenntnissen sehr gut bezahlen. Auf Dioscorides setzen die levantinischen Aerzte einen grossen Werth, und es giebt unter den hiesigen Aerzte die von Ebn senna, Rhases und etwas von Hippokrates Schriften zu

¹⁸¹ So zitiert Seetzen in seinem « Reiseplan ins innere Afrika » u. a. Carsten Niebuhr (1733–1815), Charles-Nicolas-Sigisbert Sonnini de Manoncourt (1751–1812), Constantin François Volney (1757–1820), François Levaillant (1753–1824), John Jackson (gest. 1807), William Francklin (1763–1839), William George Browne (1768–1813), Georg Forster (1754–1794), Jean Louis Marie Poiret (1755–1834), Mungo Park (1771–1806), Eyles Irwin (1751–1817), James Bruce (1730–1794), Göran Rothman (1739–1778): Vgl. SEETZEN, « Reiseplan ins innere Afrika », p. 201–232, 317–342.

¹⁸² MIRIJAM HÄHNLE, « Das Ruinenfeld als 'Merkwürdigkeit' und 'Kontaktzone' », in JOACHIM EIBACH, CLAUDIA OPITZ-BELAKHAL (eds.), *Zwischen Kulturen. Mittler und Grenzgänger vom 17. bis 19. Jahrhundert*, Wehrhahn Verlag, Hannover 2018 (Historische Formationen Europas, 9), p. 102.

sagen wissen. Sie gewinnen vorzüglich auf die Arznei, die sie zu hohen Preisen geben.¹⁸³

Die Kritik zielt auf das angeblich mangelhafte medizinische theoretische Fachwissen und die daraus resultierende fachliche Inkompetenz: Aufgrund des Fehlens sowohl einer akademischen Ausbildung als auch europäischer Sprachkenntnisse hätten diese Ärzte nur auf veraltete medizinische und pharmazeutische Werke zurückgreifen können. « Oft » besäßen sie sogar kein einziges Fachbuch. Mit den « alten elenden » Werken sind Schriften von Dioskurides,¹⁸⁴ Ibn Sīnā¹⁸⁵ und ar-Rāzī¹⁸⁶ gemeint.

Diese Ärzte seien ‘Stümper’, womit ein bemitleidenswerter und untüchtiger Mensch bezeichnet wurde, der in « Handwerk, Kunst und Wissenschaft nichts oder nur geringes versteht und leistet ». ¹⁸⁷ Darüber hinaus werden die einheimischen Ärzte als ‘Empirici’ charakterisiert. Damit sind laut Steven Blanckaerts *Lexicon medicum* Mediziner gemeint, die sich bei der Behandlung von Krankheiten auf die praktische Erfahrung und nicht auf Wissenschaft stützen, was im Deutschen dem ‘Landfahrer’ oder ‘Quacksalber’ entspricht. ¹⁸⁸ Wie genau die Worte des armenischen Arztes lauteten, ist aus Seetzens Eintrag nicht zu eruieren; wichtig ist, dass er dessen Kritik durch die Verwendung des Wortes ‘Empirici’ in seine eigene Wissensordnung transferierte. Bereits seit der frühen Neuzeit kämpften akademische bzw. staatlich geprüfte Mediziner gegen ‘Landläufer’ und ‘Empirici’,

¹⁸³ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 676.

¹⁸⁴ Pedanius Dioscorides aus Anazarbos (fl. im 1. Jhd.) war ein griechischer Arzt, Herbalist und Verfasser des einflussreichen Werks *De materia medica*, das die Pharmakologie in der islamischen Welt, im Byzantinischen Reich und in Lateineuropa bis in die Neuzeit prägte (Vgl. LEIGH CHIPMAN, « Dioscorides », in KATE FLEET et al. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Islam*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_26047> (Accessed September 2023)).

¹⁸⁵ Abu ‘Alī al-Husayn b. ‘Abd Allāh b. Sīnā (980–1037), in Europa als Avicenna bekannt, war ein Universalgelehrter, der sich vor allem in Philosophie und Medizin auszeichnete. Sein enzyklopädisches Werk *al-Qānūn fī ṭ-ṭibb* (Kanon der Medizin) wurde ins Lateinische übersetzt und war vom 12. bis ins 16. Jahrhundert das Standardlehrbuch für Medizinstudenten an europäischen Universitäten (Vgl. AMÉLIE MARIE GOICHON, « Ibn Sīnā », in KATE FLEET et al. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Islam*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_0342> (Accessed September 2023)).

¹⁸⁶ Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Zakariyyā’ ar-Rāzī (ca. 854–925/935), in Europa als Rhazes bekannt, war Arzt, Philosoph und Alchemist. Seine medizinischen Bücher, z. B. *al-Manṣūrī fī ṭ-ṭibb* (*Liber medicinalis ad Almansorem*) und *al-Kitāb al-Mulūkī* (*Regius*), wurden im 12. Jahrhundert ins Lateinische übersetzt und waren einflussreiche medizinische Werke (Vgl. LENN EVAN GOODMAN, « al-Rāzī », in P. BEARMAN et al. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Islam*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_6267> (Accessed September 2023)).

¹⁸⁷ JACOB GRIMM, WILHELM GRIMM, « Stümper », in *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, vol. XX, Universität Trier, Trier 2002, col. 422, <<https://www.woerterbuchnetz.de/DWB?lemid=S54507>> (Accessed February 2023).

¹⁸⁸ BLANCKAERT, *Lexicon medicum*, p. 291: « qui in curandis morbis experimentis solummodo continenti sunt, neglecta ratione ».

also gegen die frei praktizierenden Ärzten ohne Examen, die « ohne behördliche Genehmigung Arzneimittel herstellten und vertrieben ». ¹⁸⁹ So verbot die Nürnberger Medizinalordnung von 1592 nicht nur die Ausübung medizinischer Tätigkeiten ohne Genehmigung, sondern bestrafte auch jeden, der einen 'Empiricus' oder Alchemiker beherbergte, mit einer Geldbuße von 10 Gulden. ¹⁹⁰

Weiterhin verlangten einheimischen Ärzte trotz schlechter Fachkenntnisse ein hohes Honorar und verkauften ihre selbst hergestellten Arzneien « zu hohen Preisen ». Inwieweit dieses Urteil einer Konkurrenz um die Klientel in einer vergleichsweise kleinen Stadt entsprang, muss dahingestellt bleiben. Setzen zufolge bemängelte also der armenische Arzt bei einheimischen Medizinern das veraltete Wissen, die fachliche Inkompetenz und das überhöhte Honorar.

Setzen kritisiert ebenfalls in mehreren Kommentaren Fachkenntnisse und Praktiken einheimischer Mediziner, allerdings nicht in Bezug auf ihre Sprachkenntnisse oder ihre wissenschaftlichen Autoritäten. So nennt er ohne Wertung die Werke von Ibn Sīnā, Ibn al-Quff¹⁹¹ und Dawūd al-Anṭākī¹⁹² sowie die von Galen¹⁹³ und Hippokrates,¹⁹⁴ die levantinische Ärzte in Aleppo lasen.¹⁹⁵ Er wunderte sich zwar über die Monolingualität des maronitischen Arztes, die ihm ausschließlich Zugang zur arabischen Medizin gewährte, seine Äußerung enthält allerdings keine Geringschätzung der arabischen Medizin, obgleich er sie als Gegenpol zur europäischen darstellte: « Ich wundere mich aber, dass er keine

¹⁸⁹ RUDOLF SCHMITZ, « Von der frühen Neuzeit bis zur Gegenwart », in CHRISTOPH FRIEDRICH, WOLF-DIETER MÜLLER-JAHNCKE (eds.), *Geschichte der Pharmazie*, vol. II, Govi Verlag, Eschborn 2005, p. 87.

¹⁹⁰ SCHMITZ, « Von der frühen Neuzeit bis zur Gegenwart », p. 213.

¹⁹¹ Amīn al-Dawla Abū 'l-Faraj b. Muwaffaq al-Dīn Ya'qūb b. Ishāq (1233–1286) war zur Herrschaftszeit von al-Zāhir Baybars (1260–1277) Arzt und Chirurg in Adschlun (im heutigen Jordanien) und Damaskus. Er verfasste mehrere medizinische Werke, die nicht ins Lateinische übersetzt wurden, darunter sein bekanntes Werk über Chirurgie 'Umdat al-iṣlāḥ fī 'amal ṣinā'at al-ḡarrāḥ, sowie Kommentare zum Werk von Ibn Sīnās al-Qānūn fī ṭ-ṭibb und zu Hippocrates Aphorismen (SAMI K. HARMARNEH, « Ibn al-Quff », in KATE FLEET et al. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Islam*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_8659> (Accessed September 2023)).

¹⁹² Dā'ūd b. 'Umar al-Ḍarīr al-Anṭākī (gest. 1599), ein Arzt aus Antakia, der das enzyklopädische Werk Taḍkirat ūlī l-albāb wa-l-ḡāmi' li-l-'aḡāb al-'uḡāb verfasste. Das Werk besteht aus vier Büchern, wobei das dritte Buch alphabetisch nach Drogen und Arzneimitteln geordnet ist und das vierte nach Krankheiten und Wissenschaftsgebieten (Vgl. RAPHAELA VEIT, « Dā'ūd al-Anṭākī », in KATE FLEET et al. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Islam*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_23481> (Accessed September 2023)).

¹⁹³ Zum griechischen Arzt Galenus von Pergamon (ca. 129–199), seiner Rezeption und Wirkung in der islamischen Welt und seinem ins Arabische übersetzten Werk siehe ULLMANN, *Medizin im Islam*, p. 35–68.

¹⁹⁴ Zum griechischen Arzt Hippokrates von Kos (460–ca.370 v. Chr.), seiner Rezeption und Wirkung in der islamischen Welt und seinem ins Arabische übersetzten Werk siehe ULLMANN, *Medizin im Islam*, p. 25–35.

¹⁹⁵ « Von den hiesigen levantinischen Aerzten werden ausser Ibn Sina, Ebne l Kuff etc., Daúhd etc., vorzüglich die Werke Hippokrates' und Galenus geschätzt, wovon es unterschiedliche arabische Übersetzungen giebt », SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 230.

einzigste europäische Sprache spricht, sondern bloss das Arabische. Mithin versteht er auch keine andere medicin als die arabische, da er nie in Europa war ».¹⁹⁶ Seetzens Kritik an den einheimischen Mediziniern richtete sich vielmehr gegen konkrete Sachverhalte: das mangelhafte Anatomiewissen, den Aberglauben und die Praxis des Aderlasses.

Seetzens erster Kritikpunkt betrifft die fehlenden Anatomiekenntnisse einheimischer Ärzte. So schreibt er während seines Aufenthalts in Aleppo:

Das ist ein sehr schlimmer Umstand für die hiesigen inländischen Aerzte, dass eine Anatomie fehlt. Wie sollen sie den menschlichen Körper kennen lernen? Daher die mancherley unrichtigen Meinungen vom menschlichen Körper. Ein Arzt, der den menschlichen Körper nicht kennt, ist ein Blinder oder ein Sehender, der im Finstern tappt.¹⁹⁷

Allerdings beruhte dieses Urteil nicht auf einem konkreten Erlebnis im Umgang mit den einheimischen Ärzten. Es erinnert vielmehr an die ironische Beschreibung der Brüder Russell, die die ungenauen anatomischen Kenntnisse aleppinischer Ärzte anprangerten: « They change the site of the viscera, vary the distribution of nerves and blood vessels, at pleasure, and, when necessary to their demonstration, can even create new bones, unknown in the European skeleton ».¹⁹⁸ Diese subjektive Einschätzung aus europäischer Perspektive lässt sich kaum mit dem in arabischen und osmanisch-türkischen medizinischen Werken und medizinhistorischen Schriften herrschenden Tenor in Einklang bringen, der Anatomiekenntnisse angehender und praktizierender Ärzten als essentiell hervorhebt und der sich in Shefer-Mossensohns Resümee niederschlägt: « Knowledge of anatomy was an integral part of medical sciences in Ottoman society ».¹⁹⁹

Dieser Widerspruch scheint durch unterschiedliche Vorstellungen von Anatomiekenntnissen entstanden zu sein, wie das folgende Zitat Russells bezüglich des anatomischen Wissens aleppinischer Mediziner veranschaulicht: « Their knowledge of anatomy is acquired by reading, not from dissection, and both anatomy and physiology remain precisely in the state in which they were

¹⁹⁶ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 21.

¹⁹⁷ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 86.

¹⁹⁸ RUSSELL, *The Natural History of Aleppo*, p. 132.

¹⁹⁹ SHEFER-MOSSENSOHN, *Ottoman Medicine*, p. 47. Zur Anatomie und Chirurgie im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert siehe *Ibid.*, p. 47–56. Ġād stellt in seinem Buch über Anatomie und Chirurgie und deren Rolle in der islamischen Zivilisation mehrere Zitate aus medizinischen Werken des 11. bis 17. Jahrhunderts zusammen, die die Wichtigkeit der Anatomiekenntnisse hervorheben. Allerdings handelt es sich dabei um theoretisches Wissen und nicht um das Sezieren von Leichen (Vgl. MUḤAMMAD KĀMIL ĠĀD, *at-Taṣrīḥ wa-āl-ġirāḥa wa-dawruḥuma fī al-ḥaqāra al-islamiyya*, Markaz Ġum'a al-Māġid, Dubai 2013, p. 129–134).

transmitted by Galen ». ²⁰⁰ Bereits Ende des 15. Jahrhunderts gründet der Professor für Chirurgie und Anatomie Alessandro Benedetti (1445–1525) an der Universität Padua (um 1490) ein *theatrum anatomicum*, wo Leichen für Unterrichtszwecke in der Öffentlichkeit seziiert wurden. ²⁰¹ Weitere europäische Städte folgten diesem Beispiel. Leichensektionen waren bis zum 18. Jahrhundert nicht nur auf den akademischen Unterricht beschränkt, sondern bildeten eine Art gesellschaftliches « Event ». ²⁰² Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts wurde der Anatomieunterricht weitgehend auf den akademischen Betrieb beschränkt, Leichensektionen blieben jedoch ein integraler Bestandteil der medizinischen Ausbildung.

Dahingegen war die Leichensektion im Osmanischen Reich bis Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts strikt verboten. Diesen Zustand beschrieben mehrere europäische Autoren, darunter Finke: « Die gegenwärtige Verfassung ihrer Regierung [der Türken] erlaubt es nicht, menschliche Körper zu zergliedern, und an die Oeffnung thierischer Körper wird nicht gedacht ». ²⁰³ Das Sezieren von Leichen im Anatomieunterricht wurde erst mit der Begründung der modernen Medizinschulen im Osmanischen Reich eingeführt. ²⁰⁴ Dementsprechend

²⁰⁰ RUSSELL, *The Natural History of Aleppo*, p. 132.

²⁰¹ Vgl. WOLFGANG UWE ECKART, « Anatomisches Theater », in FRIEDRICH JAEGER et al. (eds.), *Enzyklopädie der Neuzeit Online*, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2352-0248_edn_SIM_239423> (Accessed October 2023).

²⁰² Vgl. KARIN STUKENBROCK, *‘Der zerstückelte Körper’. Zur Sozialgeschichte der anatomischen Sektionen in der frühen Neuzeit (1650–1800)*, Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart 2001, p. 123, 149–153.

²⁰³ FINKE, *Versuch einer allgemeinen medicinisch-praktischen Géographie*, vol. I, p. 135; Patrick Russell schreibt: « The practice of opening bodies after death, is not permitted ». Er erklärt, dass dieses Verbot nicht nur der Hitze und der Angst vor Ansteckung geschuldet war, sondern vor allem gesellschaftliche Gründe hatte, da ein Arzt, der eine Leichensektion ausführen würde, sich vor Rache der Familienmitglieder des Verstorbenen fürchten müsse. Daher lehnte Russell das Angebot des Statthalters von Aleppo ab, der ihm eine Erlaubnis erteilen wollte, Leichen bei Verdacht auf « extraordinary disorder » zu obduzieren (Vgl. RUSSELL, *The Natural History of Aleppo*, p. 130–131).

²⁰⁴ Zu den Bemühungen des französischen Arztes und Leiters der ersten um 1820 gegründeten modernen Medizinschule in Kairo, Antoine Barthélémy Clot (1793–1868) oder Clot Bey, das Leichensezieren im Anatomieunterricht einzuführen und dem diesbezüglichen Widerstand unter muslimischen Gelehrten, selbst unter einheimischen Medizinstudenten, siehe SONBOL, *The Creation of a Medical Profession*, p. 64–65. In Istanbul lassen sich Bemühungen um die Legalisierung des Leichensezierens ebenfalls Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts, während der Herrschaftszeit von Sultan Selim III. (reg. 1789–1807), nachweisen. Allerdings wurde eine staatliche Genehmigung erst 1841, während der Herrschaftszeit Sultan Abdülmecids (reg. 1839–1861), erteilt. In der 1827 neu gegründeten modernen Königlichen Hochschule für Medizin und Chirurgie (Tıphane ve Cerrahhane-i Amire) wurde der Anatomieunterricht solange anhand von Anatomieatlanten und aus Europa importierten Wachsexponaten durchgeführt, bis Sultan Abdülmecid seine Erlaubnis erteilte, die Leichen gefangener Sklaven der Marine für den Unterricht zu verwenden, da in diesem Fall keine sozialen Konsequenzen zu fürchten waren (Vgl. SALIH MURAT AKKIN, DINC GULTEN, « A Glimpse Into the Process of Gaining Permission for the Educational Dissection of Human

beschränkte sich das anatomische Wissen einheimischer Ärzte um die Wende zum 19. Jahrhundert auf theoretische Kenntnisse,²⁰⁵ was akademischen Mediziner wie den Brüdern Russell und Seetzen gewiss mangelhaft erschien.

Seetzens zweiter Kritikpunkt betrifft den Aberglauben, was eingedenk seines Selbstverständnisses als Aufklärer nachvollziehbar ist. In den Wissensbeständen der einheimischen Ärzte seien Alchemie und Astrologie ebenso verankert wie der Glaube, dass Krankheiten durch Zauberei ausgelöst werden könnten.²⁰⁶ Seetzen kritisierte weiterhin den Glauben « [an] Hexereien etc. aller Art » und fragte sich: « Kann ein solcher Mann behandeln, wenn er glaubt, dass eine Zauberey bey einer Krankheit im Spiele sey? »²⁰⁷ Was Seetzen mit « Hexereien aller Art » meint, ist anhand seiner Schilderungen nicht zu ermessen, da seine Äußerung nicht im Zusammenhang mit einer konkreten Situation steht.²⁰⁸ Durch die Verwendung des Wortes « Hexerei » überträgt er allerdings die europäische Vorstellungswelt von schwarzer Magie und der Verursachung von Unheil durch dämonische Kräfte, die durch eine Hexe hervorgerufen werden, auf die Praktiken der einheimischen Ärzte im Osmanischen Reich.²⁰⁹

Als akademischer Mediziner kritisiert Seetzen zudem naheliegenderweise die Praxis des Aderlasses. Nach der Beschreibung des großen Blutkreislaufes durch William Harvey (1578–1657) und der Aufdeckung der fehlerhaften Darstellung der Blutzirkulation bei Galen geriet die Phlebotomie in Verruf und wurde mit ungebildeten Barbieren und Praktikern in Verbindung gebracht. Akademische Mediziner setzten die alte Praxis des Aderlasses nur noch in einer modifizierten

Cadavers in the Ottoman Empire », *Clinical Anatomy*, 27 (2014), p. 968–969). 1843 führte der österreichische Arzt und Leiter der Medizinschule Charles Ambroise Bernard (1808–1844) die erste Obduktion vor Medizinstudenten durch (Vgl. NERMIN ÇELİK, « The Start of Conducting Dissection in Ottoman Empire: Osmanlı Devletinde Disseksiyonun Uygulanmaya Başlanması », *International Journal of Basic and Clinical Medicine*, 3/1 (2015), p. 58).

²⁰⁵ Für eine theoretische Darstellung der Anatomie spricht sich auch das Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts verfasste Anatomiewerk von ad-Damanhūrī (1689–1778) al-Qawl aṣ-ṣarīḥ fī ʿilm at-taṣrīḥ (Klare Darstellung der Anatomie) aus, das auf Autoritäten der galeno-arabischen Medizin wie Hippokrates, Ibn Sīnā und al-Majūsī zurückgreift. Das Werk Ibn Sīnās *al-Qānūn fī ṭ-ṭibb* spielt dabei eine wichtige Rolle (Vgl. RAGAB, *Medicine and Religion*, p. 122–125).

²⁰⁶ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 37.

²⁰⁷ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 86.

²⁰⁸ Während seines Aufenthalts in Aleppo berichtete Seetzen von verbreitetem Aberglauben an Amulette, konkret einer Art Kupfermünzen mit dem Bild eines Kalifen in sitzender Stellung, die Schwangeren bei der Entbindung helfen sollen (Vgl. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 252–253). Seetzen beschrieb, wie ein heiliger Scheich durch die Stadt zog und kranke Kinder, Epileptiker, Gelähmte und Wahnsinnige zu ihm gebracht wurden (Vgl. Ibid., p. 95–96).

²⁰⁹ « Witchcraft » stellt Uluğ als ein europäisches Phänomen dar (Vgl. NİMET ELİF ULUĞ, *Elemterefis: Superstitious Beliefs and Occult in the Ottoman Empire (1839–1923)*, Libra Kitapçılık ve Yayıncılık ticaret A.Ş., Istanbul 2016, p. 63–72). Zu den verschiedenen Facetten magischen Denkens im Osmanischen Reich C.f. Ibid., und MARINOS SARIYANNIS, *Perceptions ottomanes du surnaturel: Aspects de l'histoire intellectuelle d'une culture islamique à l'époque modern*, Les Editions du Cerf, Paris 2019.

Form ein oder lehnten die Prozedur völlig ab.²¹⁰ Dies verdeutlicht der Eintrag « Aderlassen » im zeitgenössischen *Allgemeinen Real-Wörterbuch aller Künste und Wissenschaften*, der zusammenfassend feststellt:

Es ist dieses eine der ältesten Operationen, wie man aus den Schriften des Hippocrates ersiehet, und ob sie gleich, wie uns die Erfahrung in allen Zeitaltern lehret, und dem größten Nutzen in sehr vielen Krankheiten gewesen, so ist sie doch nicht unangefochten geblieben, und von einigen als eine grausame und höchst verwerfliche Sache ausgeschrien worden.²¹¹

Seetzen, als akademisch ausgebildeter Mediziner, war ebenfalls kein Befürworter des Aderlassens und betrachtete die Prozedur als lebensbedrohlich, wie er anlässlich einer eigenen Erkrankung am Anfang seiner Reise zum Ausdruck brachte. So schildert er am 19. November 1803 seine Behandlung durch einen einheimischen Arzt in Antakia, der ihn zu Ader lassen wollte, was jedoch durch die Intervention seines Reisebegleiters und Dolmetschers Rubin verhindert wurde. Seetzen zeigte sich überzeugt, dass dieses Eingreifen sein Leben gerettet habe:

Da ich bey meiner Ankunft in Antákia meiner grossen Schwäche wegen wenig von mir wusste: so liess man mich durch einen Arzt besuchen. Er trug seinen Doctor-Kalpack von schwarzem Pelzwerk, wie sich geziemt und gebührt. Das erste, was er, wenn er kam, that, war, dass er meinen Puls an beiden Händen untersuchte, worauf er dann laut schreiend seine Meinung sagte. Darauf besahe er den Urin. Er hatte erst für nöthig gehalten, mich zur Ader zu lassen, wodurch er mich sicher in die Ewigkeit geschickt hätte. Rubin versichert, er sey es gewesen, der ihn davon abgehalten hätte. Wenn dies so ist: so bin ich diesem Menschen noch wohl gar Dank schuldig. Der Doctor verordnete mir nachher ein paar Klystire, welches sehr gut war, und gab mir Crem. Tart., welchen ich selbst auch schon genommen hatte. Ueberdem gab er mir eine Art von Mandelmilch, welche von Melonenkernen gemacht wird, die er mir aber für wahre Mandelmilch verkaufen wollte. Obgleich ich nach etlichen Tagen, wie ich mehr zu mir kam, nichts mehr von ihm nehmen wollte, so kam er doch noch täglich, um meine beiden Pulse zu fühlen und um schreiend zu sagen, dass Alles in guter Besserung sey. Er konnte die lateinischen medicinischen Aufschriften auf den Schachteln meines Medicinvorraths nicht lesen. Seines lauten Sprechens und überhaupt seines rohen Betragens wegen war er mir ein äusserst widerlicher Mann.²¹²

²¹⁰ ECKART, *Geschichte der Medizin*, p. 114–118. PORTER, *The Greatest Benefit to Mankind*, p. 211–216, 313–314. Zu Geschichte des Aderlasses siehe: KAY CODELL CARTER, *The Decline of Therapeutic Bloodletting and the Collapse of Traditional Medicine*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick 2012.

²¹¹ HÖPFNER, *Deutsche Encyclopädie*, p. 223.

²¹² SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 727–728.

Das grobe Benehmen des Arztes und sein lautes Sprechen waren für Seetzen ebenso abstoßend wie seine Unfähigkeit, die lateinischen Buchstaben zu lesen. Das Auftreten verstieß offenbar gegen die Vorstellung eines gelehrten europäischen Arztes, der gewisse gesellschaftliche Standards in Kleidung, Sprache und Benehmen erfüllen musste, um Fachkompetenz und gesellschaftlichen Status vor allem gegenüber seiner Klientel demonstrieren zu können.²¹³

Außerdem beschreibt Seetzen einen Vorfall in der kurz davor besuchten Küstenstadt Smyrna, bei dem das Aderlassen unsachgemäß angewendet wurde. Ein Grieche, der nicht schwimmen konnte, fiel von einem Schiff ins Meerwasser. Nachdem er ans Ufer gebracht worden war, rief man Seetzen aufgrund seiner ärztlichen Ausbildung herbei. Dieser zürnte über die Unzulänglichkeit der einheimischen Ärzte, die den Ertrunkenen an den Beinen aufhängten, damit das Wasser aus seinem Körper austrete und ihm die Ader mit einem Brotmesser aufschnitten, was zu hohem Blutverlust führte.²¹⁴ Seetzen sorgte dafür, dass der Ertrunkene in einen warmen Raum gelegt wurde und rieb ihn mit Sand und Asche ab. Jedoch blieben seine Bemühungen erfolglos, weil « [der Ertrunkene] 4 Stunden im Wasser geblieben und wegen der unvernünftigen Behandlung, die er vorhin erfahren hat ». ²¹⁵

Im Laufe seiner Reise änderte Seetzen allerdings seine ablehnende Haltung zum Aderlass. In Aleppo wurde er durch Dr. Salina zum ersten Mal in seinem Leben zur Ader gelassen und lobte den positiven Effekt.²¹⁶ In Jerusalem ließ er dies selbst wegen Koliken im Unterleib und Leberbeschwerden vornehmen.²¹⁷ Dieser Einstellungswandel demonstriert Seetzens Entwicklung und den durchlaufenen Lernprozess im Laufe seiner Reise.

Seetzen kritisierte weiterhin das Medizinalwesen im Osmanischen Reich an mehreren Stellen. In Smyrna schreibt er unter dem Eindruck des Vorfalls des ertrunkenen Griechen: « Bei dieser Gelegenheit konnten wir recht einsehen lernen, wie nützlich ein Physikus, d. h. ein öffentlicher Stadt- oder Landarzt sey? Keiner von den vielen sogenannten Doctoren, die hier sind, kümmerte sich um den Ertrunkenen ». ²¹⁸ Öffentliche Stadt- oder Landärzte waren in Europa « verpflichtete und besoldete Ärzte », welche die Aufsicht über das Medizinalwesen im Staat zwecks Beförderung der öffentlichen Gesundheit und der Abwendung von Gefahren übernahmen. Neben anderen Aufgaben oblag ihnen, « bey den Bemühungen zur Rettung der Verunglückten und Scheintodten die

²¹³ Vgl. HUERKAMP, *Der Aufstieg der Ärzte*, p. 28.

²¹⁴ Vgl. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 464.

²¹⁵ Vgl. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 465.

²¹⁶ Vgl. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 201.

²¹⁷ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. II, p. 58. Seetzens Diagnose war Skirrhus (verhärtetes Geschwür).

²¹⁸ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 464.

Oberaufsicht zu führen». ²¹⁹ Vor dem Hintergrund einer europäischen Medikalisierungskultur ist Seetzens Kritik bezüglich der Zustände in Smyrna nachvollziehbar.

In Istanbul prangerte Seetzen die hygienischen Zustände in den Gassen an, wo Schmutz und Tierleichen lagen, und machte die « Polizei » dafür verantwortlich. Mit « Polizei » meint Seetzen wohl die Medizinalpolizei, zu deren Aufgaben die « Abwendung von Leben und Gesundheit bedrohenden Zufällen, Unglücksfällen und Gefahren » gehörte. ²²⁰ Er bestritt allerdings die allgemein verbreitete Meinung, dass Muslime schmutzig seien und wiederdelegte diese anhand religiöser Vorschriften, Badbesuch und Alltagsbräuchen wie dem Ausziehen der Schuhe vor Betreten des Wohnraums. ²²¹ Dabei ist er im Geiste der Medikalisierung verpflichtet, indem er den Staat und nicht die Einwohnerschaft oder einzelne Personen für die hygienischen Zustände verantwortlich macht.

Im Zusammenhang mit dem Medizinalwesen bleibt noch die Frage nach der Zulassung von Ärzten zu klären. In seinem Tagebuch erwähnt Seetzen an keiner Stelle, dass er in Aleppo eine Genehmigung zum Praktizieren als Arzt benötigt hätte. Russell zufolge benötigten Ärzte zwar eine Genehmigung des Obermedicus der Stadt, indes sei die Erlaubnis nicht allein aufgrund fachlicher Kriterien erteilt worden, handelte es sich beim *hekîmbaşı* doch erwähnenswertenmaßen um einen ranghohen Würdenträger, ohne herausragende medizinische Expertise, der sein Amt in erster Linie als Bürokrat ausübte:

It is requisite, in order to exercise the profession of physic within the city, to have a license from the Hakeem Bashi, an office commonly bestowed on an Effendee of some eminence, who, being himself no competent judge of the merits of the candidate, is under the necessity of trusting to one of the faculty, whom he appoints to act as examiner, or (which is far from uncommon) he grants his license upon receipt of his fee, without the ceremony of previous examination: It is not therefore

²¹⁹ JOHANN GEORG KRÜNITZ, *Oeconomische Encyclopädie oder allgemeines System der Land-, Haus- und Staats-Wirtschaft: in alphabetischer Ordnung*, 242 vols., Pauli, Berlin 1773–1858, p. 86, 523. Weitere Aufgaben sind: « schädliche Misbräuche anzuzeigen, Wundärzte, Apotheker, Hebammen zu prüfen, dieselben zu Beobachtung ihrer Pflichten anzuhalten, grobe Vergehungen derselben gehörigen Orts zu rügen, in gerichtlich medicinischen Fällen Besichtigungen und (gewöhnlich mit Zuziehung eines Wundarztes,) Sektionen zu verrichten, über den Befund in erster Instanz ihr Gutachten gewissenhaft und den Grundsätzen der Heilkunde gemäß zu erteilen, die Armen unentgeltlich in Krankheiten zu besorgen, bey den Bemühungen zur Rettung der Verunglückten und Scheintodten die Oberaufsicht zu führen, auch von dem gesammten Medicinal-Zustand seines Ortes und von seinen Amtsverrichtungen an die medicinische Facultät oder Sanitäts-Collegium, unter welchem er steht, oder wo es dergleichen nicht giebt, an die Landesregierung von Zeit zu Zeit getreulich Bericht zu erstatten. »

²²⁰ KRÜNITZ, *Oeconomische Encyclopädie*, p. 114, 236. Siehe auch den Beitrag « Medizinalpolizey » in KRÜNITZ, *Oeconomische Encyclopädie*, p. 86, 676.

²²¹ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 68–71.

to be wondered at, that the most ignorant pretenders should sometimes be qualified at the expense of a few Zechins; and that, though the license may be recalled upon complaint of mal practice, the regulation serves less in reality to secure the public health, than to furnish the Hakeem Bashi with plausible pretexts for extortion.²²²

Der Tenor eines korrupten Obermedicus hallte in europäischen Reiseberichten und Länderbeschreibungen nach. Finke schreibt subsumierend: « Ohne Vorwissen und Genehmigung eines des Ober-Arzttes, welcher Hackin [sic] Baschi heisset, darf aber niemand die Kunst treiben: dieser ist aber leicht mit Geld zu gewinnen, und daher ist den elendesten Stümpfern alle Freyheit gelassen ». ²²³ Inwieweit tatsächlich solche Genehmigungen notwendig waren, um als Arzt praktizieren zu dürfen und ob die Restriktionen in großen Städten strenger als in kleinen Städten waren, muss noch weiter untersucht werden. Möglicherweise benötigte Seetzen keine Lizenz, weil er Salina, dem Arzt des russischen Konsuls von Aleppo, formal assistierte. Jedenfalls hätte der mitteilungsfreudige Seetzen sicher vermerkt, wenn er sich um eine offizielle Genehmigung hätte kümmern müssen.

Zusammenfassend lässt sich in Seetzens Beschreibungen eine negative Beurteilung einheimischer Ärzte und lokaler hygienischer Zustände feststellen. Berücksichtigt man die in europäischen Kontext prägende Unterscheidung zwischen gelehrten und handwerklich tätigen Ärzten, und vergegenwärtigt man sich die Polemik gegen 'Empirici' und 'Pfuscher', wird die Übertragung dieser Kategorien und Polemiken auf fränkische im Gegensatz zu einheimischen Ärzte im Osmanischen Reich sichtbar. Fränkische Ärzte waren in erster Linie Doktoren der Medizin, die ein akademisches Studium absolviert hatten, in Kontakt zur Obrigkeit standen, in einem Patronage-Verhältnis zu ihren sozial hochgestellten Patienten standen und dementsprechend gut bezahlt wurden. Ihrem Gelehrtenstatuts verliehen sie durch die Verfolgung botanischer, astronomischer oder musikalischer Interessen Ausdruck und standen mit der europäischen Gelehrtenwelt in Europa über Korrespondenzen, Lektüre und Publikationen in Fachzeitschriften in Verbindung. Ihnen gegenüber stehen die 'Empirici' und 'Pfuscher', die oft mit einheimischen Ärzten identifiziert werden. Negative Assoziationen prägen das Bild des einheimischen Arztes mit mangelhaften Fachkenntnissen, fehlender institutioneller Ausbildung und grobem Benehmen, der besessen von Gewinnstreben überholte Behandlungsmethoden einsetzt und bei der Herstellung von Arzneimitteln pfuscht.

Die Darstellung Seetzens ist im Allgemeinen durch eigene Wertvorstellungen und Wissenssysteme gefärbt. Sein Selbstverständnis als Aufklärer und akademischer Mediziner macht seine Kritik an Anatomiekenntnissen, Aderlass und Aberglauben nachvollziehbar. Auffällig ist, dass sich diese Abwertung oft bei

²²² RUSSELL, *The Natural History of Aleppo*, p. 117.

²²³ FINKE, *Versuch einer allgemeinen medicinisch-praktischen Géographie*, vol. I, p. 132–133.

der Beschreibung der einheimischen Ärzte als Kollektiv manifestiert, als ob Seetzen gewisse stereotype Urteile pauschal reproduzieren oder auf sein diskursives Vorwissen zurückgreifen würde, während die oftmals auf eigener Anschauung beruhenden Schilderungen einzelner Personen, wie bei der Beschreibung von Dschibbra Asihs, ohne solche Wertung und Geringschätzung auskommen. Allerdings änderte Seetzen im Laufe seiner Reise gewisse Überzeugungen, darunter die bedingungslose Ablehnung des Aderlasses.

Seetzens scharfe Kritik an unhygienischen Zuständen oder am Fehlen staatlich angestellter Städteärzte richtete sich gegen die osmanische Obrigkeit und ist vor dem Hintergrund der Medikalisierungsbestrebungen europäischer Länder und Konzepte der Medizinalpolizei zu begreifen.

VII. Fränkische Ärzte und Wissenstransfer

Inwieweit spielten fränkische Ärzte eine Rolle beim Wissenstransfer zwischen Europa und dem Osmanischen Reich? Aufgrund ihrer Ausbildung und ihres langen Aufenthalts im Osmanischen Reich kommen als Akteure in erster Linie jene europäischen Ärzte in Frage, die sich in den Städten des östlichen Mittelmeerraums niederließen. Diese behandelten zwar Einheimische, darunter auch Muslime, jedoch beschränkte sich ihre Rolle auf die Erbringung von medizinischen Dienstleistungen. Eine Interaktion mit einheimischen Ärzten, die zur expliziten Wissensvermittlung hätte dienen können, z. B. durch die Annahme einheimischer Lehrlingen, durch Unterricht angehender Mediziner oder durch den wissenschaftlichen Austausch in Studien- oder Diskussionszirkeln, ist weder in Seetzens Tagebüchern noch in den Schriften Russells oder Larreys dokumentiert. Dadurch wird der Eindruck erweckt, dass zwei parallel existierende wissenschaftliche Medizinkulturen bestanden, deren Grenzen nur von wenigen Levantinern überschritten werden konnten, die an italienischen Universitäten studierten. Letztere grenzten sich allerdings durch eine elitäre Haltung ebenfalls von einheimischen Ärzten ab, wie am Beispiel des armenischen Arztes deutlich wurde. Eine Interaktion im Sinne einer expliziten Wissensvermittlung scheint folglich kaum stattgefunden zu haben. Eine direkte Weitergabe von Wissen setzte erst mit der Gründung der modernen Medizinschulen nach europäischem Vorbild und der Aufnahme einheimischer Studenten ein, die durch Modernisierungsbestrebungen lokaler Herrscher veranlasst wurden.²²⁴

²²⁴ Zur modernen Medizinschule in Kairo siehe SONBOL, *The Creation of a Medical Profession*. Zur 1827 neu gegründeten modernen Königlichen Hochschule für Medizin und Chirurgie (Tıphane ve Cerrahhane-i Amire) siehe YILDIRIM, NURAN, *A History Of Healthcare In Istanbul*, p. 277.

In Istanbul fand ab dem 17. Jahrhundert unter Förderung des Obermedicus des Osmanischen Reiches Ibn Sallūm al-Ḥalabī (gest. 1669) eine selektive Übernahme europäisches Wissens und dessen Integration in die eigenen humoralpathologischen Wissensbestände statt.²²⁵ Die unter seinem Namen zirkulierten arabischen und osmanischen Werke wie *Ġāyet ül-beyān fī tedbīr beden il-insān* (Die klarste Explikation der Behandlung des menschlichen Körpers), *Ġāyat al-itqān fī tadbīr badan al-insān* (Die höchste Perfektion in der Behandlung des menschlichen Körpers), *aṭ-Ṭibb al-kīmiyāʾī al-ġadīd* (Die Neue Chemische Medizin) und *al-Kīmiyāʾ al-malakiyya* (Die Königliche Chemie) bildeten eine Synthese verschiedener Auszüge aus Schriften europäischer Mediziner wie Johann Jacob Wecker (1528–1586), Daniel Sennert (1572–1637) und Oswaldus Crollius (ca. 1560–1608).²²⁶ Die zahlreichen sowohl in türkischen als auch in arabischen Bibliotheken vorhandenen Abschriften belegen die weite Verbreitung dieser Werke.²²⁷ Selbst unter den von Seetzen angekauften und in der Forschungsbibliothek Gotha befindlichen Handschriften finden sich Abschriften davon, die er in Aleppo erworben hatte.²²⁸ In Seetzens Tagebüchern werden diese Werke allerdings nicht erwähnt, ganz zu schweigen von Hinweisen auf deren Verwendung durch einheimische Mediziner. Seetzen pflegte offenbar zu den Milieus der muslimischen medizinkundigen Gelehrten keinen direkten Kontakt, so dass seine Schilderungen der Ärztelandschaft und des medizinischen Wissens in den von ihm besuchten Gebieten große Lücken aufweisen.

Des Weiteren machten europäische Reisende und Mediziner durch ihre Schriften die Gelehrtenwelt in den europäischen Ländern mit den Wissensbeständen im Osmanischen Reich bekannt. Darauf bauten europäische Wissenschaftler zuweilen auf und entwickelten neue Behandlungsmethoden, wie Marcel Chahrour dies am Beispiel des Gipsverbandes und der Pockenimpfung darlegt.²²⁹ Seetzen trug ebenfalls durch seine Schilderungen verbreiteter

²²⁵ Vgl. NATALIA BACHOUR, *Oswaldus Crollius und Daniel Sennert im frühneuzeitlichen Istanbul. Studien zur Rezeption des Paracelsismus im Werk des osmanischen Arztes Sālih b. Naṣrullāh Ibn Sallūm al-Ḥalabī*, Centauro, Freiburg im Breisgau 2012 (Neuere Medizin- und Wissenschaftsgeschichte 23).

²²⁶ Vgl. BACHOUR, *Oswaldus Crollius*, Kapitel 3 & 4.

²²⁷ Vgl. İHSANOĞLU, *Osmanlı Tıbbi Bilimler*, vol. I, p. 264–279.

²²⁸ Ein Abschrift des arabischen enzyklopädischen Werks *Ġāyat al-itqān fī tadbīr badan al-insān* ist im Pertsch-Katalog unter Medicin 1940 zu finden (Vgl. WILHELM PERTSCH, *Die orientalischen Handschriften der Herzoglichen Bibliothek zu Gotha: Auf Befehl Sr. Hoheit des Herzogs Ernst II von S. Coburg-Gotha verzeichnet von Wilhelm Pertsch*, vol. III: *Die Arabischen Handschriften*, p. 480; Ms. arab. 52). Eine Beschreibung von *aṭ-Ṭibb al-kīmiyāʾī al-ġadīd* steht im selben Katalog unter Medicin 1941 und 1942 (Vgl. PERTSCH, *Die orientalischen Handschriften*, p. 481–482; Ms. arab. 48), wobei auch das unter Medicin 1940 beschriebene Werk eine weitere Abschrift von *aṭ-Ṭibb al-kīmiyāʾī al-ġadīd* enthält.

²²⁹ Vgl. CHAHROUR, *Der medizinische Orient*, p. 45–61; 62–111; 197, 208.

Krankheiten und der entsprechenden Behandlungsmethoden zu dieser Wissenszirkulation bei.²³⁰

Fränkische Mediziner, vor allem die im Dienste von Konsuln stehenden, bildeten ein Bindeglied zu europäischen Wissensbeständen, setzten gewisse Neuerungen in der Medizin in ihrem Umfeld um und publizierten ihre dabei gemachten Erfahrungen in europäischen Fachzeitschriften, wie Seetzens Beschreibung der Aktivitäten zur Pockenimpfung zeigt. Mehrere fränkische Ärzte waren an der Einführung der Impfung beteiligt, z. B. in Smyrna der französische Arzt Ferrand, in Aleppo der italienische Dr. Salina und in Kairo der deutsche Dr. Ritz. Da Seetzen als Assistent Dr. Salinas an der Einführung der Impfung in Aleppo beteiligt war, sind seinen Tagebüchern einige Details zu entnehmen. Die Einführung der Impfung erfolgte unter Schirmherrschaft eines Konsuls, d. h. sie war ein institutioneller Akt und nicht als Initiative eines Arztes zu begreifen, was als Ausdehnung der Medikalisierungspraktiken auf europäische Gemeinden im Orient zu deuten ist.²³¹ Den Pockenimpfstoff ließen sich die Ärzte aus England oder Wien schicken, entweder direkt oder über Konstantinopel,²³² was die Vernetzung der im Osmanischen Reich ansässigen Ärzte untereinander und mit ihren Kollegen in europäischen Ländern belegt.

Die Impfmaßnahmen wurden bei Angehörigen der europäischen Gemeinden begonnen und auf Einheimische ausgeweitet, stießen jedoch bei gewissen Gruppierungen auf wenig Akzeptanz. In Smyrna schrieb Seetzen am 9. Juli 1803:

Der französische Arzt Ferrand, der vormals bey der Marine in Toulon als Wundarzt angestellt war, steht hier sehr in Achtung. Es macht ihm viele Ehre, dass er aus England die Kuhpocken kommen ließ und die Inoculation derselben sich zu verbreiten sehr angelegen seyn lässt. Selbst Griechen und Armenier machen schon

²³⁰ Seetzen nennt in seinen Tagebüchern zahlreiche Krankheiten, ohne ein detailliertes klinisches Bild zu beschreiben. Die Erwähnungen reichen von epidemischen Erkrankungen bis hin zu Wunden: Hautausschlag, Hämorrhoiden, Augenkrankheiten, Leberverhärtung, Appetitlosigkeit, inneres Jucken der Hände und Füße, Taubstummheit, Fieber (Wechselfieber, intermittierendes, gastrisches Entzündungsfieber), Schlaganfall, venerische Erkrankungen, Bandwurmbefall, Pest, Aleppobeule ('Übel von Halep'), Aussatz, Pocken. Lokale Behandlungsmethoden ergänzen seine Beschreibungen bei mehreren dieser Erkrankungen (Vgl. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 5, 22, 25, 72, 85, 87, 94, 96, 105, 127–128, 321, 323, 378, 390, 398; SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 11, 19, 60, 92, 106, 108, 309, 310; SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. I, p. 32, 119, 187, 197, 130–131, 228; SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. II, p. 304; SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. III, p. 187–188, 242, 345).

²³¹ In Aleppo wurde die Impfung auf Veranlassung des englischen Konsuls Barker ins Leben gerufen, der sich und seine Kinder zuerst impfen ließ (Vgl. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 94).

²³² So erhielt Dr. Salina den Impfstoff zuerst aus Wien, dann aus England, dann via Istanbul durch den französischen Arzt Dr. Auban (Vgl. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 11, 92, 94, 97, 100–103, 106, 108).

Gebrauch davon; nur die Türken nicht. Sie sind hier seit etwa 1 Jahre eingeführt. Die Juden halten es für gesetzeswidrig.²³³

Offensichtlich ließen sich Juden und Muslime in Smyrna im Gegensatz zu Griechen und Armeniern nicht impfen.

Die Ablehnung von jüdischer Seite sei auf religiöse Verbote zurückzuführen. So berichtet Seetzen am 3. Mai 1804 von einem Vorfall, der dazu führte, dass Juden in Aleppo ihre Kinder trotz des religiösen Verbots gegen Pocken impfen ließen:

Er [Dr. Salina] erzählte mir, dass die Zahl der ietzt bisher mit der Vaccine inokulirten sich auf 35 belaufe; und er hat noch eine grosse Anzahl zu inokuliren. Es ist zu bewundern, dass dieses Neue hier so gute Aufnahme findet. Ohne Zweifel hat das Beyspiel des Herrn Consuls Barker vielen Einfluss gehabt. – Die Inoculation der wahren Blattern wurde hier vor mehreren Jahren bey den Juden durch einen besonderen Vorfall eingeführt. Zuvor wollten die Rabbiner es nicht erlauben, weil sie es als etwas Gesetzeswidriges ansahen. Ein Jude aus Italien hatte dort seine 2 Kinder nicht inokuliren lassen, weil die Rabbiner es nicht erlauben wollten, und beide wurden ein Opfer der natürlichen Blattern. Dies brachte ihn fast zur Verzweiflung. Er kam hierher, und das erste, was er hier that, wie ihm wieder ein Kind geboren wurde, war, dass er es durch Doctor Salina inokuliren liess. Die andern Juden erklärten ihn zuerst für einen Ketzer; allein nachher ahmten sie ihn hübsch nach.²³⁴

Die bewiesene lebensrettende Wirkung der Impfung habe folglich zu allmählicher Akzeptanz unter der jüdischen Gemeinschaft in Aleppo geführt.

Bleibt die Frage, ob Muslime die Pockenimpfung ebenfalls aus religiösen Gründen ablehnten. Dies wird in Seetzens Tagebüchern nicht thematisiert, was wiederum Zweifel bezüglich seiner Kontakte zu Muslimen aufwirft. Dass muslimische Rechtsgelehrte die Impfung aus Reinheitsgründen nicht guthießen, ist nachvollziehbar, da das Blut von Tieren im islamischen Recht als unrein gilt.²³⁵ Die Ablehnung durch Muslime könnte aber auch darauf zurückgehen, dass im Osmanischen Reich bereits eine andere Schutzmethode gegen die Pocken verbreitet war: Die Variolation oder Inokulation gegen Blattern basierte auf der Übertragung der Krankheitserreger von Mensch zu Mensch, wodurch eine mild verlaufende Infektion hervorgerufen wird, die den Inokulierten zugleich gegen eine spätere Erkrankung schützt. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689–1762), die

²³³ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 457.

²³⁴ Vgl. SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel*, p. 108.

²³⁵ Das Verbot von Blut im Islam geht auf mehrere Koranverse und Prophetenzitate zurück, beispielsweise: « Verboten ist euch (der Genuß von) Fleisch von verendeten Tieren und Blut » (MUHAMMAD, « Tisch: 3 », in MUHAMMAD, *Der Koran*, transl. RUDI PARET, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart 1993). Vgl. den Beitrag « dam » (Blut) in : WIZĀRAT AL-AWQĀF WA-Š-ŠU'ŪN AL-ISLĀMIYYA, *al-Mawsū'a al-fiqhiyya*, vol XXI, Wizārat al-Awqāf wa-š-Šu'ūn al-Islāmiyya, Kuwait 1992, p. 25–26.

Frau des britischen Botschafters in Konstantinopel, beschrieb die Praxis und machte sie im frühen 18. Jahrhundert in Europa bekannt.²³⁶ Russell beschreibt ebenfalls diese Praxis für Aleppo, wo der frische Eiter eines Infizierten durch Einritzung der Handfläche zwischen Daumen und Zeigefinger mittels einer Nadel auf ein Kind übertragen wurde.²³⁷ Das Verfahren zur Übertragung der Kuhpocken auf den Menschen entwickelte hingegen Edward Jenner (1749–1823) Ende des 18. Jahrhunderts und publizierte die Resultate seiner Impfexperimente 1798 in einem Artikel. Die Berichte Seetzens über die Einführung der Impfung stammten aus den Jahren 1801 bis 1805, also aus einer sehr frühen Phase, als die Kuhpockenimpfung noch nicht etabliert war. Warum sollten Einheimische eine traditionelle, über Jahrhunderte praktizierte Schutzpraxis aufgeben und sich auf ein neues Experiment einlassen, dessen Erfolg noch nicht erwiesen war? Die zurückhaltende Aufnahme lässt sich also auf zu geringe Erfahrung mit der neuen Methode zurückführen, ohne dass religiöse Vorschriften oder ähnliches bemüht werden müssten.

Zusammenfassend lässt sich die Frage nach dem Beitrag fränkischer Ärzte beim Wissenstransfer anhand Seetzens Schilderung eher negativ beantworten. Fränkische Ärzte wirkten vorrangig als Dienstleister, ohne europäisches Wissen explizit an einheimische Mediziner weiterzugeben. Allerdings bildeten die fränkischen Mediziner, allen voran die im Dienste von Konsuln stehenden, ein Bindeglied zu europäischen Wissensbeständen, setzten gewisse medizinische Neuerungen in ihrem Umfeld um und publizierten die dabei gewonnenen Erfahrungen in europäischen Fachzeitschriften. Durch ihre Schriften und Beschreibungen machten sie zugleich die europäische Gelehrtenwelt mit Wissensbeständen im Osmanischen Reich bekannt.

VIII. Fazit: Seetzen als Vermittler

Seetzen zeichnet durch die Schilderung der von ihm besuchten Gebiete das Bild einer vielfältigen Ärztelandschaft, die durch eine markante Trennlinie zwischen einheimischen und fränkischen Ärzten geprägt ist. Zwar sind seine Beobachtungen von einer lückenlosen Darstellung weit entfernt, da muslimische und jüdische Ärzte nur marginal und nebulös erwähnt werden, beleuchten sie jedoch punktuell wichtige Aspekte ärztlichen Lebens in den Städten des östlichen Mittelmeerraums, wenngleich das darauf geworfene Licht von stereotypen

²³⁶ Vgl. CHAHROUR, *Der medizinische Orient*, p. 66–69; KARL-HEINZ LEVEN, *Die Geschichte der Infektionskrankheiten. Von der Antike bis ins 20. Jahrhundert*, Ecomed, Landsberg am Lech 1997 (Fortschritte in der Präventiv- und Arbeitsmedizin, 6), p. 46–48.

²³⁷ Vgl. RUSSELL, *The Natural History of Aleppo*, p. 317.

Vorstellungen, diskursivem Vorwissen und seinen eigenen Werten gefärbt ist. Berücksichtigt man die in europäischen Kontext prägende Unterscheidung zwischen gelehrten und handwerklich tätigen Ärzten wird die Übertragung dieser Kategorien und Polemiken auf religiöse und ethnische Gruppierungen der Ärzte im Osmanischen Reich sichtbar.

Fränkische bzw. europäische Ärzte waren Seetzens Darstellung zufolge wichtige Akteure in der medizinischen Versorgung der fränkischen und der mit ihnen in Kontakt stehenden einheimischen Bevölkerung in den Städten des Osmanischen Reichs. Den fränkischen Ärzten stand die Gruppe der einheimischen Mediziner gegenüber, welche die orientalisch-christlichen bzw. levantinischen Ärzte, die türkischen bzw. muslimischen Ärzte sowie die jüdischen Ärzte umfasste. Während Seetzen mit levantinischen Ärzten in direkter Beziehung stand, blieb ihm der Kontakt zu muslimischen und jüdischen Ärzten offenbar verwehrt, denn seine Informationen über diese Akteure stammten aus zweiter Hand und waren äußerst karg. Selbst wenn das verbindende Element der fränkischen Mediziner im Studium an einer europäischen Ausbildungsstätte zu bestehen scheint, sind für Seetzen kulturelle Merkmale, vor allem Sprache und Religion, das entscheidende identitätsstiftende Substrat. Dass diese kulturellen Merkmale in gewissen Fällen sogar höher gewichtet wurden als die universitäre Ausbildung, zeigt sich bei den Renegaten, die Seetzen nicht mehr als 'fränkisch' bezeichnet, sondern als 'türkisch'. Auch orientalisch-christliche Mediziner, die an einer europäischen Universität studiert hatten, genossen bei Seetzen zwar einen höheren Status, blieben jedoch Angehörige der 'anderen' Gruppe.

Seetzen bereiste mehrere Städte und Gegenden des östlichen Mittelmeerraums, wo er entweder bei fränkischen oder orientalisch-christlichen Gastgebern verweilte. Dementsprechend kam er mit vor Ort niedergelassenen fränkischen und orientalisch-christlichen Ärzten in direkten Kontakt. Er berichtete über seine Erfahrung mit ihnen, nutzte sie aber auch als Informanten, um mehr über das Leben der Franken im Orient oder über lokale Wissensbestände und Kulturen zu erfahren. Zum einen bemühte sich Seetzen, Naturalien, Artefakte und Handschriften zu sammeln und nach Gotha zu schicken, was als Beitrag in Form physikalischer Vermittlung gedeutet werden kann. Zum anderen leistete er einen gewissen Beitrag hinsichtlich transaktioneller Vermittlung, indem er sich durch Gespräche mit Einheimischen, in der Regel mithilfe eines einheimischen Begleiters, um das Verständnis des 'Anderen' bemühte. Jedoch besteht seine mit Abstand wichtigste Vermittlungsfunktion als letztes Glied in einer Vermittlungskette, die mehrere Vermittler involvierte, in der Repräsentation des 'Anderen' durch schriftliche Fixierung und Darstellung.

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WORK MIGRATION FROM THE WEST INTO THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE?

ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN AND THE RENEGADES AT THE TIME OF 'NEW ORDER' (1802/1803)

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Abstract

The article explores U. J. Seetzen's perspective on renegades in the Ottoman Empire in 1802/03, when modernist hierarchies had not yet become an irrefutable truth. For emigrants from Western Europe's society of estates, the Ottoman Empire still offered opportunities for a fresh start in life, or for refuge. The contribution contextualises the perception of renegades, their motives and attitudes as apparent in Seetzen's diary entries. He characterises his acquaintances in an unflattering way, employing appropriate topoi, but also sympathises with many of them, and indicates ways of social converting and integrating.

Key Words

Ulrich Jasper Seetzen; Ottoman Empire; Renegade; 1802–1803;
Conversion; New Order; Nizām-ı cedid



I. Conversions and Reversions

This contribution explores Ulrich Jasper Seetzen's perspective on people who had immigrated into the Ottoman Empire and converted to Islam. This prominent way of crossing supposed borders between polities and religions shaped European concepts of the Middle East as well as the sociopolitical make-up of the Ottoman Empire. Both changed particularly during the nineteenth century, paving the way for dichotomies operative until today. In this respect, especially the decades of intense crisis around 1800 constituted a watershed between perceptions on an equal footing and hierarchies of civilisational progress in a world of modernist empires and nation states.

Seetzen paid attention to renegades' attitudes as well as employment opportunities for immigrants, to the varying motives and the obstacles they encountered. Since this of course no representative selection, the individual life stories are each presented in their narrative context to address individual motives and agency as well as social relations related to this conversion/immigration.

The term work migration is only applied with a grain of salt in this contribution. From the perspective of the 20th and 21st century, work migration is usually considered to proceed from the Middle East, Southeastern Europe and North Africa to Western Europe, mostly concerning low-skilled labour. However, before novel concepts of civilisation and modernity first implemented in Western Europe took hold in the Ottoman Empire during the 19th century, many people crossed ideological boundaries into the opposite direction – the ancient divide between Christian Occident and Islamic Orient,¹ which was routinely exploited by propaganda and warmongering on both sides. Such ideologemes impacted Seetzen's patterns of perception as well, influenced by his concept of enlightenment but only in the course of the nineteenth-century hierarchies of civilisation and modernity would become entrenched. In view of these later developments and the ambiguous role Westerners were to play in the region, the transition period around 1800 deserves attention, especially as Ulrich Jasper Seetzen's perspective differed considerably from those of other visitors.

On the surface, 'modern' work migration takes place voluntarily but push factors in the region of origin exert considerable pressure. The same may be said about its pre-modern predecessor, but in Seetzen's time the Ottoman Empire still exhibited strong enough pull factors. Migration to the Ottoman Empire might have been effectuated by either voluntary immigration or through capture and enslavement;² advancement opportunities, however, were not determined by voluntariness but by sought-after skills and social position.

Until the mid-nineteenth century, conversion to Islam was required as a social marker and a token of loyalty to the sultan for 'state service' (military capacities in particular). Similar situations rarely occurred vice versa in Christian kingdoms, while Middle Eastern empires including the Ottoman were to a significant extent built on recruiting foreigners through elite slavery for service to the crown. Importing male and female slaves for the court and the military began as early as the ninth century AD, massively affecting elite formation and even forming the

¹ This dichotomy soon turn into that of civilised West and underdeveloped Middle East, later privileged North and disenfranchised Global South. See also TOBIAS P. GRAF, *The Sultan's Renegades: Christian-European Converts to Islam and the Making of the Ottoman Elite, 1575–1610*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2017, p. 4–6.

² These two possible paths of immigration can be distinguished, but they can not always be clearly separated, as explained below.

foundation of eminent kingdoms in Egypt and India in the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries.³

Related phenomena in the Ottoman context abound: Until the late sixteenth century, many Franks became first prisoners and then janissaries, female slaves from Caucasia, Ukraine or Italy could rise to the highest levels of the court, which was still the case in Seetzen's time, and in addition to recruiting 'porte slaves' (*kapı kulları*) from male Christian subjects, slaves of both sexes were imported from Eastern Europe, Caucasia and Sub-Saharan Africa. It goes without saying that Ottoman slavery must not be seen as a social, but as a legal status, because closeness to the master determined one's social position. For instance, slaves close to the sultan held the most prestigious offices and had a much higher status than free peasants. Apart from elite slaves, large numbers of ordinary captives were used as a cheap labour force (e. g. for galley rowing or domestic work, but almost never for fieldwork or mining). However, migrants did not necessarily have to be slaves, especially if their skills were in demand and they already possessed a suitable qualification (or pretended to have it) when they immigrated. In this vein, military engineers from Italian and German lands had entered Ottoman service since the fifteenth century, while beneficial innovations such as trustable surgery, fire brigades or grenadier companies were allegedly introduced by distinguished immigrants.⁴

Those men Seetzen encountered had crossed the boundary and converted to Islam to become loyal subjects of the sultan; in the parlance of the time, they were renegades, the very antithesis of the true and faithful. This judgement was widely accepted in central and western Europe but could be qualified in times of enlightenment and revolutionary change. However, the term renegade continued to have disparaging connotations. Despite Seetzen's sometimes contemptuous attitude, its mere employment does not convey scorn but may even coincide with a sympathetic representation.

³ CARL F. PETRY (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Egypt, 640–1517*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1998, p. 242–515; and RICHARD M. EATON, *India in the Persianate Age, 1000–1765*, Penguin, Allen Lane 2019, p. 45–99.

⁴ FELIX KONRAD, « Soziale Mobilität europäischer Renegaten im frühneuzeitlichen Osmanischen Reich », in HENNING P. JÜRGENS, THOMAS WELLER (eds.), *Religion und Mobilität. Zum Verhältnis von raumbezogener Mobilität und religiöser Identitätsbildung im frühneuzeitlichen Europa*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 2010, p. 213–234. Several high-profile renegades of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are described in some detail on p. 219–223, the mentioned eighteenth-century innovations on p. 224–228.

II. *Renegades and Seetzen's Diary in the Crisis of Empire*

This contribution analyses the attitude of Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811) towards the Ottoman subjects he described as renegades in the diary he kept between in 1802 and 1803. The diary was edited by Volkmar Enderlein⁵ and covers Seetzen's sojourn in Constantinople during the first half of 1802 as well as his ensuing journey through Asia Minor to Aleppo. Although Seetzen did not intend to publish it, at least not in the extant form, the diary nonetheless offers insights into how he characterised renegades. For the most part, current research on renegades has concentrated on circumstances either before or after the time of Seetzen's writings.

By definition, renegades were former Christians from central or western Europe who had migrated to the Ottoman Empire and converted to Islam in search of a better life. Seetzen consorted with some men among them (no women) who were interested in making connections with visitors from the 'West' and possessed the cultural and linguistic skills to do so. Thus, in the case of Seetzen's diaries, the renegades appear as a separate category whereas indigenous source texts in Turkish or Arabic usually do not distinguish them from other Muslim subjects,⁶ if they happen to mention them. While renegades cannot be considered a group in any meaningful sense, they received considerable attention in contemporary literatures of western and central Europe, reinforcing the asymmetry of sources on both sides of the assumed East-West divide. Ottoman texts not only render renegades invisible, but offer also little insight into changing attitudes towards conversion and towards converts themselves.⁷

While in the seventeenth century Ottoman authorities used to triumphantly and propagandistically celebrate each conversion to the true religion, in the second half of the nineteenth century, they preferred to tacitly pass over them.⁸

⁵ ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel und der Reise nach Aleppo 1802–1803*, ed. VOLKMAR ENDERLEIN, MICHAEL BRAUNE, DIETRICH HAGEN, Georg Olms, Hildesheim et al. 2012. For the sake of brevity, from now on this reference shall be given as 'SEETZEN, p. x', indicating the edition's pages, except if indicated otherwise.

⁶ Attitudes towards Ottoman Christians and Jews, for which the legal category of *zimmi* could be one point of reference, have to be distinguished from the phenomenon of Muslim renegades. The latter are scarcely included in the collection of HAKAN KARATEKE, H. ERDEM ÇİPA, HELGA ANETSHOFER (eds.), *Disliking Others: Loathing, Hostility, and Distrust in Premodern Ottoman Lands*, Academic Studies Press, Boston 2018.

⁷ GRAF, *The Sultan's Renegades* emphatically stresses the source value of supposedly outsider testimonies.

⁸ SELIM DERINGIL, *Conversion and Apostasy in the Late Ottoman Empire*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2012. For seventeenth-century conversions, see MARC DAVID BAER,

In the same vein, polemical self-narratives of Ottoman renegades from the sixteenth century often resemble Christian conversion narratives in an age of confessionalism, but by the mid-nineteenth century such accounts became defensive and tried to fend off 'accusations of forced conversion' and foreign interference.⁹

As of yet, scholars have not fully explored exactly how these attitudes and perspectives changed or what caused the shifts over the entire period. This paper will try to chip away at this larger question by looking at Seetzen's encounters with actual renegades during a short period of time at a turning point in this development. It intends to explore what can actually be gleaned from existing sources and therefore serve as a springboard for future research. While this article only examines one source, Seetzen's explicit interest in renegades that also seems to lack an overt religious-political agenda offers a rare perspective. As he stated it himself, his specific interest in renegades was straightforward: to learn what motivated them to venture on this path.¹⁰

Of course, our modern-day definitions of what it means to be a renegade have changed considerably from Seetzen's time. In the premodern world, changing one's religion was not so much connected with individual faith or personal belief as it was with affiliation and loyalty.¹¹ Every conversion occurred against the backdrop of the often tense relations between the Ottoman Empire and its Christian rivals,¹² which were shaped significantly by wars with the Austrian, Russian, and French empires. In each of these empires, religion played a similar role in terms of expressing affiliation and loyalty to a regime.¹³ Consequently, any religious conversion implied a shift in political allegiance. At the same time,

Honored by the Glory of Islam. Conversion and Conquest in Ottoman Europe, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2008.

⁹ TIJANA KRSTIĆ, *Contested Conversions to Islam. Narratives of Religious Change in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire*, Stanford University Press, Stanford 2011, p. 166–167.

¹⁰ « Ich bin Willens, von den hiesigen Renegaten so viele Nachrichten einzuziehen, als möglich, um die Ursachen kennen zu lernen, die sie zu diesem Entschlusse bewegen » (SEETZEN, p. 233).

¹¹ Hedda Reindl-Kiel has examined a remarkable eighteenth-century renegade based on related private papers (HEDDA REINDL-KIEL, « Das Ende einer Kavaliersreise – Beginn einer osmanischen Karriere? », in HEDDA REINDL-KIEL, SEYFI KENAN (eds.), *Deutsch-türkische Begegnungen / Alman Türk Tesadüfleri. Festschrift für Kemal Beydilli / Kemal Beydilli İçin Armağan*, EB-Verlag, Berlin 2013, p. 106–187).

¹² Work migration between Persia and the Ottoman Empire was probably substantial but is not connected to renegades. To a lesser degree, migration links existed with other Muslim realms, but unlike Safavid Persia, they were not military rivals of the Ottomans.

¹³ Cf. WILL SMILEY, « The Meanings of Conversion: Treaty Law, State Knowledge, and Religious Identity among Russian Captives in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire », *International History Review*, 34/3 (2012), p. 559–580.

Western imaginations and perceptions of renegades were subject to constant change.

In contrast to its all-important significance in the later nineteenth century, however, any sense of national affiliation was at best nascent in Seetzen's time. Religious affiliation, on the other hand, had been a potent factor in identity formation for centuries, though it was by no means the only one. The importance of religion during this time has been well-documented, not least by studies of the rhetorical epiphenomena of the Ottoman-Habsburg wars in Southeastern Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹⁴ The situation around 1800 at the time of Seetzen's journey, however, was quite different. In the Ottoman Empire, the decades between the disastrous war against Russia in 1768–1774 and the termination of the janissary corps in 1826 have been aptly described as an existential crisis¹⁵ in military, political and economic terms.¹⁶ Meanwhile, Europe experienced a series of destructive wars and upheaval itself that stemmed from revolutionary and Napoleonic France, which culminated in the new international order established in Vienna in 1815.¹⁷ The Ottoman world remained on the sidelines of these European conflicts as far as possible, with the notable exception of the French invasion and occupation of Egypt in 1798–1801.

That said, these disruptive changes and widespread violence in large parts of Europe did bring changes for the Ottoman Empire in that they further increased already existing motivations for migration. Compared to the instability of some European regions, the Ottoman Empire seemed to promise opportunities, in spite of having plenty of difficulties of its own. In addition to these 'push factors', the time-honoured practice of recruiting people from outside the Ottoman realm combined with new demands for technology specialists served as 'pull factors' attracting 'Franks'¹⁸ from Western and Central Europe who were on the lookout

¹⁴ On the resentment against renegades in Western Turcica prints, see KRSTIĆ, *Contested conversions*, p. 20, and ALMUT HÖFERT, *Den Feind beschreiben: 'Türkengefahr' und europäisches Wissen über das Osmanische Reich 1450–1600*, Campus, Frankfurt 2003. For an overview of enemy-related early modern pamphlets in the Holy Roman Empire see MARTIN WREDE, *Das Reich und seine Feinde: politische Feindbilder in der reichspatriotischen Publizistik zwischen Westfälischem Frieden und Siebenjährigem Krieg*, Zabern, Mainz 2001.

¹⁵ KLAUS KREISER, CHRISTOPH K. NEUMANN, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches und der modernen Türkei*, Reclam, Stuttgart 2020³, p. 283–313. C. K. Neumann uses the term 'Existenzkrise' (Ibid., p. 283).

¹⁶ For economic aspects, see e. g. FARUK TABAK, *The Waning of the Mediterranean, 1550–1870: A Geohistorical Approach*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 2008.

¹⁷ For the groundbreaking changes in political culture that reshaped Europe during this period, see DAVID BELL, *The First Total War. Napoleon's Europe and the Birth of Modern Warfare*, Houghton Mifflin, Boston 2007.

¹⁸ 'Franks' (*frenk*, *firengī*, *ifrenc*, *ifranjī*) referred mainly to inhabitants of West and Central Europe. For the term and its usages, see İŞİN DEMİRKENT, « Franklar », in BEKİR TOPALOĞLU

for a fresh start. In contrast to the migrants who headed towards the New World, migrants to the Ottoman world were not looking for land, but rather for employment opportunities. Not every immigrant, however, was successful: in Aleppo, for instance, Seetzen mentions an 'Avanturier' who had to be supported by other resident Franks and finally returned to Central Europe.¹⁹

III. Perceptions of Renegades

For decades, scholars have explored travelogues and accounts of foreign encounters with all their constructions, perceptions and misconceptions of the 'other' so that by now it is considered common knowledge that any observations about an 'other' is a reflection of the 'self'.²⁰ Therefore, looking at the 'other' can be a tool for deeper self-reflection that neither generates an inflated opinion of the self nor disparages the other. Moreover, it has the potential to expose the reflexive dynamics that underpin a source text.

In spite of much theorising and debate within scholarship, several questions continue to pose difficulties, such as how to account for changes in the perception of others that occurred over time and across shifting places and contexts. Likewise, there is still no consensus on how to determine whether estrangement or distortion was caused by an author, by a contemporary audience, or by readers today, or how best to conceptualise the notion of borders. Borders, for example, may be intracultural or intercultural, they may also refer to preexisting stereotypes, standards of knowledge of the existing order, or even politically implied limits of what can be said. Borders can overlap, reinforce or attenuate. They can also seem to be hermetically sealed and at the same time be crossed on a daily basis.²¹ Most would agree, however, that borders presuppose entities

et al. (eds.), *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, vol. XIII, Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Araştırmaları Merkezi, Istanbul 1996, p. 173–176.

¹⁹ ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo 1803–1805*, ed. JUDITH ZEPTER, CARSTEN WALBINER et al., Georg Olms, Hildesheim et al. 2011, p. 75.

²⁰ For this and the following considerations, see JOACHIM EIBACH, CLAUDIA OPITZ-BELAKHAL, « Zwischen Kulturen. Mittler und Grenzgänger vom 17. bis 19. Jahrhundert », in Eid. (eds.), *Zwischen Kulturen. Mittler und Grenzgänger vom 17. bis 19. Jahrhundert*, Wehrhahn, Hannover 2018, p. 7–13.

²¹ JOACHIM EIBACH, CLAUDIA OPITZ-BELAKHAL, « Zwischen Kulturen. Mittler und Grenzgänger vom 17. bis 19. Jahrhundert », p. 8. For a methodological approach to the concept of culture, see JÜRGEN OSTERHAMMEL, « Die Vielfalt der Kulturen und die Methoden des Kulturvergleichs », in FRIEDRICH JAEGER, JÜRGEN STRAUB (eds.), *Handbuch der Kulturwissenschaften*, vol. II, Metzler, Stuttgart 2004, p. 50–65.

between which borders can be drawn²² and that a special category of people crossing borders were the so-called renegades.

The renegades that make an appearance in Seetzen's diaries convey the full ambiguity of the concept as they crossed these physical borders between rival empires, which had their own ambiguities, and represented both worlds to one another without fully belonging to one side or the other. Turning their backs to one side could actually compromise their trustworthiness in both, though they continued to be useful because of their special skills as well as their knowledge of 'the other side'. As they moved within these border zones, their lives were fundamentally ambiguous.²³ During the nineteenth century, however, this situation began to change as the prospects and perspectives for renegades diminished significantly, perhaps due to the growing tendency of disambiguation in all walks of life.²⁴ The perceptions and social realities of renegades that had existed in 1800 had become unthinkable and hardly imaginable by 1900, let alone 2000. Thus, the turn of the nineteenth century when Seetzen was writing seems to occupy an interim position in this regard that allows for his diaries to speak to these often intangible transitions that may merit further research.

On a number of occasions, Seetzen mentions in passing how he encountered renegades and what his exchanges with them were like. As a Frankish foreigner in the Ottoman Empire, it was easier for him to connect with Christian subjects and people who were already seeking commercial or political contact with Franks than it was to come into contact with Muslim and Jewish subjects in the absence of a formal connection to consular or trading representatives.²⁵ Contact with consulate

²² These topics are further explored with respect to the concept of transculturality in MONICA JUNEJA, JOACHIM EIBACH, CLAUDIA OPITZ-BELAKHAL, « Kultur, Transkulturalität und post-koloniale Grenzüberschreitungen », in JOACHIM EIBACH, CLAUDIA OPITZ-BELAKHAL (eds.), *Zwischen Kulturen. Mittler und Grenzgänger vom 17. bis 19. Jahrhundert*, Wehrhahn, Hannover 2018, p. 15–25. Cf. MADELEINE HERREN-OESCH, MARTIN RÜESCH, CHRISTIANE SIBILLE, *Transcultural History: Theories, Methods, Sources*, Springer, Berlin – Heidelberg 2012.

²³ Cf. FRAUKE BERNDT, STEPHAN KAMMER, « Amphibolie – Ambiguität – Ambivalenz. Die Struktur antagonistisch-gleichzeitiger Zweiwertigkeit », in Eid. (eds.), *Amphibolie – Ambiguität – Ambivalenz*, Königshausen & Neumann, Würzburg 2009, p. 7–30.

²⁴ This claim, yet to be substantiated empirically in the Ottoman context, is made by THOMAS BAUER, *Die Kultur der Ambiguität. Eine andere Geschichte des Islams*, Verlag der Weltreligionen, Berlin 2011; and Id., *Die Vereindeutigung der Welt: Über den Verlust an Mehrdeutigkeit und Vielfalt*, Reclam, Stuttgart 2018.

²⁵ Seetzen had even less contact with female Christian subjects and virtually none with Jewish and Muslim females. This seems to enhance the importance of his Christian landlady Mme. Sariman in Aleppo for his diaries, but there is no record of any encounters with female renegades.

staff was in fact expected from him,²⁶ but from their point of view contact with renegades, as former subjects of a Protestant or Catholic power, could be a delicate issue. This was however not relevant as far as Seetzen was concerned.

Indeed, a Frankish traveller's outlook even seemed to correspond more readily to that of the renegades in terms of communication and positioning. On the one hand, with Seetzen the renegades had the opportunity to speak to somebody from a familiar context in a familiar language who, as a learner of Turkish and Arabic himself, could even appreciate their own difficulties in 'blending in' linguistically, culturally and socially. On the other hand, Seetzen encountered Ottoman civilisation not as a foreign diplomat, spy or military expert, but as a an explorer whose goals related to humanism and enlightenment as a collector of curiosities in the service of a minor prince who had no clout in the Ottoman Empire whatsoever.²⁷

To former Franks, Seetzen represented their homeland, but he was not seen as an emissary of their former masters, especially because he accepted their changeovers for what they were, unlike diplomatic representatives. This made it easier for Seetzen to encounter renegades and engage with some of them on a deeper level. For this reason—although his perceptions and descriptions were doubtlessly coloured by his own context, education and knowledge – his accounts do seem to in part avoid the blatant narrow-mindedness of some narratives of the later nineteenth century.

Nonetheless, he does employ categories familiar to a presumed reader educated in a similar way when he explains certain notions that he comes across.²⁸ The concept of renegades, however, was not difficult to translate in this respect despite the alleged or actual hate and mistrust between empires: a contemporary reader would have been able to draw connections to their own world in which people in eighteenth-century Europe, particularly in the Holy Roman Empire, were accustomed to the rivalry, borders and conversions between Lutheran, Catholic and Reformed sects, as individuals were defecting from one army or principality to another.

At the same time, Seetzen's accounts are not entirely free of misgivings and suspicion when it came to those designated as 'renegade'. Despite his obvious

²⁶ The territory Seetzen was born in (Herrschaft Jever in East Frisia) was under the overlordship of the Czar between 1793 and 1807 due to complicated inheritance dealings. He therefore made a courtesy call on the Russian representative on 2 June 1802 (SEETZEN, p. 341–352).

²⁷ The petty prince in question was Ernst Ludwig von Sachsen-Gotha-Altenburg (1745–1804, see CHRISTOPH KÖHLER, ANDREAS KLINGER, WERNER GREILING (eds.), *Ernst II. von Sachsen-Gotha-Altenburg. Ein Herrscher im Zeitalter der Aufklärung*, Böhlau, Köln 2005).

²⁸ For instance, various kinds of dervishes appear as cynics, epicureans or advocates of enlightenment (SEETZEN, p. 206, 274, 139–140).

commitment to enlightenment ideals and his ostentatious anti-clericalism, Seetzen was still influenced by that fact that during the early modern period, this common appellation carried a derogatory connotation, referring to somebody who had defected to the opposing side. The writings of some eighteenth-century lexicographers, for example, offer insights into how the term *renegade* was understood at the time. Seetzen's contemporary Johann Christoph Adelung (1732–1806)²⁹ explains the term 'Renegat' as somebody who has forsaken his religion for another, especially for Islam:

A renegade [...] is a person who has forsaken his religion, switching over to another except for Christianity, which is especially common among Christians who convert to the Mohammedan religion. Jeroschim, an author of the 14th century,³⁰ called them abnegating people.³¹

Likewise, Samuel Johnson (1709–1784) attributes the term *renegade* to the Spanish *renegado* and explains it as either « one that apostatises from the faith; an apostate » or as « one who deserts to the enemy; a revolter », ³² which encompasses both the idea of defecting from a religion and defecting to an enemy. Adelung does not explicitly address this latter aspect, but he does state that becoming a renegade means abandoning Christianity, in contrast to conversions between Catholic and Protestant denominations within Christianity. In this context, he also refers to the relationship with Islam, which was particularly connected with the term, and this may also have been the case in early modern Spain. Whereas media

²⁹ OTTO BASLER, « Adelung », in *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, vol. I, Duncker & Humblot, Berlin 1953, p. 63–65, <<https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118500651.html#ndbcontent>> (Accessed October 2023).

³⁰ This is perhaps Nikolaus von Jeroschin (d. after 1344), who authored a history of the Teutonic Order (SABINE SCHMOLINSKY, 'Nikolaus von Jeroschin', in *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, vol. XIX, Duncker & Humblot, Berlin 1999, p. 272, <<https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd119014998.html#ndbcontent>> (Accessed October 2023).

³¹ « Der Renegāt, des -en, plur. die -en, aus den mittlern Lat. Renegatus, renegare, verläugnen, eine Person, welche ihrer Religion entsaget und zu einer andern außer der christlichen übergethet; wo es besonders von Christen üblich ist, welche zu der Mahomedanischen Religion übergehen, und welche Jeroschim, ein Schriftsteller des 14ten Jahrhunderts, vernoigte Leute nennet » (JOHANN CHRISTOPH ADELUNG, *Grammatisch-Kritisches Wörterbuch der Hochdeutschen Mundart*, 4 vols., Bauer, Vienna 1811, p. 1083–1084, <https://lexika.digitale-sammlungen.de/adelung/lemma/bsb0000_9133_6_1_1195> (Accessed October 2023).

³² SAMUEL JOHNSON, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, Knappton, London 1755, <<https://johnsonsdictionaryonline.com/views/search.php?term=Renegade>> (Accessed October 2023). The entry of the 1773 edition is identical.

usage today stresses the abandonment of a political ideology, these late eighteenth-century definitions clearly had religious connotations.

Seetzen himself adds that the Turkish analogue to the term 'renegade' was *dönme*.³³ In the Ottoman context, this term is used mostly to refer to adherents of the messianic figure Sabbetai Zevi (Šabbēṭay Šēḇī, 1626–1676) who allegedly converted to Islam but continued in their Jewish beliefs. This small group situated between two established religions was rejected by both and remains an object of antisemitic hatred even to this day.³⁴ Seetzen presumably equated renegade with *dönme* given the strong similarity between the two as well as the inclusion of the idea of 'turncoats'.³⁵

Shortly after Sabbetai Zevi's demise, *dönme* was often applied in a broader sense without stripping it of its origin. The scholar Franciscus à Mesgnien Meninski (1623–1698) from Lorraine, who had served as a Polish ambassador and later as an interpreter of Oriental languages at the Habsburg court, published his famous polyglot dictionary in 1680. In this work, he explained *dönme* as a renegade and apostate from Christianity.³⁶ By way of example, Meninski invokes the idea of a Jew turned Turk (*yehūdīden dönme*) with antisemitic innuendo and compares this to a baptised Jew 'with us' ('*nobis*', i. e. in Latin Europe) or by extension a Jew turned 'Mahometanus'.³⁷

Two generations after Seetzen, Julius Theodor Zenker explained *dönme* without reference to a particular religion as a convert or apostate (« Bekehrter, Convertit, Abtrünniger »).³⁸ Around the same time, Redhouse's dictionary restricted its use to converts to Islam: « One who has changed his religion to become a Mussulman,

³³ « Ein Renegat heißt im Türkischen Dönmä » (SEETZEN, p. 125).

³⁴ See MARC BAER, *The Dönme. Jewish Converts, Muslim Revolutionaries, and Secular Turks*, Stanford Univ. Press, Stanford 2010; and CENGİZ ŞIŞMAN, *The Burden of Silence. Sabbatai Sevi and the Evolution of the Ottoman-Turkish Dönmes*, Oxford University Press, New York 2015.

³⁵ BRUCE MASTERS, « Shabbatai Zvi », in BRUCE MASTERS, GÁBOR ÁGOSTON (eds.), *Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire*, Facts On File, New York 2009, p. 575.

³⁶ « Reversus, conversus, et desertor, apostata. Der zurück kommen ist / ein bekehrter / und ein verläugneter Christ. Tornato, conuertito, et rinegato. Retourné, converti, et renegat, apostat. Rtory śie wroćik / nąwrocony / zbieg / poturczony » (FRANCISCUS À MESGNIEN MENINSKI, *Thesaurus Linguarum Orientalium* [...], 4 vols., self-published, Vienna 1680, vol. I, col. 2195).

³⁷ He paraphrased this as « a Jew turned Turk » (ein Jud der ein Türck worden ist). Without apparent reason, but still in an antisemitic mood, he transposes a change of religion into a change of species: « A man turned ape » (*adamdan dönme meymun*) and explains it thus (*in simiam transmutatus homo*); see MENINSKI, *Thesaurus Linguarum Orientalium*, col. 2196.

³⁸ JULIUS THEODOR ZENKER, *Türkisch-Arabisch-Persisches Handwörterbuch*, vol. II, Engelmann, Leipzig 1876, p. 444.

a renegade ».³⁹ Until Seetzen's time, the meaning of *dönme* and paraphrasing it as *renegade* was quite consistent, but it appears that the antisemitic undertone of the seventeenth century may have faded, and later on even the Islamic element might have been eclipsed by a generalised concept of religious defection.

IV. *Regular Corps and Nizâm-ı Cedîd*

From the very beginning, the Ottomans continued the practice adopted by several previous Muslim polities of recruiting migrants from outside their own political boundaries.⁴⁰ Such traditions are, however, less relevant than parallels with other early modern empires, including Austria or Russia. Military defeats and other crises in the late eighteenth century combined with the pressures of rivalling empires reinforced the desire of large parts of the Ottoman court and the upper echelons of its bureaucracy to match these rivals in terms of skill, knowledge, and technology. This resulted in the adoption of practices and technologies that had proven to be effective in the most advanced armies of the day, coinciding with what had been established in some 'Western' armies and resembling similar imports in the Russian Empire starting several decades before, but it did not mark the adoption of a 'Western mindset'. Such adoptions, even to the point of industrial espionage, could be detected in other contexts as well, including Western ones (such as Austria or Denmark, based on French models). In the Ottoman Empire, this led first to the establishment of two colleges of military engineering⁴¹ and then took the shape of an entirely new military unit set up to employ these techniques.⁴²

³⁹ JOHN W. REDHOUSE, *Redhouse's Turkish Dictionary*, Quaritch, London 1880, p. 572.

⁴⁰ For migration from West and Central Europe to the Ottoman Empire in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, see RALF C. MÜLLER, *Franken im Osten. Art, Umfang, Struktur und Dynamik der Migration aus dem lateinischen Westen in das Osmanische Reich des 15./16. Jahrhunderts auf der Grundlage von Reiseberichten*, Eudora, Leipzig 2005. Müller characterises Frankish and Ottoman attitudes towards renegades as unbiased (Ibid., p. 135). However, Muslim opponents of recently converted officeholders could challenge their eligibility on these grounds (KRSTIĆ, *Contested Conversions*, p. 169–170).

⁴¹ For the schools of military engineering founded in the 1770s see KEMAL BEYDILLI, *Türk bilim ve matbaacılık tarihinde mühendishâne: Mühendishâne matbaası ve kütübhânesi (1776–1826)*, Eren Yayıncılık, İstanbul 1997.

⁴² See KEMAL BEYDILLI, İLHAN ŞAHİN, *Mahmud Râif Efendi ve Nizâm-i Cedîd'e dâir eseri*, Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi, Ankara 2001.

Building this new kind of corps required enormous resources and especially skilled personnel.⁴³ Franks, therefore, appear to have been sought-after immigrants, particularly if they converted to Islam, which they often did given the prospect of promotions available for Muslims who would be eligible for command-level positions. In March of 1802, Seetzen visited one such advanced military compound known as 'Lāwānd Tschiftlik' (Levend Çiftlik),⁴⁴ an area a few miles north of Constantinople. Since 1792, this area had been home to the main drill grounds and barracks for troops of the 'new order' (*nizām-ı cedīd*),⁴⁵ who were trained and equipped according to 'Frankish' models. The *Nizām-ı Cedīd*, which Seetzen calls the 'regular corps' (reguläres Corps), employed at least four French officers, several German and Russian 'renegades' as officers and drill masters, and other renegades with military, technical, or medical expertise.⁴⁶ From an Ottoman point of view, recruiting 'foreigners' and captives for the military and requiring them to become Muslims had been the rule for centuries, effectively making them renegades in the sense discussed above. These renegades now formed the 'nucleus' of the *Nizām-ı Cedīd* corps⁴⁷ but were, of course, a numerical minority. Rather than just being adventurers or soldiers of fortune, Seetzen indicates that these foreigners might have migrated because they had lost their positions at home or they were driven out by revolutionary upheaval in France and elsewhere.

In 1802, the commander of the barracks of Levend Çiftlik was General Soliman (Süleymān),⁴⁸ an officer of Hungarian origin and a patron of renegade Hungarian clients in the corps. In part because of this shared background, Seetzen's

⁴³ The same is true for the construction of warships that met the requirements of the time (cf. SEETZEN, p. 289 and p. 337–338).

⁴⁴ SEETZEN, p. 209–214. The place occasionally appears as Lāwāntschiflick or Lāwāndschischlick as well. Decades before, the area had already been used for the formation of an artillery regiment under the Hungarian-French officer Baron de Tott (1733–1793), and the component manor (*çiftlik*) would be changed to barracks (*kışla*) in the nineteenth century. Today, the business district of Levent forms part of the municipality (*ilçe*) of Beşiktaş in Greater Istanbul.

⁴⁵ A slightly dated overview of the 'new order' (*nizām-ı cedīd*) is given in STANFORD SHAW, *Between Old and New: The Ottoman Empire under Sultan Selim III, 1789–1807*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1971. For a more recent interpretation see FREDERICK ANSCOMBE, *State, Faith, and Nation in Ottoman and Post-Ottoman Lands*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2014, p. 33–89.

⁴⁶ STANFORD SHAW, « The Nizam-ı Cedid Army under Sultan Selim III 1789–1807 », *Oriens*, 18–19 (1965–1966), p. 168–184. Shaw designates the mentioned « officers and drill masters » (Ibid., p. 170) as renegades but also mentions that they had been captured.

⁴⁷ STANFORD SHAW, « The Nizam-ı Cedid Army under Sultan Selim III 1789–1807 », p. 181.

⁴⁸ General Soliman is only mentioned by this name. Seetzen never met him in person but attests to his extraordinary importance for Hungarian renegades and probably others in the military (especially in the *Nizām-ı Cedīd* corps).

Hungarian interpreter in Constantinople ('unser Ungar') had managed to establish a relationship with this commander, though this was not necessarily a given and required effort and commitment on both sides. For generations, Hungarian émigrés had moved into the Ottoman Empire;⁴⁹ renegades from Hungary were therefore not uncommon in Constantinople as many had fled Habsburg rule or rather the prospect of war in central Europe.

While this pattern of recruitment across borders continued time-honoured practices, it also reflects an ambivalent view of the inimical 'West'⁵⁰ as superior in economic, technical and military terms that made it a worthwhile 'recruitment area'. In the second half of the nineteenth century, under imperialist auspices, Islamic perceptions of 'the West' as technologically and economically superior continued to grow, as did the conviction that it was morally inferior to the country of true religion, thereby manifestly matching Western ideas of the wisdom of the wondrous Orient.⁵¹ Preferential treatment and the difficulty of attracting suitable candidates therefore offered some renegades the ability to immediately attain an elevated position in the ranks, even if they might not have been obviously qualified for it or had not even yet converted.⁵²

As Seetzen astutely observes, the Ottoman authorities were well aware of the renegades' multifarious motivations and dispositions. Nevertheless, they

⁴⁹ The latest but certainly not the last group of Hungarian anti-Habsburg nobles and their retinues had emigrated into the Ottoman Empire in the wake of Rákóczi's uprising in 1703–1711 (KÁLMÁN BENDA, « Rákóczi von Felsővadász, Ferenc II. », in MATHIAS BERNATH, KARL NEHRING (eds.), *Biographisches Lexikon zur Geschichte Südosteuropas*, vol. IV, Oldenbourg, Munich 1981, p. 22–25, <<https://www.biolex.ios-regensburg.de/BioLexViewview.php?ID=1581>> (Accessed 17 August 2023). Another famous Hungarian renegade before Seetzen's time was the well-known book printer İbrâhîm Müteferrika (1674–1745); see SZUZZA BARBARICS-HERMANIK, « İbrahim Müteferrika als transkultureller Vermittler im Osmanischen Reich », in ARNO STROHMEYER, NORBERT SPANNENBERGER, ROBERT PECH (eds.), *Frieden und Konfliktmanagement in interkulturellen Räumen. Das Osmanische Reich und die Habsburgermonarchie in der Frühen Neuzeit*. Franz Steiner, Stuttgart 2013, p. 283–308; and KEMAL BEYDILLI, *İki İbrahim Müteferrika ve Halefi*. Kronik Kitap, İstanbul 2019.

⁵⁰ What would become referred to as the West was still designated as lands of the Franks around 1800. Looking for models of progress not unlike countries in the central, northern and eastern parts of Europe, during the 19th century Ottoman views became fixated on Paris and London as centres of an idealised West, which occasionally resulted in some disappointment among Ottoman travellers who actually visited France and Britain.

⁵¹ For the all too simple opposition of a hegemonic West and a resistant Middle East in the wake of the French invasion of Egypt, see JUAN COLE, *Napoleon's Egypt. Invading the Middle East*, Palgrave Macmillan, Basingstoke 2007, esp. p. 247–248.

⁵² SEETZEN, p. 173, 289, 337–338.

welcomed even dubious newcomers as they were intent on attracting skilled employees, particularly for staffing the military, and because they could not reject prospective converts. Seetzen acknowledges this quandary of the Ottoman authorities who were obliged by 'their religion' to accept everybody who applied, even though « Christian renegades later usually wanted to defect again ». ⁵³ According to Seetzen, Ottoman authorities took this into account, granting renegades lucrative positions, but rarely gifting them presents or single payments in exchange for their conversion. ⁵⁴

Furthermore, Seetzen also compares Christian renegades to Jewish converts to Islam who had been Ottoman subjects from the start. In an effort to escape punishment for misdeeds within their local Jewish communities, some had converted to Islam to escape their grip. Then, however, some decided to leave the country by ship, often heading to Italy where they joined a new Jewish community and continued to live as Jews again. ⁵⁵ Although Seetzen's account might not be entirely reliable and antisemitic prejudice on his part cannot be ruled out, this 'countermovement' shares some characteristics with other patterns in renegade immigration. In this particular context, it seems that conversion may have been regarded as instrumental to avoid punishment or to achieve advancement, while the zeal for a new faith suddenly waned after the border had been crossed.

Seetzen describes another 'countermovement' in connection with a wrestler who had been serving as a corsair in Tripoli before he came to the Ottoman capital. The wrestler complained that he could not advance in Constantinople because only favour was relevant in the city, not merit or perseverance. ⁵⁶ He implied that he had served successfully for a long time, but lacked patronage (incidentally concealing the reason why he had left Tripoli). As Seetzen recounts, the wrestler said that he was going to turn to the French or the English in order to advance his career, ⁵⁷ thus crossing alleged borders in the opposite direction. The issue of conversion does not seem to figure prominently in this account, even after years

⁵³ « Auch die christlichen Renegaten suchen gewöhnlich nachher wieder zu entfliehen » (SEETZEN, p. 483).

⁵⁴ « Da die Türken schon häufig die Erfahrung gemacht haben, daß Renegaten wieder die Turkey verlassen: so ist es selten, daß Renegaten ietzt wieder Geschenke an baarem Gelde oder Geldeswerth erhalten. Bessere Chargen erhalten sie » (SEETZEN, p. 208).

⁵⁵ « Indessen bleiben sie es nur auf eine ganz kurze Zeit. Mit der ersten besten Gelegenheit reisen sie mit einem europäischen Schiff, nach Europa, Triest, Venedig, Ankona, Livorno etc. ab, und leben dort wieder als Juden, und als wäre nichts vorgefallen » (SEETZEN, p. 483).

⁵⁶ « Ueberdem kann er nicht avanciren, weil die Stelle nicht nach Verdienst und der Anciennität, sondern bloß nach der Gunst vergeben würde » (SEETZEN, p. 356–357).

⁵⁷ « Er wollte Constantinopel wieder verlassen und bey den Franzosen oder Engländern Dienste suchen » (SEETZEN, p. 357).

of Islamic privateering against Christian seafaring.⁵⁸ Most of the corsairs in Tripoli, moreover, in fact originated from Italy or other 'Frankish' territories, having already crossed this border in the opposite direction.⁵⁹

V. Escaping Vicissitudes and Seizing Opportunities

In order to explore Seetzen's perceptions and representations, the following section will examine some narratives of vicissitude as much as of opportunity. In Antakia (Antioch) and later in Aleppo, Seetzen was visited by Ioseph/Joseph, a slave of a local dignitary, in late 1802.⁶⁰ He describes him as a likeable and talkative man of twenty-six years who knew German, Hungarian and French as well as some Arabic and some Turkish.⁶¹ Seetzen calls Joseph a slave, i. e. a close dependant, as well as a renegade and explains that he was born as Ioseph in the Hungarian town of Raab (Győr).⁶² Raised a Catholic, he learned his father's craft of tanning and was conscripted into the Habsburg cavalry. He had participated in the siege and capture of Mannheim in 1795 during the War of the First Coalition but was himself captured when the French defeated his army.⁶³

According to Seetzen's account, Joseph had come to France as a prisoner of war but seems to have been released soon thereafter. He began working as a tanner there and married twice. Seetzen neglects to give any details about these marriages, even though a marriage should have caused Joseph to stay in one place. He seems to have taken to his heels, however, for « he wanted to see Paris and still

⁵⁸ For the relevant period, see DANIEL PANZAC, *Les Corsaires barbaresques. La fin d'une épopée, 1800-1820*, CNRS, Paris 1999.

⁵⁹ The regencies of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli, still under Ottoman suzerainty in Seetzen's time, were major destinations for both voluntary immigration and forced enslavement and thus an important place of renegacy. See BARTOLOME BENNASSAR, LUCILE BENNASSAR, *Les chrétiens d'Allah. L'histoire extraordinaire des renégats, XVI^e et XVII^e siècles*, Perrin, Paris 2006²; SALVATORE BONO, *Corsari nel Mediterraneo. Cristiani e musulmani fra guerra, schiavitù e commercio*, Mondadori, Milano 1993.

⁶⁰ The following account is based on SEETZEN, p. 719-722. He laid ill in Antioch before he could travel to Aleppo, where Joseph visited him later.

⁶¹ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 86.

⁶² Győr is located halfway between Vienna and Budapest.

⁶³ According to Seetzen, this happened at the battle of Lautern (modern Kaiserslautern). French, Prussian and Austrian troops fought three battles there in 1793-1794, but the capture of Mannheim only took place in 1795. Joseph's capture may therefore have occurred at another battle. While probably not unusual, such minor factual errors show that the accuracy of Seetzen's diary in detail should not be overrated.

being young, he would not tie himself to a place ».⁶⁴ Having stayed a year in the capital, Joseph went on to work in other towns and hired on a boat at the Canal de Languedoc (Canal du Midi) for six months.

He was once again conscripted, but this time into the French army, where he managed to be put on a coast ship and then transferred to a transport ship bound for Alexandria. Given that Napoleon had already abandoned his troops in Egypt, this part of the story likely happened between autumn 1799 and autumn 1801. Joseph then left the French troops to work with a tanner and pig dealer in Būlāq,⁶⁵ when the French withdrew in 1801, however, he was captured again, robbed and enslaved. In the service of a Mamluk lord, Joseph was circumcised, i. e. converted to Islam, and sold to another when his lord retreated to Upper Egypt.⁶⁶ Finally, his present master had purchased him in El-Arihsch⁶⁷ from whence they travelled with an Ottoman army through Palestine and Syria to Antioch. As a conscript, a captive, and a slave, Joseph could be considered an involuntary renegade who had succumbed to the vicissitudes of fate by serving several masters one after another but who had made the best of his situation. Other renegades actively fled uncomfortable situations like these and emigrated in search of opportunities; some of them were even of noble descent but had to forgo some of their privileges in the process.

In the context of perambulations in Istanbul on 15 March 1803, Seetzen mentions some renegades of noble descent, namely a Polish count (Graf Schablinsky) who had served in a Napoleonic Polish legion⁶⁸ before entering Ottoman service as a Niẓām-ı Cedīd cavalry officer named Mechmed (Meḥmed), and one Baron Keil from Hungary who had immigrated and converted around

⁶⁴ « Allein er wünschte Paris zu sehen, und überdem wollte er sich, da er iung war, noch nicht an einem Ort immer fesseln » (SEETZEN, p. 720).

⁶⁵ Būlāq was the river port of Cairo and is now a district of that city.

⁶⁶ Several so-called Mamluks, i. e. members of the former Egyptian-Ottoman elite, who had been beaten by the French invasion force and in part allied themselves to these, fled to Upper Egypt when the French army departed to escape the returning Ottoman troops and the ensuing turmoil. Those Egyptian-Ottoman elite have to be distinguished from pre-Ottoman Mamluks who could serve as historiographical points of reference. Considering the recruitment of non-muslim outsiders for elite and military purposes, for centuries Western Christian travellers had been drawing comparisons with Joseph of Genesis 37–39 (cf. ULRICH HAARMANN, « The Mamluk System of Rule in the Eyes of Western Travelers », *Mamlūk Studies Review*, 5 (2001), p. 1–24, here 13–15).

⁶⁷ The town of al-ʿArīsh on the Mediterranean north coast of the Sinai peninsula on the road between Egypt and Syria.

⁶⁸ A comprehensive study on the Légions polonaises founded in 1796 and 1798 is JAN PACHOŃSKI, *Legiony polskie 1794–1807. Prawda i legenda*, 3 vols., Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony, Warsaw 1969–1979.

1792.⁶⁹ Seetzen does not provide any detail on the circumstances, but he states that Keil had been serving as a slave in Baghdad for some time,⁷⁰ hence he was called Bagdadly Soliman (Baġdādī Süleymān), now residing in Egypt where he served the governor-general in a military capacity.⁷¹ These noblemen had fled the Austrian and Russian empires and entered Ottoman service to find opportunities befitting their respective ranks. Seetzen does not mention whether they were involved in Polish or Hungarian campaigns against their imperial overlords, but he does note that the latter's mistrust may have curbed their career opportunities at home while Ottoman authorities welcomed them with more open arms.

Apart from such instances, criminal prosecutions also seem to have played a role in the decision of some renegades to leave home. In this case, a perpetrator had fled to escape shame and conviction, taking advantage of a potential fresh start within a different legal context. Another noble renegade that Seetzen reported on was 'a certain Baron von Linden'. His father Johann Heinrich Freiherr von Linden (1719–1795) had been minister of finance (Geheimer Rat und Direktor der Hofkammer) to the archbishop-elect of Mainz,⁷² who fled in 1792 when revolutionary French troops threatened the town. Some time before, the finance minister's son had been implicated, of all things, in a counterfeiting affair. Betrayed by an accomplice, Linden the counterfeiter had been incarcerated,⁷³ but

⁶⁹ SEETZEN, p. 208.

⁷⁰ He was probably an elite slave in a notable household. For the context, see THOMAS LIER, *Haushalte und Haushaltspolitik in Bagdad 1704–1831*, Ergon, Würzburg 2004.

⁷¹ What SEETZEN, p. 208 calls *Exerciermeister* may refer to supervising infantry drills such as ordered marching and firing, or possibly to naval artillery. In 1802, the governor-general of Egypt would have been Koca Hüsrev Mehmed Paşa (d. 1855) who had reconquered French-occupied Egypt in 1801, but in 1803 rebellious local militia and unruly Albanian troops would drive him out of the country. Later on, Hüsrev Paşa served in many capacities and played an important role in politics. A recent monograph on the topic is YÜKSEL ÇELİK, *Şeyhül-vüzerâ Koca Hüsrev Paşa. II. Mahmud devri'nin perde arkası*, Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara 2013.

⁷² The noble family von Linden had been in the service of the principality of Mainz during the 18th century and after the Holy Roman Empire's dissolution entered that of Württemberg. On the family, see FRANZ MENGES, «Linden, von», *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, vol. XIV, Duncker & Humblot, Berlin 1985, p. 588, <<https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd131533894.html#ndbcontent>> (Accessed August 2023). The archbishop-elect was Friedrich Carl Joseph Freiherr von Erthal (1719–1802); see HERIBERT RAAB, 'Friedrich Karl Freiherr von Erthal', *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, vol. V, Duncker & Humblot, Berlin 1961, p. 517–518, <<https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/pnd118703234.html#ndbcontent>> (Accessed August 2023).

⁷³ According to SEETZEN, p. 208 one of his two accomplices, who were quite appropriately also of noble birth, betrayed Linden because he did not support him with money and

after the capture of Mainz in 1792,⁷⁴ the French released him. Linden left for the Netherlands, where he allegedly entered a monastery before absconding after a short while. He went on to take up an insignificant position with the police in Vienna⁷⁵ that he left soon and continued on to Hungary. Suspected of being a seditionist (namely a Jacobin),⁷⁶ Linden was deported back to Vienna but finally released to be disposed of; he obtained a passport for the Ottoman Empire under the condition that he would neither become a 'Mohammedan' nor enter the service of the French adversary. Once he arrived in Constantinople, he unhesitatingly violated the former condition by converting and taking the name 'Ömer Efendi. Having lost access to all his networks of patronage as well as his personal credit, Linden had tried in vain to find a position within Europe, and so he opted to try to start a new life in the Ottoman Empire.

'Ömer Efendi was appointed a physician in the Nizām-ı Cedīd corps at Levend Çiftlik, « because he had dabbled in medicine », ⁷⁷ as Seetzen sarcastically remarks, and retained this position for two or three years, before « it no longer suited him, and again he deserted ». ⁷⁸ This had happened about 1800, perhaps a year or two before Seetzen made his enquiries. 'Ömer allegedly obtained a general pardon from the Habsburg ambassador and clandestinely travelled into the Imperial realm ('ins Kaiserliche'). According to rumour, he was detained in spite of the pardon, ⁷⁹ mirroring the fact that he had violated the conditions of his passport a few years before.

While Seetzen refers only to hearsay about Linden/'Ömer, the way he portrays the fate of this renegade certainly dovetails with how he characterised other renegades that he met personally. Seetzen alludes to Linden/'Ömer's insincerity by saying that « he pretended to want to become a monk » and « disliked all the

was himself pardoned for this cooperative behaviour (turning King's evidence as it were), while Linden and the other accomplice were imprisoned.

⁷⁴ For the ensuing Republic of Mainz, see ROLF REICHARDT, « Mainzer Republik », in FRIEDRICH JAEGER et al. (eds.), *Enzyklopädie der Neuzeit*, 16 vols., Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt 2005–2012, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2352-0248_Edn_COM_306332> (Accessed August 2023).

⁷⁵ SEETZEN, p. 209 asserts that Linden tried hard to obtain a respectable post but failed, with even his own brother refusing to support him. This is Seetzen's only mention of a von Linden brother in Vienna.

⁷⁶ In Vienna, Franz Hebenstreit and Andreas von Riedel were arrested as leaders of a Jacobin conspiracy (Jakobinerverschwörung) in July 1794. Jacobinism is explained in ROLF REICHARDT, « Jakobinismus », in FRIEDRICH JAEGER et al. (eds.), *Enzyklopädie der Neuzeit*, 16 vols., Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt 2005–2012, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2352-0248_edn_COM_286534> (Accessed August 2023).

⁷⁷ « Da er sich etwas mit der Medizin beschäftigt hatte » (SEETZEN, p. 208).

⁷⁸ « Nun gefiel es ihm hier nicht länger, und desertirte wieder » (SEETZEN, p. 208).

⁷⁹ SEETZEN, p. 209.

praying ».⁸⁰ Similarly, although the baron's origins in an ecclesiastical principality might have invited additional commentary, Seetzen does not mention religion after this point, referring exclusively to political upheaval, criminal activities, and the search for employment. Seetzen thus emphasises renegades' instability and unreliability as opposed to the idea of a committed plan.

Seetzen underscores this often unfavourable impression by pointing out a disagreeable tendency among renegades to a certain kind of arrogance. Seetzen deplores a French renegade's boasting (« eben ein solcher Prahler, als alle Uebrigen ») and posturing as 'Louis Comte de Saxe', citing a lack of both education and refinement.⁸¹ Another dubious character – « Ein Neuf-Chateller », as Seetzen calls him – was active as an illusionist whose boasts indicated not so much personal success as personal fantasy.⁸² Apart from sleights of hand, the Neuf-Chateller claimed to have entered Egypt as an engineer in French employ, married an Armenian who still lived in their coffeehouse in Cairo, left the country when the British departed in 1801, and ended up on Malta. He then settled in Italy where he was accepted in a monastery but found the monks to be scoundrels, despite all their apparent castigating and bigotry. Then, with the surprising help of two free masons, the Neuf-Chateller soon escaped, which may have been supported by his dubitable claim to have had erected a masonic lodge back in Cairo. After returning to the Ottoman Empire at this point, he apparently continued his career by giving advice on floriculture and flower trading. Hearing that story, Seetzen suspected that it came down to this renegade scrounging for money,⁸³ as the Neuf-Chateller had allegedly gone hungry for three days but Seetzen considered his attire more refined than his own.

In response to the Neuf-Chateller's later conversion and his membership in the mentioned Nizām-ı Cedīd corps,⁸⁴ Seetzen remarks: « The change in religion will

⁸⁰ « Unterweges [nach Wien] besucht er eine Abtey, wo er vorgiebt, Mönch werden zu wollen. Indessen hielt er es als Noviz nicht lange aus. Das viele Beten gefiel ihm nicht, und er verschwand wieder » (SEETZEN, p. 208–209).

⁸¹ SEETZEN, p. 633.

⁸² SEETZEN, p. 81–83. This man was probably from Neuchâtel, today in western Switzerland. This town and its surrounding area were under Hohenzollern rule (in personal union with Prussia) between 1707 and 1857, in Seetzen's time mainly oscillating between France and the Swiss Confederacy. Another possibility might be the town of Neufchâteau in Wallonia, which formed part of the French département Forêts in 1795–1814. A third town named Neufchâteau in the Vosges region, legally a part of France since 1766, had been renamed Mouzon-Meuse after the revolution.

⁸³ « Worauf alle dies Geschwätz hinzielen sollte, sahe ich lange voraus » (SEETZEN, p. 83).

⁸⁴ The editor assumes that this person was identical with the Neuf-Chateller (VOLKMAR ENDERLEIN, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen in Istanbul », in ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des*

probably make him uncomfortable, inducing him to proceed the same way as in his adventure in an Italian monastery from which he ran away ».⁸⁵ Apart from his unreliability and dubious lifestyle, this man seems to have shared the fate of other renegades who were washed to Egypt in the wake of the Napoleonic invasion. Since he was then unable or unwilling to return to France, he decided to try his luck in the Ottoman Empire where he does not seem to have felt bound to its authorities although he then entered the new corps as so many others had done.

VI. *Nostalgia and Remorse*

Apart from such multilayered motives and instances of fickle fate, Seetzen ascribes antithetically connected attitudes to several renegades. In particular, his interpreter introduced him to a Hungarian renegade resident in a barracks close to Kadıköy on the Asian estuary of the Bosphorus, formerly known as Anton, now named Mustapha (Muṣṭafā).⁸⁶ As names like Muṣṭafā, Mehmed, 'Ali etc. were extremely widespread and surnames virtually unknown, it was common to add sobriquets. In this case, Anton's distinguishing trait was his difficulty in learning Turkish, which earned him the honour of being referred to as 'Türkische bilness Mustapha' (Türkçe Bilmez Muṣṭafā), i. e. Muṣṭafā who does not know Turkish.

In his brief summary of Anton's background, Seetzen characterises Anton/Muṣṭafā as a native of Hungary whose parents spoke German. Not unlike the Hungarian Joseph, he had served in the light cavalry, presumably during a campaign against a Napoleonic army, had been captured and detained in France. After his return, Anton requested his dismissal as an invalid because he had broken his breastbone. When his request was denied, he was finally dishonourably discharged for running the gauntlet.

Shortly thereafter, Anton crossed the Danube and converted to Islam, assuming the name Mustapha/Muṣṭafā. Around 1799, he entered the Nizām-ı Cedīd troops at Levend Çiftlik in his former profession as a cavalryman, rising to the non-commissioned ranks of corporal and sergeant.⁸⁷ He still held this rank when Seetzen visited him, though Seetzen doubted that Muṣṭafā would rise further

Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel und der Reise nach Aleppo 1802–1803, ed. VOLKMAR ENDERLEIN, MICHAEL BRAUNE, DIETRICH HAGEN, Georg Olms, Hildesheim et al. 2012, p. xiv).

⁸⁵ « Wahrscheinlich wird ihm diese Religionsveränderung auch nicht sonderlich behagen, und vielleicht wird er es mit der Zeit ebenso machen, als bey einem Abenteuer in dem italienischen Mönchskloster, wo er echappierte » (SEETZEN, p. 173).

⁸⁶ SEETZEN, p. 123–125. Seetzen calls the whole estuary Scutari (Üsküdar) but acknowledges that it also was the name of a distinct town apart from Kadıköy and its vicinity.

⁸⁷ SEETZEN, p. 125–126.

because of his fondness for alcoholic beverages (« da er dem Trunke sehr ergeben ist »).⁸⁸ Seetzen also notes that Muṣṭafā's downcast mood was only further aggravated when the plague killed many soldiers and friends of his.⁸⁹ Although he was struck by grief and sorrow, he did not contract the disease himself, which Seetzen ascribes to the beneficial effect of the spirits Muṣṭafā used to drink abundantly.⁹⁰ In fact, Seetzen's comments demonstrate that he likely supported the assumption that imbibing brandy protected against the plague. He speculates that ingesting a substantial amount of spirituous beverages not only boosted courage, but might also have inhibited the absorption of the disease's 'venom' through skin pores. He also suggests that the spirits had antiseptic properties.⁹¹

We have no reason to assume that the excessive drinking that Seetzen so wryly commented upon was just a figure of his imagination; on the contrary, he offered his own interpretation of Muṣṭafā's habit as an expression of his sincere wish to 'flee that wretched country': Drinking numbed the renegade's feeling of unhappiness and misfortune. Seetzen was obviously familiar with the idea of drowning sorrows in drink from either experience or the teachings of folk psychology. Not surprisingly, it was easy to establish a connection between these habits and a renegade who may have expressed remorse over converting to a new religion. Seetzen also hints at an attitude of contrition in the following description:

He did not like it at all in the Turkish military; he asserted that they were a rude barbarian people. He lamented his displeasure to me. It would be better to be a common soldier under another European monarch than an officer here: I have to go away, even if it costs my life.⁹²

Changing to a first-person narrative here,⁹³ Seetzen seems to succinctly reproduce what Muṣṭafā said. Aside from the depiction of the Ottoman military as a bunch of

⁸⁸ SEETZEN, p. 126.

⁸⁹ SEETZEN, p. 127.

⁹⁰ « Diese Erzählung des Renegaten Mustapha kann wirklich Vieles dazu beytragen zu seiner Medicin, dem Branntwein, einiges Vertrauen einzufloßen » (SEETZEN, p. 128).

⁹¹ « Vielleicht unterhält dies geistige Getränk in Quantität getrunken, die Ausdünstung in einem hohen Grade, verhindert dadurch die Einsaugung des Giftes durch die Hautöffnungen, befördert den Muth, und wirkt auch überdem als kraftvolles Antisepticum » (SEETZEN, p. 128).

⁹² « Es gefiel ihm unter dem türkischen Militaire gar nicht; er versicherte, es sey ein grobes barbarisches Volk. Er klagte mir seine Not und sein Mißvergnügen. Lieber gemeiner Soldat unter einem andern europäischen Monarchen als hier Officier. Ich muß fort von hier und wenn es mein Leben kosten sollte » (SEETZEN, p. 126).

⁹³ Apart from the change from 'he' to 'I', the impression of a verbatim quote is supported by quotation and exclamation marks in the end at « ... nach Hause darf ich leider nicht! » on the same page, seemingly ending a quote but lacking an opening mark.

barbarians, it is striking that the Hungarian renegade considers serving « under another European monarch » as an alternative, relegating the (not even mentioned) change of religion to a mere necessity. Nevertheless, he obviously felt stuck in his position as a sergeant in the Nizām-ı Cedīd corps, however much he wanted to escape. A few weeks later, Muṣṭafā actually absconded after quarrelling with a renegade Polish general and went into hiding somewhere in Pera, which was heavily populated by Franks.⁹⁴

Although Seetzen did not refrain from condescendingly judging conditions in the Ottoman Empire, he also appreciated the soldiers' decent payment and superior provisioning⁹⁵ and commended the bathing facilities, which were absent from barracks he knew from the West.⁹⁶ He also complimented the ruler (Selīm III) for carefully fostering the new corps. Notwithstanding such commendable qualities, he also reiterated Muṣṭafā's criticism that the corps lacked discipline and orderliness, a fact that was graphically depicted in the sergeant's anecdotes as well as his own observations.

Seetzen recounts another sentimental experience in connection with a renegade who came to him in Constantinople, not disclosing his Christian name but calling himself Achmed (Aḥmed). Both the communications between the two and the sentimentality of the story were apparently influenced by the fact that Aḥmed was drunk, which Seetzen assumes to be his usual state.⁹⁷ He seems to commiserate with him, noting that « hubris, brandy and a savage life have mostly destroyed his mind ». ⁹⁸ In this case, regardless of his sincere intent to gather information about renegades and their motives, Seetzen had to admit that Aḥmed's statement was just too muddled,⁹⁹ rendering it difficult to corroborate his woolly background story.

According to what Seetzen does write, Aḥmed was an artillery soldier from either the Eichsfeld or Hildesheim region, which he had left in his early youth, about twenty-seven years ago. As Aḥmed was about forty when they met, Seetzen calculates that he left home at age twelve or thirteen, around 1775. Ahmed claimed to be the descendant of a mayor or a bailiff with a noble lineage, to be sure, and

⁹⁴ SEETZEN, p. 250–251.

⁹⁵ « [Die tägliche Soldatenkost] ist vielleicht besser, als bey irgend einer Nation in Europa » (SEETZEN, p. 127).

⁹⁶ Recommending the bath as « lobenswürdige Anstalt », Seetzen remarks that soldiers in Vienna used to take a bath in the Danube during summer but had the forgo such cleanliness in winter (SEETZEN, p. 130).

⁹⁷ « Er war besoffen, was bey ihm meistens der Fall ist » (SEETZEN, p. 233).

⁹⁸ « Hochmuth, Branntwein und ein wildes Leben haben ihm seinen Verstand größtentheils genommen » (SEETZEN, p. 233).

⁹⁹ « Allein, bey diesem hätte es mir fast gereut, indem sich kein vernünftiges Wort mit ihm sprechen läßt » (SEETZEN, p. 233).

acquainted with a certain Eckhart, head of a posthouse in the vicinity of Hildesheim. Seetzen assumes that he was born a Protestant, then turned Catholic and became a monk before absconding to join the Prussian cavalry. He then deserted to the Imperial/Austrian army and was taken prisoner by Ottoman forces. At that point, he must have converted to Islam because he continued to fight under the Ottoman flag. His first battle, this time against Imperial troops, was at Orschowa (Orşova) on the Danube, probably in the war against the Russian and Austrian empires in 1787–1792. Later on, he participated in an unsuccessful Ottoman landing operation during the French occupation of Egypt at Abū Qīr in 1799. Seetzen also notes that at some point, Aḥmed had been imprisoned for insulting a superior.¹⁰⁰

When he visited Seetzen, Aḥmed dictated a confused and sentimental letter for postmaster Eckhart. Seetzen cites this letter in full, likely because he had to write it for the illiterate renegade who also expected him to somehow deliver it. Ahmed's text culminates in the exclamation:

Alas! If I could only see my relatives and my fatherland again; I would rather eat dry bread and onions there than stay here and have thousands to eat! I still harbour this hope and am also still unsure where I will be laid to rest.¹⁰¹

This sentiment Aḥmed seems to have shared with the aforementioned Muṣṭafā. Apart from their mawkishness, both express deep discontent with their lots and purport to prefer service in a different army, as if this was a matter of choice. Although their situations may have been difficult, Seetzen describes the renegades' decisions to convert or serve under a different flag not as matters of conscience or loyalty but of convenience and opportunity.

VII. *Flight and Patronage*

Besides renegades' motives and attitudes, Seetzen also paid attention to processes of crossing boundaries and to social relations, especially of patronage. In the town of Manisa (Western Anatolia) on 3 July 1803, he visited a physician named Mechmed (Meḥmed) Efendi, born as Johann Christian Friedrich Bieberstein. Seetzen assesses his situation as quite modest as he was practising in a humble

¹⁰⁰ SEETZEN, p. 251.

¹⁰¹ « 'Ach!' sagte er, 'könnte ich meine Verwandten und mein Vaterland wiedersehen, gerne äße ich dort trockenes Brod und Zwiebel, als daß ich hier bleibe und tausende zu verzehren hätte! Noch immer trage ich mich mit dieser Hoffnung herum und bin auch noch ungewiß, wo mich die Erde ziehen wird.' » (SEETZEN, p. 234).

booth, and describes him as a tall man of almost fifty with a curved nose.¹⁰² Bieberstein had been born a Protestant in Saxonia during the Seven Years' War (1756–1763) and learned his craft with his father, hailing from Stuttgart in Württemberg, who had served as a surgeon in the Imperial army during that war.¹⁰³ Bieberstein himself entered French service in a Swiss regiment probably during the last years of Bourbon rule before 1789.¹⁰⁴ In the troubled times that ensued ('nach mancherlei Fata'), Bieberstein managed to leave France for a new position in Algiers, then a city state under Ottoman suzerainty where immigrants from Italy and the Northwestern Mediterranean used to dominate the navy.¹⁰⁵ Given that the navy could use a surgeon, it seems that he was able to settle in without converting at this point. Moreover, as Seetzen comments on Bieberstein's inability to obtain a divorce, it seems to support this lack of a conversion as it would not have been difficult to enter into a Muslim marriage and divorce in Algiers.

Seetzen gives a somewhat gossipy account of Bieberstein's marriage to an Italian, which was unhappy because she wasted his wealth on lovers.¹⁰⁶ When he left for another maritime city state, namely for Genoa, he found suitable employ and cohabitated happily with a Frenchwoman. Apparently, Seetzen writes, his former wife followed him to demand a reconciliation and attempted to murder him when he refused.

Bieberstein and his mistress then fled to Smyrna (İzmir), soon followed by the vindictive wife, who managed to win the support of the consul of the Holy Roman

¹⁰² « Wir besuchten den deutschen Renegat und Arzt Mechmed Efendi in seiner kleinen ärmlichen Arzneibude. Er war ein ziemlich langer Mann, den Fünffzigern nahe, mit einer großen gebogenen Nase. Vor seinem Uebertritt zum Islam hieß er Johann Christian Friedrich Bieberstein » (SEETZEN, p. 437).

¹⁰³ This army was virtually identical with the Austrian army, supported by the Habsburg emperor, but in the Seven Year's War, several principalities including Württemberg raised troops to punish Prussia for occupying Saxony in the legal framework of a federal intervention (CARSTEN FISCHER, « Reichsexekutionsordnung », in ALBRECHT CORDES et al. (eds.), *Handwörterbuch zur deutschen Rechtsgeschichte*, vol. IV, Schmidt, Berlin 1971–1998, p. 1478–1480, <<https://www.hrgdigital.de/HRG.reichsexekutionsordnung>> (Accessed October 2023).

¹⁰⁴ Several thousand soldiers from Switzerland had been in the French king's service since the sixteenth century, but the national assembly disbanded the Swiss troops in 1792 (GÉRARD MIÈGE, *Le sang des Suisses du roy: histoire des relations militaires entre la Confédération helvétique et le royaume de France, 1444–1789*, Edition G. Miège, Versoix 2012). A few years later, Napoleon resumed the employ of Swiss troops.

¹⁰⁵ This is reflected in the statement of the wrestler from Tripoli as explained above.

¹⁰⁶ « Nachher heirathete er eine Italienerinn, mit welcher er aber eine mißvergnügte Ehe führte. Dies Weib war in hohem Grade ausschweifend und verschwendete sein Vermögen mit ihren Lieblingen » (SEETZEN, p. 438).

Empire. She appears to have learned that neither representatives of France nor Genoa could help her because her husband was still considered an Imperial subject. At this point, Seetzen describes how Bieberstein's desperate unnamed mistress came up with an idea to save the couple by persuading him to convert with her together.¹⁰⁷ Although this step removed both from their former subject status as well as from the wife's and the consul's grasp, it may not have been enough in and of itself to save the day.

Fortunately, they found protection with an Ottoman grandee, becoming clients of Melek Paschá, a former grand vizier.¹⁰⁸ If Seetzen's statement is correct, Melek Paşa stayed in Smyrna or Manisa during that time at least temporarily, but must then have taken his new clients with him because Bieberstein alias Mechmed became his personal physician.¹⁰⁹ This remarkable advancement from military and naval surgeon to close client¹¹⁰ of a leading dignitary with the prestige of a personal physician seems to have been supported by the act of conversion. But, given that the rudimentary information relayed by Seetzen had come from Mehmed himself, it is entirely possible that some elements of the story were exaggerations or even outright lies. When Seetzen arrived in Manisa, Melek Paşa had just died at the stately age of 83 in the vicinity of Constantinople,¹¹¹ and

¹⁰⁷ « Immer beunruhigt, überredete ihn seine Mätresse, gemeinschaftlich den mohammedanischen Glauben anzunehmen » (SEETZEN, p. 438).

¹⁰⁸ Dāmād Melek Mehmed Paşa (1718–1802) served in many capacities, including those of lord high admiral, deputy and finally grand vizier (1792–1794). In spite of his advanced age, Melek seems to have had an important part in some of Selīm III's reform plans, such as raising troops of the 'new order' (*niẓām-ı cedīd*). In contrast to many other incumbents of the grand vizierate, this worthy dignitary was not exiled upon his dismissal at the ripe age of 75 but allowed to live in a seaside villa (*yalı*) close to the capital (FATİH YEŞİL, « Melek Mehmed Paşa », in BEKİR TOPALOĞLU et al. (eds.), *Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslâm Ansiklopedisi*, Appendix II, Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, Ankara 2019, p. 244–245). A special connection with Manisa, however, is not known.

¹⁰⁹ « Er [Bieberstein] wandte sich an den gewesenen Großwesir Melek Paschá, in Manissa, welcher sie in Schutz nam. Er wurde Mohammedaner und Leibarzt desselben, welcher ihm ein Haus schenkte und ihn beständig begünstigte » (SEETZEN, p. 438).

¹¹⁰ Apart from personal physicians, personal closeness to a patron could take several shapes within his household, such as the position of bodyguards, eunuchs, concubines or sons and daughters in law, as well as lovers, and all of these positions could be filled by renegades. In Seetzen's time, the governor-general of Aleppo, for instance, had a number of French renegades among his personal guard and a Maltese male lover (« Unter den Haustruppen des hiesigen Pascha giebt es etliche französische Renegaten. Ein Maltheser Renegat ist der Liebling des Pascha und sein Beyschläfer »; SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 86).

¹¹¹ His tomb is in the Eminönü district of that city (see YEŞİL, « Melek Mehmed Paşa », p. 244–245).

considering Mehmed's bleak material situation, it was clear that he had not been provided for by his former master. Seetzen concludes that this meant that he had either fallen from grace before Melek Paşa died or had never become a close client in the first place.

Furthermore, by the time Seetzen met Mehmed Efendi, both his mistress and a common child had already passed away, which meant he could only rely on Mehmed's word alone. However, Seetzen made enquiries in Smyrna, learning that the issue had not been as one-sided as Mehmed had described it. Informants told Seetzen that the vengeful wife had in fact been in the right and Mehmed's allegations were false, adding the fact that the wife was frail and lame. While her apparently poor state does not necessarily support the idea that she was justified, it does cast doubt as to the veracity of Mehmed's story. At the same time, whoever it was who cautioned Seetzen against the truth of Mehmed Efendi's lopsided statement also made no secret of his own partiality.

VIII. Views on Those Who Turned Turk: Individual Perspectives and Social Processes

Obviously, only Seetzen's perspective can be considered on the basis of his account. However, it is clear that the motivation of the renegades acquainted with him for immigration and conversion was not conscience or loyalty, but convenience and opportunity. Seetzen's renegades appear as dubious characters with unstable and untrustworthy dispositions. Some displayed criminal tendencies, and most of them were marked by sorrow and remorse. For all their shadiness and unreliability, however, Seetzen does not portray most of them as criminals, but merely as unsavoury characters riven by inner conflict. By the same token, their accounts may also be questioned; however, only Seetzen's description is available to us. In many instances, Seetzen illustrates their personality traits using two narrative topoi that he seems to specifically associate with renegades.

Firstly, Seetzen ascribes a habit of liberal alcohol consumption to all renegades (« eine Eigenschaft, die man bey allen Renegaten antrifft »).¹¹² Within this framework, it seems that Seetzen interpreted excessive drinking as an indication of dishonesty because conspicuously pious Muslims were expected to frown upon any consumption of alcohol and new converts to be particularly pious. Not all Muslims and certainly not all Ottoman subjects would have conformed to this expectation, however, nor considered this to be a defining characteristic of

¹¹² SEETZEN, p. 126.

Muslims.¹¹³ Today's reader should be careful not to impose Orientalist, modernist or Salafist norms to the quite different realities and practices Seetzen encountered, even if he was presupposing certain readers' expectations. Seetzen occasionally notes a tension between the claim to be Muslim and the habit of drinking, possibly suspecting that such old habits die hard but were also incompatible with pretences of Muslimness.¹¹⁴ Conversely, he records with slight amusement if certain kinds of wine or their common combination with opium did not agree with somebody.¹¹⁵

Secondly, the 'monastery episode', which appears in the narratives of several renegades, exhibits a pattern of entering an ecclesiastical convent but then absconding before long. This may underscore the renegades' unreliability and indicate a disrespect for serious religiosity, which Seetzen does not comment on, but which nonetheless mirrors the tales of switching the flag under which they fought. Several renegade soldiers had served in more than two armies, and, more often than not, in adversarial ones. Many of them had also switched between denominations, such as from Protestantism to Catholicism, before 'turning Turk', i. e. converting to Islam, and quite a few seem to have entered a monastery only to abscond before long (*echappieren*). Overall, Seetzen's renegades seem to live up to the expectations associated with the term renegade at the turn of the nineteenth century: having turned their coats once, renegades could no longer be relied upon.

Regardless of whether immigrants had come involuntarily or of their own free will, perhaps the most important reason for conversion and the associated change of allegiance was to preserve their social position and, if possible, to move up the social ladder. This supports Richard Bulliett's model of 'social conversion', postulating that people only converted if the conversion did not jeopardise their social status, i. e. at least maintained it.¹¹⁶ In this case, it could even be a necessary condition for social advancement. This may correspond to the fact that some had been denied social advancement in their country of origin. Sometimes the

¹¹³ Cf. SHAHAB AHMED, *What Is Islam? The Importance of Being Islamic*, Princeton University Press, Oxford 2016.

¹¹⁴ SEETZEN, p. 349: « ...although he did not mind drinking wine at the English agent while being a full-fledged Muslim » (« ...obgleich er sich kein Gewissen machte, bey englischen Agenten nach Belieben Wein zu trinken, und nichts weniger, als ein Moslem zu seyn »).

¹¹⁵ Seetzen applied the same attitude to some dervishes; see SEETZEN, p. 349 (concerning Madeira and Port wine), p. 169 (concerning the combination of wine and opium) and p. 173 (some tolerate wine better than others).

¹¹⁶ RICHARD W. BULLIETT, *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period. An Essay in Quantitative History*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge/Mass., 1979; see also KONRAD, « Soziale Mobilität », p. 228-233, and GRAF, *The Sultan's Renegades*, p. 12.

motivation was a mixed bag of push and pull factors, though, with a particular kind of mixture arising from criminal prosecution at the place of origin.

If it were possible to triangulate individuals using different sources, their social networks, patronage relationships and the effect of social capital could be analysed. In this respect in particular, it could be determined to what extent the politico-religious conversion process served the conversion of Social Capital, the role of which is discussed in migration research.¹¹⁷ Further case studies with sufficient detail could allow to find out how changing allegiance and religion related to maintaining or improving one's social position. For example, was it possible for members of the lower classes to rise from the rank of ordinary soldier or sailor to higher officer ranks, what opportunities were (or were not) available to people with a university education or specialised technical knowledge, or did nobles have to convert in order to be accepted into the upper classes? Similar to the New World, the Ottoman Empire did not have the estate barriers of Old Europe,¹¹⁸ and although fairy-tale social mobility (from street urchin to grand vizier) tends to belong to the realm of literary fiction, it was precisely for renegades that a new life was opened up.

Seetzen's comments on patronage and clientelism as evidenced in most of the narratives detailed above suggest similarities between the Frankish and Ottoman societies in terms of the interplay of societal workings, sociocultural hierarchies, and interpersonal relationships when it came to an individual's opportunities. Obviously, patronage was a common denominator. Shapes and forms differed between different societies but nevertheless, analysing them in terms of social networks is feasible.¹¹⁹ Seetzen's account clearly attests to this, as he was used to pay special attention to such relations from his community of origin. At first glance, renegades may also be considered quintessential transimperial subjects in

¹¹⁷ SONJA HAUG, « Soziales Kapital als Ressource im Kontext von Migration und Integration », in JÖRG LÜDICKE, MARTIN DIEWALD (eds.), *Soziale Netzwerke und soziale Ungleichheit. Zur Rolle von Sozialkapital in modernen Gesellschaften*, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, Wiesbaden 2007, p. 85–111.

¹¹⁸ PETR MAT'A, « Ständegesellschaft », in FRIEDRICH JAEGER (ed.), *Enzyklopädie der Neuzeit*, vol. XII, Metzler, Stuttgart 2010, col. 865–872.

¹¹⁹ For patronage as an integration factor, cf. KONRAD, « Soziale Mobilität », p. 223–228; for the Central European context of clientelism, see HILLARD VON THIESSEN, « Klientel », in FRIEDRICH JAEGER et al. (eds.), *Enzyklopädie der Neuzeit*, 16 vols., Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, Darmstadt 2005–2012, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/2352-0248_edn_COM_293482> (Accessed August 2023). The Ottoman context is addressed in HENNING SIEVERT, *Zwischen arabischer Provinz und Hoher Pforte. Beziehungen, Bildung und Politik des osmanischen Bürokraten Râğîb Mehmed Paşa (st. 1763)*, Ergon, Würzburg 2008.

the sense in which Rothman coined the term,¹²⁰ capitalising on their specific knowledge. However, the renegades Seetzen encountered were, in contrast to dragomans or courtly circles, not ‘embedded in webs of contact on both sides’.¹²¹ In fact many turned to him exactly because they lacked such contacts on one side.

For centuries, the Ottoman Empire had not only supplemented its elites to a large extent by importing slaves but also facilitated the immigration of skilled workers to a certain extent. Faced with crisis around 1800, it intensified recruitment in certain areas of expertise, particularly targeting staff to help train the Nizām-ı Cedīd corps,¹²² which absorbed several renegades who had fallen through the cracks during the revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. While renegades originated in all parts of Europe, many of them hailed from neighbouring regions of the Italian peninsula, the Habsburg realm, or the Russian Empire. Given the general political circumstances at Seetzen’s time, Poland and especially Hungary figured heavily. Additionally, Egypt seems to have been another source of newcomers from Western Europe as some had remained there after Napoleon’s failed invasion of the country in 1798–1801.

Although the renegades that Seetzen met in connection with the Nizām-ı Cedīd accounted for only a fraction of the corps, his diaries nevertheless open a window to view the experiences of some of these men. Complemented by an analysis of other contemporary sources, Seetzen’s notes can likely help us to better understand changes in the limits and possibilities as well as the perspectives and attitudes that surrounded the phenomenon of renegades between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Given that Seetzen framed his characterisation of the renegades in terms that were familiar to him, we can assume that he expected potential readers to do the same. We therefore have to read his diaries as a representation of his observations refracted through the lens of his own views.

¹²⁰ GRAF, *The Sultan’s Renegades*, p. 14–15 after E. NATHALIE ROTHMAN, *Brokering Empire: Trans-Imperial Subjects between Venice and Istanbul*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca 2011.

¹²¹ GRAF, *The Sultan’s Renegades*, p. 15.

¹²² The corps would cease to exist with the overthrow of Selīm III. in 1807.

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U. J. SEETZEN'S OBSERVATIONS ON WAHHABISM*

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Abstract

Seetzen's name is not typically included on the list of Europeans who first introduced the West to the religious movement known as Wahhabism and the political developments associated with it in the Middle East. However, an analysis of his diaries and correspondence reveals him to be a keen observer, capable of correcting his preconceived notions while still on his travels through the region. Though he initially subscribed to the hypothesis put forth by Niebuhr and Volney that the Wahhabis were a sect of armed deists, Seetzen eventually became convinced that they were a faction of Muslims hostile to forms of worship that they considered superstitious and attributed to other Muslim groups. Seetzen's premature death, leading to the loss of his Arabic diaries, has likely deprived us of a wealth of rich first-hand observations that could have easily competed with the accounts of the French consuls Rousseau, Corancez, and Mengin, as well as the Catalan Badía y Leblich, the English Brydges, and especially the Swiss Burckhardt: none of whom, it should be noted, visited Najd firsthand.

Key Words

Seetzen; Wahhabism; First Saudi State; Islam; Western Travellers in Arabia



I. On the Eve of Seetzen's Departure for Asia

When Seetzen left Germany for the Middle East in 1802 as a free scholar and physician under the patronage of the Duke of Gotha, the Saudi kingdom controlled the whole Najd region and had formed alliances with coastal pirates on the Arabian shore of the Persian Gulf. The Saudis posed a threat to Oman to the south, Basra and the Shia religious centres of the Bagdhad pashalic (Karbala and Najaf) to the north, and the Muslim holy places in the Hijaz to the west, the latter of which were protected by the Sharif of Mecca on behalf of the Ottoman Grand Sultan. They

* The spelling of the Arabic names in the notes and where appropriate also in the text follows that adopted by Seetzen.

disrupted not only the traditional Mecca-bound caravans of Sunni pilgrims heading from Cairo and Damascus, but also the trading activities of the British East India Company. In 1801, the year before Seetzen's departure, Karbala was brutally sacked, while two years later the first, albeit short-lived, Saudi occupation of Mecca took place.¹ In the Turkish empire and among European observers, there was an acute sense that Islam was facing a threat comparable only to that posed by the Qarmatians in the tenth century. Religious teachings to be considered new and heretical according to their Ottoman critics, which had taken root barely fifty years earlier in the province of Aridh, were fuelling the Saudis' thirst for conquest and giving rise to fears of upheavals in Asia that might be just as devastating as those brought about by the French Revolution in Europe.

The first indication of Seetzen's interest in these events can be found in his travel plan, which was published in the journal edited by astronomer Franz Xaver von Zach in September 1802. This plan, dedicated to illustrating the aims of a journey that should have led him from the Ottoman territories to the heart of Africa to ascertain the actual course of the Niger, lists the new religion of a mysterious 'philosopher-sheikh' in northeast Arabia alongside the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim religions as the latest proof of the inexhaustible fertility of the Middle East when it came to germinating self-proclaimed divine revelations that could determine the fate of mankind for better or worse. Seetzen notes that, like Mohammed, the new, nameless 'prophet' preferred armed conquest as his favourite form of proselytism, but Seetzen did not reference a book of revealed truth associated him.²

¹ On the controversial dating of the sack of Karbala, whether in 1801 or 1802, see KALBE RAZI NAQVI, *Wherefore became dating the Wahhabi attack on Karbala such an entangled mess?*, forthcoming.

² ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Reiseplan ins innere Afrika », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmels-Kunde*, 6 (1802), p. 202: « Arabien, Aegypten und Palästina waren von jeher Mütter und Säugammen religiöser Systeme, und ihre Urheber hatten das seltene Glück, ihre Lehre dem grössten Theil der bewohnten Erde zur Norm mitzuthellen. Wie wichtig wurden nicht für das Menschengeschlecht Moses, Jesus – dem Johannes das war, was etwa Huss dem Luther –, Mohammed? und dem philosophischen Scheche in der nordöstlichen Gegend von Arabien, dem Verkünder einer sehr einfachen Religionslehre, scheint ein ähnliches glückliches Loos beschieden zu seyn. Wenn man gleich nicht leugnen kann, dass jene unsterblichen Männer manches thaten, was eine strenge Moral verdammen würde, indem sie, wie Cagliostro's ihrer Zeit, allerhand Taschenspieler- und Marktschreierkniffe ausübten, um das Ansehen eines vorzüglich von der Gottheit Begünstigten und eines Wunderthäters zu erhalten, und sie unter der Maske einer religiösen Reform beständig eine politische Revolution bezweckten, an deren Spitze sie sich zu stellen bestrebten; so darf man doch ihren Kenntnissen, ihrem glänzenden Genie und manchen ihrer moralischen Lehren seine Huldigung nicht entziehen. Ich werde mit sehr gemischten Empfindungen das Vaterland dieser Männer betreten, deren Meinungen Jahrtausende hindurch bey zahllosen Generationen so unendlich viel Gutes und so unendlich viel Unheil anrichteten, und zwey der berühmtesten Wallfahrtsörter der Welt, Jerusalem und Mekka, die Centralpuncte von drey am weitesten ausgedehnten Religionsparteyen, mit der gespanntesten Erwartung besuchen. » On the historical background and scope of Seetzen's

In commenting on the travel plan, Seetzen's most important German predecessor, the traveller Niebuhr,³ chose not to dwell on these lines which sounded vaguely blasphemous and seemed to lump together Moses, Jesus Christ, and the other founders of religions in 'Arabia' (according to the ancient Roman name of the entire region south of Siria). In fact, Seetzen compared all their miracles to the tricks that the magician Cagliostro had recently performed in several European courts.⁴ However, the actual source of Seetzen's observation was none other than Niebuhr himself. In his book *Beschreibung von Arabien* (1772), Niebuhr had reported on a new religious movement in Najd whose military operations met with mixed success but were nonetheless concerning to neighbours. Niebuhr had identified its founder as a certain *Abd al-Wahhab*, but he had made it clear that he was far from certain about the true nature of this new religion. He included two very different accounts from informants in Basra. One of them maintained that the followers were Moslems who were hostile to the cult of the Prophet, including the veneration of saints and relics practised by other Muslim believers. The other went as far as to claim that the new devotees objected to the very concept of revelation, holy scripture, dogmas, and even ceremonies and prayers held in designated religious buildings.⁵ It is safe to assume that this

undertaking, see DETLEF HABERLAND, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen und Afrika – die entdeckungs- und wirtschaftsgeschichtliche Dimension seiner Reise », in DETLEF HABERLAND (ed.), *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811). Jevevaner – aufgeklärter Unternehmer – wissenschaftlicher Orientreisender*, Isensee Verlag, Oldenburg 2014, p. 199–225.

³ CARSTEN NIEBUHR, « Über D. Seetzen's Reiseplan », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmels-Kunde*, 6 (1802), p. 457–462.

⁴ For a more cautious variant of this comparison, see GIOVANNI BONACINA, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen über Jesus Christus », in DETLEF HABERLAND (ed.), *Der Orientreisende Ulrich Jasper Seetzen und die Wissenschaften*, Isensee Verlag, Oldenburg 2019, p. 37–59.

⁵ CARSTEN NIEBUHR, *Beschreibung von Arabien. Aus eigenen Beobachtungen und im Lande selbst gesammelten Nachrichten*, Möller – Breitkopf, Copenhagen – Leipzig 1772, p. 348: « Unter die letzten kann ich einen Gelehrten zu Basra zählen, welcher behauptete, daß die Anhänger des Abd ul wáheb, noch beständig Mohammed ihren Propheten nennen, daß sie beten und fasten wie die übrigen Mohammedaner, und daß der Unterschied zwischen ihnen und den Súniniten nur darinn bestehe, daß sie von den Heiligen derselben nichts wissen wollen. Hiernach sollte man glauben, daß Abd ul wáheb nichts gelehrt habe, als die reine Lehre der Súniniten. [...] Ein gewisser Schech, der von Jugend aus in der Wüste herumgereiset war, und bey Gelegenheit, da er seine Kameele an Kaufleute vermietete, nicht nur die vornehmsten Städte in Nedsjed, sondern fast in ganz Arabien gesehen hatte, wollte besser unterrichtet seyn. Dieser gab vor, Abd ul wáheb lehre seine Schüler Gott als den Schöpfer und Regierer aller Dinge zu verehren und anzubeten; er verbiete ihnen aber in ihrem Gebete weder des Mohámmeds, noch irgend eines andern Propheten oder Heiligen, und selbst nicht seines eigenen Namens zu gedenken, weil dieses zur Abgötterey Anlaß geben könne. Mohámmed, Christum, Mosén und viele tausend andere, die die Súniniten unter die Zahl der Propheten setzen, soll er bloß als große und würdige Leute ansehen, deren Geschichte man ohne eine Sünde zu begehen, lesen und hören könne. Er soll es aber leugnen, daß jemals durch göttliche Eingebung, oder von dem Engel Gabriel Bücher geschrieben worden sind. Ich weiß nicht, wie viel man sich auf die Nachricht dieses Arabers verlassen kann; denn die

latter interpretation, which was soon endorsed by Volney⁶ and more in line with the secularism of the Age of Enlightenment, provided the basis for Seetzen's description of the sheik as a « philosopher ». To him, it likely seemed as if an oriental variation of deism, which had become fashionable among educated classes in Europe and had been adopted as the state religion during the Reign of Terror in France, was also gaining ground in Arabia. Given the continuity of customs in the region, Seetzen was surely only momentarily surprised that this oriental deism employed methods very reminiscent of the rough and ready ones used by Mohammed and the early caliphs. Moreover, his reasoning may have rested on something much closer to home: Was it not true that even in Europe the philosophical champions of religious tolerance were forced to resort to intolerance and persecution against traditional Christian churches and their die-hard followers? It was probably not surprising to someone like Seetzen that the same was happening in Asia at the expense of Islam.

When he embarked on his travels, Seetzen was doubtless hoping to find out something more about the little known religious reformer alluded to by Niebuhr. Although the *Beschreibung von Arabien* had provided some useful information, it still proved difficult for Seetzen to distinguish this figure independently from the ruling Saudi monarch. Seetzen had yet to even use the term « wahhabi » itself – which was absent in Niebuhr yet destined in much literature not necessarily polemical to gain currency (against the wishes of its assignees, obviously offended at seeing themselves designated by the Ottomans with the name of their spiritual leader branded as a heresiarch). On the eve of his departure and in the absence of an actual name for this new faith, it likely seemed all the more plausible to Seetzen to credit these followers with the most outlandish beliefs.

Bedouinen nennen sie zwar Mohammedaner, sie bekümmern sich aber gemeiniglich weder um Mohámméd noch um den Korân, und ich glaube deswegen fast, daß mein Schech die erwähnte Lehrrsätze selbst billigte. » Rentz's study remains classic on the origins of Wahhabi movement and its founder, who also mentions the testimony of Niebuhr, see GEORGE S. RENTZ, *The Birth of the Islamic Reform Movement in Saudi Arabia. Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Wahhab (1703/4-1792) and the Beginnings of Unitarian Empire in Arabia*. Edited with an Introduction by William Facey, Arabian Publishing, London 2004. For a balanced restitution of the opposing reasons of Muhammad ibn Abd-al-Wahhab and his theological opponents between Arabia and Iraq, see ESTHER PESKES, *Muhammad b. 'Abdalwahhab (1703-92) im Widerstreit. Untersuchungen zur Rekonstruktion der Frühgeschichte der Wahhabiya*, in Kommission bei Franz Steiner Verlag Stuttgart – Beirut 1993. Attentive to historical data, but more concerned with correcting the negative image of Wahhabism conveyed by its opponents up to the present day is NATANA J. DELONG-BAS, *Wahhabi Islam. From Revival and Reform to Global Jihad*, Tauris, London – New York 2004.

⁶ CONSTANTIN FRANÇOIS VOLNEY, *Voyage en Syrie et en Égypte, pendant les années 1783, 1784 et 1785*, vol. I., Volland et Desenne, Paris 1787, p. 381–382.

II. In Istanbul and Aleppo

By the time he reached Istanbul, Seetzen's understanding of the general situation had already started to change and would only alter more radically in Aleppo and Damascus, where he developed his knowledge of Arabic. While Niebuhr had witnessed the initial amazement at events in Najd, Seetzen and his immediate predecessors (particularly the Englishman William George Browne,⁷ in 1797) were in a different position at the end of the century. By this time, they could tell that the population and resident Europeans in Turkey, Siria and Egypt were well aware of this growing political and religious threat to the very survival of the Ottoman Empire coming from Arabia. The nature of the religious controversy within this movement continued to elude exact definition, but what was undeniable was the emergence of a fearsome military adversary to the south of Baghdad, more or less contemporary with Napoleon's attempted conquest of Egypt. While in Istanbul in the first part of 1803, Seetzen received news of the fall of Mecca, which would preclude further travel from Jeddah into the interior of the Hijaz, and he had heard about riots in southern Siria and a potential danger zone extending as far as Baghdad. In his journal, however, Seetzen attributed all of this upheaval to an Arab conqueror and prophet, the founder of a new, purely deist religion.⁸ His interpretation of the situation had in fact changed very little from when he first set out from Europe as what he saw only seemed to confirm his assessments.

When Seetzen landed in Aleppo towards the end of 1803, his perspective began to shift. He came into contact with at least two European informants and acquainted himself with a new written text on the subject which had recently appeared in Europe. The two informants were an envoy of the East India Company, John Lewis Reinaud, and the son of the local French consul, Jean-Baptiste Louis Rousseau; the written source was an article in the *Journal de Francfort*. While in Aleppo, Seetzen also spent time with another future writer on the Wahhabis, the French trade commissioner, Louis Alexandre Olivier de Corancez, but to all appearances their acquaintance was unrelated their mutual interest in this

⁷ WILLIAM GEORGE BROWNE, *Travels in Africa, Egypt and Syria*, Cadell & Davies, London 1806², p. 446–448. On Seetzen's learning of Arabic and the transliteration system he adopted, see HANS STEIN, « Seetzens Bemühungen um Aneignung und Wiedergabe der arabischen Sprache », in HANS STEIN (ed.), *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811) Leben und Werk. Die arabischen Länder und die Nahostforschung im napoleonischen Zeitalter*, Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek, Gotha 1995, p. 53–63; NATALIE BACHOUR, « Arabischlernen in der Aufklärung am Beispiel Ulrich Jasper Seetzens », in HABERLAND (ed.), *Der Orientreisende Ulrich Jasper Seetzen und die Wissenschaften*, p. 195–232.

⁸ ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel und der Reise nach Aleppo 1802–1803*, ed. VOLKMAR ENDERLEIN, MICHAEL BRAUNE, DIETRICH HAGEN, Georg Olms Verlag, Hildesheim et al. 2012 (Schriftenreihe des Landesmuseums Natur und Mensch, 87; Schriften der Landesbibliothek Oldenburg, 53; Documenta Arabica, 1), p. 132: « Der arabische Eroberer (und Stifter einer neuen rein deistischen Religionslehre), welcher Bagdad bedrohete. ».

subject.⁹ From this point on, Seetzen finally had a name – *Wabi* or *Wuhaby* – to apply to the new Arab prophet or warlord; he could also make use of it to refer to the crowds who were faithful to him and talk about a capital city in the new kingdom of Najd called *Adrâhiâ*. Although the identity of the prophet and the city matched up with Niebuhr's account, Seetzen does not mention this in his journal; rather, he seems to have asked Reinaud – a Frenchman in the service of Samuel Manesty, an English resident in Basra – to draft a report on the attempted assault by the *Wabi*'s followers on the Company's warehouse in *Grain* (now Kuwait City) and on Reinaud's subsequent embassy to *Adrâhiâ* to secure a truce and assurances for the English. The report, dated 2 April 1805 and translated into German by Seetzen, was despatched to Zach in Europe and published, albeit partially, in his journal. This account represents Seetzen's most significant contribution to European awareness of the Wahhabi movement, especially given that we can now safely assume that the more thorough observations that he claimed would follow or accompany this report have been lost. While the assailants at *Grain* are distinguished by their cruelty, their co-religionists at *Adrâhiâ* are described as hardworking and hospitable, their king an elderly sage. In his journal, Seetzen identifies this king as the founder of the movement and mentions a son, *Abdul Asihl*, who was committed to military conquest.¹⁰ Seetzen's account still seemed to conflate to some extent the person of the religious reformer and that of the Saudi monarch who had converted to his teaching – the confusion of the two was already present in Niebuhr and rampant beyond the Arab territories of the new kingdom. Reinaud is believed to have actually met the elderly king, Abd-al-Aziz, who was the son of Muhammad ibn Saud who had been the first to welcome the religious reformer,

⁹ Corancez published his *Histoire des Wahabis* only in 1810 (LOUIS ALEXANDRE OLIVIER DE CORANCEZ, *Histoire de Wahabis depuis leur origine jusqu'à la fin de 1809*, Crapart, Paris 1810); for a previous, anonymous note by him on the same matter, see « Extérieur Turquie. Smyrne, le 15 sept. 1804 (28 fructidor.) », *Gazette Nationale ou Le Moniteur Universel*, 39 (1804), p. 137–139. On Seetzen's acquaintance with him, see ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo 1803–1805*, ed. JUDITH ZEPTER et al., Georg Olms Verlag, Hildesheim et al. 2011 (Schriftenreihe des Landesmuseums Natur und Mensch, 87; Schriften der Landesbibliothek Oldenburg, 53; Documenta Arabica, 1), p. 16–17, 19, 80.

¹⁰ ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Fortgesetzte Reise-Nachrichten des Dr. U. J. Seetzen », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmels-Kunde*, 12 (1805), p. 235: « Mehrere Einwohner von Grain, die sich ausserhalb der Stadt verspätet hatten, wurden von ihnen zu Gefangen gemacht. Die Männer wurden im Augenblick ohne Gnade ermordet; die Weiber aber mitgenommen. Hr. Reinaud sah es selbst, dass ein armer Einwohner von zwey Wuhâbi am Strand eingeholt wurde, dass der eine ihm einen Säbelhieb, der andere mehrere Lanzenstiche gab, bis er todt niederfiel, und dass sie darauf ihre Hände in seinem Blute wuschen, wodurch sie sich zu entsündigen glauben. ». See also 'Auszug aus dem Briefe des Hrn. Reinaud an Dr. Seetzen.' Ibid., p. 240: « Die in diesen Gegenden hausenden Whahabee sind sehr wilde, aber auch auf der andern Seite sehr gastfreundliche Menschen. » On Reinaud's character and report, see: SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 7, 272.

Muhammad ibn Abd-al-Wahhab, in the mid-eighteenth century, and who was the father of Saud, the conqueror of Mecca. Although the names of the three Saudi rulers are mentioned in exact succession in Reinaud's account and he uses the term *whahabee* to indicate the nation subject to their rule, the fact remains that the patriarch, *Sand* (sic) *al Whahabee*, is declared here to be the founder of a new religion.¹¹ Until he arrived in Arabia, *Wuhaby* was the name that Seetzen most frequently used to refer to the prophet and warlord described here or to his successors as he was apparently unaware of the division between the political and religious roles that had existed from the very beginning among the members of two distinct families of rulers and jurists: the Ibn Saud on the one hand and the Ibn Abd al-Wahhab on the other.

Almost contemporaneously to Seetzen's account, the young Rousseau had written a short biography of a little-known sheikh, which was published four years later in Europe in 1809 under the title *Notice sur la secte des Wahabis* as part of a more comprehensive collection of reports on the Baghdad pashalic. In referring to the biography in his journal, Seetzen does not mention whether or not Rousseau (a hypochondriac who is thought to have sought his advice as a medical doctor) had allowed him to read the text.¹² However, there is no doubt that the article, which had appeared anonymously in the *Journal de Francfort* in 1804 under the title *Notice sur la horde des Wahabis* and was based on a previous publication in the *Moniteur*, formed the core of Rousseau's 1809 report. Seetzen transcribed a substantial excerpt from this article in French, and this text gave rise to the use of « *Wahabis* » as the name for the followers of *Abdoul Wahab*, a man famous for his learning and an original commentator on the Koran. It was only towards the end of the article that the conventional (in the wake of Niebuhr and Volney) portrayal of the Wahhabis as deists tainted by atrocious fanaticism emerged after the author had mentioned that the new sectarians respected Mohammed but denied him divine honours.¹³

Seetzen seems to have been perplexed by the coexistence of deist (the pure cult of the Supreme Being, the rejection of all prophecy) and Islamic elements (the

¹¹ SEETZEN, « Fortgesetzte Reise-Nachrichten des Dr. U. J. Seetzen », p. 240–241: « In der Zeit als ich mich zu Drahîa aufhielt, war der Name des dasigen Scheiks Abdil Aziz Ibn Sand, der Vater des jetzigen. Sand al Whahabee war der erste, der die neue Religion stiftete, und Abdil Aziz schmückte sie nur noch mehr aus. ».

¹² SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 59: « Er hat Wuhäbi's Leben beschrieben; eine kleine Biographie, die aber für Europa vieles Interesse haben dürfte. »

¹³ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 190–192 (See « Notice sur la horde des Wahabis », *Journal de Francfort*, 135 (1804), n.p.). See also 'Notice sur la horde des Wahabis', in « Extérieur Turquie. Constantinople, 1^{er} mars 1804. », *Gazette Nationale ou Le Moniteur Universel*, 243 (1804), p. 1101–1103. Rousseau's major work appeared five years later with the title: JEAN-BAPTISTE LOUIS JACQUES ROUSSEAU, *Description du Pachalik de Bagdad, suivie D'une Notice historique sur les Wahabis, et de quelques autres pièces relatives à l'histoire et à la littérature de l'Orient*, Treuttel et Würtz, Paris 1809.

revealed and uncreated book) as evidenced by his avowed wish to lay his hands on one of the polemical Arab text with anti-Wahhabi sentiments that he knew were circulating in large numbers in Baghdad and Basra.¹⁴ Nonetheless, at the time of his stay in Aleppo (until April 1805), Seetzen was still reluctant to renounce his early assumptions about the Wahhabis because he knew that their presence in Mecca was proving a hindrance to the traditional Sunni pilgrimage organized in the form of a caravan under the direction of the pasha of Damascus. Indeed, he still used the term « new religion » when referring to the Wahhabis in his letters from this time.¹⁵ Seetzen clearly knew about the Saudi withdrawal from the Islamic religious capital and the assassination of the monarch whom Reinaud had met just two years previously (now incorrectly identified as *Abdullah* rather than Abd-al-Aziz, perhaps from the name of the second son of Muhammad ibn Abd-al-Wahhab) by a Persian and of his succession by a son. In fact, he applied the epithet *Wuhaby* to both father and son, as a patronymic. Not surprisingly, therefore, Seetzen came to the conclusion in his Aleppo journal that not just Siria and Baghdad, but rather all of Anatolia itself might soon be threatened by the armed progress of these new sectarians.¹⁶ By this time, he had surely begun to harbour doubts as to the veracity of his initial convictions, but he still had no alternative explanation.

¹⁴ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 248: « Ich erkundigte mich bey ihm (i.e. the Aleppinian bookseller Mohammed el Éschraphy), ob nicht wider die neue Lehre des Wuháby müsleminische Schriften erschienen seyen? Er versicherte, sowohl in Bagdad und Bassora als auch hier seyen unterschiedliche Schriften wider ihn erschienen seyen, die verdiente Männer von den Ölemâ's zu Verfassern haben. Hier sey unter andern eine Schrift von einem gewesenen Müfty in Homs Namens [...] vor etlichen Jahren wider ihn geschrieben worden. ».

¹⁵ SEETZEN, « Aus einem Briefe des Kammer-Assessors Dr. Seetzen an seinen Bruder, Pfarrer in Heppens », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmels-Kunde*, 12 (1805), p. 346: « Der Eroberungen Wuhaby's ungeachtet ist die religiöse Kjerwane von Damask nach Mecca abgegangen, woselbst sie nach 50 Tagen anlangt. Der Pascha von Bagdad ist mit einer ziemlichen Armee gegen Wuhaby ausgerückt; allein nach den neuen Nachrichten ist er nicht weit avancirt. Vielleicht hat er nicht einmahl die Absicht, diesen misslichen Zug wider jenes Haupt der neuen Religion und eines neuen ansehnlichen Staats im Ernst zu beginnen. ».

¹⁶ SEETZEN, *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo*, p. 265-266: « Auch hat man die Nachricht erhalten, dass seit einem Monate der kriegerische Pascha von Bagdad mit einer grossen Armee wider Wuháby's Sohn ausgezogen, um ihn wo möglich gänzlich zu vernichten. Zum Transport der Bedürfnisse seiner Armee waren 30000 Kameele erforderlich. Man versichert, es haben sich mit seinen eigenen zahlreichen Truppen, die vorzüglich aus Kjürden bestehen, 50000 Araber vereint. Abdullah Wuhaby ist seit einem Jahre von einem Scheche aus Bagdad ermordet. Sein Religionseifer trieb diesen Bagdadiner, alle möglichen Mittel aufzusuchen, um mit Wuháby bekannt zu werden. Es gelang ihm, und er ermordete ihn, da er neben ihm auf dem Sopha sass. Der Schech wurde sogleich ergriffen und auf das schrecklichste hingerichtet. Wuháby hinterliess 9 Söhne, wovon der Aelteste das Haupt der geistlichen und weltlichen Macht ist. Dieser bietet ietzt gegenseitig alles auf, um sich dem Pascha von Bagdad zu widersetzen und um ihn wo möglich schlagen zu können. Gelingt ihm dieses, so ist Bassora und Bagdad, ganz Syrien und sogar Anadoly in der grössten Gefahr, dass sie dem Sieger in die Hände fallen, der dem Besiegten nur zwischen Todt oder Annahme seiner Seite wählen lässt. ». For a summary of the political-

III. In Damascus, Jerusalem and Cairo

It was only at Damascus (1805) and during his travels from there towards the Hauran and then Palestine (1806–807) that Seetzen resolved to abandon his cherished view of the Wahhabis as followers of a pure, European-style form of deism. He must have been swayed to some extent by his encounters with Arabs of the Anazeh tribe whom he identifies as Wahhabis, one of whom even offered to accompany him into Najd as far as the Saudi capital of *Drahíja*. In describing these events, Seetzen reconfirmed his deep interest in the inhabitants of the kingdom.¹⁷ Brought to Damascus by the pilgrim caravans, the news of the second and longer-lasting Saudi conquest of Mecca and Medina towards the end of 1805 would mark a shift in Seetzen's observations. According to accounts, an emir named *Mohammed Szálehh* was reported to have settled in the holy city as regent to the *Wuhâby* and expelled all the sharifs who had refused to become Wahhabis.¹⁸ Later, on his way to Palestine in January 1806, Seetzen made a more important and detailed entry in his journal, though it was one marred by inaccuracies. He reported that *Abd al Wuhâb*, the founder of the movement, died without issue and that his command had been handed to a certain Saud. This Saud, however, had recently been killed at *Derréja*: A man from Bagdhad took revenge, because Wahhabis led by Saud had slaughtered his son, together with other Shia pilgrims, in the sanctuary of Imam Ali (Najaf, but actually Karbala). In turn, *Abd el Asis*, a son of Saud's, was believed to have executed the assassin from Bagdhad.¹⁹ Although this account was riddled

military history of so-called First Saudi State in Arabia from its origins until its defeat by Mohammed Ali in 1818, see ALEXEI VASSILIEV, *The History of Saudi Arabia*, Saqi Books, London 1998, p. 29–157.

¹⁷ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien, Palästina, Phönicien, die Transjordan-Länder, Arabia Petraea und Unter-Aegypten*, vol. I, Reimer, Berlin 1854, p. 122: « Die Anasé-Araber sind alle Wuhabi. Die hiesigen betragen sich gut gegen mich. »; *Ibid.*, p. 131–132: « Ich schenkte einem Araber für den Emir ein Fernrohr. Er will mich in 60 Tagen mit einem Kameele nach Drahíja bringen. »

¹⁸ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien, Palästina, Phönicien, die Transjordan-Länder, Arabia Petraea und Unter-Aegypten*, vol. I, p. 271: « Wuhâby hat einen Statthalter (Hakîm) zu Mekka, Mohammed Szálehh, einen Emîr. Ein anderer Scherîf verwaltet dort mit ihm die Regierung. Auch Medina ist jetzt im Besitze der Wuhâby. Verschiedene Scherîfs haben Mekka verlassen müssen, weil sie nicht Wuhâbys seyn wollten. ».

¹⁹ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien, Palästina, Phönicien, die Transjordan-Länder, Arabia Petraea und Unter-Aegypten*, vol. I, p. 326: « Wenn die Juden und Christen den Glauben des Wuhâby nicht annehmen, müssen sie sterben. Zur Verbreitung seiner Religion durchs Schwerdt und zur Erhaltung der Truppen bezieht er den Sicke. Abd el Wuhâb hatte keine Kinder und war nie verheurathet. Einer aus seinem Hause wurde für seinen Nachfolger erkannt, und dies war Sôâûd, der 8 Söhne hatte. Dieser eroberte Imam Ali und ermordete dort unter andern den Sohn eines begüterten persischen Kaufmanns und plünderte die Stadt. Dieser schwur ihm Rache. Er war in Bagdad ansässig. Er zog als ein Armer nach Derréja und blieb dort eine Zeitlang als ein unschuldiger Mensch, bis Niemand Argwohn in ihn setzte. Einst beym Gebet nahm er die Zeit wahr, wo Sôâûd das Allah hu akbar sprach, und sich dabey niederbückte, und versetzte ihm mit einem kleinen

with factual errors (the usual confusion between the family lineage of Muhammad ibn Saud and that of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab, which had been resolved here by mistakenly assuming that the latter had been a childless prince, the fact that Najaf is mentioned as the scene of the massacre instead of Karbala, the confusion of the current ruler, Saud, with his father Abd al-Aziz; and the term *Wuhâby* used as a title with reference to Saud), it nonetheless indicates that Seetzen was now in possession of more doctrinal information about this new religion. He had learned that the religion that the Wahhabis were spreading with the sword was still that of the Koran, but reduced to the bare letter of the sacred book and stripped of any form of veneration for the person of Mohammed who, it was believed, had even been denied the dignity of prophet; Jews and Christians who refused to convert faced death. A short note to the effect that the Wahhabis consumed jerboa meat, considered impure by many Moslems, suggested there was also some dissent over the question of dietary prohibitions.²⁰

Seetzen ultimately learned about the rout of the pilgrim caravan heading for Mecca and Medina and led by the pasha of Damascus when he was in Jerusalem in the spring of 1807. The pasha himself had been forced to beat a hasty retreat by troops loyal to the *Derréja* ruler for refusing to hand over all the wealth, weapons and ornaments that the new masters of these holy places deemed incompatible with the decorum of the pilgrimage. This episode of humiliation, coupled with the continuing fear of fresh wars with Napoleonic France or Russia, seemed to bode ill for Ottoman power.²¹ Seetzen was evidently aware, however, that despite the more

Messer, das er im Busen versteckt hatte, einen tödtlichen Stoss. Man glaubte anfangs, dass er sey von irgend Jemand abgesandt; allein er gestand, dass dies ganz auf seine Anstiftung aus Rachgier geschehen sey. Er wurde ermordet von Abd el Asis ibn Szöoud. - Die Familie von Vettern etc. soll aus 40 Personen bestehen. Saöüd ist aus Derréja gebürtig und seine Familie wohnt immer dort. Wuhâby geht nach den trocknen Worten des Gesetzes im Koran. Allein er sagt, Mohammed sey kein Prophet, und man müsse nicht zu seinem Grabe wallfahrten, oder ihn statt Gottes anrufen. ».

²⁰ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien, Palästine, Phönicien, die Transjordan-Länder, Arabia Petraea und Unter-Aegypten*, vol. I, p. 310: « Die übrigen Mohammedaner halten sie für unrein; allein die Wuhâby und die Araber speisen sie. » For a more detailed reconstruction of the original assumption by Niebuhr and Volney that the Wahhabis were Islamic « deists », polemical towards the cult unduly paid by ordinary Muslims to Muhammad with his Koran and its progressive correction by subsequent European informants up to Burckhardt, including Seetzen, see GIOVANNI BONACINA, *The Wahhabis Seen through European Eyes (1772-1830). Deists and Puritans of Islam*, Brill, Leiden – Boston 2015.

²¹ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien, Palästina, Phönicien, die Transjordan-Länder, Arabia Petraea und Unter-Aegypten*, vol. II, Reimer, Berlin 1854, p. 398–399: « Heute verbreitete sich die für Mohammedaner sehr traurige Nachricht, dass der Pascha von Damask mit seiner grossen Pilgerkjerwane von den Truppen des Regenten von Derréja angegriffen und grösstenstheils zu Grunde gerichtet sey, dass die Uebergebliebenen sich genöthigt gesehen hätten, die eiligste Flucht zu ergreifen, und der Pascha gänzlich beraubt in Damask angekommen sey. Es fand sich indessen in der Folge, dass diese erste Nachricht übertrieben war, obgleich die Hauptsache ihre Richtigkeit hatte. Der

defamatory rumours circulating about the Wahhabis, they did not persecute pilgrims indiscriminately but rather only those whom they held to be impure. While on his way to Sinai, Seetzen wrote that *Wuhâb*, known also as *Móheb*, was considered to be an unbeliever by Moslems because of his refusal to recognize in Mohammed a divine prophet. Yet, it was the Wahhabis themselves who were responsible for introducing fasting and prayer, on pain of death, among their Bedouin tributaries, who were otherwise indifferent to religious precepts.²² It was not long before « Wahhabize » (*wûhabisieren*)²³ became the eloquent term used by Seetzen to describe these collective conversions to a more scrupulous piety accomplished by example or threat. Seetzen wrote of the Sunnis that they held Mohammed as dear as the Catholics held the Madonna; of the Wahhabis that they did not respect the Sunna and had banned tobacco. Here was sown the seed of that influential analogy between Wahhabism and Protestantism, properly Puritanism, that Burckhardt would develop shortly thereafter. Indeed, both the journal and an article which appeared in Zach's publication (entitled *Einige Bemerkungen über die Kjerwanen-Strasse von Damask bis Bagdad*) make explicit mention of a

Pascha erhielt von dem Regenten von Derréjia bey seiner Annäherung von Medina die Erklärung, dass er ihm nicht erlauben könnte, die beiden heiligen Oerter zu besuchen, weil er mit einer bewaffneten Macht, also als ein Feind, erscheine. Wollte er sich indessen dazu entschliessen, dass er alles kleine und grobes Geschütz, so wie allen Pomp zurücklasse: so möge er immerhin seine Wallfahrt vollenden, indem er gar nicht geneigt sey, fromme Pilger von dem Besuch dieser heiligen Oerter abzuhalten. Der Pascha hielt indessen diese Bedingungen für zu entehrend für sich und für die hohe Pforte, deren Repräsentant er war, und da er, umgeben von einer zahllosen Menge feindlicher Truppen, mit Gewalt nichts ausrichten konnte, da er nur etwa 2000 Mann Soldaten mit sich führte: so musste er sich zur Rückkehr entschliessen, obgleich er bis eine halbe Stunde vor Medina vorgerückt war. Ein böser Unstern verfolgt jetzt die Osmanen: dieser Vorfall und ein neuer Krieg mit Russland, welche Begebenheiten könnten wohl niederschlagender für sie seyn? ».

²² SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien, Palästina, Phönicien, die Transjordan-Länder, Arabia Petraea und Unter-Aegypten*, vol. III, Reimer, Berlin 1855, p. 61–62: « Ueberall sprach man von Wuhâb, den man gewöhnlich Móheb nannte, und worunter man den jetzigen Regenten von Derréjia verstand, obgleich dieser nicht Wuhâb heisst; von dessen neuem Glauben und dem unglücklichen Schicksal der heurigen [sic] Pilgerkjerwane von Damask. Einige schienen ihm etwas gewogen zu seyn; die Meisten aber versicherten, er sey ein Mensch ohne Glauben, ein Kaffer. Am Anstössigsten fanden sie, dass er Mohammed nicht für einen göttlichen Propheten anerkennen wolle. Mohammed ist nun einmal der Liebling der Sunniten, wie die Madonna die geliebte der katholischen Christen. Auch findet seine Lehre bey den Beduinen, die sich vorhin wenig um ihre Religion bekümmerten, in dem Punkte Anstoss, dass er auch von ihnen, sobald er sie unterjocht, verlangt, die im Koran vorgeschriebenen Fasten, sowie die fünfmaligen Gebete an jedem Tage genau zu beobachten, und dass er diejenigen, welche wider dies Gebot handeln, mit dem Tode bedroht. Die Beduinen sind also verbunden, in diesen Punkten ganz andere Menschen zu werden und von neuem zu lernen ».

²³ SEETZEN, « Über das Küstenland von Szauáken und Massaúa auf der Westseite des arabischen Meerbusens, nebst Bemerkungen über einige Nachbarländer », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmels-Kunde*, 20 (1809), p. 21: « Die Araber haben ein neues Verbum, Wuhabisiren, gemacht, welches so viel heisst, als die Lehre von Wuhaby annehmen ».

« reformation » of Islam implemented by *Wuhâb* (or *Abd el Wuhâb* in the article; the German term is *Reformation*, the conventional name also to designate Luther's movement) that was also covertly embraced by the Bedouin dwelling beyond their dominions. In particular, Seetzen writes that the profession of Wahhabi faith required only the explicit affirmation of the mortal nature of Mohammed.²⁴

When he reached Suez (April 1807), Seetzen received intelligence that Jeddah, the last bastion of Ottoman power in the Arabian peninsula, had fallen to the Wahhabis. He also noted in his journal that he intended to add to his collection of Bedouin songs by including those of converts to Wahhabism.²⁵ Finally, in Cairo in June 1807, he pieced together rumours of an insulting letter sent by Ibn Saud (that very Saud, son of the assassinated Abd al-Aziz) to the Egyptian pasha, Mohammed Ali. This news seems to have persuaded him that Egypt risked an invasion of a kind that would thwart European designs on the region for centuries while also hindering any economic and social progress whatsoever.²⁶ His fears must have been fuelled less by religious factors as his awareness of the « backwardness » of Arab customs compared to those of the Egyptians, who were considered the heirs to an ancient civilization and the beneficiaries of closer ties with Europe. Seetzen maintains that a dervish named Hassan, who claimed to have stayed at *Derhéjja*, was expected to provide news about *Abd el Wuhâb* (once again echoing the name

²⁴ SEETZEN, « Einige Bemerkungen über die Kjerwanen-Strasse von Damask bis Bagdad », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmels-Kunde*, 18 (1808), p. 511; for this strange sounding profession of faith, see SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. III, p. 33: « Ich glaube an den einigen Gott und an Mohammed, Knecht des Gesandten Gottes, der gebohren ward und starb. ».

²⁵ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. III, p. 128: « Ich fand in Sués einen Trupp osmanischer Soldaten, welche in Dschidda zur Garnison gelegen hatten, welches sie aber verlassen mussten, weil sie von den siegenden Truppen des Regenten von Derréjja vertrieben wurden. »; *Ibid.*, p. 148: « Die Beduinen haben noch jetzt die Sitte, bey ihren Fehden mit einem feindlichen Stamm gewisse Stanzen abzusingen, oder sich einander zuzurufen, welche Bezug auf ihre Fehden haben. Den Gesang der Wuhabiten werde ich an einer andern Stelle anführen; hier nur ein Paar von benachbarten Stämmen ».

²⁶ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. III p. 181: « Gestern Nachmittags kam ein Schreiben von dem jetzigen Regenten von Derréjja oder dem Chef der Wuhabiten an den Pascha an, worin dieser aufgefordert wurde, sich dessen Macht zu unterwerfen, widrigenfalls er die Folgen seiner Widerspenstigkeit sich selbst zuzuschreiben haben würde. Der Pascha hat indess keine Notiz davon genommen, wozu er auch gar keine Veranlassung sahe, da in der Nähe Aegyptens keine wuhabische Armee vorhanden ist. Indessen, fällt Aegypten nicht in die Hände der Europäer: so lässt sich erwarten, dass es über kurz oder lang den Wuhabiten zur Beute fallen werde, wodurch sich also die Scene von Amru's Eroberung bald nach Mohammeds Tod erneuern würde. »; *Ibid.*, p. 197: « Man würde längs der Nordküste von Aegypten grosse Landstrecken gewinnen, die jetzt in Salzseen verwandelt sind, wenn man die Mündungen in den Dünen verdammt. Die Seen würden austrocknen, so bald sie keinen Zufluss aus dem Meere erhielten; man würde das Nilwasser dorthin leiten, und in wenigen Jahren würden diese Districte in fruchtbare Felder verwandelt werden. Alles dieses wäre indess nur von einer europäischen Regierung zu erwarten. Sollten die Chaliphen von Abd el Wuhâb ihren Plan, Aegypten zu erobern, ausführen: so würden alle schönen Pläne auf Jahrhunderte vielleicht verloren seyn ».

used by Niebuhr) and his followers, but the fact that he also promised information about the Alawis (Nusairi) and the Ismaili suggests that Seetzen may have overrated this potential witness. No further mention is made of this dervish in either the journal or letters to Zach (September 1807).²⁷ In any case, Seetzen's observations make clear that the memories of the philosophical and deist piety once ascribed to the movement had now faded as rumours began to circulate (March 1808) that Mohammed Ali was being pressed by the Ottoman sultan to take part in a joint expedition to reconquer Arabia along with the pashas of Damascus and Baghdad.²⁸ Although Seetzen would not live to witness the actual Egyptian operation of 1811, he had seen the first signs that it was coming.

IV. In Arabia

When he reached Arabia in 1809, Seetzen was no longer able to send his accounts of the events which were to prove fatal for him back to Europe; his journal went missing when he was killed in Yemen.²⁹ We only know of his visit to Mecca (in the guise of a Sunni Moslem pilgrim of the Hanafi rite and of European origin since the Ottoman empire included the Balkans, Musa al-Hakim his adopted name) from a long letter written from Mokha, published by Zach, and bearing the date 17 November 1810. While in Mecca, Seetzen drew attention to himself through his interest in acquiring manuscripts, and he was questioned by someone whom he calls the Wahhabi emir. In other words the Saudi monarch's regent suspected that he was dealing with a Turkish spy.³⁰ From a doctrinal viewpoint, Seetzen was now

²⁷ ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Schreiben des Russisch-Kaiserlichen Cammer-Assessors, Dr. U. J. Seetzen », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmels-Kunde*, 17 (1808), p. 159: « Auch über Abd el Wuhâb und seine Nachfolger erwarte ich interessante Nachrichten von einem talent- und kenntnißvollen Becktaschy-Derwisch, Schech Hassan, welcher sich eine Zeitlang in Derhéhija in Nedschd aufhielt. Der nämliche versicherte von den Nasséiry in Syrien, dass ihre Religionsparthey sich in drey Secten theile, wovon die eine die Ismaélje seyn ».

²⁸ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. III, p. 398–399: « Es hatte sich das Gerücht verbreitet, dass dem Pascha in dem neulich erhaltenen Bestätigungs-Firman seiner Würde vom osmanischen Hofe anbefohlen worden, den Engländern Alexandrien, Raschid und Damiet abzutreten. Allein dies war ungegründet. Man hatte ihn bloss ermuntert, wider die Wuhabiten zu Felde zu ziehen, wie den Pascha von Damask und Bagdad ».

²⁹ As attested by the first editor of Seetzen's travel notes, the historian Friedrich Kruse: see FRIEDRICH KRUSE « Vorrede und Einleitung zu Seetzens Reisetagebüchern in den Orient », in ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien, Palästina, Phönicien, die Transjordan-Länder, Arabia Petraea und Unter-Aegypten*, vol. I, Reimer, Berlin 1854, p. XLI–XLII.

³⁰ ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Schreiben des Russ. Kais. Kammer-Assessors Dr. U. J. Seetzen », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmels-Kunde*, 27 (1813), p. 165–166: « Den 22 Dec. wurde ich von dem Emîr der Wuhabiten verlangt. Ich ging zu ihm, und man

clear that the Wahhabis honoured Mohammed as the supreme prophet and simply condemned the improper forms of worship practised by many superstitious pilgrims. They even frowned upon the pilgrimage to the « chapel » containing his tomb in Medina, and the lavish offerings left there were seized by Saud, who was a pilgrim at Mecca during Seetzen's stay and revered as an imam.³¹ Extreme forms of circumcision were also banned and declared unorthodox as well as barbaric.³² Seetzen clarifies that the pilgrims included numerous Shiites, but that Turks were noticeably thin on the ground because they were unpopular for political reasons with the new masters of the holy places.³³

Despite the apparent tolerance for the pilgrims, Seetzen learned from a survivor about the recent killing of a party of pilgrims from India who had run into a Wahhabi military detachment on the road from Mokha to Mecca.³⁴ Although

erkundigte sich, wer ich sey? weswegen ich hierher gekommen? warum ich hier so lange mich aufhalte? warum ich so viele Bücher kaufe? u. s. w. Letzteres hatte zuerst Aufsehen erregt, und man hatte mich für einen Türken gehalten. Als man hörte, dass ich kein Türke, sondern ein Franke und Neophyt sey, liess man mich wieder abtreten. ». A first catalog of the over two thousand Arabic, Persian, Armenian, Syriac and Turkish manuscripts sent by Seetzen to Gotha was published in 1823 by Johann Heinrich Möller, then surpassed thanks to the publication of the catalog of the entire oriental collection of the Gotha library edited by Wilhelm Pertsch (1859–1892); the purchases made in Arabia never reached Europe due to the traveler's death, see MONIKA HASENMÜLLER, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen als Sammler orientalischer Manuskripte », in HABERLAND (ed.), *Der Orientreisende Ulrich Jasper Seetzen und die Wissenschaften*, p. 459–476. In Cairo Seetzen also turned to al-Jabarti for purchases, who however sold at unaffordable prices, SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. III, p. 178–179.

³¹ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Schreiben des Russ. Kais. Kammer-Assessors Dr. U. J. Seetzen », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmels-Kunde*, 27 (1813), p. 163: « Man versichert, dass Söüd, der jetzige Heerführer von Nedsched, alle Schätze aus dieser Capelle nach Dreheia fortgeführt habe. »; Ibid., p. 170: « Söüd, der weltliche Oberhaupt der Wuhabisten, welche ihn schon Imâm zu nennen anfangen, war auch in diesem Jahre mit einer grossen Pilger-Karavane angekommen ».

³² SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Schreiben des Russ. Kais. Kammer-Assessors Dr. U. J. Seetzen », *Monatliche Correspondenz*, 27 (1813), p. 170–171: « Die Excision des weiblichen Geschlechts findet auch hier, wie in Egypten statt. Die Beschneidung des alten Stammes Hodaïl, welcher nach Taif zu auf einem Gebirge wohnt, war äußerst barbarisch; man versichert aber, dass die Wuhabisten ihnen ihr Verfahren verboten haben ».

³³ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Schreiben des Russ. Kais. Kammer-Assessors Dr. U. J. Seetzen », *Monatliche Correspondenz*, 27 (1813), p. 168: « Ausser Arabern aus allen Provinzen, Hedschâs, Jemen, Hadramût, Oman, besonders aber Wuhabisten aus Nadsched sahe man Mauren, Neger aus den inneren Gegenden Afrika's, Perser, Afghânen, Indier aus allen Gegenden, eine Menge Javanaser (von der Insel Java), Tataren, aber verhältnissmässig nur wenige Türken ».

³⁴ From the story of a survivor, SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Schreiben des Russ. Kais. Kammer-Assessors Dr. U. J. Seetzen », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmels-Kunde*, 28 (1813), p. 244: « Ich hatte das Unglück, nebst meinen Landsleuten unterwegs von einem wuhabistischen Corps überfallen zu werden, obgleich wir ganz unschuldig, und diese Truppen wider Scherîf Hammûd von Abu Harîsch bestimmt werden; mehrere von uns verloren das Leben, und ich alle meine wenigen Haabseligkeiten ».

aware that the sharif of Mecca, Ghalib, had submitted to the new Saudi overlord, Seetzen reported a general aversion on the part of the ordinary inhabitants of the holy city towards the occupiers from Najd. Specifically, his hosts and friends voiced concern that he might join Saud's entourage on the way back to *Derreija*, dissuading him by their disapproval.³⁵ The death that Seetzen probably avoided on this occasion caught him nonetheless two years later in Yemen, a country untouched by Saudi expansion and considered, on the basis of Niebuhr's account, a safer place for European travellers than the central regions of the Arabian peninsula.³⁶ What can only remain a matter for conjecture at this point is Seetzen's opinion of the Wahhabis – whether definitive or subject to revision – that he developed in his journal. It must have been clear to him by the time he reached Yemen that the Wahhabis saw themselves as Moslems faithful to the Koran, but their poor relations with neighbouring Moslem populations might have raised doubts as to the legitimacy of their claims.

The disappearance of Seetzen's Arab journal meant the loss of what, in all probability, was a highly instructive account of a rare visit by a European to Mecca under the first Saudi government. The Catalan Badía y Leblich (Ali Bey el Abbassi) had found his way to Mecca two years before Seetzen under more favourable circumstances. He reported his experiences at some length to his readers but, unlike his German counterpart, he suffered from an irresistible tendency to exaggerate his exploits, to the point of pretending to have been a witness to the capture of the city by Saud which had actually taken place before his arrival.³⁷ In 1814, Burckhardt reached Mecca, but only after the Egyptians had regained

³⁵ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Schreiben des russ. Kais. Kammer-Assessors », *Monatliche Correspondenz* 27 (1813), p. 170: « Söüd war sehr einfach gekleidet; er trug einen weissen Abbäje. Personen, die Gelegenheit hatten ihn zu sprechen, versichern, dass er vielen natürlichen Verstand besitze. Ich hätte eine fürtreffliche Gelegenheit gehabt, mit seiner Karawane nach Nadsched und Dreheia und ferner nach el Bahhran zu reisen; allein, da meine Bekannten ihn und alle Wuhabisten äußerst hassen: so würde ich alle ihre Achtung verscherzt und mich wohl gar ihren Verfolgungen ausgesetzt haben ».

³⁶ NIEBUHR, *Beschreibung von Arabien*, p. 40: « Die Araber bezeigen sich viel höflicher gegen Fremden als die Türken. Die Europäer können in Jemen und Omân, ingleichen in Persien, fast eben so viele Höflichkeit von den Eingebornen erwarten, als wir diesen Mohámmedanern erzeigen würden, wenn sie nach Europa kommen sollten. ». The never clarified circumstances of Seetzen's death gave rise to rumors in Mokha that he had been poisoned on the orders of the Imam of Saana as soon as he had left the city, or alternatively that Seetzen's seventeen transport camels might have aroused the greed of marauders ready to kill the owner in order to get hold of the load, see NORBERT NEBES, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen im Jemen », in HANS STEIN (ed.), *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811) Leben und Werk. Die arabischen Länder und die Nahostforschung im napoleonischen Zeitalter*, p. 39–51.

³⁷ DOMINGO BADIA Y LEBLICH, *Voyages d'Ali Bey el Abbassi en Afrique et en Asie Pendant Les Années 1803, 1804, 1805, 1806 et 1807*, vol. II, Didot, Paris, 1814, p. 320. For Seetzen's judgement about him (Badía's speeches each time so different as to suggest that he did not always tell the truth, according to the Spanish consul in Cairo), see SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien*, vol. III, p. 373–374.

control of the city and reintroduced the more traditional religious rites. Despite his impressive account of their history and religious practices (*Notes on the Bedouins and Wahábys*, 1830), he could hardly have met many Wahhabis in the Hijaz because the war being waged against them by Mohammed Ali confined them to the margins of the territories occupied by the detested « associationists » (Arab *mushrikun*, as the Wahhabis named the Egyptians because of their alleged offense against monotheism) who had come across from the western shore of the Red Sea. Seetzen, whom Burckhardt judged to be almost his equal as an observer (though rather too much the philosopher and poet)³⁸ might even have rivalled him as our major source of information on the Wahhabis, not least because he was able to consort freely with them in a way that was later impossible for Burckhardt. As modern-day scholars, we can thus only lament Seetzen's early death and the loss of that precious knowledge that he carried with him to the grave.

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³⁸ JOHANN LUDWIG BURCKHARDT, *Travels in Nubia*, Murray, London 1822², p. LXXX: « Although endowed with a lively fancy, and even with considerable poetical talents, he was a man of plain truth ».

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ON THE BEDOUINS AND THEIR HORSES

ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN

AS A CONTRIBUTOR TO EUROPEAN JOURNALS (1802–1834)

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Abstract

Ulrich Jasper Seetzen's scholarly contribution to knowledge-making on the Near East remained limited at this time to the articles he published in various European periodicals. Yet it appears that this highly-scattered source material has been neglected in scholarly literature, which tends to focus instead on his diaries, published over forty years after his death. These articles, however, prove an invaluable source in order to analyze not only his contribution to the scholarly debates of his time, but also to explore the role played by European periodicals in the construction of knowledge about the Near East in the early nineteenth century. Accordingly, this article examines Seetzen's contributions on the Bedouin tribes and their desert-bred horses, which were arguably of interest to the scholars of his time who commented on and translated them but have been overlooked by previous research. By focusing on these intertwined topics, this article thus aims to examine the significance of his contributions and assess their contemporary reception.

Key Words

Bedouin tribes; Arabian horses; Arabian Peninsula; European journals; Orientalism



I. Introduction

No other traveller has provided us with more abundant and interesting details on the different tribes of Arab nomads as our respectable countryman, Herr Justizrath Niebuhr. They are not without mistake though; only he who knows, how extremely difficult it is to collect accurate information on this strange class of people, will hold

his information in high esteem and express the fairest thank for his determination in research as well as his love of truth.¹

Thus opening his own piece on Bedouin tribes wandering across the Near East written for the *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmels-Kunde* [Monthly Correspondence for the Advancement of Terrestrial and Celestial Science] (1800–1813), Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811) was paying a vibrant tribute to Carsten Niebuhr's (1733–1815) *Beschreibung von Arabien* [Description of Arabia] first published in German in 1772, while claiming his ambition to supplement and even to amend this epoch-making book.² The sole survivor of the Danish-German Arabia Expedition (1761–1767), Niebuhr was indeed able to publish most of the expedition's results in several books soon translated in several languages.³ Seetzen, by contrast, died in Yemen in 1811 before even reaching Africa, the ultimate goal of his scientific travel, which prevented him from compiling a single publication encompassing all the information that he had collected in the field.⁴

¹ ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Beiträge zur Kenntnis der arabischen Stämme in Syrien und im wüsten und peträischen Arabien », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmelskunde*, 19 (1809), p. 105–106: « Kein Reisender hat uns mehrere und interessantere Nachrichten über die verschiedenen zahlreichen Stämme der arabischen Nomaden mitgeteilt, als unser achtungswürdiger Landsmann, Herr Justizrath Niebuhr. Sie sind nicht ganz ohne Fehler; allein wer es weiss, wie ungemein schwer es hält, genaue Nachrichten über diese merkwürdige Volksklasse einzuziehen, wird die seinigen im hohen Grade schätzbar finden und seiner Beharrlichkeit im Nachforschen, so wie seiner Wahrheitsliebe den gerechtesten Dank zollen ».

² CARSTEN NIEBUHR, *Beschreibung von Arabien: aus eigenen Beobachtungen und im Lande selbst gesammelten Nachrichten*, Möller, Copenhagen 1772. On the Danish-German Arabia Expedition see HAN F. VERMEULEN, *Before Boas. The Genesis of Ethnography and Ethnology in the German Enlightenment*, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln – London 2015, p. 219–267 and MIRJAM HÄHNLE, « Knowledge about the 'Orient' between voice and scripture. Michel de Certeau and the Royal Danish Expedition to Arabia Felix (1761–1767) », *InterDisciplines*, 2 (2017), p. 41–68 and « Das Ruinenfeld als 'Merkwürdigkeit' und 'Kontaktzone'. Die Ägyptenberichte der dänischen Arabien-Expedition (1761–1767) », in JOACHIM EIBACH, CLAUDIA OPITZ-BELAKHAL (eds.), *Zwischen Kulturen. Mittler und Grenzgänger vom 17. bis 19. Jahrhundert*, Wehrhahn Verlag, Hannover 2018, p. 93–117. We use the designation *Danish-German Arabia Expedition* coined by Han F. Vermeulen (see *Before Boas*, p. 222) although it is traditionally called the *Danish Arabia Expedition* or *Royal Danish Arabia Expedition* (see HÄHNLE, « Knowledge about the 'Orient' »).

³ CARSTEN NIEBUHR, *Description de l'Arabie faite sur des observations propres et des avis recueillis dans les lieux mêmes, par Carsten Niebuhr*, S. J. Baalde, Amsterdam 1774; Id., *Beschryving van Arabie, uit eigene waarnemingen en in 't land zelf verzamelde narigten*, S. J. Baalde, Amsterdam 1774; Id., *Reisebeschreibung nach Arabia und den andern umliegenden Ländern*, 2 vols., Möller, Copenhagen 1774–1778; Id., *Voyage en Arabie et en d'autres pays circonvoisins*, 2 vols., S. J. Baalde, Amsterdam 1776–1780; Id., *Reize naar Arabië en andere omliggende landen*, S. J. Baalde, Amsterdam 1776–1780; Id., *Travels through Arabia and Other Countries in the East*, R. Morison and Son, Edinburgh 1792.

⁴ On Seetzen's plan to publish his travelogue, see DETLEF HABERLAND, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen und Afrika – die entdeckungs- und wirtschaftsgeschichtliche Dimension seiner Reise », in Id. (ed.),

Nowadays, Seetzen is best known for his diaries (*Reisetagebuch*), that he kept during his travels to and in the Near East, and which have been the focus of most of the research and edition works carried out on him.⁵ The ongoing (re)edition of Seetzen's diaries understandably spurred this scholarly interest in what Detlef Haberland describes as Seetzen's « life's work » (*Lebenswerk*) while pointing out the variety of his publications and warning against the tendency in the research to mention « always the same titles ».⁶

Seetzen's diaries, however, were not published before the mid-nineteenth century and therefore remained unknown to the learned readership of his day. Indeed, his scientific contribution to the knowledge-making on the Near East at the turn of the nineteenth century remained in fact limited to his articles and letters published in various European journals either during his lifetime or shortly after his death.⁷ Not only were these articles widely distributed among the scholarly community, but most of them were also critically reviewed and translated in other European journals. A rather prolific contributor to some of the most prominent journals of his time, Seetzen thus made a name for himself as a scientific traveller and gained some fame through these publications.⁸ Most of these articles have been, nevertheless, rather neglected in the literature, which,

Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767-1811) *Jeverander – aufgeklärter Unternehmer – wissenschaftlicher Orientreisender*, Isensee Verlag, Oldenburg 2014, p. 199–224, p. 207.

⁵ The nineteenth-century edition of Seetzen's diaries was reprinted in 2004: ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien, Palästina, Phönicien, die Trans-Jordan-Länder, Arabia Petraea und Unter-Ägypten*, vol. I: *Tagebuch über seine Reise von Halep nach Damaskus, und von dort nach Haurân, nach dem Libanon und Antilibanon, nach Ledscha, nach dem Dschibbal es Schech, Dschaulân, el Gôr, Dschibbal Edschlûn, Belka und um das Todte Meer nach Hebron und Jerusalem* (9. April 1805–10 April 1806); vol. II: *Tagebuch über seinen Aufenthalt in Jerusalem und mehrere Reisen durch Palästina, Süd-Phönicien, die Transjordan-Länder und rings um das Todte Meer* (12 April 1806–12 März 1807); vol. III: *Tagebuch über seine Reise von Jerusalem durch das Peträische Arabien und Theil Unter-Aegyptens* (13 März 1807–23 März 1809); vol. IV: *Commentare zu Ulrich Jasper Seetzen's Reisen durch Syrien, Palästina, Phönicien, die Trans-Jordan-Länder, Arabia Petraea und Unter-Ägypten. Ausgearbeitet von Staatsr. Prof. Dr. Fr. Kruse und Prof. Dr. H. L. Fleischer in Verbindung mit mehreren Gelehrten, Nebst sämmlichen Original-Charten Seetzen's, von ihm selbst zu seiner Reise gezeichnet und auf seinen Wunsch vervollständigt durch Hinzufügung mehrerer Ortsnamen nach seinen Tagebüchern, so wie der alten Namen der zu bestimmenden Orte*, von Kruse, Georg Olms Verlag, Hildesheim – Zürich – New York 2004 (repr. of Reimer, Berlin 1854–1859). New editions have been carried out the past years ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *Tagebücher*, vol. I: *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Konstantinopel und der Reise nach Aleppo, 1802–1803*, ed. VOLKMAR ENDERLEIN, MICHAEL BRAUNE, Georg Olms Verlag, Hildesheim – Zürich – New York 2012 and *Tagebücher*, vol. II: *Tagebuch des Aufenthalts in Aleppo 1803–1805*, ed. JUDITH ZEPTER, CARSTEN WALBINER, MICHAEL BRAUNE, Georg Olms Verlag, Hildesheim – Zürich – New York 2011.

⁶ See HABERLAND, « Die Publikationen Ulrich Jasper Seetzens », in HABERLAND (eds.), *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811)*, p. 133–156, p. 133–134 and p. 136.

⁷ *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen's Reisen durch Syrien, Palästina, Phönicien, die Transjordan-Länder, Arabia Petrarca und Unter-Aegypten*, ed. FRIEDRICH KRUSE, 4 vols., Reimer, Berlin 1854–1859.

⁸ As Detlef Haberland notes, Seetzen was mentioned in encyclopedias of the early nineteenth-century, HABERLAND, « Die Publikationen Ulrich Jasper Seetzens », p. 134.

consequently, has so far barely dealt with the reception of Seetzen's work on the Near East by his contemporaries. This relative lack of interest can be well due to the very scattered nature of his journal publications, as underlined by Detlef Haberland, but also to the no less scattered nature of the sources, such as journals, books or manuscripts, in which Seetzen work was discussed, translated or quoted.⁹ While his famous *Reiseplan ins innere Afrika* has been often used in the literature, his following articles have been, by contrast, far less researched. Studies based on Seetzen's journal contributions such as Giovanni Bonacina's work on the European perception of the Wahhabis or Norbert Nebes's article on Yemen are more the exception than the rule.¹⁰ Seetzen's articles on the Bedouin tribes and their desert-bred horses belong to these overlooked contributions, although they arguably constitute an interesting case in point to study Seetzen's contribution on the Near East and its reception, since both articles drew the attention of his contemporaries, who translated, commented and quoted them.¹¹ Both intertwined topics were still the subjects of broad speculations in European scholarship at the turn of the nineteenth century. By focusing on both Seetzen's « Beiträge zur Kenntnis der arabischen Stämme in Syrien und im wüsten und peträischen Arabien » [Contributions to the knowledge of the Arab tribes in Syria as well as in Arabia Deserta and Arabia Petrea] written in 1806 and published in 1809 in the *Monatliche Correspondenz* as well as his « Letter » on Arabian horses released in 1811 in *Fundgruben des Orients / Mines de l'Orient* [Mines of the Orient] (1809–1818), this article aims to analyze Seetzen's participation in and contribution to the scholarly exchanges informing the oriental studies at a key moment of their development, but also to explore the role played by European journals in the construction of knowledge about the Near East in the early nineteenth century.¹²

⁹ Detlef Haberland underlines their scattered nature and calls for their publication, as a means of bringing them to the forefront of scientific interest.

¹⁰ On Seetzen's views on the Wahhabis, see GIOVANNI BONACINA, *The Wahhabis Seen through European Eyes (1772–1830): Deists and Puritans of Islam*, Brill, Leiden – Boston 2015; NORBERT NEBES, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen im Jemen », in HANS STEIN (ed.), *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811) Leben und Werk. Die arabischen Länder und die Nahostforschung im napoleonischen Zeitalter. Vorträge des Kolloquiums vom 23. und 24. September 1994 in der Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek Gotha, Schloß Friedenstein, Gotha* Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek, Gotha 1995, p. 39–52.

¹¹ Apart from an article by Bernadette Lizet on Oriental horse breeds in the work of Wenceslas Severyn Rzewuski, it seems that Seetzen's report on horses and its reception by contemporaries has not been much researched, see BERNADETTE LIZET, « Le cheval arabe du Nejd et le système des races orientales dans le manuscrit de Wenceslas Severyn Rzewuski », *Anthropozoologica*, 39/1 (2004), p. 79–97. As to Seetzen's report on the Bedouins, it seems that it has never been analysed for itself.

¹² SEETZEN, « Beiträge zur Kenntnis der arabischen Stämme » and ID., « Auszug aus einem Briefe des kaiserlich. Russ. Collegienassessors Herrn Dr. Seetzen an Herrn von Hammer aus Mocha den 14. November 1810 », *Fundgruben des Orients*, 2 (1811), p. 275–284.

Therefore, this paper aims to demonstrate how Seetzen's articles on Bedouins and horses can shed light on the mechanisms of knowledge-making about the Arabias at the turn of the nineteenth century. Accordingly, this article will first focus on Seetzen's integration within the scholarly journals of the time. It will then address Seetzen's ethnography of the Bedouin tribes before analyzing his approach to the Arabian horses in order to better underline his methodology, research outcomes, and critical reception until the 1830s.

II. Writing for Scholarly Journals:

Seetzen as a Contributor to the European Knowledge-making in the 1800s

From the outset of his journey to Africa in 1802 to his tragic death in Yemen in 1811, Seetzen made a name for himself among the European learned readership of his time as a contributor to scholarly journals. The *Monatliche Correspondenz* and the *Fundgruben des Orients*, in which both of his texts on the Bedouin tribes and their desert bred horses were respectively published, were in fact the main journals to which he directly contributed during his journey to and in the Near East. Regularly in touch with the editors of both journals, Seetzen appeared as a reliable correspondent able to fuel the scholarly debate through his field research. It is no coincidence that Seetzen, financed and supported from Gotha, kept the successive editors of the *Monatliche Correspondenz*, namely the astronomers Franz Xaver von Zach (1754–1832) and Bernhard August von Lindenau (1779–1854), updated on the progress of his journey. Established in 1800 in Gotha by Zach, the *Monatliche Correspondenz* was edited by Lindenau from 1806 on until 1813, that is from Zach's departure from Gotha until the year of the journal's last issue. Later on, Seetzen also corresponded with the Austrian Diplomat and Orientalist Joseph Hammer-Purgstall (1774–1856), the joint editor of the Vienna-based *Fundgruben des Orients* along with the Polish count Wacław Seweryn Rzewuski (1784–1831). The latter financed the journal which was published from 1809 to 1818. By keeping the editors of these journals informed about his works-in-progress or by providing them with the conclusions of the investigations that they had commissioned from him, Seetzen delivered them original material for their journals. His contribution proved even more significant in that collecting data in the Near East was a difficult undertaking, which Seetzen himself emphasized while referring to Niebuhr in the opening quotation of the present article. These direct journal contributions soon gave rise to indirect ones, since some of the formers were critically reviewed and translated in other European journals. From this perspective, studying Seetzen's publications in contemporary journals will exemplify the international cooperation within Oriental Studies at the turn of the nineteenth century. Indeed, a closer look at these journals will allow us to underline the particular significance

of exchanges taking place between German and French-speaking scholars in the process of knowledge-making about the Orient.¹³

In this context, the *Monatliche Correspondenz* proved instrumental in spreading Seetzen's research goals and observations and, therefore, in building his reputation as a trustworthy scientific traveller. Whereas the *Monatliche Correspondenz* was by no means the first journal in which Seetzen published, it nevertheless marked a shift in terms of the scope and nature of his scholarly ambitions. Until 1802 his horizon was mainly limited to Germany.¹⁴ The significance of Seetzen's first substantial article published in the *Monatliche Correspondenz*, his *Reiseplan ins innere Afrika*, was highlighted by Detlef Haberland who analyzed the different stakes of this inaugural contribution against the scientific background of his time.¹⁵ Published in four successive issues of Zach's journal from August to November 1802, Seetzen's programmatic article proved instrumental in introducing him both to the learned readership as well as in a scholarly circle prompt to support his enterprise.¹⁶ Indeed, the *Reiseplan* was nothing else but the letter sent by Seetzen to Zach to require his support in his plan. Once convinced by Seetzen, Zach endeavored to draw the attention of his readers on a plan which he deemed promising, while making them familiar with Seetzen's name. Zach therefore authored a detailed foreword to Seetzen's *Reisenplan* in order to explain how he learnt about his project and how his scientific endeavour would be supported in and from Gotha.¹⁷ After introducing Seetzen as a medical doctor (*Doctor Medicinae*) Zach thus pointed out that he was recommended to him by one of the most prominent scholars of his time, Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752–1840), professor at the Georgia Augusta in Göttingen and a native of Gotha.¹⁸ Himself a doctor from the University of Göttingen where he studied medicine and natural sciences from 1785 to 1789, Seetzen was a former student of Blumenbach in both medicine and natural history.¹⁹ After mentioning

¹³ PASCALE RABAUULT-FEUEHHAHN, CÉLINE TRAUTMANN-WALLER (eds.), *Itinéraires orientalistes entre France et Allemagne*, CNRS Editions, Paris 2008, (Germanique Internationale, 7, Special Issue) <<https://doi.org/10.4000/rgi.222>> (Accessed October 2023).

¹⁴ HABERLAND, « Die Publikationen Ulrich Jasper Seetzens », p. 138–143.

¹⁵ HABERLAND, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen und Afrika », p. 199–224.

¹⁶ ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Reiseplan ins innere Afrika », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmelskunde*, 6 (1802), August No. XIII, p. 126–159; September No. XX, p. 201–232; October No. XXX, p. 317–342; November No. XLII, p. 401–457.

¹⁷ SEETZEN, « Reiseplan ins innere Afrika », p. 126–142. It must be noted, however, that the *Reiseplan* was not Seetzen's first contribution to the *Monatliche Correspondenz*. He authored a piece on Africa which was published the same year in March: Id., « Etwas über Afrika. Aus einem Schreiben des Dr. Seetzen », *Monatliche Correspondenz*, 5 (1802), March No. XXVIII, p. 260–262.

¹⁸ SEETZEN, « Reiseplan ins innere Afrika », p. 126.

¹⁹ MICHAEL SCHIPPAN, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen und die Georgia Augusta in Göttingen », in HABERLAND, (ed.), *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811)*, p. 111–132. During his time at the Georgia Augusta, Seetzen

this prestigious scholarly recommendation, Zach further underlined the patronage of the Duc of Gotha who had supported Seetzen's plan as soon as he heard about the goals of his trip as well as his needs.²⁰ Zach had shared with the Duc the details of Seetzen's letter, in which the latter stated the wide spectrum of his interest including « Natural history (...), agriculture, technology, commerce, statistics, political and physical Geography »²¹ as well as his desire not only to acquire knowledge and skills in practical astronomy but also to be provided with the necessary astronomic instruments in order to determine longitudes and latitudes.²² This last request was met with great interest by Zach who greeted an initiative which, he hoped, would allow for significant progress in the geographic knowledge of the territories crisscrossed by Seetzen. Zach criticized, in contrast, the inaccuracy of the information given by some travellers such as the Scottish James Bruce (1730–1794), who also travelled to Africa. Zach deemed his measurements to be generated « at random » and therefore useless for the geographers.²³

One of the main stakes of Zach's introduction and subsequent publication of Seetzen's *Reiseplan* was thus to establish him as a scientific traveller, a trustworthy scholar whose goals were thought through and based on the latest literature and therefore, to compensate for a certain lack of legitimacy from which Seetzen might have suffered in the eyes of the readership of the *Monatliche Correspondenz*. His research, although diverse and regularly published in journals, had been limited so far to the German area, notably to his home region of the Jeverland, and despite his arguably very thorough preparation of his journey to Africa, Seetzen could neither speak yet any of the languages of the lands that he planned to travel nor claim to be a part of a scientific expedition. A doctor from the prestigious University of Göttingen, Seetzen had nevertheless no academic position and his key advantage was the financial backing of the Duke of Gotha as well as the scientific support of Zach, which included the opportunity to be published in the

also attended the lectures of the botanist Johann Andreas Murray (1740–1791) and the mineralogist Johann Friedrich Gmelin (1748–1804).

²⁰ SEETZEN, « Reiseplan ins innere Afrika », p. 132.

²¹ SEETZEN, « Reiseplan ins innere Afrika », p. 128: « Naturgeschichte (...), Landwirthschaft, Technologie, Handlung, Statistik, politische und physikalische Geographie ».

²² SEETZEN, « Reiseplan ins innere Afrika », p. 128–131.

²³ SEETZEN, « Reiseplan ins innere Afrika », p. 138: « auf gerathewohl ». On Seetzen's measurements and his instruments see: MICHAEL GEFFERT, OLIVER SCHWARZ, « Seetzens astronomische Ortsbestimmungen und sein astrogeodätischer Lehrmeister Franz Xaver von Zach », in DETLEF HABERLAND (ed.), *Der Orientreisende Ulrich Jasper Seetzen und die Wissenschaften*, Isensee Verlag, Oldenburg 2019, p. 329–348; EBERHARD SCHULZ-LÜPERTZ, « Die Reiseinstrumente von Ulrich Jasper Seetzen und Alexander von Humboldt – ein Vergleich. Anhang: Seetzens und Humboldts apparative Ausstattung », in HABERLAND (ed.), *Der Orientreisende Ulrich Jasper Seetzen*, p. 349–373.

Monatliche Correspondenz.²⁴ A very detailed piece of scholarship, the *Reiseplan* was meant to forge his ethos as a scientific traveller by emphasizing his scholarly practices which were largely inspired by the high scientific standards developed at the University of Göttingen. Therefore, it is no coincidence that the *Reiseplan* constitutes a key source for Detlef Haberland's claim that « Seetzen verkörpert vollständig den Typus des wissenschaftlichen Reisenden, wie ihn sein Kommilitone Alexander von Humboldt in Idealform vorgeprägt hatte ».²⁵ Indeed, Detlef Haberland tends to distinguish the « modern researcher » from the Enlightenment Era such as, among others, Alexander von Humboldt, Georg Forster, and Carsten Niebuhr from the « travellers from the Early Modern Times ».²⁶ While « die adäquate Wahl der Methoden, die gezielte und umfassende Vorbereitung, die systematische Durchführung der Reise und ihre Auswertung » characterized the formers, the latter, although very knowledgeable about the places that they visited, learned about them mainly during their utilitarian journeys whose goals were not primarily scholarly but diplomatic, missionary or commercial.²⁷ One can argue, therefore, that Seetzen precisely aimed at showing that he meant to walk in the footsteps of his predecessors in the Near East and Africa such as Niebuhr or Friedrich Konrad Hornemann (1771–1801), even if he was quite far from traveling under the same circumstances. Whereas Niebuhr or Humboldt were members of scientific expeditions and selected to take part in scientific projects, Seetzen was pursuing on his own his self-determined scientific ambitions. A well-read and informed scholar such as Seetzen knew about contemporary large-scale field research like the *expédition d'Égypte* (1798–1801)²⁸. Even though he was not the first scholar to travel alone with a research plan in mind, it is a fact that no scientific society endorsed his initiative in the same way that the *Association for promoting the discovery of the interior parts of Africa* did for Hornemann. In his wish to emulate travellers such as Niebuhr and Hornemann who were connected to the scholars of Göttingen, Seetzen also aimed

²⁴ It must be noted that the Duke of Gotha entrusted Seetzen with the mission to acquire manuscripts and artefacts for his collection Seetzen, see UTA WALLNSTEIN, « 'Ich habe mehr gefunden, als ich erwartete...' – Seetzen und die Ägyptensammlung Gotha », in STEIN (ed.), *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811)*, p. 65–73; EAD., « 'Eine schöne ägyptische Antike' – Seetzens Bedeutung als Altertumsforscher und Sammler für den Gothaer Hof », in HABERLAND (ed.), *Der Orientreisende Ulrich Jasper Seetzen*, p. 441–448; MONIKA HASENMÜLLER, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen als Sammler orientalischer Handschriften », in HABERLAND (ed.), *Der Orientreisende Ulrich Jasper*, p. 459–476. See also SABINE MANGOLD's contribution on Seetzen's mission for the Duke of Gotha (*Eine 'weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft' – die deutsche Orientalistik im 19. Jahrhundert*, Steiner, Stuttgart 2004, p. 43).

²⁵ HABERLAND, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen und Afrika », p. 207.

²⁶ HABERLAND, « Die Publikationen Ulrich Jasper Seetzens », p. 135.

²⁷ HABERLAND, « Die Publikationen Ulrich Jasper Seetzens », p. 135.

²⁸ ROBERTO A. DIAZ HENANDEZ, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzens Forschungsreise in Ägypten », in HABERLAND (ed.), *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811)*, p. 187–197, p. 189.

at differentiating himself from other types of travellers whose contributions were deemed disappointing. It seems noteworthy that throughout his journey, Seetzen kept emphasizing the scientific dimension of his trip in his diaries, while taking every precaution not to be mistaken for an « adventurer ».²⁹

Thus, Seetzen describes himself in the *Reiseplan* as a « litterarischer Reisender ». ³⁰ Shedding light on the preparatory work to his field trip, he systematically used and mentioned the previous literature, including specialized books and travel accounts. Claiming that he was unable to live without books, he explained that « über jede Wissenschaft, der ich meine Aufmerksamkeit zu widmen vorhabe, werde ich wenigstens *ein* gutes Handbuch zum Nachschlafen mit mir führen ». ³¹ Obviously well versed in the travelogues of his predecessors in the Near East and Africa, he listed these books and discussed their information to determine his possible itineraries, the potential difficulties that he could face, and the topics which should be further researched. ³² Both the systematic review of the latest literature as well as the thorough exploitation of travelogues belonged to the scientific practices of the scholars from the University of Göttingen. Blumenbach, along with other scholars from the Georgia Augusta such as August Ludwig von Schlözer (1735–1809), made a systematic use of travel literature. ³³ The no less systematic review of the latest scholarly literature at large constituted the basis of the scholarship elaborated by the professors of Göttingen who thus aimed at emphasizing the originality of their contributions. Detlef Haberland has listed the references used by Seetzen among which notably appear the works of Daniel Albert Wyttenbach (1746–1820), l'Abbé Binos (1730–1803), Constantin-François Chasseboëuf de La Giraudais comte de Volney (1757–1820), Carsten Niebuhr, Peter Forsskål (1732–1763) for the Near East. ³⁴ The perusing of travel accounts led Blumenbach, however, to point out some of the recurring shortcomings in the genre and, therefore, the necessity of a critical approach when dealing with them.

²⁹ VOLKMAR ENDERLEIN, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzens Reise-Journal als biographische Quelle », in HABERLAND, (ed.), *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811)*, p. 157–166, p. 157; MICHAEL BRAUNE, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzens Leben in der Community der Franken in Aleppo (1803–1805) », in HABERLAND (ed.), *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811)*, p. 167–185, p. 174.

³⁰ SEETZEN, « Reiseplan ins innere Afrika », p. 147.

³¹ SEETZEN, « Reiseplan ins innere Afrika », p. 147.

³² DETLEF HABERLAND, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen – Ein Leben für eine Forschungsreise in den Vorderen Orient und auf die Arabische Halbinsel », in JUDITH ZEPTER et al. (eds.), *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen – Tagebücher*, vol. II, Georg Olms Verlag, Hildesheim – Zürich – New York 2011, p. XIII–XL.

³³ HANS ERICH BÖDEKER, PHILIPPE BÜTTGEN, MICHEL ESPAGNE, « Introduction », in HANS ERICH BÖDEKER, PHILIPPE BÜTTGEN, MICHEL ESPAGNE (ed.), *Göttingen vers 1800. L'Europe des sciences de l'homme*, Vandenhoek and Ruprecht, Göttingen 2010, p. 7–20. In the same volume, see as well CÉLINE TRAUTMANN-WALLER, « L'atelier de Blumenbach (1752–1840). Comment Göttingen inventa l'unité de l'espèce humaine », p. 285–311 and HAN F. VERMEULEN, « Göttingen et la 'science des peuples': Ethnologie et ethnographie dans les Lumières allemandes (1710–1815) », p. 247–284.

³⁴ HABERLAND, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen – Ein Leben für eine Forschungsreise », p. XVII–XIX.

Blumenbach's criticism was explicitly formulated in his foreword to the 1789 German edition of Adriaan van Berkel's travel account:

So lehrreich mir diese Arbeit an und für sich seyn musste, so hat sie mich doch auch zugleich von der Nothwendigkeit der strengsten Kritik bey dem Gebrauch der Reisebeschreibungen überzeugt; um so mehr, da ich, wie gesagt, das ganze Fach nach der Ordnung durchgieng, folglich die Reisen nach jedem Lande in chronologischer Ordnung hintereinander zu lessen bekam, und nun so oft theils die auffallendsten Widersprüche in den Nachrichten, die verschiedene Reisende von einer und eben derselben Sache geben, theils das blosser Nachbetheilen bey solchen, die man insgemein für klassische Gewährsleute hält, und manches andere Verdächtige dieser Art bemerken musste, das zur Warnung beim Gebrauche der Reisegeschichten aufmahnt.³⁵

Such travel contribution against which Blumenbach warned could act as a foil for Seetzen who was eager to distinguish his upcoming work from these mediocre relations. His role model, by contrast, appeared to have been Carsten Niebuhr, with whom he was able to establish a scholarly dialogue through the *Monatliche Correspondenz*. Soon after the publication of the *Reiseplan*, Niebuhr discussed it in a contribution which served as a response to the goals set forth by our traveler.³⁶ Niebuhr's comments and advice regarding his travel plans arguably marked the start of the scientific exchanges between Seetzen and the larger scientific community. From then on, Seetzen's integration to the scientific exchanges taking place among European scholars on the Near East will further deepen. In this context, the publication of the *Reiseplan* and Zach's foreword to it aimed at raising the interest of the European scientific community and learned readership by giving Seetzen credibility based on his scientific method and goals.³⁷ The *Monatliche Correspondenz* thus allowed Seetzen to create his *ethos* as a scientific traveller for an audience that he had seemingly in mind since the beginning of initiative.³⁸ Further establishing his credibility articles after articles, he also came to meet other members of the Republic of scholars in the field.

³⁵ ADRIAAN VAN BERKEL, *Sammlung seltener und merkwürdiger Reisegeschichten. Erster Teil. Mit einer Vorrede von D. Johann Friederich Blumenbach, der Medic. Prof. ordin. zu Göttingen. Beschreibung seiner Reisen nach Rio de Berbice und Surinam. Aus dem Holländischen übersetzt*, Andreas Seyler, Memmingen 1789, fol. 3^r.

³⁶ CARSTEN NIEBUHR, « Über D. Seetzen's Reiseplan. Aus dem Schreiben des königl. Dänischen Justizraths Carsten Niebuhr », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmelskunde*, 6 (1802), p. 457–462.

³⁷ On the late eighteenth-century debates regarding the credibility of travel accounts, see YASMINE MARCIL, « Voyage écrit, voyage vécu ? La crédibilité du voyageur, du *Journal encyclopédique* au *Magasin encyclopédique* », *Sociétés & Représentations*, 21/1 (2006), p. 25–43.

³⁸ SEETZEN, « Reiseplan ins innere Afrika », p. 130: « das Publicum ».

Indeed, Seetzen stands out as one of the first contributors to the *Fundgruben des Orients* founded by Hammer and Rzewuski. Published in Vienna from 1809 to 1818 by Anton Schmid, this multilingual journal alternated between notices and letters with original texts in Arab, Persian, and Turkish, as well as their translations sent by scholars from all over Europe and even the Ottoman Empire. While the first volume released in 1809 contained no less than four pieces authored by Seetzen, his name soon became familiar to the *Fundgruben des Orients*' readership since the second (1811) and third (1813) volumes also included extracts from two of his letters to Hammer. The fourth volume (1814) delivered news about his death. In many respects, it appears remarkable that Seetzen belonged to the first scholars contributing to this epochal journal in the field of Oriental Studies. The significance of the *Fundgruben des Orients* in the development of the Oriental Studies in the German-speaking area has been notably highlighted by Sabine Mangold.³⁹ According to her, Hammer made through this journal a decisive contribution to the emancipation of the Oriental studies from theology, thus fostering the « Entstehung der Modernen Orientalistik » which she situates over a period stretching from 1810 to 1840.⁴⁰ As the first successful scholarly journal devoted to Oriental Studies, the *Fundgruben des Orients* aimed to offer a comprehensive vision of the Orient with up to seven main sections respectively dedicated to philology, poetry, history, geography, astronomy and chronology, positive sciences and bibliography.⁴¹ The distance taken from the theology thus seemed to go hand in hand with an enlargement of the research areas of the Oriental studies. In Hammer's own words, the *Fundgruben des Orients* explicitly aimed at the « Erweiterung des Gebiethes der orientalischen Litterature in Europa » and were therefore meant including everything « was nur immer aus dem Morgenland kömmt, oder auf dasselbe Bezug hat ». ⁴² Beyond the four sections which structured each issue, all possible fields of knowledge on the Orient should find place in Hammer's journal, whether « Philologie, Rede- und Dichtkunst, Philosophie, Physik und Mathematik, Medizin und Jurisprudenz, Geographie und Historie mit ihren Hülfwissenschaften, Numismatik und Statistik, Topo-, Ethno- und Bibliographie, Nachrichten von jedem Land und Volk, von jeder Wissenschaft und Kunst des Morgenlandes ». ⁴³ While Sabine Mangold rightly emphasizes the

³⁹ MANGOLD, *Eine 'weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft'*, p. 47–52.

⁴⁰ MANGOLD, *Eine 'weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft'*, p. 42.

⁴¹ The *Asiatisches Magazin* was the first journal fully dedicated to the Orient. Only one issue, however, was published in Weimar in 1802 by Julius Heinrich Klaproth, see MANGOLD, *Eine 'weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft'*, p. 44. On the following publications on the Orient see DANIEL MARTIN VARISCO, *Reading Orientalism: Said and the Unsaid*, University of Washington Press, Seattle – London 2007, p. 88: « it was not until 1895 that a journal was exclusively devoted to Islam » while « the first International Congress of Orientalists was held in Paris ».

⁴² JOSEPH VON HAMMER-PURGSTALL, « Vorrede », *Fundgruben des Orients*, 1 (1809), p. II.

⁴³ VON HAMMER-PURGSTALL, « Vorrede », p. III.

role played by Hammer with the *Fundgruben des Orients* and describes him as « die wichtigste Figur in der deutschen Orientalistik des frühen 19. Jahrhundert », she does not say a word about the Polish count Rzewuski, the co-founder of the journal. An equine expert and Arabist, Rzewuski was a relative of the famous orientalist Jan Potocki (1761–1815) and a contributor to the *Fundgruben des Orients*. Even if Hammer was arguably the main editorial figure, the role of Rzewuski should not be downplayed, especially when dealing as we are with Seetzen's piece on Arabian horses for their journal.

It is a fact that Seetzen was acquainted with Hammer, who he met in Constantinople in January 1803, a few weeks only after his arrival in the city in late December 1802. Based in Pera, the neighbourhood of the diplomatic representations of the European powers, Seetzen immediately strived to get in touch with all the European consuls of the city in order to obtain recommendation letters.⁴⁴ This initiative led him to the Austrian representation, where the absence of the envoy Ignatz Lorenz von Stürmer allowed him to meet the young Legationssekretär Joseph von Hammer who was serving as an interpreter there since 1799.⁴⁵ Hammer notably helped Seetzen at several occasions to assess Oriental manuscripts and overall contributed to Seetzen's connection with other Europeans. It seems noteworthy that whenever it was possible, such as in Aleppo or in Cairo, Seetzen prioritized the frequenting of the consuls, which allowed him to connect with the small European scholarly circles of these cities as well as to keep in touch more easily with the scholars with whom he was communicating in Europe. Visiting the consuls helped Seetzen to be informed about some of the latest European publications. From his time in Constantinople, which he left later in 1803, Seetzen stayed in touch with Hammer who was accustomed to serving as an intermediary between the traveller and the scholars of Gotha by passing on letters and parcels sent by the former to the latter. This connection explains why Hammer was able to publish four of Seetzen's pieces in the first volume of the *Fundgruben des Orients*. It is likely that Hammer had mentioned his editorial project in his correspondence to Seetzen, who interestingly paid an advance homage to the initiative in one of his letters from Cairo. Hammer chose a long extract from this letter for the first volume in which, as his abovementioned quotations demonstrate, he was very eager to put forth the novelty of his editorial endeavour. Written from Cairo on July 10th, 1808, Seetzen's letter epitomizes in many respects the epistolary exchanges that he used to have with Hammer.⁴⁶ The traveller delivered his observations about Egypt, especially about the Fayum, since Hammer had encouraged Seetzen to send him a report about this region, mentioned his

⁴⁴ ENDERLEIN, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzens Reise-Journal als biographische Quelle », p. 157–166.

⁴⁵ ENDERLEIN, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzens Reise-Journal als biographische Quelle », p. 160.

⁴⁶ ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Auszug eines Briefes von Herrn Kollegienassessor Dr. Seetzen, an H. von Hammer, Kahira den 10 Julius 1808 », *Fundgruben des Orients*, 1 (1809), p. 43–75.

other excursions, informed about his quest for manuscripts, referred to the parcels and texts previously sent to Hammer, including an extract from his diaries, and further dealt with the rest of his journey, since Cairo was one of his last stages before setting out to the Arabian Peninsula. The content of the letter thus determined Hammer to publish it in the section « Geography » of his journal. In Cairo, Seetzen received the assistance of two officials of the French consulate in the city, the orientalist Jean-Louis Asselin de Cherville (1772–1822) (vice-consul) and Bernardino Drovetti (consul general) who regularly corresponded with the prominent French orientalist, Antoine-Isaac Silvestre de Sacy (1758–1838).⁴⁷ Asselin was even entrusted with a mission by the latter to gather manuscripts that were not available in Paris. Asselin thus showed Seetzen the manuscripts which he had copied himself in Paris as well as other manuscripts brought in Cairo and share with him some of the conclusion of his intensive study.⁴⁸ Asselin's work aroused Seetzen's admiration which he communicated to Hammer: « es lässt sich viel Interessantes von seinem Eifer für die orientalische Litterature erwarten, wenn er erst nach Frankreich zurückkehren wird, oder wenigstens wenn die offenen Meerwege die litterarischen Verbindungen mit Europa erleichtern ». ⁴⁹ Last but not least, Asselin allowed Seetzen for having a look at some of the latest work published in Europe, such as Sacy's *Chrestomathie arabe* (1806).⁵⁰ In Cairo, Seetzen could not only carry out a scientific exchange face-to-face but also encouraged his colleagues in Europe in their scholarly endeavour. In the same letter, Seetzen seemingly made a brief allusion to the establishment of the *Fundgruben des Orients*:

In dem beykommenden Aufsätze habe ich den Wunsch geäußert, dass ein geschmackvoller Kenner des Orients eine orientalische Monatsschrift herausgäbe, und den Nutzen davon gezeigt. Die sogenannten orientalischen Bibliotheken, von Michaelis u. a. haben ein zu schwerfälliges, zu gelehrtes Ansehen, und es fehlt denselben meistens an geschmackvoller Darstellung.⁵¹

While supporting the very idea of a new type of orientalist journal, Seetzen tended to criticize previous periodicals whose austerity he probably condemned because he wished for a kind of publication able to catch the interest of a wider audience for orientalist topics. By mentioning the « sogenannten orientalischen Bibliotheken », he had possibly in mind a previous epoch-making journal, namely the *Orientalische und exegetische Bibliothek* [Oriental and Exegetical Library] (1771–

⁴⁷ On Sacy and his role in the development of Oriental studies in France, see ALAIN MESSAUDI, *Les arabisants et la France coloniale. Savants, conseillers, médiateurs (1780–1930)*, ENS Éditions, Lyon 2015.

⁴⁸ SEETZEN, « Auszug eines Briefes, Kahira den 10 Julius 1808 », p. 54–60.

⁴⁹ SEETZEN, « Auszug eines Briefes, Kahira den 10 Julius 1808 », p. 54.

⁵⁰ SEETZEN, « Auszug eines Briefes, Kahira den 10 Julius 1808 », p. 60.

⁵¹ SEETZEN, « Auszug eines Briefes, Kahira den 10 Julius 1808 », p. 61.

1789/1791) authored and edited by the famous biblical scholar and professor of Oriental languages at the University of Göttingen, Johann David Michaelis (1717–1791) until his death in 1791.⁵² One can argue that Seetzen had in mind the model of a monthly journal such as the *Monatliche Correspondenz* which was designed to spread new geographic findings not only among scholars, but also among learned readers. By doing so, Seetzen seemingly tried to embrace the changes taking place in Oriental studies at the turn of the nineteenth century. It can also be assumed that Seetzen was not only aware of these changes but wanted to play a role in them.

It seems necessary here to dwell for a moment on what these changes were and how the *Fundgruben des Orients* in general, and Seetzen in particular, took a part in them. First, it must be noted that even if the rich literature on Oriental studies generally identifies the turn of the nineteenth century as a key moment for their development in Europe, scholarly opinions may vary when it comes to analyze these changes. In a seminal book on *German Orientalism in the Age of the Empire*, Suzanne Marchand tried to answer the question to know what lies at the heart of German orientalism by writing a critical history of the practice of oriental scholarship in Germany.⁵³ Regarding the changes marking oriental studies in the second half of the eighteenth century, Suzanne Marchand points out the necessity to place them in the long-durée, thus insisting on the continuities which characterized the European study of the East since at least the Christian Hebraism of the Renaissance and the *Bibelforschung* rooted in the Reformation.⁵⁴ Therefore, she refuses the historiographic tradition which claims that the 1780's marked a watershed moment for the oriental studies by giving rise to a new European interest in the Orient. According to this historiographic tradition, oriental studies thus came to be characterized by secularization which caused the disappearance of previous concerns among orientalist, such as biblical criticism. Largely based on Raymond Schwab's idea of an « Oriental Renaissance » occurring in the 1770's, this interpretation also implied that the secularization of Oriental studies and their subsequent distancing from biblical studies meant the beginning of their

⁵² There were, however, other publications with a similar title, such as the *Orientalische und exegetische Bibliothek* (1772–1776) by Johann Friedrich Hirt (1719–1783), which was published in Jena. It was then continued under the title *Wittenbergische neue orientalische und exegetische Bibliothek: mit beygefügter Anzeige neuer theologischer Schriften und andern Nachrichten*, from 1776 to 1779. <https://zs.thulb.uni-jena.de/receive/jportal_jpjournal_00000098>.

⁵³ SUZANNE L. MARCHAND, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire. Religion, Race, and Scholarship*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2009, p. xviii–xxi. Interestingly, Suzanne Marchand notes that the question was posed immediately after the publication in 1978 of Edward Said's seminal book *Orientalism*, in which he consciously chose to exclude German scholarship from his analysis to prioritize British and French Oriental studies.

⁵⁴ MARCHAND, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, p. 1–52.

modernity and scientific rigour.⁵⁵ In the 1980's, Dominique Bourel also used the secularization's narrative to describe the rise of German oriental studies from the Bible studies as a kind of emancipation.⁵⁶ Suzanne Marchand, by contrast, emphasized how much the orientalist working at the turn of the nineteenth century were indebted to « past traditions » which they transformed rather than replaced. Among the transformations highlighted by Suzanne Marchand there are

a shift toward secular, prosaic, and nationally focused histories, an increased willingness to take non-Christian authors seriously – meaning new attempts to translate their texts – a wider distribution and larger number of exotic texts and travel reports in circulation, and finally by the (eighteenth) century's close, a real diminution of interest (especially in Germany) in the cultures of the modern East.⁵⁷

In Suzanne Marchand's own words, the Age of Enlightenment « marks an enormous increase in Europe's pursuit of knowledge about the East » before underlining that

while older traditions continued, the eighteenth century witnessed data collection, on a new scale; it saw the creation of new institutions, or institutional roles, for philological scholars, especially in the place where the study of pagan cultures became more socially acceptable. There were large numbers of new travelogues and translations of nonwestern texts and more armchair readers able to read them.⁵⁸

Suzanne Marchand also notes that a sign of the expansion of « non-theological orientalist knowledge » was the « upswing in the state-financed expeditions to the East », among which the Carsten Niebuhr's expedition of 1761–1767, even if the mission appeared to be « more theological than political » according to her.⁵⁹

This reference to the Danish-German Arabia Expedition to Egypt and Yemen (Arabia Felix) bring us back to the role played by the professor of Göttingen Johann David Michaelis in the development of oriental studies in the second half of the eighteenth century.⁶⁰ This role is strongly emphasized by Suzanne Marchand and

⁵⁵ RAYMOND SCHWAB, *La Renaissance orientale*, Payot, Paris 1950.

⁵⁶ DOMINIQUE BOUREL, « Die deutsche Orientalistik im 18. Jahrhundert. Von der Mission zur Wissenschaft », in HENNING REVENTLOW (ed.), *Historische Kritik und biblischer Kanon in der deutschen Aufklärung*, Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden 1988, p. 113–126.

⁵⁷ MARCHAND, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, p. 14.

⁵⁸ MARCHAND, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, p. 15.

⁵⁹ MARCHAND, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, p. 18.

⁶⁰ On the role played by Johann David Michaelis as well as Johann Gottfried Heder, see MARCHAND, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, p. 38–52. Sabine Mangold tends to underline the significance of Johann Jacob Reiske (1716–1774) who, according to her, « vertrat ein neues Orientalistik-Konzept, das mit dem der Universitäten und der von ihnen favorisierten

Sabine Mangold, who describes Michaelis as « der einflussreichste Vertreter dieser Aufklärung-Orientalistik ». ⁶¹ Initially undertaken in the hope of gaining knowledge for the philology of the Old Testament, the Danish-German Arabia Expedition de facto opened new horizons to oriental studies. ⁶² Planned in Göttingen and Copenhagen and carried out by a multinational and multidisciplinary team of scientists, this expedition aimed to enlighten obscure passage of the Holy Scriptures by focusing on questions relating to literature, history, geography, fauna, flora and religious customs in the East, which for the time led to consider the Orient as an autonomous field of study. The significance of Michaelis' famous *Fragenkatalog* in this development was decisive and understandably inspired Seetzen who refers to it in his *Reiseplan*. ⁶³ Michaelis' journal, of which Seetzen, by contrast, tended to be more critical, played nevertheless an equally decisive role in many ways in the development of Oriental studies. ⁶⁴ According to Sabine Mangold, Michaelis' *Orientalische und exegetische Bibliothek* and Johann Gottlieb Eichhorn' (1752–1827) *Repertorium für biblische und morgenländische Litterature* appeared the most important periodical of their time. By consisting mainly of critical reviews of the latest publications useful to biblical scholarship, Michaelis' journal arguably played a role in synthesizing and spreading most of orientalist works written by his contemporaries. ⁶⁵ Although both periodicals were characterized by theological topics, it was also possible to find some contribution relating to oriental religions, history and poetry. These kinds of publication « beschleunigten (...) nicht nur den wissenschaftlichen Austausch der Orient-Gelehrten, sondern schufen erstmals auch eine nationale und international Öffentlichkeit, die sich über das gelehrte Interesse am Morgenland definierte ». ⁶⁶

Sabine Mangold analyses the birth of the modern oriental studies as a story of their emancipation from theological questions, and therefore, emphasizes its rise outside of the Universities, which tended to harness them to theology. ⁶⁷ This perspective led her to a very interesting point about the self-description of the

Anbindungen an die Theologie nichts mehr gemeinsam hatte » (MANGOLD, *Eine 'weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft'*, p. 33).

⁶¹ MANGOLD, *Eine 'weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft'*, p. 35.

⁶² WOLF FEUERHAHN, « A Theologian's List and an Anthropologist's Prose: Michaelis, Niebuhr, and the Expedition to Felix Arabia », in PETER BECKER, WILLIAM CLARK (eds.), *Little Tools of Knowledge: Historical Essays on Academic and Bureaucratic Practices*, University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor 2001, p. 141–168; HAN F. VERMEULEN, *Before Boas. The Genesis of Ethnography and Ethnology in the German Enlightenment*, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln – London 2015, p. 219–267.

⁶³ SEETZEN, « Reiseplan ins innere Afrika ».

⁶⁴ MANGOLD, *Eine 'weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft'*, p. 36.

⁶⁵ SEETZEN, « Auszug eines Briefes, Kahira den 10 Julius 1808 », p. 61.

⁶⁶ MANGOLD, *Eine 'weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft'*, p. 36.

⁶⁷ MANGOLD, *Eine 'weltbürgerliche Wissenschaft'*, p. 37.

contributors of the *Fundgruben des Orients* as a « Gesellschaft von Liebhabern » on the front page of the journal. It seems noteworthy that Hammer himself refused to be named a scholar or even an orientalist and probably hoped to get a certain recognition through the *Fundgruben des Orients*. It is a fact that Hammer had no academic position and no academic degrees, since he was educated at the Orientalische Akademie (Oriental Academy) established in 1754 by Maria-Theresa (1717–1780) for the training of translators and diplomats. The very fact that Hammer refused the word should prompt us to define who the orientalists were. To do so, we will follow Suzanne Marchand who describes them as the

individuals who counted as ‘orientalists’ in their cultural milieux, namely men (and they were mostly men) who invested time and effort in actually learning to read and/or to speak at least one ‘oriental’ language and who could be academics, travellers, diplomats, populariser, missionaries, pastors and rabbis.⁶⁸

This definition interestingly contrasts with Detlef Haberland’s characterization of the scientific travel, which excluded travellers on religious, diplomatic or commercial missions. Suzanne Marchand’s definition interestingly reflects the diversity of the contributors of the *Fundgruben des Orients*, even if some of them, including Hammer, would not have called themselves ‘orientalists’. Chosen by Hammer, they were, at the end of the day, the individuals considered the « most worthy to write and speak about Eastern cultures ». Most, if not all, of the contributors of the *Fundgruben des Orients* were contributing to the Oriental studies outside from the University setting. The journal nonetheless counted among its contributors prestigious figures of orientalism, such as the above mentioned Silvestre de Sacy, Jean-Pierre Abel-Rémusat (1788–1832) and Antoine-Chrysostome de Quatremère de Quincy (1755–1849) as well as orientalist diplomats who, such as Joseph Rousseau (1780–1831) or Bernardino Drovetti (1776–1852) sent first-hand reports and material from the field.⁶⁹ Mentioned in the long list of the « Herrn Mitarbeiter », Seetzen had already been traveling the Near East for seven years when his pieces were published by Hammer and he had learned Arabic during his stay in Syria.⁷⁰ He was deemed worthy of joining the society of amateurs

⁶⁸ MARCHAND, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, p. xxiii.

⁶⁹ FRANÇOIS POUILLON (ed.), *Dictionnaire des orientalistes de langue française*, Karthala Editions, Paris 2012.

⁷⁰ JOSEPH VON HAMMER-PURGSTALL (ed.), « Verzeichnis der Herrn Mitarbeiter », *Fundgruben des Orients*, 1 (1809), p. 466. On Seetzen’s skills in Arabic, see HANS STEIN, « Seetzens Bemühungen um Aneignung und Wiedergabe der arabischen Sprache », in Id. (ed.), *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811) Leben und Werk. Die arabischen Länder und die Nahostforschung im napoleonischen Zeitalter. Vorträge des Kolloquiums vom 23. und 24. September 1994 in der Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek Gotha, Schloß Friedenstein*, Gotha Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek, Gotha 1995, p. 53–64; NATALIA BACHOUR, « Arabischlernen in der Aufklärung am Beispiel Ulrich Jasper Seetzens », in HABERLAND (ed.), *Der*

by writing on topics that Hammer considered of the highest interest for his readers. One can assume, however, that Rzewuski probably lied behind Hammer's demand to author a piece about Arabian horses, which interestingly raised great interest among the scholarly community of his time.

It is a fact that Seetzen's contributions on the Arabias published in the *Monatliche Correspondenz* and the *Fungruben des Orients* aroused the interest of contemporary scholars across Europe. A study of the reception of both his articles on the Bedouins and the Arabian horses more specifically exemplifies the significance of the scholarly exchanges taking place between France and German-speaking territories in the field of Oriental studies. Indeed, the analysis of the translations, reviews and commentaries of these articles points out the importance of the scholarly interactions taking place between Gotha, Vienna and Paris. First, it appears that the Dano-French geographer Conrad Malte-Brun (1775–1826) published translations of some of Seetzen's contributions in his Paris-based journal the *Annales des voyages, de la géographie et de l'histoire* [Annals of travels, geography, and history] (1807–1814). A reader of the *Monatliche Correspondenz*, Malte-Brun thus selected the reports he deemed the most noteworthy in the Gotha-based journal to propose French translations to his own readership. In 1810, Malte-Brun edited a French translation of Seetzen's « Contributions to the knowledge of the Arab tribes in Syria, Arabia Deserta and Petrea », printed only one year earlier in the *Monatliche Correspondenz*.⁷¹ Far from being a mere rhetorical flourish, the introduction of Seetzen as 'a famous traveller' (« un célèbre voyageur ») by Conrad Malte-Brun in his *Annales des Voyages* reflected the familiarity of his name among the European readership.⁷² Not only was Seetzen published in specialized journals like the *Fundgruben des Orients* or the *Monatliche Correspondenz*, but he was also regularly mentioned in less reputed journals or at least those targeting a broader audience, like the *Journal politique de Mannheim*.⁷³ No doubt that the geographer Malte-Brun himself was a keen reader of the *Monatliche Correspondenz*, which constituted one of his many sources for translating the latest travel accounts into French. From the *Monatliche Correspondenz*, Malte-Brun selected Seetzen's accounts of the Arabian World, which he probably regarded as the most revealing. Second, Seetzen's report on Arabian horses in the *Fundgruben*

Orientreisende Ulrich Jasper Seetzen, p. 195–232; EAD., « Arabisch in lateinischen Buchstaben. Das Transkriptionssystem Ulrich Jasper Seetzens », in HABERLAND (ed.), *Der Orientreisende Ulrich Jasper Seetzen*, p. 233–263.

⁷¹ ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Mémoire pour servir à la connaissance des tribus arabes en Syrie et dans l'Arabie déserte et Pétrée », *Annales des voyages, de la géographie et de l'histoire ou Collection des voyages nouveaux les plus estimés, traduits de toutes les langues européennes*, 8 (1810), p. 281–324.

⁷² ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Voyage de M. Seetzen sur la Mer Rouge et dans l'Arabie », *Annales des voyages, de la géographie et de l'histoire ou Collection des voyages nouveaux les plus estimés, traduits de toutes les langues européennes*, 22 (1813), p. 309.

⁷³ *Journal politique de Mannheim*, 53 (1809), p. 2.

des Oriens triggered even more interest among the scholarly community: commented by Sacy and Rzewuski, and then later used by Karl Wilhelm Ammon (1777–1842), this article remained an influential work among equine experts decades after its publication.⁷⁴ As a matter of fact, it was no coincidence that Seetzen's report was critically reviewed soon after its publication by Silvestre de Sacy (1758–1838), one of the most prominent orientalist of that time, for the French journal the *Magasin Encyclopédique* [Encyclopedic magazine] (1795–1816) edited by Aubin-Louis Millin (1795–1816). A prolific reviewer for the *Magasin Encyclopédique* as well as the *Journal des savants* and, to a lesser extent, to the *Journal asiatique*, Sacy authored over two-hundred reviews during his life, which represented a total of over two-hundred and sixty articles.⁷⁵ From 1797 to 1815, Sacy was a regular contributor to the *Magasin Encyclopédique* for which he was in charge, along with Abel-Rémusat and Simon Chardon de la Rochette (1753–1814), of the monthly review of books related to Oriental studies.⁷⁶ In contrast to the *Fundgruben des Oriens*, *Le Magasin Encyclopédique* was not a specialized journal. Oriental studies, nevertheless, were well represented in each issue, either through critical review of foreign publications or through the original contribution of orientalist like Sacy, Jean-François Champollion (1790–1832), or Abel-Rémusat.⁷⁷ This particularity led Pascal Rabault-Feuerhahn to point out the role played by the *Magasin Encyclopédique* as a « relais du savoir sur l'Orient ». Through his reviews of the latest orientalist literature, as Sandrine Maufroy notes it, « Sacy introduit ainsi le lecteur français dans la connaissance du réseau des orientalistes germanophones. La plus grande partie de ses comptes rendus est consacrée à ce

⁷⁴ ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe des kaiserlich. Russ. Collegienassessors Herrn Dr. Seetzen an Herrn von Hammer aus Mocha den 14. November 1810 », *Fundgruben des Oriens*, 2 (1811), p. 275–284; ANTOINE ISAAC SILVESTRE DE SACY, « Notice du tome second du recueil intitulé: *Fundgruben des Oriens*, bearbeitet durch eine Gesellschaft von Liebhabern, ou Mines de l'Orient, exploitées par une Société d'amateurs, etc. Tome II. Vienne, 1811 (Second Extrait) », *Magasin Encyclopédique*, 6 (1813), p. 213–240; WACLAV SEWERYN RZEWUSKI (ed.), « Extrait d'une lettre du savant Seetzen, Assesseur du Collège de Russie, à M^r de Hammer », in BERNADETTE LIZET, FRANÇOISE AUBAILE-SALLENAVE, PIOTR DASZKIEWICZ, ANNE-ÉLIZABETH WOLF (eds.), *Impressions d'Orient et d'Arabie. Un cavalier polonais chez les Bédouins, 1817–1819*, José Corti, Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris 2002, p. 633–652; KARL WILHELM AMMON, *Nachrichten von der Pferdezucht der Araber und den arabischen Pferden: Nebst einem Anhang über die Pferdezucht in Persien, Turkomanien und der Barberei*, Riegel und Wießner, Nürnberg 1834.

⁷⁵ SANDRINE MAUFROY, « Silvestre de Sacy auteur de comptes rendus », in MICHEL ESPAGNE, NORA LAFI, PASCALE RABAULT-FEUEHRAHN (eds.), *Silvestre de Sacy. Le projet européen d'une science orientaliste*, Éditions du Cerf, Paris 2014, p. 231–247.

⁷⁶ MAUFROY, « Silvestre de Sacy auteur de comptes rendus », p. 231–232.

⁷⁷ PASCALE RABAULT, « Réseaux internationaux de l'orientalism naissant. Le *Magasin encyclopédique* comme relais du savoir sur l'Orient », in GENEVIÈVE ESPAGNE, BÉNÉDICTE SAVOY (eds.), *Aubin-Louis Millin et l'Allemagne. Le Magasin encyclopédique – Les lettres à Karl August Böttinger*, Georg Olms Verlag, Hildesheim 2005.

qui se publie en Allemagne et en Autriche ».⁷⁸ Among these publications, Sacy focused in particular on the volumes of the *Bibliotheca Arabica* (1799–1806) by his former student Christian Friedrich Schnurrer (1742–1822) as well as the volumes of the *Fundgruben des Orients*.⁷⁹ As for his review of *Fundgruben des Orients*, it should be noticed that Sacy very carefully selected the articles, which he deemed worthy of attention by providing more detailed commentary. Therefore, it appears meaningful that Seetzen's reports on Arabian horses benefited from his special attention.

While this focus was induced by the dynamism of Oriental studies in German-speaking territories, Sacy actively contributed to the French-German cultural transfers taking place at a key moment of the development of this field.⁸⁰ Unlike the other fields of knowledge in the human sciences whose practices became more and more nationally differentiated, oriental studies were then characterized by European exchanges dominated by French, British, German, and Russian scholars. In Paris, Silvestre de Sacy played a major role in spreading knowledge produced Europe-wide on and from the Orient.⁸¹ Once again, discovery and understanding of the 'other' was seen as a European enterprise. Gathering information about the « Orient », be it the Near or the Far East or even the Americas, required the cooperation of a vast community of scholars scattered throughout Europe and indeed the world. This process of knowledge-making on the Orient involved a very small group of scholars who raised cultural awareness throughout Europe. It is within this interaction that Seetzen intended to shed more light on the Arabian World, notably by striving to provide a more accurate description of the Bedouin tribes.

III. Describing the Arab Tribes: *Seetzen's Ethnography of the Bedouins*

It is no coincidence that Seetzen's writings on the nomadic tribes of the Near East as well as their horses found a particular resonance on the editorial stage. First, our traveller sought to provide new information on an area which was generating an increasing and wide-ranging interest among the scientific community and the

⁷⁸ MAUFROY, « Silvestre de Sacy auteur de comptes rendus », p. 245.

⁷⁹ MAUFROY, « Silvestre de Sacy auteur de comptes rendus », p. 245–246.

⁸⁰ MANGOLD, « France Allemagne et retour: une discipline née dans l'émulation », *Revue germanique internationale*, 7 (2008), p. 109–124.

⁸¹ MICHEL ESPAGNE, NORA LAFI, PASCALE RABAULT-FEUEHRAHN, *Silvestre de Sacy. Le projet européen d'une science orientaliste*, Éditions du Cerf, Paris 2014.

learned public.⁸² Second, Seetzen, as I will show, did not hesitate to put into question his predecessors' views and to refuse the biblical lens which was sometimes used to study them.

Seetzen's « Beiträge zur Kenntnis der arabischen Stämme in Syrien und im wüsten und peträischen Arabien » [Contributions to the knowledge of the Arab tribes in Syria as well as in Arabia Deserta and Arabia Petrea] constitutes in fact his first detailed report on the Arabias for the *Monatliche Correspondenz*. Written from Acre in June 1806, it was published two years and a half later, in February 1809, in the *Monatliche Correspondenz*. Around three years and a half after arriving in the Orient, Seetzen thus strived to provide European scholars with new information on the nomadic-pastoralist Arabs tribes that are the Bedouins. By dealing with a topic most likely to spark the interest of the learned readership, Seetzen also placed himself in the position to complete and amend the works of previous travellers to the Arabias while developing his own scientific practices and approach. The choice of this theme was not coincidental since it allowed him to emulate if not rival famous scholars such as Niebuhr and Volney, who wrote extensively about the Bedouins tribes, and thus to contribute to one of the major research topics about the Orient. As a contributor to scientific journals, Seetzen aimed to verify and supplement the information given by his peers who, before him, researched in the field. In this way, he clearly intended to be a central figure in the process of knowledge-making on the Orient at work in Europe. While drawing on other travellers' contributions, Seetzen also tried to distinguish himself from them by concentrating on data and the collection of objects.

Seetzen's ambition to amend and supplement Niebuhr's epoch-making contribution on the Bedouins tribes appears clearly from the outset of his report, where he simultaneously recognizes both its great merits but also its flaws. Published in the 1770's, Niebuhr's book provided the first list of Bedouin tribes, along with data on their customs, language, food, and herds.⁸³ Soon translated into French, Dutch and partly into English, the *Beschreibung von Arabia* served as a reference for any scholar interested in the region.⁸⁴ More than just a mine of information, Niebuhr's book also proposed a new way of investigating an area through scientific travel.⁸⁵ Not only was Seetzen well-versed in Niebuhr's work, but also he proved to be familiar with the latest travel accounts published across

⁸² PASCALE RABAULT-FEUERHAHN, CELINE TRAUTMANN-WALLER (eds.), *Itinéraires orientalistes entre France et Allemagne*, CNRS Editions, Paris 2008, (Germanique Internationale, 7, Special Issue) <<https://doi.org/10.4000/rig.222>> (Accessed October 2023); HANS ERICH BÖDEKER, PHILIPPE BÜTTGEN, MICHEL ESPAGNE (eds.), *Die Wissenschaft vom Menschen in Göttingen um 1800*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 2008.

⁸³ NIEBUHR, *Beschreibung von Arabien*, p. 161–180, p. 379–399.

⁸⁴ NIEBUHR, *Beschreibung von Arabien*, p. 161–180, p. 379–399.

⁸⁵ FEUERHAHN, « A Theologian's List »; VERMEULEN *Before Boas*, p. 219–267.

Europe and relating to the Middle East. Among the several titles he alludes to in his *Reiseplan ins innere Africa*, he notably mentioned the work of Volney, who specifically studied Bedouin society.⁸⁶ It is moreover very likely that Seetzen knew the earlier literature published by travellers such as Arvieux.⁸⁷ This handful of authors proved instrumental in shedding new light on the Bedouin tribes in Europe.

Indeed, Niebuhr's book bore witness to the strong scholarly interest in the nomadic Arabs which characterized the second half of the eighteenth century. As Suzanne Marchand underlines it regarding the development of oriental studies of that time, «one culture the later eighteenth-century enlightened elite did champion, especially against a purportedly degenerate and tyrannical Ottoman state, was that of the nomadic Arabs».⁸⁸ Even if the Bedouins were by no means unknown to the Europeans in the previous periods, since travelogues had mentioned them since the medieval ages, they nevertheless became one of the main focuses of scholarly attention during the Enlightenment era. This new wide-ranging interest developed in European scholarship proved critical in improving the state of knowledge on the nomadic Arabs who became the object of several speculations. From the perspective of Biblical studies, Michaelis thus counted the Bedouins among the most significant topics to be investigated and documented by the expedition in which Niebuhr took part. Michaelis' attention to the Bedouins was underpinned by the idea that the tribes wandering across the Arabias were the closest people to the ancient Hebrews. The assumption that the Arab tribes were perpetuating the original lifestyle of the biblical Patriarchs made them therefore an invaluable source of information for biblical scholarship and compelled scholars and travellers to document core values of Bedouins societies, such as hospitality or the simplicity of their life. Another scholarly tradition of the time consisted in comparing the Bedouins to the ancient Greeks for the similar purpose to learn more about the protagonists of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.⁸⁹ By anchoring the Bedouin tribes in the Ancient Times, both traditions tended to freeze them in time and therefore to decontextualize them. The study of the Bedouins was further fostered by other perspectives revolving around the notions of freedom and equality which were of central importance in the same period. The significance of the nomadic Arabs in these different fields of Enlightenment

⁸⁶ CONSTANTIN-FRANÇOIS DE CHASSEBOEUF VOLNEY, *Voyage en Syrie et en Égypte pendant les années 1783, 1784 et 1785*, Volland – Desenne, Paris 1787, p. 343–383.

⁸⁷ LAURENT D'ARVIEUX, JEAN DE LA ROQUE, *Voyage fait par ordre du roy Louis XIV, dans la Palestine, vers le grand Emir, chef des princes arabes du desert, connus sous le nom de Bedouïns, ou d'Arabes Scenites. Avec la Description generale de l'Arabie, faite par le sultan Ismaël Abulfeda, traduite en françois sur les meilleurs manuscrits, avec des notes. Par Monsieur D. L. R., Cailleau, Paris 1717.*

⁸⁸ MARCHAND, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire*, p. 26.

⁸⁹ ROBERT WOOD, *Essay on the Original Genius and Writings of Homer*, printed by H. Hughes for T. Payne and P. Elmsly, London 1775.

thinking tended to shape a rather positive image of the Bedouin tribes which was partly related to the idea that they had preserved a unique bond to their origins.⁹⁰ It goes without saying that the depiction of the Bedouins as free and hospitable people was not only based on European travel accounts but was also rooted in Eastern traditions about them. All in all, the source material about them provided a contrasted and nuanced image of the Bedouins and their way of life.

Well-versed in the European literature on the nomadic Arabs, Seetzen was of course aware of the qualities and characteristics that the latest research tended to underline. Rather than repeating his predecessors, he opted to concentrate on highlighting unknown facts about their society and culture. Prone to amend his predecessors' information, he prioritized data collection, classification, and cross-checking over analysis and opinion. To do so, he chose to resort to local sources to address the various challenges inherent to his topic. One of these challenges was to collect and check data about multiple tribes that wandered across an area almost as large as the Near East itself, that is including areas that Seetzen had not traveled himself yet. Encompassing territories stretching from the Levant and modern-day Iraq to the South of the Arabian Peninsula, his actual field of study seemed extremely large. The second challenge was to study tribes whose traditions relied on orality rather than on written records. The very fact that Bedouins preferred oral traditions to written ones necessitated observations and direct contact for whomever planned to study them. Studying the tribes therefore required to spend time with them and to gather different traditions from and about them. This necessity required from the researcher to understand the Bedouins perfectly, since it was not possible to only collect manuscripts from them and later analyze them or just to send them to Gotha. Seetzen was indeed a strong proponent of local sources when it came to study the peoples of the East. As he wrote in 1805 from Aleppo, that is one year before sending his report on the Bedouins to the *Monatliche Correspondenz*:

Die Orientalische Literatur hat auch ihre Reisebeschreibungen, obgleich nicht in einer so großen Menge aufzuweisen, als es zum Besten der Geographie und

⁹⁰ On the imagery of the Bedouins in eighteenth-century Europe, see ANNE DENEYS-TUNNEY, « Le Voyage en Syrie et en Égypte de C. F. Volney, un discours de la méthode du voyage philosophique », *Corpus*, 34 (1998), p. 153–180; « Voyageurs, 'Sauvages' et droit d'hospitalité dans l'œuvre de C. F. Volney », in ALAIN MONTANDON, *L'hospitalité au XVIII^e siècle*, Presses Universitaires Blaise Pascal, Clermont-Ferrand 2000, p. 191–208; SARGA MOUSSA, « Une peur vaincue. L'émergence du mythe bédouin chez les voyageurs français du XVIII^e siècle », in JACQUES BERCHTOLD, MICHEL PORRET (eds.), *La Peur au XVIII^e siècle. Discours, représentations, pratiques*, Droz, Geneva 1994, p. 193–212; « Le Bédouin, le voyageur et le philosophe », *Dix-Huitième Siècle*, 28 (1996), p. 141–158; « Orientalisme et rousseauisme: la représentation des Bédouins d'Arabie par un voyageur polonais, le comte W. Rzewuski », *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 45/2 (1998), p. 346–356; *Le mythe bédouin chez les voyageurs aux XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles*, Presses de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, Paris 2016.

Völkerkunde zu wünschen wäre, und es ist in der That zu bedauern, dass man in Europa bisher so wenig darauf achtete, ihre Aufsuchung vernachlässigte und sie nicht durch Uebersetzungen und Auszüge dem Publicum mittheilte.⁹¹

Thus advocating the use of Eastern travelogues in European research in Geography and *Völkerkunde*, Seetzen further justified why he had prioritized the acquisition of such manuscripts for the princely library of Gotha. The language skills of Eastern travellers, their familiarity with the customs of the territories that they crossed as well as their experience of the lifestyle and the climate recommended their writings to European scholars. Last but not least, their points of view differed significantly from European ones on whatever they could encounter during their journey.⁹² While pointing out the need for more translations, Seetzen interestingly underlined the importance of such sources for the *Völkerkunde* that is the « science of peoples », an academic discipline which was taught for the first time at the University of Göttingen by August Ludwig von Schölzer at the beginning of the 1770's.⁹³ While Schölzer coined the word *Völkerkunde* and was the first to teach it as an academic field, Hans Vermeulen has demonstrated that ethnography was not born in Göttingen but took root in the ethnographic works carried out by German scholars such as Gerhard Friedrich Müller (1705–1783) in Siberia at the beginning of the eighteenth century. Even if Seetzen was not one of Schölzer's students, he had nonetheless access during his time in Göttingen to the rich anthropological and ethnographical collection of the University which was curated by Blumenbach. This collection, originally based on the Cabinet of Natural History sold to the University by Christian Wilhelm Büttner, who was Blumenbach's mentor, gradually grew into an anthropological and ethnographical University Museum. The collection of *ethnographia* consisted mainly in objects coming from the second and third trips of James Cook to the Pacific Ocean as well the academic expeditions in the Russian Empire.⁹⁴ It is very likely that Seetzen's initiative to collect objects related to Bedouins' lifestyle was inspired by the remarkable University Museum in Göttingen.

More than the objects' collection, however, Seetzen's data collection proves particularly interesting regarding his scientific practices. First, it must be said that Seetzen did not directly observe the Bedouins nor was in direct contact with them. Second, it seems noteworthy that, even if he did value Arabic written sources

⁹¹ ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Nachrichten von einigen Arabischen, Persischen und Türkischen Reisebeschreibungen, Topographien und andern geographischen Werken und Landkarten », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmelskunde*, 12 (August 1805), p. 101–125, here p. 101–102.

⁹² SEETZEN, « Nachrichten von einigen Arabischen, Persischen und Türkischen Reisebeschreibungen », p. 102.

⁹³ VERMEULEN, « Göttingen et la 'science des peuples' », p. 270.

⁹⁴ VERMEULEN, « Göttingen et la 'science des peuples' », p. 258–259.

above all to study the region and its peoples, he does not refer to any Arabic author in his report about the Bedouins.⁹⁵ Interestingly, he instead opted for an oral source for a people whose culture was characterized by orality. Rather than immersing himself in these nomadic groups, Seetzen, who had other goals in mind, chose therefore to turn to third parties to investigate the Bedouin tribes.⁹⁶ He saw himself as playing the crucial role of a go-between in writing his report since he was the one selecting the oral witnesses, assessing their credibility, gathering their statements and probably questioning them on specific aspects he knew were lacking in previous research, and finally writing and structuring his own report as to meet the standards of European scholars. The most significant of these third-party observers was undoubtedly his guide, Juszef el Milky from Damascus. As Seetzen claimed, most of the information in his reports came from him as he had been in contact with these tribes for several years.⁹⁷ By questioning his guide on the tribes, Seetzen was able to gain knowledge about them and then cross-check the information provided by Niebuhr. One could consider Juszef el Milky as a reliable source, a first-hand witness, who shared the life of Bedouins for many years. Seetzen, however, occasionally resorted to other informants in order to deepen his knowledge on a particular point. In any case, all these intermediaries shared the following commonalities: They maintained long-lasting contacts with some Bedouin tribes, lived in the Levant, and were Christians. Juszef el Milky el Mobszûd was a Maronite, while Seetzen's other go-betweens are described as Christian Arabs or Greek Christians.⁹⁸ Never using the direct testimony of the Bedouins themselves, although he had the opportunity to meet with them, Seetzen followed a tradition that designated the Christian Arabs as cultural translators between Europeans and the rest of the Arab world. Seetzen had familiarized himself with this situation since his arrival in the Orient. In Aleppo in particular, he got acquainted with the *dhimmi* who served as translators for the Europeans, the so-called Franks, who offered their services to the merchants and consular employees.⁹⁹

It is noteworthy that this intermediation compelled the German scholar to partly adopt the point of view of these local actors and to limit his investigation to what they knew. It likely determined, for instance, the scale of his research, which excluded, for instance, the Southern part of the Peninsula, which Juszef el Milky was quite unlikely to know. This intermediation appears to be all the more

⁹⁵ On the Western reception of Ibn Khaldun, see SYED FARID ALATAS, *Ibn Khaldun*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2015 (first edition 2013), p. 100–116.

⁹⁶ KAPIL RAJ, « Go-Betweens, Travellers, and Cultural Translators », in BERNARD LIGHTMAN (ed.), *A Companion to the History of Science*, Wiley Blackwell, Oxford 2016, p. 39–57.

⁹⁷ SEETZEN, « Beiträge zur Kenntnis der arabischen Stämme », p. 106.

⁹⁸ SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien, Palästina*, vol. I, p. 313.

⁹⁹ BRAUNE, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzens Leben in der Community der Franken in Aleppo », p. 167–176.

important in that it sheds light on the complexity of the construction of knowledge in European journals on the Orient. The first intermediation of the Christian Arabs was soon completed by Seetzen's own intermediation with European readers of scientific journals.

Underpinning his research that was itself based on a limited number of go-betweens, Seetzen elaborated a critical framework comprised of thirteen main categories. His methodology consisted of a strict organization of the data obtained from his informants. While aiming at collecting information about every aspect of the Bedouin life, Seetzen adopted a systematic pattern of description, which enabled him to check, amend, and complete the authoritative writings on his topic. He started with a detailed description of the main tribes of the region from the most powerful to the least, then he moved on to the Bedouins' character, religion, laws, dogs, onomastics, diet, hunting, herds, medicine, ways to express gratitude, weddings, weaponry, and, lastly, their relations with the cities. In this encyclopaedic endeavour, Seetzen subdivided each of these categories into subcategories to clarify further specific matters. Ultimately, this framework thus allowed him to emphasize the diversity between and within the tribes. For example, Seetzen gave an estimate for each tribe as to the number of Sheikhs and members before enumerating their branches. Sticking to his local sources, Seetzen refused to decontextualize the Bedouins. Anchoring the nomadic tribes in time and space, this German scholar was rather inclined to point out their integration within regional networks of political relations. To this end, he sought to document the links that united each tribe to the Pasha of Damascus as well as to « the successors of (Muhammad ibn) Abd al-Wahhab ». ¹⁰⁰ Even though the most powerful tribes could require a tribute from the Pasha in exchange for keeping the Caravans heading to Mecca safe, they still had to pay a tax to their new master once they had embraced Wahabism. Similarly, Seetzen merely equated the money that Bedouins demanded from isolated travellers to a very codified taxation system that was justified by their *de facto* authority over the desert. While confirming the independence of the tribes vis-à-vis the Ottoman sultan, Seetzen thus added nuance to the enlightened vision of a free people living outside of the world and history by pointing to how the tribes had ties to the various political players in the region. These relationships were clearly institutionalized as well as precisely regulated and delineated. Seetzen refrains from describing the Bedouins as 'the genuine Arabs', as Niebuhr did, and does not refer to the Bible or the Patriarchs as their forefathers. A freemason since 1802, Seetzen tended towards a much more secular perspective while a more detailed description of the Bedouins inevitably led him to rethink or add nuance to generalities about them. His attempt to deal statistically with his topic within a predefined analytical

¹⁰⁰ SEETZEN, « Beiträge zur Kenntnis der arabischen Stämme », p. 112.

framework was probably meant to afford him greater objectivity. Willing to address the possible bias in Juszez el Milky's information, Seetzen chose to remove one zero from the estimate he would give regarding the members of the tribes. Pointing out his guide's tendency to exaggerate, which he allegedly shared with the Bedouins, Seetzen ultimately showed his own prejudice towards his informant and the nomadic Arabs.¹⁰¹

In his classification of information, Seetzen was obviously driven by the thrill of collecting new material on the Bedouins and his goal to correct his predecessors. For example, he expressly drew the attention of his readers to the new data that he was able to provide on Bedouin onomastic practices. Commenting on male first names, he proudly explains that there was a « (...) very specific tradition, which, to my knowledge, has never been noticed by a traveller »¹⁰². This custom consisted in naming a child after the circumstances of his birth, be it the place where he was born or the natural elements surrounding the happy event.¹⁰³ Similarly, Seetzen was very keen on collecting objects that would help Europeans to better picture and analyse Bedouin culture. A case in point is his intention to acquire the typical one-string fiddle played by the Bedouins, the *rababah*, which he called *Erbâbe*.¹⁰⁴ This instrument accompanied poetry singing or recitation, which appeared to be one of the major entertainments of the Bedouins. Aware of the significance of poetry to the tribes, Seetzen therefore elaborated on this matter, relating anecdotes and outlining his desire to collect poems to send them to Europe.¹⁰⁵ Conversely, he also expressed regret that Bedouin culture was rooted in oral tradition.¹⁰⁶ According to him, the poems were thus forgotten after a few generations while the alteration of time inevitably corrupted historical facts. Last but not least, Seetzen strove to check the data given by Niebuhr on the Bedouin tribes. Seetzen completed his predecessor's enumeration by adding new tribes' names and providing more details on their lifestyles, even as he discarded some Bedouin groups mentioned by Niebuhr as irrelevant due to their very few members and lack of significance.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, Seetzen often discussed Niebuhr's reports to alter the latter's conclusions. For instance, after introducing the *Szlèb* (Solluba) tribespeople and their habits, he discussed their possible

¹⁰¹ SEETZEN, « Beiträge zur Kenntnis der arabischen Stämme », p. 107.

¹⁰² SEETZEN, « Beiträge zur Kenntnis der arabischen Stämme », p. 214: « eine ganz besondere Sitte, die, soviel ich mich erinnere, noch von keinem Reisenden bemerkt ist ».

¹⁰³ ALEXANDER BORG, GIDEON M. KRESSEL, « Bedouin Personal Names in the Negev and Sinai », *Zeitschrift für Arabische Linguistik*, 40 (2001), p. 32–70.

¹⁰⁴ SEETZEN, « Beitrag zur Kenntnis der arabischen Stämme », p. 126.

¹⁰⁵ SEETZEN, « Beiträge zur Kenntnis der arabischen Stämme », p. 127.

¹⁰⁶ SEETZEN, « Beiträge zur Kenntnis der arabischen Stämme », p. 128.

¹⁰⁷ SEETZEN, « Beiträge zur Kenntnis der arabischen Stämme », p. 124.

Christian origin, but ultimately concluded that the tribe mentioned by Niebuhr was unlikely to be a Christian one.¹⁰⁸

Seetzen's writings about the Arabian horses in particular epitomizes his approach.¹⁰⁹ Mentioned after camels but before sheep, horses figured prominently in the section that the German correspondent devoted to Bedouin herding activities. This short passage not only illustrates Seetzen's aims in writing about the Bedouins, but also it allows for an assessment of his shifting opinion about these nomadic herders. Here, Seetzen clearly strove to contribute to the classification of Arabian horses while calling into question the stance and information of his predecessors. As in the rest of his ethnography, his intent seems to be to merely supplement and correct the existing knowledge on the desert-bred horses for his contemporaries. His contributions therefore need to be read and understood within the context of the travel accounts of Arvieux and Niebuhr. Indeed, their writings contributed significantly to the shaping of European theories on the excellence of Arabian equine breeds by providing the basis on which scholars could elaborate.¹¹⁰ Decades before Niebuhr, Arvieux had classified Arabian horses into three categories by distinguishing between the noble ones, which he calls 'Kehilan', the mixed ones or 'Aatiq', and the non-noble ones, the so-called 'Guidieh'. According to the French envoy, the Kehilan or Kehilet were descended from an ancient horse lineage whose purity was guaranteed by strict inbreeding practiced before witnesses and subsequently attested by written and sealed certificates. These practices, along with recorded genealogies allegedly kept by the Bedouins, demonstrated the importance of preserving the noble Arabian horse breed purity as well as its significance for the Bedouin economy of honour.¹¹¹ Indeed, Bedouin herders prided themselves on keeping their horses *asil* (pure), which implied that the noble Arabian horses could be defined, in other terms, as purebred horses.¹¹²

More important for Seetzen, though, was Niebuhr's passage on this very same topic. Niebuhr's description of the noble Arabian horse breed, which he calls the 'Kochlâni' (Kohelan or Kehilet), went beyond the mere recognition of Bedouin breeding practices and the remarkable qualities of the breed. Whereas Arvieux

¹⁰⁸ SEETZEN, « Beiträge zur Kenntnis der arabischen Stämme », p. 119–120.

¹⁰⁹ SEETZEN, « Beiträge zur Kenntnis der arabischen Stämme », p. 222–224.

¹¹⁰ FRANÇOIS POUILLON, « À la recherche de la race arabe: cheval et voyage en Arabie centrale au XIX^e siècle », *Arabian Humanities*, 8 (2017), <<https://doi.org/10.4000/cy.3321>> (Accessed October 2023).

¹¹¹ D'ARVIEUX, *Voyage fait par ordre du roy Louis XIV*, p. 194–210.

¹¹² CHRISTOPH LANGE, « Purity, Nobility, Beauty and Performance. Past and Present Construction of Meaning for the Arabian Horse », in DONA LEE DAVIS, ANITA MAURSTAD (eds.), *The Meaning of Horses: Biosocial Encounters*, Routledge, London – New York 2016, p. 39–53; CHRISTOPH LANGE, « The Making and Remaking of the Arabian Horse – From the Arab Bedouin Horse to the Modern Straight Egyptian », in KIRSTEN GUEST, MONICA MATTFELD (eds.), *Horse Breeds and Human Society: Purity, Identity and the Making of the Modern Horse*, Routledge, London – New York 2020, p. 234–250.

merely mentioned the noble ancestry of the pure Arabian horses, Niebuhr integrated them in a biblical genealogy that matched the patriarchal descent that was attributed to the nomadic Arabs. In doing so, he was offering a mythology of origin that connected the Bedouins and their horses within a biblical narrative that appealed to Western readers at that time. These noble horses' genealogies had been kept for 2000 years, according to Niebuhr, who related the noble breed to the horses of King's Solomon stables.¹¹³ Niebuhr also provided the first extensive list of the different strains of Kehilan horses and depicted these animals' extraordinary physical and moral qualities. Interestingly, this biblical genealogy correlated with both the scientific expectations that underpinned the project of the Danish-German Expedition to Egypt and the Arabian Peninsula as well as Arabian mythology about Bedouin horses. Dispatched from Copenhagen and financed by the Danish crown, the expedition was organized at the University of Göttingen where it was initiated, and its instructions were formulated by Michaelis. At the initiative of this scientific expedition, Michaelis planned the whole undertaking with the support of the king of Denmark and Norway, Frederik V (1723–1766), and his foreign minister, Johann Hartwig Ernst von Bernstorff (1712–1772). Since the expedition was originally aimed to notably answer questions about the Bible's natural history, Niebuhr probably found it very fitting to pass along the Arab tradition that connected Arabian horses directly to the Old Testament. Correspondingly, among the plethora of myths and legends surrounding this noble breed, Niebuhr chose to mention the one that featured King Solomon. As a result, Western scholars then sought to apply this same biblical lens to both the nomads and their mounts. Once again, Niebuhr's seminal book on Arabia had been instrumental in forming and spreading this idea in Europe. The biblical framing of the Bedouin horses, although partly inspired by the Bedouin traditions themselves, thus reinforced the interpretation of the desert as a pristine territory; not only had a patriarchal lifestyle been preserved here since the time of antiquity, but also the flora and fauna had survived in extant form.

Similarly, Arabian horses were also incorporated into Arab mythology that reinforced the prestige of their ancestry.¹¹⁴ Celebrated in pre-Islamic legends and poems, horses found a place of honour in the Qur'an as well as the Hadith. In Arabia, myths and traditions from different origins associated the Arabian horse with some of the greatest figures of Islam, such as the Prophet Ismā'īl (Ishmael),

¹¹³ NIEBUHR, *Beschreibung von Arabien*, p. 161–164; DE CHASSEBOEUF VOLNEY, *Voyage en Syrie et en Égypte*, p. 372.

¹¹⁴ HOSSEIN AMIRSADEGHI, PETER UPTON, RIK SR & JR VAN LENT, *The Arabian Horse. History, Mystery and Magic*, Thames & Hudson, London 2005² (1998¹).

Sulaymān b. Dāwūd (Solomon) and Prophet Muhammad.¹¹⁵ While Niebuhr chose the story that connected purebred Arabian horses to the stud farms of King Solomon, Seetzen decided to highlight another tradition, which related them to the five favourite mares of Prophet Muhammad.

Seetzen, who was of course well-aware of Arvieux and Niebuhr's reports, chose not to repeat what was already known about the Arabian equine breeds, but rather to amend their classification by introducing a new tradition which was very meaningful in the Arab world. Once again, Seetzen relied on the account of Juzsef El Milky and the Christian Arabs from *es Szalt*, located on the West side of the Jordan river, rather than on the Bedouin themselves.¹¹⁶ Based on what he learned from his informants, he divided the 'noble races of Arab horses' into two subcategories. The first and most noble of them were descended directly from the five mares of Prophet Mohammed (*Al-Khamseh*). According to this tradition, each of these mares had given birth to a lineage whose genealogy was thoroughly recorded, generation after generation, to guarantee the pedigree of the foals. Arabs and Muslims in general held these five lineages in the highest esteem. They were more than ready to pay the highest price to acquire them even if, as Seetzen emphasised, some of these horses did not distinguish themselves by any particular virtue. Within this first classification, Seetzen identified five noble families that were the Seglawieh jedranieh, Managhieh, Kehilet, Abeyeh, and Jilfeh.¹¹⁷ In doing so, he placed the Kohelan or Kehilet within a larger category that also included four other noble strains. The second tier consisted merely of pureblood Arab horses whose reputation relied on strict inbreeding practices. By refusing to engage in interbreeding, Bedouin herders had guaranteed the purity of this second class of Arabian horses over the centuries. Although these horses were less valuable and more numerous than the first category, they were still highly prized in Arabia. According to Seetzen, the pedigrees of these horses were also recorded in genealogies. By opting to describe this tradition of categorization that firmly connected Arabian horses to Islam, Seetzen helped to establish a new narrative about these horses. Moreover, these accounts also demonstrate how Seetzen was in fact navigating between two perspectives: the one proposed by those travellers who had gone before him and the one offered by his local informants. A few years later, however, it became obvious that Seetzen had in fact separated himself from his peers by presenting his very own views and observations. Freed not only from the intellectual expectations of his colleagues, but also the perspective of local

¹¹⁵ JÉRÉMIE SCHIETTECATTE, ABBÈS ZOUACHE, « The Horse in Arabia and the Arabian Horse: Origins, Myths and Realities », *Arabian Humanities*, 8 (2017), <<https://doi.org/10.4000/cy.3280>> (Accessed October 2023).

¹¹⁶ SEETZEN, « Beiträge zur Kenntnis der arabischen Stämme », p. 223.

¹¹⁷ SEETZEN, « Beiträge zur Kenntnis der arabischen Stämme », p. 223–224.

traditions, he altered the dominant views of the Bedouins and their horses by offering new observations and assumptions on them.

IV. On Arabian Horses

On November 14th, 1810, four years after writing his report about the Bedouin tribes, Seetzen authored an article for the *Fundgruben des Orients* from his current location in Mocha in which he dealt in detail with the horses bred by the nomadic herders across the Arabian Peninsula.¹¹⁸ Right from the start of this piece, Seetzen recognized the significance of the topic while warning that his observations were going to differ from some of the existing views on it:

In einem Ihrer vorigen schätzbaren Briefe erwähnen Sie der arabischen Pferde, mit dem Zusatze, dass Sie bis dahin keine deutliche Idee von dem Pferdewesen der Araber hätten. Ich gestehe Ihnen offenherzig, dass dies grade auch mit mir der Fall ist. Indessen ist der Gegenstand zu wichtig, als dass er nicht eine genauere Untersuchung verdienen sollte. Ich will Ihnen meine Erfahrungen und meine Ideen darüber mittheilen; vielleicht sind sie etwas auffallend, weil sie von den gewöhnlichen Vorstellungsarten abweichen, und vielleicht finden sie Widerspruch.¹¹⁹

It seems noteworthy, however, that Seetzen had previously showed reluctance to write on the topic despite Hammer's request. Indeed, at least two years had passed since Hammer had first mention the matter to Seetzen. While Hammer had urged him to collect information about the different noble Arab horse breeds for the *Fundgruben des Orients*, Seetzen bluntly replied from Cairo in 1808 that he preferred dedicating his efforts to « the human races », as he had done two years earlier with his description of the Bedouin tribes.¹²⁰ He claimed furthermore that he was rather more disposed to fuel the European debate on Arabian horses by acquiring books on the subject for the library of his patron in Gotha.¹²¹ To him, these animals appeared worth mentioning mainly as a component of the life and culture of the nomadic-pastoralist Arabs. He had thus logically included them in his Bedouin ethnography that was supposed to be published in the *Monatliche Correspondenz*.

In 1810, however, Seetzen felt ready to finally meet Hammer's demand on the matter by sending for the *Fundgruben des Orients* a piece whose conclusions, by his own admission, could surprise the readers, if not possibly spark some controversy.

¹¹⁸ SEETZEN, « Auszug eines Briefes, Mocha den 14. November 1810 ».

¹¹⁹ SEETZEN, « Auszug eines Briefes, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 275.

¹²⁰ SEETZEN, « Auszug eines Briefes, Kahira den 10 Julius 1808 », p. 58.

¹²¹ SEETZEN, « Auszug eines Briefes, Kahira den 10 Julius 1808 », p. 58.

By the time he reached Yemen, Seetzen had travelled most of the Western part of the Peninsula with Medina and Mecca as two of the most significant stages on his journey. Perhaps emboldened to be more provocative in style and reasoning by his accomplishments and experience, Seetzen thus wrote an article which went far beyond an attempt to augment and amend the observations and assumptions made by other travellers and scholars. By questioning some of the widely received ideas on the topic while also trying to answer some open questions by providing new data from Arabia, Seetzen tended in fact to shed new light on animals which were generally held in high esteem in the West as well as in the East. Thus, Seetzen's preliminary remarks to his contribution shows not only that he had a clear idea of the dominant views on Arabian horses in Europe and in the Arabias; it also demonstrates his awareness of the significance of this matter in European scholarship. Indeed, scholars working in fields as varied as Biblical studies, natural history, horse breeding or Arabic literature tended to focus their attention on Arabian horses during the eighteenth century. Michaelis, for instance, published in 1785 a piece on the most ancient history of horses and horse breeding in Palestine and its neighbouring countries, particularly Egypt and Arabia.¹²² At the beginning of his essay, Michaelis reminded his reader that « Unter allen Pferden, die wir kennen, wird jetzt das Arabische für das edelste gehalten, und sonderlich von den Engländern sehr theuer gekauft, um dadurch die Race ihrer Pferde zu veredeln ».¹²³ He also recommended the reading of the contribution on horses made by the French naturalist Georges-Louis Leclerc, count de Buffon (1707–1788) in the fourth volume of his *Histoire naturelle, Générale et Particulière* published 1753.¹²⁴ While dealing with the horse in his *magnum opus*, Buffon pointed out the significance of Arabian horses for European horse breeding. His views reflected the increasing European interest in Oriental horses in general and particularly in horses coming from Arabia since the beginning of the Early Modern Times. Even if it goes without saying that the horse, and, therefore, horse breeding and horsemanship, were central to most pre-industrial societies, it seems remarkable that the Arabian horse lied at the centre of the connected history between the Arabian Peninsula, the Indian subcontinent and Europe since the late fifteenth century.¹²⁵ The cultural, military, commercial and economic dimensions of these

¹²² JOHANN DAVID MICHAELIS, *Mosaïsches Recht*, vol. III: *Nebst einem Anhang von der ältesten Geschichte der Pferde und Pferdezucht in Palästina und den benachbarten Ländern, sonderlich Egypten und Arabien*, Johannes Grözingen, Reutlingen 1785, p. 195–270.

¹²³ MICHAELIS, *Mosaïsches Recht*, vol. III, p. 199.

¹²⁴ MICHAELIS, *Mosaïsches Recht*, vol. III, p. 198. GEORGES-LOUIS BUFFON, *Histoire naturelle, Générale et Particulière, avec la Description du Cabinet du Roi*, vol. IV, Paris 1753, Chapter « Le Cheval », p. 174–376.

¹²⁵ DANIEL ROCHE, *La Culture équestre de l'Occident, XVIe–XIXe siècle. L'Ombre du cheval*, t. I: *Le Cheval moteur. Essai sur l'utilité équestre* (2008); t. II: *La Gloire et la puissance. Essai sur la distinction équestre* (2011); t. III: *Connaissance et passion* (2015), Fayard, Paris 2008, 2011, 2015.

exchanges explained the high stakes related to the Arabian horse in Early Modern Europe. To better comprehend to what extent Seetzen's contribution could have surprised his readers and/or helped them to gain new knowledge on the horses bred by the Bedouins, it appears necessary to highlight both why Arabian horses hold such a significance in the Western eyes at that time and what was the commonplace ideas and ongoing debates about them.

First, the « gewöhnlichen Vorstellungsarten » on Arabian horses to which Seetzen alluded at the beginning of his report probably referred to excellence attributed to these animals in Europe as well as in the East. This excellence mainly relied on what was deemed their extraordinary beauty, lightness and stamina. These three qualities were indeed among the main ones generally attributed to the Arabian breed by European breeders, riders, and scholars. These features were interestingly based on the qualities traditionally attributed by the Bedouins themselves to their best horses. These three characteristics underpinned the European idea of the superiority of the Arabian horses over all others, which spurred the gradual importation to Europe of Oriental horses from the beginning of the Early Modern Period. Along with the Arabian horses, the Barb horses from Northern Africa, the Persian horses and the Turkish horses belonged to the Oriental horses that came to be held in high esteem by Europeans. Although horses were brought from the Orient to Europe during the Roman Empire as well as during the Crusades, the Early Modern Times arguably witnessed the increasing European interest in Oriental horses as well as in Bedouin horse breeding practices. First, the Portuguese discovered at the turn of the fifteenth century that horses were intensely traded between the Arabian Peninsula and the Indian subcontinent. What appeared to have been a very lucrative trade between both regions had been carried out from at least the thirteenth century onward. Arabian horses were indeed in high demand in India where they were very renowned and most needed due to conflicts involving different powers of the subcontinent, such as the Muslim Sultanates of the Deccan or the Hindu Empire of Vijayanagar. While establishing a thalassocracy connecting Europe to the Far East, the Portugal not only became aware of this highly profitable trade happening across the Arabian Sea, but it also started to play a role in it.¹²⁶ Second, changes in military tactics and equine culture taking place in Europe from at least the seventeenth century is another factor to explain why Europeans came to consider Oriental horses as the best to enhance European horse breeds. The need for lighter and swifter mounts compelled European breeders to recognize the qualities of Arabian horses while

¹²⁶ RUI MANUEL LOUREIRO, « Portuguese involvement in Sixteenth century horse trade through the Arabian Sea », in BERT. G. FRAGNER, RALPH KAUZ, RODERICH PTAK, ANGELA SCHOTTENHAMMER (eds.), *Pferde in Asien: Geschichte, Handel und Kultur. Horses in Asia: History, trade and culture*, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Vienna 2009, p. 137–43.

developing new conceptions about crossbreeding and inbreeding.¹²⁷ These conceptions led to an increasing European demand for Arabian horses which translated in their higher economic value. At the end of his passage on Arabian horses, Niebuhr specifically pointed out the higher price that Europeans were ready to pay to acquire them:

Die Engländer hingegen kaufen bisweilen zu Mochha Pferde zu acht hundert, bis tausend Species Thalern. Ein Kaufmann versicherte mich dass einer seiner Landsleute in dem vorhergehenden Jahre zu Mochha ein solches Pferd gekauft hätte, dass ihm dafür in Bengalen die Summe doppelt geboten worden, dass er aber nach England abgesandt hätte, in der Hoffnung seine Kaufsummer vierfach zu erhalten.¹²⁸

In the same passage, Niebuhr also pointed out that Bedouins generally preferred mares to stallions, which led them to sell their stallions rather than their mares¹²⁹. The significance of the female lines in Bedouin horse breeding practices was notably stressed by the tradition according to which the noblest Arabian horses descended directly from the *Al-Khamseh*, the five favourite mares of Prophet Mohammed. Even if European breeders would buy both female and male Oriental horses when possible, they tended over the course of the Early Modern times to give more and more significance to the male lines, especially in England. Thus, the mention of English buyers by Niebuhr was no coincidence. English breeders were among the first to most successfully use Oriental horses. Even if other factors explain the English presence in Arabia, the horse trade appears all the more significant between both areas that English breeders through selection were able to achieve results which aroused the admiration among European horse breeders. These results relied on ideas which were in fact widely spread across eighteenth-century Europe.

Mid-eighteenth century, Buffon significantly contributed to synthesize, deepen and spread these conceptions in his seminal *Natural History* which was soon translated in several European languages. It constitutes therefore a very valuable source to understand what lied behind the prestige then enjoyed by desert bred horses. In his study of the horse from the ancient times to his day, Buffon notably emphasized the importance of crossbreeding European horses with Arabian horses to regenerate them. Indeed, Buffon firstly underlined the need to interbreed European horses who were prone to degeneration due to climate and food; second, he pointed out the superiority of Arabian horses, which, thirdly,

¹²⁷ CLARISSE ROCHE, « Appropriating and Re-Appropriating the Arabian Horse for Equestrian Sport: The Complexities of Cultural Transfer », *Sport, Ethics and Philosophy*, 14/3 (2020), p. 320–338.

¹²⁸ NIEBUHR, *Beschreibung von Arabien*, p. 164.

¹²⁹ NIEBUHR, *Beschreibung von Arabien*, p. 163. This preference is also noted by d'Arvieux.

relied on their pure bloodline. Buffon thus claimed that each species derived from a

general prototype [...] from which each individual is modelled, but which seems in procreation to be debased, or improved, according to its circumstances, insomuch, that in relation to certain qualities, there is a strange variety in the appearance of individuals, and at the same time a constant resemblance in the whole species.¹³⁰

Among these circumstances, climate and food appeared the most decisive to 'improve' or 'debase' animals over the generations. To regenerate altered horses, Buffon recommended interbreeding with horses coming from cold, temperate and hot climates. According to the geo-humoralist perspective of the time, horse breeds were traditionally divided into cold-bloods from northern Europe, warm-bloods from temperate climates, and hot-bloods from the desert. Since optimal interbreeding was purportedly among the opposites, desert bred horses were deemed the best to regenerate European ones from cold and temperate climates. Moreover, Buffon pointed out that the breeding practices of the Bedouins allowed them to keep their horses the closest to the original, that is perfect, prototype by alleviating the impact of climate and diet on them. Even though the French scholar admitted that information was scarce about desert bred horses and that these animals remained rare in his country, he nevertheless deemed that « the Arabian horses are the handsomest known in Europe, they are larger and more plump than those of Barbary, and equally well shaped ». ¹³¹ According to Buffon, their superiority over all other horses ultimately relied on the skills of their breeders since:

the Arabs take care to preserve their [horses] own purity; that if the climate is not of itself the best for horses, the natives have produced the same effects, by the care they have taken, from time immemorial, to ennoble their breed by putting together only the most beautiful individuals, and of the first quality; and that by this attention, pursued forages, they have improved the species beyond what nature alone would have done in the most favourable climate. We may also conclude that warm climates rather than cold, but above all, dry countries agree best with the nature of horses.¹³²

Arabian horses thus came to epitomize inbreeding practices at their best through selection and pure-bred breeding. It seems noteworthy that inbreeding practices

¹³⁰ GEORGES-LOUIS BUFFON, *Buffon's natural history, Volume 5, Containing a theory of the earth, a general history of man, of the brute creation, and of vegetables, minerals, &c. &c. from the French with notes by the translator*, T. Gillet, London 1807, p. 128–129.

¹³¹ BUFFON, *Buffon's natural history, Volume 5*, p. 142.

¹³² BUFFON, *Buffon's natural history, Volume 5*, p. 162.

tended to become more and more popular over the course of the eighteenth century, notably under the influence of English agricultural innovator Robert Bakewell (1725–95). In this perspective, it appears interesting that Buffon recommended crossbreeding of French horses with Arabian horses, or failing that, with Barb or English horses due to their qualities and nobility. The English horse, that is the Thoroughbred, gradually emerged as a new horse breed over the course of the eighteenth century. It resulted from both crossbreeding between English ‘local’ mares with three Oriental stallions imported to England between the late seventeenth century and the early eighteenth century; it was then perfected through selection and inbreeding during the eighteenth century.¹³³ It seems that some of these founding sires were probably Arabian horse.¹³⁴ The excellence of the new English horse breed for racing and jumping confirmed the benefits of crossbreeding while underlining the excellence of Oriental horses for European breeding endeavours. As Buffon’s recommendation suggests it, the English horse thus came to be seen over the century as a relative to Oriental horses if not their latest sub-strain. In a similar vein, Blumenbach, although much more laconic on horses than his French predecessor, underlined in the sixth edition of his *Handbuch der Naturgeschichte* (1799) the significance of the desert bred horses. Blumenbach not only reasserted the superior qualities of Arabian horses; he also shared the view that the differences between horse species resulted from the alteration of an original model. According to him:

Unter den zahmen Pferde-Rassen zeichnen sich die Araber (zumahl die von der Zucht der Annecy um Palmyra herum, und vom Libanus bis gegen den Horeb ꝛc.) durch ihren wunderschönen Bau, so wie durch äußerste Leichtigkeit und Dauerhaftigkeit aus. Ihnen folgen die Persianer und Barben.¹³⁵

Blumenbach further deemed that among European horses, the most excellent horses were the Spanish ones, especially those from Andalusia, then the Neapolitans and the English ones while underlying that these last ones had the advantage of swiftness which allowed them to distinguish themselves in horse races. The best European horses thus proved, according to Blumenbach, the ones related to Oriental horses. Towards the end of the eighteenth century,

¹³³ On the ‘local’ mares and their origins, see MIRIAM A. BIBBY, « The Royal Mares: Imagining a Race (Part One) », *Cheiron: The International Journal of Equine and Equestrian History*, 3/1 (2013), p. 66–84; EAD., « The Royal Mares: Imagining a Race (Part Two) », *Cheiron: The International Journal of Equine and Equestrian History*, 3/2 (2013), p. 99–112.

¹³⁴ The origins of the three Oriental founding sires, the Byerley Turk, the Darley Arabian and the Godolphin Arabian or Barb are still debated.

¹³⁵ JOHANN FRIEDRICH BLUMENBACH, *Handbuch der Naturgeschichte*, vol. I, sixth edition, Johann Christian Dieterich, Göttingen 1799, p. 106. The first edition published in 1779 did not emphasize as much the significance of the Arabian horses.

Thoroughbreds came to be seen as a new super-breed which could not be improved through outbreeding and could now rely on strict purebred-breeding. A watershed moment for the official birth of the Thoroughbred as a new horse breed was the publication in 1791 of the first official studbook.¹³⁶ By recording the pedigree of English horses descending from the three Oriental founding sires, the *General Stud Book* of 1793 (1791) was intended to guarantee and preserve the purity of the Thoroughbred breed. The Stud Book arguably emphasized ancestry by recording the genealogy of the Thoroughbreds. Understandably, inbreeding practices thus went in hand in hand in England with a specific attention given to reliable genealogical records in a way that was largely similar to the one occurring in the Bedouin horse breeding tradition.

When Seetzen wrote his piece about Arabian horses for the *Fundgruben des Orients*, the European interest for Arabian horses appeared to have been stronger than ever. On the one hand, the French campaign in Egypt and Syria (1798) and then the Napoleonic Wars reinforced the European interest in Arabian horses in terms of imports, breeding and scholarship. First, Bonaparte helped to popularize further Oriental horses by adopting them as mounts after admiring the Mamluk cavalry in Egypt. His equestrian portraits celebrate these horses whose size and origin suit him better than those of the Thoroughbreds. Second, the Arabian horse proved to be a strategic asset for the remounting of cavalries during and after the great European wars happening in the 1800s. The Napoleonic wars had thus increased the need to have well-outfitted cavalries. These efforts to bolster the stock of European horses that were often supported by states thus also reinforced a wider interest in Arabian horses.¹³⁷ Articles and treatises were thus multiplying to provide more information on these horses and further discuss their excellence. Indeed, the reputation of the Thoroughbred breed was then so well-established that equine specialists started to debate the respective excellence of the Thoroughbred and the Arabian horse. This debate aimed at determining which of these breeds was the most appropriate to regenerate the European horses whose number had considerably decreased in the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars. In this context, Arabian horses appeared in European eyes as the most valuable herd raised by the Bedouins. This is no coincidence, therefore that soon after the establishment of the *Fundgruben des Orients*, Hammer encouraged contribution on the topic. The founder of the *Fundgruben des Orients* himself, the count Walclav Seweryn Rzewuski, a former cavalryman, showed a very keen interest in Oriental

¹³⁶ The first official studbook (1791) was not without mistake, that is why the second edition tended to provide more accurate information about the equine lineages. It should be noted that before these official studbooks, private studbooks were kept on several horse farms.

¹³⁷ TATSUYA MITSUDA, « The Politics of Reproduction. Horse Breeding and State Studs in Prussia, 1750–1900 », in KIRSTEN GUEST, MONICA MATTFELD (eds.), *Equine Cultures: Horses, Human Society, and the Discourse of Modernity, 1700–Present*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2019, p. 145–159.

horses and one can infer that he probably had something to do with Hammer's suggestion to Seetzen to write about them. Overall, it is possible to say that the topic drew the attention of a broad audience of scholars and connoisseurs who wished to learn more about these horses, who were deemed the purest in the world. At the time Seetzen was travelling Arabia, many questions remained a matter of speculation and therefore needed to be addressed by means of scientific reports and evidence collected *in situ*.

Aware that his own observations served to reverse the dominant perspective on Arabian horses and offered a fresh and innovative approach, Seetzen aimed at countering five views on Arabian horses regarding their quantity in Arabia, their alleged beauty and lightness, and, last but not least, their incomparable virtues as well as their ancient nobility. By tackling these main characteristics which tended to justify the high esteem professed in the West for these animals, Seetzen clearly undermined views on Arabian climate, the physical qualities of the Arabian horses and, finally, the significance of ancestry and pedigree in horse breeding at large. This threefold reconsideration ultimately led him to reinterpret various stakes of Bedouin horse breeding as well as to rethink the special bond uniting the Bedouins to their mounts. To better orchestrate his rebuttal, Seetzen used the artifice of a rhetorical dialogue opposing him to an imaginary interlocutor who conveniently enumerated the assumptions commonly held on Arabian horses.

First, Seetzen called into question the view that Arabia abounded in Arabian horses. This view was notably supported by Niebuhr's statement according to which « es giebt in Arabien Pferde, Esel, Kameele, Dromadarien Kühe, Schafe, Ziegen und anderes zahmes Vieh in Überfluss ».¹³⁸ This general claim tended to depict Arabia as a region seemingly abounding in all possible kinds of domesticated animals, regardless of the diverse circumstances that characterized the various areas of the Peninsula. Seetzen summarized this assumption to better revise it downwards:

Da Arabien wegen seiner Pferde bey den Europäern in so hohem Rufe steht: so sollte man erwarten, dass dies schönste und edelste unter den Saugthieren daselbst in grosser Menge angetroffen werde. Allein nichts weniger als das; es giebt sogar ganze Provinzen, wo man kein einziges Pferd antrifft, z. B. auf der peträischen Halbinsel und in Hadramut.¹³⁹

¹³⁸ NIEBUHR, *Beschreibung von Arabien*, p. 161. Niebuhr refers to Starbo who had a different opinion regarding horses, p. 161: « Strabo sagt im 16 Buch seiner Erdbeschreibung, es sey in Arabien: pecorum onmis generis copia exceptis equis, mulis & porcis. Avium etiam omnium praeter anseres & gallinas ».

¹³⁹ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 276.

As the purported cradle of Arabian horses, Arabia could indeed have been seen as the best place to purchase the purest of them in the largest number. Given the commercial and breeding interests at stake at the turn of the nineteenth century, the question of the best locations to acquire Arabian horses inevitably came to the forefront. Europeans were thus keen to speculate on the untapped equine potential of the vast but still little-known territory. While Niebuhr pointed out the significance the area stretching between Bassara, Merdîn and Syria for the breeding of the noble Arabian horses, he also noted that, even if he had not heard about these horses for the Western part of Arabia, he surmised that they could also be found there, especially in Hejaz.¹⁴⁰ Based on his observations and on the relative fragility of these animals, Seetzen aimed at offering a relatively detailed and nuanced mapping of the equine population in Arabia. As he underscored, desert regions such as those in the Sinai Peninsula appeared unlikely to be prosperous breeding areas for horses. In fact, he declared the Sinai Peninsula and the Hadhramaut empty of horses, while conceding that there were likely 1,000 horses in Hejaz, 1,000 in Yemen, 1,000 in the Nejd, 1,000 in the Syrian desert and on the Southern bank of the Euphrates. In contrast, he estimated that the equine population of Oman to be well below 500, and he deemed the number of horses in Bahrain to be insignificant. Even though his evaluation was based on the reading of his predecessors like Niebuhr to whom he once again explicitly referred, on logic – there was allegedly almost no water in Bahrain –, and his own observations, one can wonder how Seetzen could be so assertive in his estimates.¹⁴¹ That being said, he in fact provided the scientific community with the first key figures in terms of the number of Arabian horses. Quite logically, he attributed this scarcity to the high cost of taking care of such delicate animals in the desert. The Bedouins themselves could barely afford the luxury to own one horse, apart from the Sheikhs, who could provide for their food.¹⁴² This remark offered a major nuance to Arvieux's claim that all Arabs had horses.¹⁴³ Although Arvieux's remark relied on his experience in Palestine, it seems noteworthy that Volney after travelling through Syria and Egypt noted that poor Bedouin households could not afford the maintenance of a mare despite their dearest wish to own one.¹⁴⁴ Horse breeding and ownership were indeed considered as a measure of wealth among the Bedouins, a status symbol, whose their survival in the desert relied on a costly logistical apparatus. Horses were therefore kept mainly by certain prestigious camel breeding tribes and by the Bedouin 'aristocracy' that was generally based in

¹⁴⁰ NIEBUHR, *Beschreibung von Arabien*, p. 162.

¹⁴¹ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 277: « nach des verdienstvollen Niebuhr's klassischer Beschreibung von Arabien ».

¹⁴² SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 276.

¹⁴³ D'ARVIEUX, *Voyage fait par ordre du roy Louis XIV*, p. 194

¹⁴⁴ DE CHASSEBOEUF VOLNEY, *Voyage en Syrie et en Égypte*, p. 372.

an oasis. Seetzen thus noted, for instance, that in Hejaz, only the Sharif of Mecca could afford a significant number of horses, that is between sixty and seventy animals of which it was taken care in his stud farm.¹⁴⁵ In contrast, Seetzen went as far as claiming that no private individual, even the richest merchants, owned a horse in Hejaz; they rather rode mules, probably to avoid any problem with the Sharif.¹⁴⁶ With his total of 6,500 horses for the whole Peninsula, Seetzen could conclude that its equine population, compared to that of Europe, appeared to be somewhat insignificant and, therefore, « that the Arabian horses are not worth mentioning in the description of the Arabias ».¹⁴⁷

Secondly, Seetzen attacked the view that Arabian horses distinguished themselves in terms of their physical qualities. Deemed by naturalist scholars such as Buffon as the purest horses in the world and, consequently, the closest to the original shape of their species, Arabian horses were ordinarily considered beautiful animals, whose lightness thrilled European riders. Arvieux particularly emphasised the beauty of Arabian mares.¹⁴⁸ With the same scepticism that he had already demonstrated, Seetzen argued that the chances of seeing these beautiful horses were low in Arabia, apart from perhaps in Yemen. In a tone that one could well deem sarcastic, he continued his imaginary dialogue on the dominant views of equine experts:

Arabien kann also mit nichts weniger gross thun, als mit der Zahl seiner Pferde. Aber desto mehr mit ihrer Schonheit! sagt man mit vielleicht. Allein, wer dies behaupten darf, muss nie arabische Pferde gesehen haben.¹⁴⁹

Seetzen confirmed this rather provocative statement by adding that even among the very expensive Arabian horses imported to Europe, some lacked beauty such as the one he saw in Vienna in 1791.¹⁵⁰ In his experience, beautiful Arabian horses were scarce. The famous horses from the Najd, which he had the opportunity to see when Saud bin Abdulaziz Al Saud (1748–1814) (r.1803–1814) and his entourage rode in Mecca, were admittedly characterized by their medium size and lightness. None of them featured, however, any kind of beauty, not even the one ridden by the ruler. Yemeni horses, and more specifically not the mares but the stallions, such as the ones he saw in Sana'a appeared to him more beautiful than the horses from the Nejd. Seetzen nonetheless deemed that these horses stood no comparison with European breeds in terms of beauty or lightness. Seetzen even drew a long list of

¹⁴⁵ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 276.

¹⁴⁶ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 276.

¹⁴⁷ « dass Arabien kaum verdiene, der Pferde bey seiner Beschreibung zu erwähnen », see SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 278

¹⁴⁸ D'ARVIEUX, *Voyage fait par ordre du roy Louis XIV*, p. 199.

¹⁴⁹ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 278.

¹⁵⁰ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 278.

European horses that he claimed more beautiful than the Arabian ones, such as Spanish stallions, but also stallions from Holstein, Oldenburg, East Friesland and many more.¹⁵¹ In a similar way, he claimed that the lightness of Arabian horses was not all that remarkable as there were also light mounts to be found Europe.¹⁵² Overrated in terms of beauty and lightness, horses in Arabia could not really be characterized by any special virtues either.

In Seetzen's view, the stamina, the courage, intelligence, empathy, and selflessness traditionally attributed to these horses were to be questioned as well. Niebuhr particularly elaborated on these virtues, so that Seetzen's passage on the same theme appears to be a thorough rebuttal of his famous predecessor. The good qualities listed by Seetzen appeared to be almost verbatim the ones attributed by Niebuhr to the *Kochlâni* or *Kohejle*, that is the horses whose origin could purportedly traced back to the stud farms of King Salomon.¹⁵³ Even if Seetzen do not mention this last point, he clearly denies these qualities to better call into question the significance of nobility for horses. Based on his predecessor's description, Seetzen reminded that Arabian horses were supposed to

dauern die grössten Strapazen aus, haben ganze Tage lang keine Nahrung nöthig, und leben gleichsam von der Luft, sie stürzen mit Heftigkeit auf den Feind los; sind sie in einem Gefechte verwundet und ausser Stande ihren Reiter länger zu tragen, so ziehen sie sich aus dem Gewühle und setzen ihn in Sicherheit; und wenn ihr Herr zur Erde gestürzt ist, so hören sie nicht auf zu wiehern, bis man ihm zu Hilfe geeilt ist.¹⁵⁴

By proposing to nuance these good qualities and put them into context, Seetzen seized the opportunity to directly discuss Niebuhr's report. While remarking that these qualities could also be noted among European horses, Seetzen nuanced the idea that all Arabian horses would display them under all circumstances. Thus, inferred Seetzen, these qualities could not be used to characterize the Arabian breed. In his opinion, these qualities rather resulted from a misconstruction due to the scarcity of horses in Arabia. He rather sarcastically claimed that the great fondness of the Arabs for their horses inevitably biased them when it came to describe their virtues and good qualities. Drawing a parallel between the admiration felt by the Bedouins for their horses and the compliments ladies in the West would pay to their pets, Seetzen concluded that the Arabs praised their horses in the same way that European ladies would celebrate the marvellous

¹⁵¹ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 278.

¹⁵² SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 278–279.

¹⁵³ NIEBUHR, *Beschreibung von Arabien*, p. 161.

¹⁵⁴ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 279.

virtues and understanding of their lapdogs or favourite cats.¹⁵⁵ Thus, Seetzen aimed at discrediting the better judgment of the Bedouins while introducing an analogy that induced their inferiority or lack of judgement. To him, the scarcity of horses in the region explained that their owners would feel a kind of devotion towards them which resulted in the deep bond that they would forge. Indeed, Arabs in general always kept their horses close to them while the Bedouin would even keep the horse under their tent and treat it as a relative, feeding it, talking to it and stocking it.¹⁵⁶ This special bond was a well-known fact, notably emphasized by Arvieux.¹⁵⁷ Based on this good treatment, Seetzen concluded that the best qualities of the Arabian horses were the result of education and not of heredity or climate and that a similar care would help European horses to develop the same qualities.¹⁵⁸ As for the purported calmness of the Arabian stallion, Seetzen argued that it was only due to the scarcity of mares, which were more easily kept away from male horses than in Europe. Finally, Seetzen sharply criticized the belief that an Arabian horse would rescue the rider from a predicament.¹⁵⁹ A last quality that Niebuhr specially associated to « einige Familien unter diesem adelichen Pferdegeschlecht ».¹⁶⁰

By arguing that ancestry counted for nothing in some of the best qualities attributed to Arabian horses, Seetzen also tended to discredit the significance of nobility and, therefore, some of the beliefs and values underlying Bedouin and European societies alike. As discussed above, travellers like Arvieux or Niebuhr highlighted the great attention that the Bedouins paid to the pedigree and genealogy of their horses in order to preserve their nobility. This special attention devoted to maintaining the pure bloodlines of horses appeared to be embedded in the Bedouin economy of honour and, therefore, gave rise to social practices such as the mating and foaling in the presence of witnesses. Horses were thus integrated into the same genealogical systems that prevailed in Bedouin society.¹⁶¹ Nobility of origin or ancestry (*asl*) was of central importance for both the Bedouins and their mounts. The centrality of blood, in the sense of a bloodline, relied on the belief that a person's nature and worth depended on their ancestry.¹⁶² Just as the nobility of origin was supposed to confer moral qualities and character to the Bedouins, it was meant to provide the horse with special virtues that reflected those of its rider. Niebuhr remarked that even if the « Araber haben von ihren

¹⁵⁵ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 279.

¹⁵⁶ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 278.

¹⁵⁷ D'ARVIEUX, *Voyage fait par ordre du roy Louis XIV*, p. 199–201.

¹⁵⁸ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 279.

¹⁵⁹ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 280.

¹⁶⁰ NIEBUHR, *Beschreibung von Arabien*, p. 162.

¹⁶¹ LANGE, « Purity, Nobility, Beauty », p. 42.

¹⁶² LILA ABU-LUGHOD, *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society*, University of California Press, Berkeley 1986, p. 41–49.

Kochlâni zwar kein Geschlechtregister von einigen hundert Jahren, sie können aber dennoch von ihrer Abkunft ziemlich gewiss seyn, weil die Stuten immer in Gegenwart von Zeugen, und zwar von arabischen Zeugen belegt werden ».¹⁶³ A possible allusion to the private stud books that existed in the Early Modern Europe, the mention of equine genealogies pointed out the significance of heredity and purity in horse breeding in the East and in the West. They reflected a similar concern for nobility in European and Bedouin societies towards the mid-eighteenth century.

Unlike Arvieux or Niebuhr, though, Seetzen claimed that these equine genealogies were nonsensical and unreliable. He admitted that these genealogical traditions are interesting though and that it was relevant to inquire about the origins of Arabian horses. He added: « Sey dem auch, wie ihm sey, obgleich der Adel dieser Pferderace ihr durchaus keinen wesentlichen Werth verleiht, eben so wenig, als unser erblicher Adel ohne persöhnliches Verdienst: doch eine historische Merkwürdigkeit, welche eine genauere Untersuchung verdient ».¹⁶⁴ Seetzen deemed that the question of their historical introduction in Europe was also pertinent. He nevertheless denied the significance of equine lineages in horse breeding:

Es kann immer seyn, dass Davids, Salomons und Mohammeds Pferde eine Nachkommenschaft hinterliessen, und es ist nothwendig, dass die jetzigen sogenannten adelichen Pferde ihre Vorfahren hatten, denn sonst existirten sie nicht (so wenig als unsere Bürger- und Bauernfamilien, welche eine eben so lange Ascendenz haben müssen, als unsere königlichen und fürstlichen Familien, wenn gleich sie öfters ihren Urgrossvater nicht kennen). Allein wer versichert uns, dass sie gerade von diesen abstammen? Wo ist der Stammbaum, der dies mit Wahrheit beurkundet? Freylich versichert man, dass die Beduinen Alles anwenden, um ihre Race unvermischt zu erhalten.¹⁶⁵

More than sceptical about Biblical and Islamic genealogies which obviously had no special appeal to him, Seetzen also clearly called into doubt the reliability of the Bedouin breeding tradition.¹⁶⁶ On this last point, he once again confronted his views with the seminal text of Niebuhr who was prone to give the credit the Bedouin way of mating their horses before witness. Since this alleged purity of blood allowed the Bedouins to sell their horses for the highest prices, they tended to lie about them and forges fake genealogies in order to scam European clients.

¹⁶³ NIEBUHR, *Beschreibung von Arabien*, p. 162.

¹⁶⁴ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 280–281.

¹⁶⁵ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 281.

¹⁶⁶ On Seetzen's attitude towards Christianity, see GIOVANNI BONACINA, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen über Jesus Christus », in HABERLAND (ed.), *Der Orientreisende Ulrich Jasper Seetzen*, p. 37–60.

Seetzen further claimed that the Bedouins had a passion for lying and would do anything for money.¹⁶⁷

Perhaps not surprisingly, Seetzen's report provoked diverse reactions among European scholars. Although they published his account, it seems likely that Hammer nor Rzewuski were rather baffled by some of its conclusions. The latter inserted a footnote at the beginning of the article that made his disagreement with the piece plain to readers. After claiming that he had personally admired the most beautiful horses of the Bay in Egypt, Hammer assumed that Seetzen had drawn such harsh conclusions either because he had spoiled his eye contemplating European horses or for another reason. While suggesting that Seetzen proved incompetent in judging Arabian horses or had hidden motives to denigrate them, Hammer reasserted the excellence of these animals whose blood had regenerated the noblest of European horses.¹⁶⁸ Given the significance of the topic, it seems noteworthy that Hammer and Rzewuski went on publishing pieces on Arabian horses in the following issues of the *Fundgruben des Orients*. Thus, the third volume of their journal (1813) interestingly featured a letter from Joseph Rousseau, the general consul of France in Alep, that reinforced the thesis that the most beautiful horses in the world came from the Arabian desert. This contribution was possibly intended to serve as a counterpoint to Seetzen's piece and, as such, increase the data on Arabian horses as well as showcasing the variety of the views shared on them.¹⁶⁹ Although these reports were not ostensibly related, the editorial choices of Hammer and Rzewuski orchestrated *de facto* a scientific dialogue between Seetzen and Rousseau. The fragmentary nature of the knowledge-making in these journals allowed for a confrontation of different viewpoints from one issue to next. By fuelling the scholarly debate with contributions from all over the Near East, Hammer and Rzewuski facilitated the gradual knowledge-building process on the Arabias. Dating from 1808, Rousseau's letter outlined the physical and moral qualities of Arabian horses while reiterating the vision of the desert as a source of superior horses. By suggesting that the harsh climatic conditions allowed for the excellence of these horses to shine forth, Rousseau thus relied on the climate theory. More than theory, though, Rousseau claimed that his report was based on his own experience of Arabian horses. Having been in contact with the Anazeh tribes of Northern Arabia, Rousseau was himself a horse connoisseur and owned several Arabian mounts. Unlike Seetzen, he tended to adopt the perspective of the Bedouins on their horses. As for the famous beauty of Arabian horses, for instance, the consul took as a benchmark the standards recognized by Arab breeders. Rousseau also underscored how they correlated with the opinions of ancient

¹⁶⁷ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 281.

¹⁶⁸ SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Briefe, Mocha den 14. November 1810 », p. 275.

¹⁶⁹ JOSEPH ROUSSEAU, « Lettre de M. Rousseau, consul-général de France à Alep, à M. Jouannin, consul-général de France à Memel, sur les chevaux arabes », *Fundgruben des Orients*, 3 (1813), p. 65–68.

writers such as Horace and Virgil.¹⁷⁰ This association implied that the Bedouin taste in horses related in fact to an immemorial tradition dating back to antiquity. By perpetuating standards long forgotten in the West, these nomadic breeders once again distinguished themselves by their ability to perpetuate the same traditions since times immemorial. Last but not least, Rousseau provided one of the Arabic certificates attesting the noble origin of a mare on both the sire and the dam sides across three generations.¹⁷¹ Translated into French, this official document produced for the buyer served to emphasise the Bedouin sense of honour. As a representation of the word given by Arab nomads, this certificate established before God the accuracy of the information pertaining to a horse on sale.

The thematic link between both reports did not escape the careful attention of Silvestre de Sacy when he reviewed the volumes II and III of the *Fundgruben* for *Le Magasin Encyclopédique*.¹⁷² When assessing the contributions made to these volumes, Sacy chose the ones that he thought worthiest of mention. Without a doubt, Seetzen's provocative conclusions from the field intrigued European scholars like Sacy, who considered his writings to be worth disseminating but also worth commentaries that might add some nuance or counterbalance. Sacy therefore focused on Seetzen's points about Arabian horses, underlining that they differed from the common views on the matter. Sacy provided a very detailed summary of Seetzen's contribution, or rather a summarized translation into French, in order to make French readers aware of these discrepancies between Seetzen's accounts and the viewpoints maintained in Rousseau's letter that was published in the third volume of the *Fundgruben*. Interestingly, Sacy did not go so far as to actually refute Seetzen's controversial piece. Although the French orientalist was prone to criticise the contributions of the *Fundgruben* when it came to philology, linguistic and history sharply, including Seetzen's reports on the Berbers, he did not feel entitled to assess an article outside his field of expertise. By reinforcing some of the dominant views on Arabian horses, Rousseau's letter thus proved instrumental in mitigating Seetzen's position. It thus seems noteworthy that Sacy quoted at length Rousseau's article in his review of the third volume of the *Fundgruben*.

After returning from his trip to the Arabian Peninsula (1818–1820), Rzewuski decided to thoroughly confront his views on Arabian horses with those of Seetzen's. Before departing for the Levant, Rzewuski published his « Notice sur les chevaux arabes » in the *Fundgruben* in which he praised the qualities of the horse

¹⁷⁰ ROUSSEAU, « Lettre de M. Rousseau, consul-général de France à Alep », p. 67.

¹⁷¹ ROUSSEAU, « Lettre de M. Rousseau, consul-général de France à Alep », p. 68.

¹⁷² DE SACY, « Notice du tome second », p. 216.

from the Nejd, the *koheilan*.¹⁷³ In this article, he recounts a note sent by the consul general of the Austrian Empire in Cairo, Carlo Rossetti (1736–1820) about Arabian horses and it is quite apparent that Rzewuski longed to take a journey to the horse-breeding tribes.¹⁷⁴ Well-versed in horse riding and breeding, Rzewuski spent two years between 1818 and 1820 among the horse-breeding Bedouins in Syria, Iraq and Palestine. His experience among the Bedouins inspired him a travel account in which he presented and discussed all the information that he was able to gather *Sur les chevaux orientaux et provenant de races orientales* [On oriental horses, and horses from oriental breeds].¹⁷⁵ At the end of his manuscript which he wrote in French, Rzewuski chose to discuss each point made by Seetzen as a conclusion to his own remarks.¹⁷⁶ This thorough discussion demonstrates the significance of Seetzen's report in Rzewuski's eyes while highlighting the scientific debate that continued *post mortem*. In his own words, Rzewuski intended to both spread and amend Seetzen's views by confronting it with his own observations while also referring to Niebuhr.¹⁷⁷ Fully translating Seetzen's equine report from German into French, the Polish scholar confirmed, completed, or corrected each of Seetzen's statements with the calm confidence of an expert who had been immersed for two years among the Bedouins. Unlike Seetzen, Rzewuski did not use intermediaries to gain knowledge about the desert herders and their precious horses, lending him the credibility to assert the superiority of his expertise. A great admirer of the nomadic riders with whom he identified, Rzewuski strove to embrace their worldview while also accumulating a rich collection of materials about them. Possibly influenced by a Rousseauian vision of the Arabian World, this aristocratic traveller also had clear commercial goals that he was pursuing in the region.¹⁷⁸ Commissioned by Catherine Pavlona (1788–1819), queen of Württemberg and sister of Tsar Alexander the First, the Count's goal was to obtain Arabian horses for the royal stables at Weil in Germany. The economic and erudite stakes of his journey compelled Rzewuski to reassert that the excellent qualities of

¹⁷³ WACLAV SEWERYN RZEWUSKI, « Notice sur les chevaux arabes », *Fundgruben des Orients*, 5 (1816), p. 49–50.

¹⁷⁴ CARLO ROSETTI, « Sur les races des chevaux arabes », *Fundgruben des Orients*, 5 (1816), p. 50–60.

¹⁷⁵ Rzewuski died before publishing his manuscript, which is preserved at National Library of Poland: WACLAV SEWERYN RZEWUSKI, *Sur les chevaux orientaux et provenant des races orientales*. vol. I & II. vol III Planches appartenant à l'ouvrage sur les chevaux orientaux, dessinées par Tag-el Faher Abd el Nischoane emir et scheick des Arabes Bédouins des déserts du Nejed en Arabie 1820–1830. Manuscript of the National Library of Poland. Rps 5678 IV t.1–3. The manuscript was edited in 2002, see WACLAV SEWERYN RZEWUSKI, *Impressions d'Orient et d'Arabie. Un cavalier polonais chez les Bédouins, 1817–1819*, ed. B. LIZET, F. AUBAILE-SALLENAVE, P. DASZKIEWICZ, AND A.-E. WOLF. José Corti, Paris, Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle, 2002.

¹⁷⁶ SEETZEN, RZEWUSKI (ed.), « Extrait d'une lettre du savant Seetzen », p. 633–652.

¹⁷⁷ SEETZEN, RZEWUSKI (ed.), « Extrait d'une lettre du savant Seetzen », p. 633.

¹⁷⁸ MOUSSA, « Orientalisme et rousseauisme ».

Arabian horses were due to the climate as well as the genealogy of the breed.¹⁷⁹ Aware of Seetzen's sarcasms on the topic, which probably hurt his feelings, Rzewuski claimed that « toutes ces qualités, dont Seetzen se moquent, ne sont point exagérées ».¹⁸⁰ Conceding that « (...) education contributed to develop the natural qualities of the horse, but did not create them », Rzewuski aimed at rehabilitating both the nobility of the Bedouins and their horses.¹⁸¹ Defending the Bedouin sense of honour, he tried to explain Seetzen's harsh judgement by highlighting Seetzen's lack of intercultural competence. Rzewuski's criticism mainly relied on the very pointed idea that Seetzen and the Bedouins did not speak the same language. Rzewuski thus noted that Seetzen, although an Arabist, could not necessarily understand Bedouin values and codes, which led him to misinterpret their oral traditions as well as their poetic rendering of the world. By applying Western categories to them, Rzewuski suggested, Seetzen thus lacked the ability to comprehend the essence of the Bedouin culture.¹⁸² More generally, he failed to understand some important cultural characteristics of the places that he crossed. Rzewuski, for instance, refuted Seetzen's observation that the Hadramout was empty of horses by underlining that in cities and villages alike, horse owners tended to hide their mounts lest someone envious would malevolently glare at them, thus cursing them and consequently harming them. The belief in the evil eye, which Rzewuski called in Italian « *cativo occhio* » [sic], partly explained why Seetzen could not see any horses there.¹⁸³ Before Rzewuski, Arvieux also pointed out that this belief compelled horse owners to protect their mounts with talismans and amulets.¹⁸⁴ Overall, Rzewuski claimed that even if Seetzen travelled Arabia, he was no horse expert. Unable to recognize the beauty of a horse, Seetzen had simply no idea of its « mathematical proportions ».¹⁸⁵ Rzewuski sometimes refused to dignify some of Seetzen's assertions with a rebuttal. His praise of Northern Europe horses, for instance, was not deemed worth discussing since « comme l'opinion publique seule est en état de répondre à cette phrase, il est inutile de mettre en avant mes voyages pour la réfuter ».¹⁸⁶ Overall, Rzewuski concluded that « Seetzen n'est ni connaisseur en chevaux, ni cavalier ». A similar assessment can be found in the work of another equine expert who, nevertheless, made an extensive use of

¹⁷⁹ SEETZEN, RZEWSUKI (ed.), « Extrait d'une lettre du savant Seetzen », p. 647.

¹⁸⁰ SEETZEN, RZEWSUKI (ed.), « Extrait d'une lettre du savant Seetzen », p. 646. Bernadette Lizet underlined that Seetzen hurt the feelings of Rzewuski who authored a thorough rebuttal of his views, LIZET, « Le cheval arabe du Nejd », p. 86–90,

¹⁸¹ SEETZEN, RZEWSUKI (ed.), « Extrait d'une lettre du savant Seetzen », p. 647: « l'éducation contribue effectivement à développer les qualités naturelles du cheval, mais elle ne les crée pas ».

¹⁸² SEETZEN, RZEWSUKI (ed.), « Extrait d'une lettre du savant Seetzen », p. 651–652.

¹⁸³ SEETZEN, RZEWSUKI (ed.), « Extrait d'une lettre du savant Seetzen », p. 636–637.

¹⁸⁴ D'ARVIEUX, *Voyage fait par ordre du roy Louis XIV*, p. 207: « les yeux de l'envie »

¹⁸⁵ SEETZEN, RZEWSUKI (ed.), « Extrait d'une lettre du savant Seetzen », p. 643.

¹⁸⁶ SEETZEN, RZEWSUKI (ed.), « Extrait d'une lettre du savant Seetzen », p. 645.

Seetzen's reports on the Bedouins and their desert-bred horses: Karl Wilhelm Ammon (1777–1842).

In 1834, the German equine specialist Ammon, published his magnum opus on Arabian horses, his *Nachrichten von der Pferdezucht der Araber und den arabischen Pferden: Nebst einem Anhang über die Pferdezucht in Persien, Turkomanien und der Berberei* in which he tried to provide some answers on the topics pertaining to Arabian horses. To do so, Ammon dedicated over twenty years of his life to compiling every piece of information produced by travellers to the Near East about the horses of the Peninsula. As part of his evaluation of all books and journal articles on the matter, Ammon compared and contrasted these varied perspectives as well as the array of data gained from field research. In his seminal book, this scholar, who never actually travelled to the East, drew on the accounts of writers such as Arvieux, Niebuhr, Seetzen, Rousseau, Rosetti, Rzewuski and many others. By including all these voices, Ammon significantly contributed to the evolving debates on the noble breed. Often mentioning Seetzen's observations and discussing them, Ammon interestingly noticed that Seetzen was no friend of the Arabian horse, a fact which, by contrast, gave more weight to any quality, even partial, that Seetzen would attribute to the Arabian horse.¹⁸⁷ On the one hand, it seems that Ammon directly discarded some of Seetzen's remarks, such as his claim that numerous Northern European horses were way more beautiful than the Arabian ones. This very claim, which Rzewuski deemed too preposterous to be even rebutted, was due to the fact, according to Ammon, that Seetzen was used to draught horses, high and heavy. Equine beauty, therefore, was tantamount to colossal constitution. Like Rzewuski had done, Ammon reminded his readers that the beauty of a horse relied in fact on the harmony of its proportions. Even though he largely drew his work on the accounts of travellers, Ammon thus distinguished between the ones who proved equine experts, such as Rosetti, from those who were no horse connoisseur, such as Niebuhr or Seetzen.¹⁸⁸ At any rate, Ammon had to deal with discrepant opinions on several matters, which led them to make his own assumptions. On the horses in Felix Arabia, that is in Yemen, Ammon wondered: « What should we believe in the presence of such contradictions in the travellers' reports? ». ¹⁸⁹ Claiming that the truth often lies between diverging opinions, he tried to make sense of the contradictory reports by proposing a contrasted map of Yemeni horse breeding. Whereas pure-blood horses were bred in some parts of Yemen such as in Al-Jawf province, in Najran province and in the

¹⁸⁷ KARL WILHELM AMMON, *Nachrichten von der Pferdezucht der Araber, und den arabischen Pferden: Nebst einem Anhang über die Pferdezucht in Persien, Turkomanien und der Berberei*, Riegel und Wießner, Nuremberg 1834, p. 199.

¹⁸⁸ AMMON, *Nachrichten von der Pferdezucht der Araber*, p. 151 and p. 163.

¹⁸⁹ AMMON, *Nachrichten von der Pferdezucht der Araber*, p. 132: « Was soll man bei diesem Widerspruche der Nachrichten der Reisenden glauben? ».

vicinity of the city of Dhamar, other horses were probably imported from the Najd or from Nubia. In this case, Ammon assumed that Seetzen probably saw imported horses. By contrast, Ammon tended to give more credit to the cultural data provided by Seetzen. It seems noteworthy, that Seetzen's report on the Bedouins, that is his piece based on the information given by Juszef el Milky, is also quoted by Ammon who used it to compare the five lineages described by Seetzen to the names given by Rosetti, Burckhardt and Macdonald-Kinneir.¹⁹⁰ The descendants of the *Al-Khamseh* were thus given different names, which highlighted the various traditions relating to them. Finally, Seetzen helped Ammon to assess the issue of the potential scams buyers could face in Arabia as well as the question of the bond uniting the rider to his mare. In Ammon's book, Seetzen was thus posthumously dialoguing with his fellow travellers on topics to which they dedicated their efforts.

V. Conclusion

In conclusion, Seetzen's writings tended to shed new light on the Bedouins and their horses. While contradicting the excellence of Arabian horses with a measure of sarcasm, Seetzen tended to discredit Arabia as a unique place where breeders could find the finest horses able to regenerate the European breeds. Based on his predecessors in the Near East, Seetzen's contribution aimed at discussing their observations and filling the gaps on these topics by writing articles as well as sending artifacts and books to Europe. By putting forth his viewpoint in European journals, Seetzen made a name for himself on the editorial stage and fuelled the scholarly debates going on the Bedouins and their horses.

¹⁹⁰ AMMON, *Nachrichten von der Pferdezucht der Araber*, p. 163–170.

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NON-EUROPEAN INTERNATIONALITY AND ORAL GEOGRAPHY

SEETZEN'S ENCOUNTER WITH TIGRIÑÑA^{*}

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Abstract

Seetzen's word lists of African languages, compiled during his stay in early 19th-century Cairo, contributed to the expanding interest in global linguistic diversity at the time but were long overlooked and only recently rediscovered as historically significant. This paper examines his encounter with Tigriñña – spoken in the northern Ethiopian highlands and modern-day Eritrea – which was then virtually unknown to European scholars. His documentation drew on Cairo's multi-national diversity and Egypt's wide-ranging connections, based on conversations with travelers from Northeastern Africa, including a Tigriñña speaker. The dialect, likely from central Tigray and influenced by Muslim terminology, contains valuable cultural insights. Notably, the word list includes geographic and ethnic references that reflect an 'oral geography' still relevant today, as recent research confirms.

Key Words

Non-European internationality; Oral geography; Tigriñña; Tigray; Northeast African travelers; Ethiopian Studies; Research history; History of language documentation.



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I. Introduction

Before Seetzen disappeared in 1811 in Yemen on his daring journey to the Orient and Africa, he regularly sent transcripts of his research results to Europe, thus contributing to the steadily growing stream of information on the languages of the world.¹ Of particular importance was certainly his transcription of a sixth century Old South Arabian inscription from Himyar that ultimately led to decipherment of this previously unknown ancient script.² His transcripts of north-east African language samples from Cairo – where Seetzen stayed from 1808 to 1810 – are far less known, however, because they were much less influential in terms of later scholarship. Most of them were published only after his death³ in a rather

¹ See the catalogue of Ethiopian manuscripts and documents in Berlin by AUGUST DILLMANN, *Die Handschriften-Verzeichnisse der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, vol. III: *Verzeichniss der Abessinischen Handschriften*, Buchdruckerei der Königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin 1878, p. 75–76. Under Dillmann's no. 87 there is an overview of the « Originalien von Dr. Seetzen's in Kahira eigenhändig aufgenommenen Afrikanischen Wörtersammlungen », a 30-folio manuscript containing the word lists (464 items in the language of the Berber and the inhabitants of « Dúngalá al adschûs » in the kingdom of « Sennâr »; 750 items in the language of « Szauaken »; 54 items in the language « Tahâsse » spoken in « Massaúa »; 744 items in « Tiggrý » spoken in the town of « Haúasá »; 48 items in « Galla », spoken « west of Habbésch »; 79 items in « Argubba in Habbésch »; 613 items in the language of the inhabitants of « Móbbá », called « Dár Szeléh » by Arabs and « Bargu » by the Furii; and notes on the country of the « Schüllúk » and their language, followed by a word list of that language with 86 items; 665 items in the language of the « Neger von Dâr Fûr »; 753 items in the language of « Áffadéh » in the country « Burnu »; notes on the country of « Bagirma », followed by 110 items in that language; 689 items in the language of the « Phálatija » Arabs living south of Tripolis and « Fesân »). Ibid., p. II, notes that this manuscript had probably been given to the Royal Library of Berlin by Johann Severin Vater, the editor of the academic journal *Allgemeines Archiv für Ethnographie und Linguistik* and publisher of a part of Seetzen's material, or had been transferred to the Library together with parts of Seetzen's library. Vater describes in his book (JOHANN SEVERIN VATER (ed.), *Proben deutscher Volksmundarten, Dr. Seetzen's linguistischer Nachlass, und andere Sprach-Forschungen und Sammlungen, besonders über Ostindien*, Fleischer, Leipzig 1816, p. VIII–IX) how he got these documents.

² NORBERT NEBES, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen im Jemen », in HANS STEIN, *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811): Leben und Werk. Die arabischen Länder und die Nahostforschung im napoleonischen Zeitalter*, Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek Gotha, Gotha 1995 (Veröffentlichungen der Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek Gotha, 33), p. 39–52, and the more recent publication NORBERT NEBES, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811), Forschungsreisender und Sammler im Auftrag der Gothaer Herzöge », in ANGELIKA GEYER (ed.), *1846–2006, 160 Jahre Archäologisches Museum der Universität Jena, Thüringer Sammlungen im Kontext internationaler Netzwerke*, Jena 2008 (Jenaer Hefte zur Klassischen Archäologie 7), p. 76–94; see also on the importance of Seetzen's discovery for the deciphering the Ancient South Arabian script in the 1840s: NORBERT NEBES, « Inscriptions: Epigraphic South Arabian Inscriptions in Arabia », in SIEGBERT UHLIG et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. III, Harrossowitz, Wiesbaden 2007, p. 153–154, here p. 154.

³ Only the word list of the « Gibbértý » (Jeberti) in Yeju was published in his lifetime (see the in-depth discussion of Seetzen « the collector of languages »: ANGELIKA JAKOBI, « Seetzen der Sprachensammler », in DETLEF HABERLAND (ed.), *Der Orientreisende Ulrich Jasper Seetzen und die*

marginal publication.⁴ In his own time, Seetzen's studies of African languages were, however, well received and discussed among scholars at least for a short time, among others by Alexander von Humboldt, who mentioned « the research carried out by Seetzen and Vater » when he reported – in his important work *Vue des Cordillères* of 1810 – that there were « over 140 languages » in Africa. This shows

Wissenschaften, Isensee, Oldenburg 2019 (Schriften der Landesbibliothek Oldenburg 69, Oldenburger Forschungen, N.F. 35), p. 265–298: « Nur eine der 14 Wortlisten, das 'Wörterverzeichnis aus der Sprache der Gibberty in dem Lande Jédshu in Habbesch' ist noch zu Seetzens Lebzeiten in der von Freiherr von Zach herausgegebenen wissenschaftlichen Zeitschrift *Monatliche Correspondenz* im Dezember 1809 publiziert worden »). ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Über das Land Jédshu in Habbesch, die Gibberty und deren Sprache », in *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmelskunde* 20 (December 1809), no. XLV, p. 541–563 (= ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *Sämtliche gedruckte Schriften*, 6 vols., ed. by DETLEF HABERLAND in cooperation with BERNHARD KWOKA, Isensee, Oldenburg 2017, vol. V, p. 243; interestingly, Seetzen refers here also to the 18th century traveller James Bruce, who – as JAKOBI, « Seetzen der Sprachensammler », notes – had published himself samples of seven Ethiopian languages in 1804).

⁴ [ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN], JOHANN SEVERIN VATER, « Dr. Seetzen's linguistischer Nachlass: Wörter-Sammlungen aus Nordost-Afrikanischen Sprachen von den Dúngalá und Berber, von Suaken, Massua, Háuasá, Argubba, von den Galla, Schiillúk, von Mobba, Darfûr, Áffadéh, Begirma, verglichen mit Arabischen, Aethiopischen, Amharischen, und mit Salt's Wörter-Sammlungen », in JOHANN SEVERIN VATER (ed.), *Proben deutscher Volksmundarten, Dr. Seetzen's linguistischer Nachlass, und andere Sprach-Forschungen und Sammlungen, besonders über Ostindien* [= a collective volume with diverse studies of German dialects, languages from Eastern India among others and documentations of African languages by Seetzen], Fleischer, Leipzig 1816, p. 245–350 (here: « Wörter und Redensarten in der Sprache der Berber und der Einwohner von Dúngalá el Adschús im Königreich Sennâr », p. 247–262; « Wörterverzeichnis aus der Sprache von Szauaken » [Vater remarks, p. 276, that the comparison with Salt's material shows that this is the language of the « Adareb » and « Bischarin », i.e. Beja], p. 263–279; « Proben von der Sprache Tahâsse, welche man in Massúa und in dessen Nachbarschaft redet », p. 280–281; « Sprache von Tiggrý, welche in der Stadt Háuasá gesprochen wird », p. 282–300 [Vater remarks that there is a similarity with the language of « Massúa » and that this corresponds to the « Tigreisch » found in Salt's material, p. 295]; « Proben von der Sprache von Argúbba in Habbesch », p. 301–303 [VATER, p. 303, notes the close connection with the « Tiggrý » language]; « Sprache der Galla westwärts von Habbesch », p. 304–305 [VATER notes that this is a variant of a different « tribe » than the one for which Salt had documented some vocabulary, but was closer to the vocabulary published by HIOB LUDOLPH, p. 305]; « Wörterverzeichnis aus der Sprache der Schüllúk », p. 306–307; « Verzeichniss von Wörtern und Redensarten aus der Sprache von Móbbá, welches Land von den Arabern Dâr Szeléh, von den Furij aber Bargu genannt wird », p. 308–318 [VATER compares some of the vocabulary with « Phellata », i.e. Fulbe, p. 318]; « Wörterverzeichnis aus der Sprache der Neger von Dâr Fûr », p. 319–333; « Sprache von Áffadéh im Reiche Burnu », p. 334–347; « Wörterverzeichnis aus der Sprache der Einwohner von Bagírma », p. 348–350; these lists are followed by word lists of American languages. AUGUST DILLMANN, *Verzeichniss der Abyssinischen Handschriften*, p. 76, referred to this publication. Nevertheless, it has rarely been quoted (see the mention in RED. [= MARIA BULAKH, GIORGIO BANTI et al.], « Research: Linguistic Research », in SIEGBERT UHLIG et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. IV, Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden 2010, p. 374–376; only recently Seetzen's studies of African languages became again more visible since their republication in ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *Sämtliche gedruckte Schriften*).

that Seetzen's studies were circulating as manuscripts well before their publication.⁵ A recent study showed that out of fourteen African languages documented by him, « twelve were first documented by Seetzen ».⁶ Seetzen produced a number of word lists, among which there is a short documentation of Tigrīñña vocabulary, the northern Ethiopian language of Tigray and of the old adjacent provinces such as Hamasen, 'Agame, Wejjerat etc. (not unified under one province or principedom in that time). This language and its dialects were not really studied until several decades later when travellers such as Lefebvre and several Protestant missionaries reached Tigray in the 1830s and 1840s. Following these first encounters with Tigrīñña, German Semitic philologists slowly began to discuss this language, while around the same time missionaries started their translation work with the support of local theological scholars. Seetzen's Tigrīñña word list was in fact never used for research, and, moreover, phonetically quite unclear and inexact, although he obviously strove for some accuracy.

Nevertheless, it is worth taking a closer look at Seetzen's word lists of different languages of northeastern Africa, which generally have been rarely used in research thus far. He documented word lists of languages that he calls « Tiggrý » (i.e. Tigray, today usually called Tigrīñña), « Gibberty » (in fact Amharic, spoken by a Muslim Jeberti)⁷ and « Argubba » (which corresponds to the Ethiopian

⁵ Quoted after EBERHARD SCHULZ-LÜPERTZ, « Alexander von Humboldt und Ulrich Jasper Seetzen – Auf den Spuren eines Helgoland-Briefes », *Internationale Zeitschrift für Humboldt-Studien – International Review for Humboldt Studies* XXIII, 44 (2022), p. 95–130, here p. 123. Just before the departure to his year-long journey, Seetzen had published a detailed plan of his projected travels into Africa in a periodical published in Gotha, which assured him the attention of scholarly circles of his time: ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Reiseplan ins innere Africa », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmelskunde* 6/1802, 13/1802, p. 126–159; 20/1802, p. 201–232; 30/1802, p. 317–342; 42/1802, p. 401–426; 56/1802, p. 513–524.

⁶ JAKOBI, « Seetzen der Sprachensammler » (« Wie dieser Beitrag zeigen wird, hat Seetzen zwölf von vierzehn verschiedenen Sprachen erstmals dokumentiert »; see also her list of all 14 languages documented by Seetzen, of which one was published in 1809, another one in 1812 and all the others in 1816 in [SEETZEN], VATER, « Dr. Seetzen's linguistischer Nachlass », p. 245–350). She rightly expresses her surprise that none of the relevant publications in the field of Ethiopian Studies (Äthiopistik) deals with Seetzen's word lists, out of which six languages stem from the Ethiopian and Eritrean region. See also: ANGELIKA JAKOBI, « Sudan and South-Sudan » (sub-chapter 5.7. in « The Study of African Languages and Linguistics in North-Eastern Africa »), in EKKEHARD WOLFF (ed.), *A History of African Linguistics*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2019, p. 108–114, here p. 109–10 on Seetzen's word lists, such as those of « Sauaken » and Fur. On the context: DETLEF HABERLAND, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen und Afrika – die entdeckungs- und wirtschaftsgeschichtliche Dimension seiner Reise », in DETLEF HABERLAND (ed.), *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811), Jeveraner – aufgeklärter Unternehmer – wissenschaftlicher Orientreisender*, Isensee, Oldenburg 2014 (Oldenburger Studien 78), p. 199–255.

⁷ See the « Wörterverzeichnis aus der Sprache der Gibberty in dem Lande Jédshu in Habbésch », in SEETZEN, « Über das Land Jédshu in Habbésch », p. 352–563 (with a number of geographical references provided by the speaker of this language, p. 351–352, which includes the information that « Jédshu », i.e. Yeju, lies south of the independent « Reich Arrargíh », i.e. the Emirate of

ethnonym Argobba, referring to a Muslim group speaking their own language⁸ – but different from the one in Seetzen's lists; in fact, this was – as a linguistic analysis shows – apparently a Silt'e dialect that was from another Muslim area). In addition, he included languages from border areas north and south of Ethiopia such as « Tahâsse » (i.e. Tigré, from the area of the then Ottoman-controlled Red Sea port of Massawa to the Sudanese border regions, or as the language is called by some Sudanese, to-Hāsā), « Szauakin » (i.e. a Beja dialect from the Ottoman port of Sawakin north of Massawa), and « Galla » (an outdated term often used by highland Ethiopians for different Cushitic-speaking groups, mainly Oromo, which is really the language documented by Seetzen). His lists also covered languages from the Sudan, among others, and « Berber » (a Nile-Nubian language). All of these languages were spoken by inhabitants of Cairo at the time as the city was a meeting place and crossroads for numerous traders, migrants, and abducted slaves from Northeast Africa. We can therefore speak of a surprisingly high degree of « Ethiopian linguistic diversity » in Cairo, which also speaks to the regional interconnections that were present long before colonialism. The language denominations collected by Seetzen thus provide some useful information about the earlier context and affiliations that existed – such as the term « Jeberti » (spelled « Gibberty » by him, based on the Egyptian dialect in which a « J » is realised as a « G »), which as a term normally refers to Muslim traders who spoke Tigrīñña or Amharic.⁹ These denominations, such as this one, form a sort of oral geography that will be discussed below.

The publisher of these word lists, the linguist Vater, did not change the spelling or add much to them, except adding some short notes on possibly related words in other languages of the region that appeared in other word lists. He did, however, leave out some of the vocabulary, especially if related to sexual organs.¹⁰ As part of his editorial work, he consulted the word lists brought to Europe by the early nineteenth century British diplomatic envoy to Ethiopia Henry Salt,¹¹ and he also received some assistance from Carsten Niebuhr, the scholar who had explored Arabic countries and the Red Sea during the Royal Danish Expedition to Arabia of

Harargé, whose sultan issues his own coins, and that the travel to the country of Iffât, i.e. Yifat, takes ten days, and then further to Harargé twenty more days – on this reference see also footnote 3).

⁸ On the 'real' Argobba see: RAINER VOIGT, « Argobba language », in SIEGBERT UHLIG et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. I, Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden 2003, p. 331.

⁹ See on the Jeberti, the complex and diverse meanings of the term and the groups to which it refers to: ABDULKADER SALEH, « Ġäbärti », in SIEGBERT UHLIG et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. II, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2005, p. 597–598.

¹⁰ As noted by DILLMANN, *Verzeichniss der Abessinischen Handschriften*, p. 76 (« mit regelmässiger Auslassung der Wörter für die Genitalien »).

¹¹ RICHARD PANKHURST, « Salt, Henry », in SIEGBERT UHLIG et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. IV, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2010, p. 503–504.

the 1760s.¹² As Vater noted, the elderly Niebuhr marked the words in Seetzen's list of the language of Dârfûr that he believed were of Arabic origin.¹³

Focusing here on Seetzen's list for Tigrîñña not only offers insight into this language, but also it will help understand the context for the other languages he documented. Seetzen's Tigrîñña is recognisable as a very local, vernacular language marked by oral simplifications that apparently stemmed from eastern-central Tigray. As the following analysis of the word list shows, moreover, it was also influenced by Muslim terminology. Rather than offering a purely linguistic perspective, this article interprets Seetzen's work as a testament to Cairo's international and northeast African interconnections by using Tigrîñña as an example. Seetzen's lists provide key insight into the linguistic diversity in Cairo of the time, revealing the otherwise totally unknown presence of African travellers and migrants in this region. Similarly, this example also illustrates the 'internationality' of the Horn of Africa, i.e. the far-reaching connections of inner-Ethiopian peoples with their neighbours along ancient routes. That said, the widespread assumption that Seetzen had collected all his material from slaves proves to be faulty, especially given that an initial analysis of this material suggests a broader context of internationality, which included northeast African traders, students and soldiers that Seetzen encountered in Cairo¹⁴.

II. *Hearing and Writing: What Seetzen Heard and Did Not Hear*

The vocabulary that Seetzen wrote down corresponds to oral and familiar language use as well as the typical slurring of an uneducated Tigrîñña speaker with his own particular individual realisation of sounds. This speech is characterised by a number of simplifications and consonant inversions that came from a local, oral practice. For the most part, the list has short, familiar forms of words, such as the

¹² Cf. CARSTEN NIEBUHR, *Beschreibung von Arabien. Aus eigenen Beobachtungen und im Lande selbst gesammelten Nachrichten*, Möller-Breitkopf, Copenhagen – Leipzig 1772; CARSTEN NIEBUHR, *Reisebeschreibung nach Arabien und anderen umliegenden Ländern*, 2 vols., Möller, Copenhagen 1774–1778; see on his contribution to the knowledge of the northern Ethiopian regions: WOLBERT SMIDT, « Niebuhr, Carsten », in SIEGBERT UHLIG et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. III, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2007, p. 1177.

¹³ See VATER, *Dr. Seetzen's linguistischer Nachlass*, p. x.

¹⁴ It is quite surprising to see the degree of re-writing of research history, against the explicit wording of Seetzen's own reports; a mid-19th century writer claimed, that Seetzen had used « the slaves » brought to Cairo to document their languages, s. Kruse in FRIEDRICH KRUSE (ed.), *Reisen durch Syrien, Palaestina, Phoenicien, die Transjordan-Laender, Arabia Petraea und Unter-Aegypten*, von ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, vol. IV: *Commentare zu Ulrich Jasper Seetzen's Reisen*, Berlin 1859, p. 495 (« Seetzen hatte die nach Kairo gebrachten Slaven dazu benutzt, um Erkundigungen über ihre Sprachen einzuziehen »). See on this, among others, footnote 44 below.

words for « God », « Christian » and « Church ».¹⁵ The numeral « Schobáty », for example, suggests that the informant spoke the Central Tigrayan dialect (in a somewhat archaic style), which is also supported by some other word forms. This also fits with the use of the term « Tiggrý », i.e. Tigray, which at that time was the provincial denomination signifying today's Central Tigray only.¹⁶ Similarly, the reference to the city or town « Háuasá » apparently refers to the town of Ḥawzén, then the seat of the princes of Tigray (the so-called *tigré mekonnen*) in Central Tigray (the area called Tigray in older practice, i.e. 'Tigray proper', to be distinguished from the neighbouring autonomous territories such as 'Agame or Ḥnderta in the east that did not fully become part of a unified princedom of Tigray until later, following complex political processes). This very historical settlement is, in simplified oral practice, also occasionally abbreviated as Ḥawza, as I was able to observe during recent fieldwork, i.e. not « Ḥawaza », as Seetzen's spelling suggests. Likely simply a misunderstanding, Seetzen's spelling with « -ua- » may possibly even be influenced by a toponymic confusion: The river Hawash that often appeared on maps of the time was quite prominent in the neighbouring Afar region. But Seetzen may not have heard the toponym Ḥawza accurately. He may have had issues realising a shwa, i.e. the place name may have been pronounced as Ḥawiza, and then Seetzen may have been further influenced by the spelling of the river on the maps. Even in today's informal parlance, one may refer to someone from Ḥawzén as « weddi Ḥawza » ('son of Ḥawzén') as a nickname – instead of the more correct « weddi Ḥawzén ».¹⁷ Simplifications of names are widespread in local parlance, although the correct form of a name or toponym is usually preserved in writing or in a more formal setting. This illustrates the very oral, informal setting within which Seetzen found himself as he was trying to document the language – seemingly with someone well acquainted with a very informal way of speaking, but not well versed in high-level formalised language.

The word list allows us to extract even more information about Seetzen's informant. The terms for religious holidays, for paradise (Djénne) and for heathen (Kuffár) point towards a Muslim context, while the Christian terms were typical for the Tigrayan highlands that were dominated by an orthodox Christian

¹⁵ I am particularly grateful to my field research assistants Mel'aku Kidane from Ḥnderta in Eastern Tigray and Mearg Abay from the Aksum area in Central Tigray for information on rural oral variants and customs.

¹⁶ On this local geographical tradition, based on extensive field research, see: WOLBERT SMIDT, « The Tigrinya-speakers across the Borders: Discourses of Unity & Separation in Ethnohistorical Context », in MARKUS VIRGIL HÖHNE, DEREJE FEYISSA (eds.), *Borders and Borderlands as Resources in the Horn of Africa*, CURREY, WOODBRIDGE et al. 2010, p. 61–83; see also WOLBERT SMIDT, « Təgray [province] », in SIEGBERT UHLIG et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. IV, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2010, p. 888–895.

¹⁷ Kind communication by Mel'aku Kidane, Mekelle, during ethnohistorical field research, October 2023.

population. This would fit well with the profile of a Muslim trader from central Tigray, where there was a prominent local Muslim minority. He might also have been a servant to traders, or perhaps someone who had come to Egypt at a younger age whose language had been influenced by Arabic. At one point the list documents a short but typical Tigrinya sentence that Seetzen did not identify as a phrase. Seetzen translated this phrase that in fact means « He is a devil » simply as « devil », which may speak to the fact that there were limitations present in the communications between Seetzen and his informant. For example, the Tigrinya word allegedly corresponding to « Imam » in Seetzen's list is Askáry, but this is in fact a mistake – it means 'soldier' and is not even Tigrinya, but Arabic (in Tigrinya it would be *hashker*, which Seetzen may have heard and then misinterpreted given the Arabic context). I suspect at this point that this was the result of a simple organisational error in the sequence of his notes – an Imam would be referred to simply as *imam*, and then the word Askáry would probably have followed in the next line, which had been inadvertently conflated. These kinds of errors may indicate that his notes were not yet in good order at the time they were published.

And what did Seetzen hear and not hear? He was clearly a phonetically untrained observer who struggled to find proper systems of transcription (on this see below).¹⁸ But some elements help us to understand what he was actually able to hear or not to hear, or at least not properly hear. A phenomenon typical for German orthography is double consonants, which do not mark geminated consonants (as in established transcriptions of Semitic languages) but indicate that the preceding vowel is short. Therefore, in words such as Hammísty, Schémmunty, Szellésty etc. the double consonants simply mean that Seetzen had heard a short vowel before that consonant. This again shows that Seetzen probably had no ear for consonant gemination (elongated consonants). He did not explicitly mark this in any of the words, suggesting that he had not identified geminations as important. Instead, he put a number of accents on several vowels that seem to indicate some difference of realisation with these vowels. It remains unclear, however, why in some cases he writes í and in others i simply, or what the different accents on the á / â etc. really mean.¹⁹ What we can say, however, is that it seems

¹⁸ Note on the simplified transcription of Tigrinya used in this article: For the sake of readability for readers interested in the Ethio-Semitic language Tigrinya but not necessarily familiar with the rather heavily diacritica-loaded philological transcription used by the *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica* (EAE), I have chosen a transcription system which also, similar to the EAE, uses one separate sign or combination of letters for every separate phoneme, but fewer diacritica. Ejectives are usually marked by apostrophes following the respective consonant (t'), except the q (such as in Qur'an), the pharyngeals are transcribed as ' ('ayn) and ḥ. The seven Tigrinya vowels in the vowel order of the Ge'ez letter table are e, u, i, a, é, ɪ (shwa) and o. Other consonants are those known from English or other European languages (such as sh, ñ).

¹⁹ See in detail the discussion of Seetzen's use of accents and his attempts to correctly transcribe JAKOBI, « Seetzen der Sprachensammler », which should not be repeated here; see especially her

that the â is supposed to express some 'long ā', which again betrays an untrained ear in some cases: it seems, for example, that he did not hear the 'ayn in *arb'a* (which he noted as *Arbâ*), but instead had some impression of a somehow elongated vowel. He generally does not seem to have properly heard the glottal stop or the 'ayn – but in some cases he had certainly heard something and tried to capture it by using accents (such as *Maláiká* for *mel'ak / malā'ika* with a glottal stop, or *Korán* for *Qur'an* or *Schobáty* for *shob'ate* with an 'ayn). The 'á' seems to indicate that Seetzen had sometimes heard some particular sound such as an 'ayn, which he then indicated with an accent and sometimes with a doubling of vowels (e.g. *Arbáatîh* for *arba'ite*).

III. Identification of Sample Vocabulary

The following section presents a short extract of the Tigrīñña word list as documented by Seetzen, accompanied by an interpretation and translation of this somehow inconsistently assembled vocabulary and toponyms. The spelling chosen by Seetzen is printed in bold, followed by an approximate reconstruction of what he seems to have heard in square brackets. The reconstructed word in actual Tigrīñña follows in italics, with explanations where needed. As this is not primarily a linguistic article, linguistic terminology has largely been avoided; however, the comparison of the different forms noted by Seetzen and a reconstruction of their phonetic value is useful as it helps to identify the dialectal area of Seetzen's informant. In particular, this analysis provides a wealth of information about the concrete situation of « orality » in which Seetzen found himself, which is why the transcription chosen by Seetzen has been compared to the actual oral practice in (rural) Tigrīñña.

In terms of methodology, the reconstruction that follows in detail below indicates that Seetzen's Tigrīñña was a purely oral language, spoken by probably only one informant without any formal education in writing. At the time, this kind of education did exist in Ethiopia in the form of Ge'ez schools: Tigrīñña words with a Ge'ez background are presented here in a simplified oral form, which does not show any knowledge of Ge'ez etymology. This kind of knowledge would (even today) influence the pronunciation of the words by an educated Tigrīñña-speaker, which would differ from rural speakers living in a purely oral sphere. This forms the basis for the comparison to local oral forms of Tigrīñña gleaned from long years of field research in central and eastern Tigray, which now helps to properly

references regarding the system of transcription influenced by Niebuhr in footnotes 93–95; Jakobi notes that Seetzen was « untrained to correctly hear the languages and phonetic systems unknown to him ».

identify Seetzen's Ṭigriñña vocabulary. His entire word list has been vetted not only by me, but also by field assistants from 2019/20, who themselves are deeply rooted in the rural world. Particularly, I am grateful to Mearg Abay from Central Tigray and Mel'aku Kidane from Eastern Tigray for their input, which was supported by information provided by Chergos Hailu from 'Agame, whose intelligence and language sensitivity combined with a lack of modern formal education (due to which he has a closer connection to local traditions) was a huge advantage in this case. In addition, I also cross-checked the oral use of Muslim terminology with Abduselam Ademnur in Mekelle and Addis Abeba. Moreover, it should be noted that despite strong contemporary attempts to achieve an orthographic formalisation of Ṭigriñña, there are still some variations strongly influenced by the oral sphere, which I also refer to in the lists below.

Seetzen attempted to find some sort of system of transcription, but his lack of training and his difficulty in phonetically dissecting the words (which were sometimes not well pronounced, but 'mumbled') led to numerous inconsistencies. As we have already seen, Seetzen had based his transcription on the German pronunciation, which makes the reading a bit difficult, as his choices of spelling are a bit surprising in some cases. However, given that an approximate reconstruction of what Seetzen had really heard (even if erroneous) plays a key role in this analysis, an attempt to compare his spellings was therefore attempted for the purposes of this article. In some cases, therefore, these reconstructions assist in the identification of the Ṭigriñña term that Seetzen actually meant.

To illustrate this method of deciphering Seetzen's 'tongue', the following observation shall serve to clarify the sound value of some of the letters used by him. For example, depending on its position in the word, the written letter 's' in the German language is pronounced like an <s> or <z> (as in zebra in English); therefore, in Seetzen's transcription, the letter 's' sometimes corresponds to the English <z>. If a word starts with the sound <s>, Seetzen then usually wrote an 'sz' following the model of the German 'sharp S' [ß] in order to avoid a possible confusion with <z>. However, as a linguistically inexperienced researcher, at one point he even seems to have heard the sound <ts> (which is spelled 'z' in German and by Seetzen) when in reality it was just a 'sharp s' (therefore wrongly writing « Zmáníá » for *semanya*), which may, however, simply be a mistake in his notes.

Generally, the identification of the vocabulary that Seetzen actually meant to record, which appears sometimes in a familiar, dialectal form, helps us to identify some of the rules that Seetzen tried to establish for his attempt at transcription. As shown above with the example of the 'ayn, he had certainly heard *something*, but had no degree of certainty or frame of reference. As a result, his transcription is quite irregular and inconsistent, using different accents for the same vowel, sometimes even writing the same word differently, due to changed contexts in which he likely heard it differently (e.g. Schobáty [7] for *shob'ate* and variants and

Assírto schebáatíh [17] for *‘asírte shob’ate* and variants). However, in order to read this list, it was generally helpful to use phonetic values based on German spelling rules. This then, in comparison to the factual pronunciation of words, helped us to reconstruct what Seetzen must have heard. In one case, however, he creates his own spelling convention differing from German standards, when he uses the -y to express a short -e at the end of words; this, clearly, is also influenced by a local dialectal variant that realises – even in today’s practice in the countryside²⁰ – the -e as a short -i (such as in Háddy for *ḥadde*).²¹ Also, his use of accents is not based on any German spelling standards – clearly a failed attempt, but still useful when we try to reconstruct what he had actually been able to hear (or not hear).

III.1. Identification of place names, ethnonyms and geographical terms

Seetzen’s word list is entitled « Sprache von Tiggrý, welche in der Stadt Háuasá gesprochen wird » (‘Language of Tiggrý, which is spoken in the town Háuasá’). These two toponyms can be explained as follows.

Tiggrý [Seetzen hears: « tigre »]

NB: Seetzen uses the « y » for a short « e » sound (cp. below: Háddy, Kúly). = *Tigré* [ትግራይ], Amharic for *Tigray* [ትግራይ]; the use of the generally known and common Amharic term is not surprising in a linguistic context outside Tigray, where Tigrayans would use the foreign Amharic term in conversations with foreigners, since it was assumed to be more familiar. The use in Ethiopia of the purely Tigríñña term « Tigray » in a non-Tigríñña linguistic context is a very recent development in the last two decades only.

Háuasá [Seetzen hears: « hawaza » or « hawiza »]

NB: in German the ‘s’ at the beginning of a word or of a syllable stands for <z>.

= *Hawza* [ሐውዛ] (sometimes realised as *Ḥawiza*) – at first sight, this seems to refer to the ancient settlement Ḥawza nearby Wuqro in the province of Tsera⁶, which is mentioned in older sources and in today’s oral tradition of that region²² as an important old settlement along the ancient eastern

²⁰ Besides personal observations during field research in eastern Tigray, this was confirmed by Mel’aku Kidane, who was exposed to many dialects, and identified by him as typical for countryside areas from Ḥawzen to Ḥnderta in eastern Tigray.

²¹ Perhaps based on some European languages such as Polish with the particular phonetic value of -y?

²² Field research carried out in 2019 for the Yeha-Project at the Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jena in cooperation with the German Archaeological Institute. Local informants also refer to Aksumite foundations of the main church of Ḥawza; only two decades later, Théophile Lefebvre, the

Tigrayan trade route, linking the Red Sea via nearby Negash with inner Ethiopia. It can also be a simple informal variant of the place name Ḥawzén [ḥw-ḥz] in local oral practice (in recent field research, I observed that in very informal, local parlance, someone who comes from Ḥawzen could be called « *weddi Ḥawza* » ‘son of Ḥawza’). The addition of an -a- in Háu-a-sá is probably the result of Seetzen’s inability to properly identify vowels with which he is unfamiliar; he may have taken the shwa in Ḥawza for a short ‘a’. The question is, however, whether the Ḥawza near Wuqro fits into the dialectal area to which the Tigrīñña documented here belongs, which was rather central Tigrayan as opposed to eastern. The only urban centre in central Tigray besides Aksum and ‘Adwa was Ḥawzén near ‘Adwa, and in fact an important one. In the first half of the nineteenth century it repeatedly appeared in Ethiopian sources, confirmed by detailed local oral tradition, as the seat of the princes of Tigray, and therefore an important centre of regional power that could certainly be called a « town » (‘Stadt’).²³

The list also contains the following ethnonyms, or denominations of specific socio-cultural and socio-economic groups and geographical terms.

44. Pond (‘Teich’) Kaléy = qalay (ቃላይ)
45. Mountain (‘Berg’) Ömba = imba (እምባ)
46. Valley (‘Thal’) Ustíh = wusht’i (ወሽጢ, with an Amharic accent: wust’i) – meaning ‘inside’; while there is no term exactly corresponding to ‘valley’,

traveller of the 1830s, refers to this eastern Tigrayan route, which can clearly be identified as largely identical with the historical route known from local tradition, leading through Negash, passing by the rock-hewn church of Wuqro Maryam (which he wrongly calls « Mariam Courou ») and Agula’ (« Agoula »), and mentions that he crossed the plains of « Aouza » with well over one thousand inhabitants on his way to the vast plains of Ḥnderta (THÉOPHILE CHARLEMAGNE LEFEBVRE, *Voyage en Abyssinie exécuté pendant les années 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842, 1843*, vol. I: *Relation historique*, Bertrand, Paris 1845, p. 278ff.). He also mentions « Aouzienne » (Ḥawzén), where he arrived later during his trip, with around 2000 inhabitants.

²³ See GIANFRANCESCO LUSINI, « Ḥawzen », in SIEGBERT UHLIG et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. II, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2005, p. 1054–1055, who refers to 13th century sources according to which the « province of Ḥawzén » encompassed important parts of modern Tigray, from the Tekkeze river in its southwest to Tembén, Tséra’ and Ḥnderta to the ‘Afar borderlands of Arho in the east, which roughly corresponds to the dialectal area to which Seetzen’s word list can be linked. See also the letters by *nīgus* Nīgusé, who claimed to be the king of Ethiopia in the late 1850s (in competition with *atsé* Téwodros II who was ruling the other half of Ethiopia), written in his capital Ḥawzén, the traditional seat of the rulers of Tigray: SVEN RUBENSON (ed.), *Tewodros and his Contemporaries, 1855–1868*, Lund – Addis Ababa 1994 (Acta Aethiopica 2), no. 49, p. 88 (letter to Emperor Napoléon III, 1 November 1859, written in Ḥawzén), no. 50, p. 90 (letter to a French representative).

the term gereb could be used according to context (valley with a seasonally dry river).

47. Sea ('Meer') Báhhrih = baḥri (ባሕሪ)
48. River ('Fluss') M'ö nu = may innehiyu (ማይ እነሆ), orally also realised as may niyu (which is probably the form Seetzen had heard) or may niyo (variants: may inneho / inni'o - ማይ እነሆ/ እነአ) – a simple phrase meaning 'there is water', while 'river' would be ruba or gereb (seasonally dry river), depending on the dialect.
49. Water source ('Quelle') Minky = minch'i (ምንጩ, a typical Tigrayan term, synonymous for 'ayni, signifying a particularly clean water source'²⁴, (remark: this is one example where Seetzen uses 'k' to transliterate the ch'e / ጩ, similarly to the word Negk, see below; we can certainly exclude that Minky refers to minqi, which is a rare term expressing opposition, e.g. in minqenña; it also appears in informal expressions such as in the rhyme 'ch'inqi minqi', where the second word does not carry a specific meaning, but is used as a stylistic element to reinforce the idea – in this case joking about 'worries').
76. East ('Osten') Szahhéy wússit = tsehay wusid? – to be interpreted either as Amharic tsehay wust' (ፀሐይ ወስጥ), 'inmidst sunshine' (then probably a misunderstanding of some explanations by the informant, who was perhaps referring to someone sitting in the sunshine) or rather nab tsehay miwtsa' ('to the appearing / outcoming sun'), which is a rural informal way of referring to the East, where « the sun comes out » (in a formally more correct form this would be: nab tsehay miḥraq – 'to the [brightly] rising sun').
77. South ('Süden') Szehhéy röffády = tsehay refadi (ፀሐይ ረፋዲ) – reference to the period around midday starting from late morning²⁵ or, in a more dialectal realisation, tsehay refdi.
78. West ('Westen') Szehhéy atût = tsehay atewot, i.e. tsehay atiya, ፀሐይ አትዖ, mixed with Amharic (atut, አቲት) – reference to the period of the day when the sun is setting (with tsehay set in a female gender, while a male gender is also occasionally chosen).

²⁴ Kind explanation by Ar'aya Teklay, 4 April 2022.

²⁵ Explanation by Ar'aya Teklay (he explains it in the following way: « ፀሐይ ረፋድ ማለት ንግሥ ናብ ቀትሪ ዝከድ ኣካባቢ ዘሎ እዩ », 'tsehay refad refers to the period when the sun moves from morning to daytime').

79. North ('Norden') Szehhéy jállun = tsehay yellen (ፀሓይ የለን, lit. 'there is no sun') – which refers to the night or other periods without sunshine such as the rainy season (perhaps mixed up with the expression tsehay yebelun, which is used in another context to refer to a specific place which is shadowy).²⁶

80. Egypt ('Ägypten') Misríh = Misri (ምስሪ)

81. Sinnar ('Sennar') Sennâr = Sînnar (ስኖር)

82. Nomadic Arab ('Nomadischer Araber') Kóllattéy = qollatay (ቆላጋይ) – a term which refers to qolla ('lowlands'), with the suffix -tay, i.e. 'inhabitant of the lowlands' (male, singular), which carries the connotation, but not the explicit meaning of a person with a nomadic lifestyle (not an Arab, but usually Muslims or believers in traditional religions often linked by trade with the Muslim world).

83. Negroe ('Neger') Adbáraé = 'Ad Barya (ዳድ ባርያ) – which is a compound of 'ad ('descent group') and barya ('slave' or 'black slave', or more generally meaning a black person, but with a pejorative undertone); Seetzen has – it seems – not fully understood the explanations given to him, but his translation is still very close to the term, including the pejorative, racist undertone: the term barya as used in Ethiopian highlanders' parlance corresponds quite exactly to the term 'negroe', which is to be seen in the context of former European slave trade and continued slavery in America, which includes heavy racist connotations – similar to the connotations linked with the Ethiopian term 'barya', as Ethiopia was then still actively involved in the international Arab slave trade (including with Egypt – with many slaves of Northeastern African origin found in Cairo); the term 'Ad Barya therefore signifies a descent group with a « barya » background, i.e. either black people perceived as « potential slaves » or as slaves, or more generally a group of people with black complexion. It has to be noted, that while the term 'ad is usually used to designate actually existing descent or ethnic groups, in this case this term is in reality a gross xenonym (under the appearance of a regular ethnonym), i.e. a foreign designation of a group, whose ethnic identity is not respected by those using this term.²⁷

²⁶ Explanation by Ar'aya Teklay (he gives one example for the use of this term: « እዚ ገዛ ፀሓይ የብሉን ፀላል እዩ », 'this house [is situated in an area] without sun, there is shadow').

²⁷ See HAGAR SALAMON, « Barya », in SIEGBERT UHLIG et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. I, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2003, p. 489–490; see also WOLBERT SMIDT, « Slavery in the language – Barya, Barot, Tsellim in Tigrinnya (northern Ethiopia / Eritrea) and its connotations », *International Conference « Slavery in Africa, Past, Legacies and Present »*, Catholic University of Eastern

84. White person ('Weisser') Negk = nech' (ነቅ), Amharic for 'white', also used for 'white person' – the use of Amharic can be explained by the fact that it was more common to see white people within the context of the Amharic-speaking court and international contacts, who then got the label « white » in Amharic, while in Tigrīñña the colour white was only rarely associated with denominations of Europeans, due to a more traditional system of denominations of skin colours which did almost not use the term « white » for skin colour in the past (Europeans – like Ethiopian highlanders – were rather designated as qeyyih in Tigrīñña, 'red').
85. A blackish-brown [person] ('Ein Schwärzlichbrauner') T'äim = t'eyim (ጠይም) – which is a commonly used adjective to designate a person of darker, but not black complexion, which corresponds also to contemporary oral praxis, where – given quite a variety of skin colours in Ethiopia – references to specific persons are often linked with terms referring to skin colour (among other terms referring to the appearance or behavior of a person), in order to quickly identify someone during a conversation.
96. A travelling merchant ('Ein reisender Kaufmann') Nagádey = negaday (ነጋዳይ), also negadi (ነጋዲ).

There are also some interesting designations of occupations and ranks that are not discussed in this article. They provide an insight into the social sphere with which Seetzen's interlocutor was familiar, but are of secondary importance for the identification of the geographical context. However, it can be briefly stated here that they correspond to the practice of the typical free peasantry of Tigray and the largely warlike aristocratic class of the time.²⁸

472. Town ('Stadt') Áddy = 'addi (ዓዲ) – a term which is not fully identical with the European terms for town or settlement; it refers to a settled area with its land and its people together, as peasants and cattle herders are legally not separable from their land in the sphere of Tigrīñña-speakers; it can refer to a town as to a village or even a larger area, and always expresses a strong sense of belonging.
473. Big town/city ('Grosse Stadt') Awih áddy = 'awiy 'addi (ዓዋ ዓዲ, a purely oral form, from 'abiy 'addi, ዓቢይ ዓዲ, 'big settlement').

Africa (CUEA), Nairobi, et al. with support from IFRA, CFEE, IRD, 29 October 2014 (unpublished paper).

²⁸ [SEETZEN], VATER, « Dr. Seetzen's linguistischer Nachlass », p. 342–365.

474. Small settlement ('Flecken') Nejíschtä áddy = ní'ishte 'addi (ንእሽተ ጥዲ, 'small settlement')

475. Village ('Dorf') Haggréssel [the 'l' is certainly a typo] = hagereseb (ሃገረሰብ) – which means 'countryside' in local parlance: it is quite usual that an area with several rural settlements is called hagereseb, which explains the only slightly wrong translation provided by Seetzen.

III.2. The 30 numerals of Seetzen's word list interpreted and contextualised

One – Háddy [Seetzen hears: « hadde »] = <i>hadde</i> [ሓድ]. Still today, in a rural setting, this word can be realised as <i>haddi</i> – like other numerals such as « <i>kilitti</i> »; such a rural accent can be found all over eastern Tigray, starting from the Hawzén area to Irob, Saḥarti, Selewa (only in the 'Adwa area, central Tigray, it is consistently <i>hadde</i>).	Sixteen – Assírto schiddísty [Seetzen hears: « asírto shidiste »] = 'asserte <i>shiddishte</i> [ኣሰርተ ሽድሽተ]; also realised as 'asserto <i>shiddishti</i> (see the remarks on the realisation of vowels in a rural setting above).
Two – Kúlyt [Seetzen hears: « Kulte », « kílte »] = <i>kilitte</i>, <i>kilitti</i> (on the ending vowel -i see above), also realised as <i>kílte</i> [ክልተ], or in individual deviating pronunciation <i>kulte</i> (the shwa realised as a short u), also in today's rural Tigríñña quite typical of an elder or someone who speaks in a somewhat mumbling manner; cp. the word « Asírto kúlyt » (see below), i.e. pronounced 'asírto <i>kulte</i> (whereby the final -e in the word 'asserte tends towards an -o through assimilation by the u in « Kúlyt », which may explain the form « Assírto » for numbers 11ff).	Seventeen – Assírto schebáatíh [Seetzen hears: « asírto sheba'ati » or « asírto shebi'ati »] = 'asserte <i>sheb'ate</i> [ኣሰርተ ሹባተ], also realised as 'asserto <i>shob'ate</i> [ኣሰርተ ሹባተ] (slightly archaic forms), but today usually as 'asserte <i>show'atte</i> [ኣሰርተ ሹወተ]. The inconsistency in Seetzen's notes (for « seven » he refers to <i>shob'ate</i>, while in « seventeen » it is <i>sheb'ate</i>) reflects different possibilities of oral realisation; for example when a speaker repeats the word slowly to make it understood, it would be 'asserte <i>sheb'ate</i>.

Three – Szellésty [Seetzen hears: « ßeleste »] = <i>seleste</i> [ሰለሰተ], also realised as <i>selesti</i> in a rural setting.	Eighteen – Assírto schemmúnty [Seetzen hears: « asírto shemunte »] = ‘asserte <i>shemmonte</i> [ጸስርተ ሸጥንተ].
Four – Arbáatfñh [Seetzen hears: « arba’atñ »] = <i>arba’te</i> [ኣርባዕተ], in oral realisation also <i>arbi’ati</i> / <i>arbi’ate</i> [ኣርብዓተ].	Nineteen – Assírto tischáatý [Seetzen hears: « asírto tisha’ate »] = ‘asserte <i>tish’atte</i> [ጸስርተ ትሸዓተ].
Five – Hamísty [Seetzen hears: « hamiste »] = <i>hammushte</i> [ኣምሸተ], also realised as <i>hammushti</i> in a rural setting.	Twenty – Ósra [Seetzen hears: ‘sra] = ‘sra [ዕስራ].
Six – Schiddísty [Seetzen hears: « shidiste »] = <i>shiddishte</i> [ሸድሸተ], also realised as <i>shiddishti</i> in a rural setting.	Twenty-one – Ósrán haddfñh [Seetzen hears: « ‘sran ḥadde »] = ‘sran <i>ḥadden</i> [ዕስራን ኣደን].
Seven – Schobáty [Seetzen hears: « shob’ate »] = <i>shob’atte</i> [ሾብዓተ]; this form exists as a variant from Ḥamasén to Ìnderta, but most frequently in central Tigray up to Ḥamasén (central Eritrea); variant of <i>shew’atte</i> [ሸውዓተ] / <i>show’atte</i> [ሸውዓተ] (orally shortened also as <i>sho’atte</i> [ሾዓተ]), also realised as <i>shob’atti</i> in a rural setting.	Thirty – Szálâssa [Seetzen hears: « ßalâsa »] = <i>selasa</i> [ሰላሳ]. This simple form is contrasted by the rather complex transcription used by Seetzen; comparison shows that he used the â for a perceived long vowel (ā) imitating the Arabic vowel model, which in fact does not fit to Tigrīñña (á = e, â = a, which is the ā in the Arabic vowel model).
Eight – Schémmuntý [Seetzen hears: « shemunte »] = <i>shemmonte</i> [ሸጥንተ], also realised as <i>shemmonti</i> in a rural setting.	Forty – Arbâ [Seetzen hears: « arb’â »] = <i>arbi’a</i> [ኣርብዓ].
Nine – Tischáatfñh [Seetzen hears: « tisha’ati »] = <i>tish’atte</i> [ትሸዓተ], which is the dialectal form of central Tigray up to central Eritrea (different from	Fifty – Hámsza [Seetzen hears: « hamßa »] = <i>ḥamsa</i> [ኣምሳ].

eastern Tigrayan <i>tish'ante</i> [ትሽጥንተ], where the geminated -tt- is realised as -nt-), also realised as <i>tish'atti</i> in a rural setting.	
Ten – Assírty [Seetzen hears: « asírte »] = 'asserte [ዓስርተ], also realised as 'asírte [ዓስርተ] or 'asírte in a rural setting.	Sixty – Szílssa [Seetzen hears: « ßilßa »] = <i>sílssa</i> [ስልሳ], Amharic numeral also widely used in Tigray, different from the proper Tigríñña <i>sisa</i> [ሲሳ] or <i>susa</i> [ሱሳ].
Eleven – Assírto háddy [Seetzen hears: « asírto hadde »] = 'asserte <i>hadde</i> [ዓስርተ ሓደ]. In eastern Tigray, starting from the Həwzén area to the east, this may also be realised as 'asserto <i>haddi</i> (see the remarks above on the realisation of vowels in those rural areas and on 'mumbling' in the following entry).	Seventy – Szébba [Seetzen hears: « ßeb'a »] = <i>seb'a</i> [ሱባ].
Twelve – Assírto kúlty [Seetzen hears: « asírto kulte »] = 'asserte <i>kálte</i>, 'asserte <i>kálitte</i> [ዓስርተ ክልተ], rarely also pronounced 'asírto <i>kulte</i> with a short u as an individual « mumbled » realisation of the shwa (not uncommon even today in rural areas; see above: Two – Kúlty).	Eighty – Zmáníá [Seetzen hears: « ßemānya »] = <i>semanya</i> [ሱማንያ]. There is probably a mistake in the notes, maybe due to lack of time; according to Seetzen's system he would normally have transcribed the word as « Szemáníá ».
Thirteen – Assírto szellésty [Seetzen hears: « asírto ßeleste »] = 'asserte <i>seleste</i> [ዓስርተ ሰለስተ]. Also here, Seetzen transcribes « Assírto », while this variant is extremely rare the oral sphere (he probably just took the oral realisation he had noted for twelve as a standard).	Ninety – Tíschaatíh [Seetzen should have heard: « tes'a », but inserts the word he had noted already for nine, probably due to a confusion in his notes or rather a confusion by the speaker – when not very experienced, even today such a unconscious mistake may happen in daily conversations, especially if in hurry; Seetzen hears: « tisha'ati »].

misunderstood an explanation by his informant (NB: a popular female name in Northafrica is Malika, 'Queen' [ملكة], derived from another word, *malik* ['king'], which has, however, probably not influenced this note).

3. Devil – **Scheïtán ejú** [Seetzen hears: « sheytan iyu »]
= *sheyt'an iyu* [ሸይጥን እዩ], which means 'he/this is (a) devil'. It seems that Seetzen's informant said when asked for the word for devil: 'this is *sheyt'an*' – which then simply means: 'the word you are looking for is *sheyt'an*'. This is, therefore, a further element illustrating the oral communication between Seetzen and his informant.
4. Paradise – **Djénne** [Seetzen hears: « dyenne »]
= in the ecclesiastical context in Central Tigray usually *jennet* [ጃነት], orally also realised as *dyenne*, *dyennet*, which corresponds to the more formal Tigrifñña term *gennet* [ገነት] from Ge'ez ('heaven' in the religious sense); the actual pronunciation documented here is probably influenced by Arabic *janna* [جنة].
5. Hell – **Dgehénnem** [Seetzen hears: « dígehenem »]
= Tigrinized term 'da *gahinnem* [ገላ ጋህነም] which is an oral short form of *inda gahinem* [እንደ ጋህነም] (literally 'place of hell', but meaning 'hell'), from an association with the Amharic term *gahinem* [ጋህነም], 'hell' (in standard Tigrifñña and Amharic also *gehannem* - ገነነም). This may show the influence of Amharic-speaking priests due to the central role of Amharophone Gonder for church education; the use of an Amharic term from the ecclesiastical context is, however, not necessarily indicative of an Amharic-influenced dialect.
6. Mohammedan – **Islámmey** [Seetzen hears: « islamay »]
= *Islamay* [እስላማይ], 'Muslim', which as a term emphasizes the phonetic connection to the word *Islam* [እስላም], in contrast to the more familiar and equally common *Aslamay* [አሰላማይ], 'Muslim', a form only used by Christians and which, according to context, has or can have a pejorative / disparaging connotation. However, the phonetically more exact connection to the word *Islam* shows respect for the religion (in its official designation).
7. Christian – **Kistánney** [Seetzen hears: « kistanay »]
= *Kistanay* [ክስታናይ] 'Christian', a common oral variant of the formal term *Kristyanay* [ክርስትያናይ] 'Christian'.
8. Heathen – **Kuffár** [Seetzen hears: « kufar »]

= in local parlance in the term *kufar* refers to a bad moment, bad luck.²⁹ In addition, in Tigrinya, 'heathen' is occasionally referred to as *kafir* [ካፍር], influenced by Arabic (especially in border areas with Sudan and along trade routes to the Red Sea, as far as Massawa; this is related to the word *kafir* / *kafer* [ካፈር] used in purely rural areas for a larger woven basket).³⁰

9. Koran – **Korán** [Seetzen hears: « kor'an »]
= *qur'an* [ቁርኅን]; the term used in Tigrinya is almost identical with the Arabic one.
10. Beiram – **Phóttir** [Seetzen hears: « fötir »]
Seetzen must have heard an explanation by his informant that he did not fully understand on the Feast of the Breaking of the Fast, one of the two most important Muslim feasts, which is called *Ramazan Bayram* in Ottoman and *Īd al-fiṭr* in Arabic, which takes place at the end of Ramadan. (NB: There may also have been some confusion with Tigrinya *fuṭ'ur* [ፋጡር] / *fiṭ'ur* [ፍጡር], 'creature', in Seetzen's seemingly difficult conversation with his Tigrayan informant; the spelling of the shwa as 'ö' is not surprising, since the pronunciation can approximate a short German 'ö', at least to the ear of a speaker of German).
11. Church – **Betúskién** [Seetzen hears: « betiskiyén »³¹]
= *béte-kisyan* [ቤተክርያን], with an inversion *béte-skiyan* (in individual parlance), an oral familial short form of *béte-kistyan* [ቤተክርያን], *béte-kistan* [ቤተክርያን], *béte-kistan* [ቤተክርያን], and the more formal *béte kristyan* [ቤተ ክርስትያን] ('church'). The familial forms are especially common in a rural context. NB: For comparison see the synonymous *béte igzi* [ቤተ እግዚ.] or short, with an inversion, *béte-zgi* [ቤተዝጊ] 'place of worship' (spelled without -n; but in the case of an uneducated speaker a blending is possible as a hypercorrection, thus creating a wrong form such as *bete-zgé-n*, in adaptation to the pattern of *bete-kistan*; therefore it cannot be excluded that Seetzen had heard both forms and then took them for the same word).
12. Kurban Beiram (Ottoman: *Qurban Bayram*, 'Feast of Sacrifice', in Arabic *Īdu l-Adḥā*, the highest Muslim feast in the last month of the Muslim calendar, *Dhū al-Hijjah*) – **Arraphá** [Seetzen hears: « arafa »]
= *arefa* [ጳፈላ], term used by Tigrinya-speaking Muslims, meaning the fasting day of Arafah [عرفة يوم] (of Mount Arafat) on the 9th day of the month Dhul al-Hijjah, just before the feast of *Qurban Bayram*, which starts on the 10th

²⁹ Informant: Mel'aku Kidane, Mekelle.

³⁰ Informant: Cherqos Haylu, Siḥeta.

³¹ Possibly also « *betiskiyén* ».

day.³² This shows that there is some problem of order in Seetzen's list, as « Arraphá » is not a Tigrĩñña translation of « Kurban Beiram », but both terms are Ottoman and seem to form a unit – maybe there was a linguistic unclarity on the side of Seetzen or his notes were simply not yet complete.³³

13. Mosque – **Mesgítt** [Seetzen hears: « mesgit »]
= *mesgid* [መስጊድ], the usual term used for mosques also in today's Tigrĩñña (from Arabic *masjid* [مسجد]).
14. Prayer – **Sziggét** [Seetzen hears: « siget »]
= *síged* [ስገድ], which is the imperative form (masculine, singular) for prostrating in veneration of Allah (a word typical for Muslims, not for Christians), also used more generally in the meaning of 'praying'. Prayer of Christians is called *sígdet* [ስገድት], prayer of Muslims is *selat* [ሰላት].³⁴
15. Imam – **Askáry** [Seetzen hears: « askari »]
This is clearly a merger of two separate lines in the list (which probably means that Seetzen's list was not yet complete or was misread by the publisher), as these are two different Arabic words. Each of them should have had a separate Tigrĩñña translation: the Muslim religious title is *imam* [ኢማም] also in Tigrĩñña; the translation for the Ottoman-Arabic term *askari* [عسكري] ('soldier') into Tigrĩñña is *hashker* [ሐሽከር].
16. Circumcision – **Korósso métterú** [Seetzen hears: « koroso meteru »] = *quretsó* [ቁረዖ] ('something to be cut', or imperative 'cut!') *mítero* [ምተር] ('to prepare/prepare/cut small').³⁵ However, circumcision actually means *mígraz* [ምግራዝ], *gírzat* [ግርዛት], *gírezo* [ግረዝ], and is not called *quretsó mítero*; but Seetzen's misunderstanding is easy to understand – apparently his informant had added an explanation which Seetzen then thought was the actual term and then failed to note the correct term.

³² Probably not referring to the Arife day, which generally signifies any day before an important feast, more specifically the day before a feast shortly after the Feast of Sacrifice (Qurban Bayram).

³³ Note from the oral sphere of Tigrĩñña-speakers, which just illustrates how local people tend to re-interpret this word: In uneducated oral speech, the word 'arefa could be associated with the Christian concept *me'aríftsadqan(at)* in Tigrĩñña, the 'seat/resting place of the faithful on the way near a church'; there is also the form *me'arífi*, with a purely oral variant *me'arífa*, which could also contribute to mixing these terms.

³⁴ In oral speech, this linguistic differentiation is crucial to identify a Muslim or a Christian context.

³⁵ In modern Tigrĩñña with new secondary meaning 'measure', derived from the Italian teaching word *metro* ('metre'), which evidently cannot be used here as an explanation.

IV. Cairo's Non-European Internationality and Linguistic Diversity: Elements of an Oral Geography

Certainly, Seetzen's lists are linguistically interesting in that they provide some small insights into dialects and especially into the oral practice of northeastern African languages. But, perhaps more importantly, the word lists in their entirety offer another kind of key insight into the world in which Seetzen travelled: They give us an impression of the surprisingly elevated diversity of northeastern African languages present in Cairo at that time. As mentioned above, the languages from the wider Ethiopian region documented by Seetzen were Tigriñña (as discussed in this article), Amharic, Silt'é, Tigré, Oromo, Beja and Berber, among others, called by him « Tiggrý », « Gibberty », « Argubba », « Tahâsse » etc. The language denominations he used are in and of themselves interesting and merit further scholarly attention. The question of which actual languages they in fact represented has already been the subject of research, even if not in sufficient depth, and the work done so far has already proved to be useful. Seetzen's « Argubba », for example, was identified by Leslau as a variant of Silt'e Wolane.³⁶ Wolane is an Eastern Gurage language, along with Silt'e and Inneqor (called the « Silt'e group » by some linguists such as Gutt and considered a group of three dialects). The great majority of the Wolane are Muslims.³⁷

The « Tahasse » of Seetzen (published in Vater's book from 1816)³⁸ had been identified as Tigre at some point after studies on the Tigre of the coast had begun. The term refers to the language's denomination tū-Hāsā,³⁹ which existed in the Sudanese context. First research on Tigre had been launched by Werner Munzinger around 1864,⁴⁰ but it was only much later that research on Tigre continued. Praetorius, for instance, only briefly referred to this language.⁴¹ The

³⁶ WOLF LESLAU, « Examen du supposé Argobba de Seetzen et de Lefebvre », *Word*, 5/1 (1949), p. 46–54.

³⁷ RONNY MEYER, « Wälane language », in SIEGBERT UHLIG et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. IV, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2010, p. 1079–1080.

³⁸ [SEETZEN], VATER, « Dr. Seetzen's linguistischer Nachlass », p. 280.

³⁹ They are living mainly in today's western Eritrea and also, historically, in the Sudanese-Eritrean borderlands. In the Sudan they were called Hāsā, which explains also the designation to-Hāsā, a language name which was formed based on the Eastern Sudanese Beja-model – the Beja language of the Bisharin in today's Eritrean-Sudanese borderlands is still called tū-Bidhaawye (Tū-Beḏāwīe, in simplified spelling also To-Bedawie); see WOLBERT SMIDT, « Təgre ethnography », in SIEGBERT UHLIG et al. (eds.): *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. IV, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2010, p. 897–899; compare with HERMAN ALMKVIST, *Die Bischari-Sprache Tū-Beḏāwīe in Nordost-Afrika*, Upsala 1881.

⁴⁰ WERNER MUNZINGER, « Vocabulaire de la langue Tigre », in AUGUST DILLMANN, *Lexicon linguae Aethiopicae. Cum indice Latino*, Weigel, Leipzig 1865, p. 1–64.

⁴¹ FRANZ PRAETORIUS, « Himjarische Beiträge », *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 26 (1872), p. 747.

first important researcher on Tigre, Enno Littmann mentioned, but did not make use of Seetzen's glossary.⁴²

Seetzen's publisher Vater describes how Seetzen had been able to access these languages, quoting Seetzen's remark on Cairo as an international centre, « where travellers arrive from the entire northern Africa, from the Nile to the Atlantic Ocean, from the Mediterranean Sea to the Senegal, Gülby [= Niger], and southwards from Habesch [al-Ḥabash = arab. Ethiopia] up to Singebär [= Zanzibar], some arriving on their pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, others staying there due to their studies and to trade ».⁴³ This description shows that, as already mentioned above, the widespread assumption in the existing literature that Seetzen had collected vocabulary mainly from slaves does not reflect the cosmopolitan situation in which Seetzen found himself in Cairo, which was undoubtedly a metropolitan centre.⁴⁴ Seetzen's reference to « studies » is of particular interest here: The ancient university al-Azhar in Cairo, one of the most ancient universities of the world, attracted Muslim students from far and wide, including from the entire Horn of Africa. The presence of « Ḥabashi » at al-Azhar (Arabic for Ethiopians, mainly as a reference to the Ethiopian highlands and the directly adjacent regions), for example, has been well documented in Cairo over many centuries.⁴⁵ Correspondingly, we can probably assume that Seetzen had in fact encountered exactly such students.

⁴² ENNO LITTMANN, « Das Verbum der Tigre-Sprache », *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, 13 (1890), p. 140.

⁴³ VATER, *Dr. Seetzen's linguistischer Nachlass*, p. ix: « wo aus dem ganzen nördlichen Afrika vom Nil bis zum Atlantischen Ocean, und von dem mittelländischen Meere bis zum Senegal, Gülby und bis südwärts von Habesch bis Singebär theils Reisende auf ihrer Pilgerfahrt nach Mekka und Medina ansprechen, theils der Studien und des Handels wegen sich aufhalten. », translated from German by the author. See also the earlier note by Seetzen himself expressing the same idea: ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Vorbericht zu den Beyträgen zur Kenntniss der unbekannten Länder von Afrika », in *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmelskunde* 33 (April 1810), p. 320-330, here p. 321.

⁴⁴ Seetzen himself underlines this: « Kahira ist für einen forschenden Geographen ein sehr wichtiger Ort, indem man hier nach und nach Reisende aus dem ganzen nördlichen Afrika [...] antreffen könnte » (« Cairo is a very important location for a geographer carrying out research, as one can subsequently encounter travellers coming from all over northern Africa »), SEETZEN, « Vorbericht », p. 321.

⁴⁵ ABDULKADER, « Ġābārti », here p. 597: « In the 15th century a *riwāq* (a section for scholarly Islamic learning) was established at al-Azhar University ... later the name was changed into *Riwāq al-Ġābarta* to include all Muslim students from Ethiopia and Somalia ». See also ALESSANDRO GORI, « Islam in Africa Orientale: Crisi Islamica e/o Crisi dell'islam? », *Africa: Rivista trimestrale di studi e documentazione dell'Istituto italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente*, 62/3 (Settembre 2007), p. 429-438, here p. 435: students from the Horn of Africa were institutionally affiliated to the *Riwāq al-Ġābarta* of al-Azhar (see also p. 436 on shaykh 'Abdallāh al-Hararī from Ethiopia, an Islamic scholar and founder of a religious movement in the Lebanon, who had studied at al-Azhar; see on his background and his studies HAGGAI ERLICH, « 'Abdallāh b. Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Hararī », in ALESSANDRO BAUSI, SIEGBERT UHLIG et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. V, Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden 2014, p. 210-211).

Another important remark by Seetzen is his mention of the traders. Cairo has to be imagined at this time as an ancient centre of Muslim trading networks that had not yet been heavily disrupted by the competition posed by Europeans along the seacoasts of the Red Sea and Indian Ocean or the partial break-down of trade relations that later arose in the era of colonialism. These traders, evidently, were attracted by Cairo as it served as a hub for international trade at the crossroads of the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea, Arabic states and inner African countries, the latter of which were linked to Egypt through northern African caravan routes and along the Nile route as well as the Red Sea coast.

It is important to underscore in this context that the Red Sea was a centre of Muslim travel: Any pilgrim on the way to Mecca coming from northern Africa or other African regions would need to cross the Red Sea by using caravan arrangements and boats travelling along Red Sea coasts. All of this travel necessitated a high degree of social, cultural and political institutionalisation of travel organisation and travel knowledge. Seetzen's lists, even if they do not actually focus on these aspects, provide a telling glimpse into this non-European internationality. In sum, Cairo was a cultural and socio-political metropolis for non-European travellers who spoke a large number of different languages and were welcomed by a local culture that had embraced this internationality. The multitude of languages from Ethiopia and the countries surrounding Ethiopia that Seetzen documented in Cairo clearly illustrate this point.

Notwithstanding, this analysis is not a wholesale rejection of the notion that there were also slaves and that Seetzen may have encountered them. But, the idea that Seetzen (in this context imagined as a well-educated European explorer) had only encountered totally illiterate slaves (imagined as persons with almost no linguistic capacities?) would be a mis-reading of his encounters with this very diverse community of non-European travellers in Cairo. The imagined hierarchy we see here is certainly at least partially wrong. Indeed, Vater remarks, after citing the above-mentioned quote by Seetzen, that these travellers were « more or less fluent in Arabic, [which is why] they were more able to provide information on their own languages than the black slaves, who had been brought to the city from Dârfûr and rarely understood enough Arabic after their arrival to be able to communicate well. Moreover, most of them had also been taken away from their home countries at too early an age to be able to communicate in a sufficiently reliable way about their own languages ».⁴⁶ Later readers seem to have misread this commentary, assuming then that Seetzen's informants and research partners

⁴⁶ VATER, *Dr. Seetzen's linguistischer Nachlass*, p. IX: « Des Arabischen mehr oder weniger kundig, sind diese geschickter zur Auskunft über ihre Sprachen, als die dorthin aus Dârfûr gebrachten Negersclaven, die bei ihrer Ankunft selten Arabisch genug verstehen, um sich verständlich zu machen, und oft schon zu früh aus ihrem Vaterlande weggeführt sind, als dass sie ihre eigne Sprache rein mittheilen könnten », translated from German by the author.

(as we should call them) had mostly been slaves. It is quite likely that they may have simply not thought of the possibility that there was such a massive presence of non-European travellers and students in Cairo – some of them well-experienced in international travel – during this pre-colonial era.

Later in his commentary, Vater also noted that he wished that other Europeans would also dare to start documenting the languages in other African regions and settlements as Seetzen had done, even if it could not be expected that they would encounter as many languages as Seetzen in Cairo.⁴⁷ Vater's remark and the tone of his comments also help us to make one more observation regarding Seetzen, notably that his scientific approach was guided by a spirit of appreciation for the linguistic diversity of humanity and a desire to document this, without any reference to any « primitivity » or « ignorance ». Even the partial ignorance of slaves that he mentions is explained through the fact that they had been uprooted, not by an assumption of their cultural inferiority. Seetzen's work on these languages thus does not betray any kind of hierarchical imagination in which Seetzen saw himself in a superior position. Rather, he appears to be an intellectually curious interlocutor who engaged at great length with his linguistic partners, even if his notes do not tell us much about these actual encounters. Seetzen's capacity to engage in human interaction and his readiness to perceive Cairo's internationality as an important resource is nonetheless evident from the great diversity of the documented languages, which clearly stemmed from people with the most diverse backgrounds and quite different levels of knowledge, as well as from the absence of any racial slurs. There were other fellow travellers who had seen nothing of this diversity.

Moreover, Seetzen's collection aptly demonstrates that essentialist perspectives on language names are problematic: Seetzen is not simply « wrong » when using a specific denomination that does not correspond to the denomination established today as the only correct one for a given language. His use of words, ethnonyms, and toponyms rather reflect, as we have seen, a fluid reality of non-formal speaking and parlance; they speak to a specific reality which did exist and does exist within which terminologies may be used in a way that does not correspond to what we believe that a language should be called from our present-day perspective. Although Seetzen himself was probably unaware, the orality of his documentation in his lists offers quite authentic insights into actual language use.

For example, such an approach which just looks into a language's denomination from today's perspective leads to the quite surprising – and wrong – identification of Seetzen's « Gibberty » as a Somali dialect that we find in

⁴⁷ VATER, *Dr. Seetzen's linguistischer Nachlass*, p. IX–X.

literature referring to Seetzen.⁴⁸ A simple check of this language informed by only some very basic knowledge of Somali (Cushitic) and Amharic (Ethio-Semitic), however, would immediately reveal that Seetzen was documenting quite usual Amharic here. This language denomination is – as said above – not a « mistake » committed by Seetzen, but rather it documents the actual use of the term Jeberti within a number of (Muslim) identities linked with very different languages, enriched here by another example for this praxis. In modern literature there are references to a northern Somali group called Gabarti, which is the reason for the confusion in the literature. In this case Seetzen uses the term « Gibberty » for the language spoken by an Amharic-speaker, which is evidently more or less the same term. Some explanations on this are necessary: generally, long-term studies of groups in the region, such as of the Gabarti, show that group names were occasionally travelling over large distances and were sometimes used by groups speaking totally different languages (while these groups did have connections some time back in history, be it ethnic, occupational or some form of inter-ethnic clan relations).

Languages in Northeastern Africa rarely had a fixed general denomination, as we also see in this example: People often simply called their language after their group's name or their region of origin. As mentioned above, the term Jeberti normally refers to Muslim traders who spoke Tigrinya or Amharic in the Ethiopian highlands; those assuring the trade connecting Christian Ethiopia with the outside world were of great importance for assuring economic stability in the region and the flow of information. As trade via the Sudanese Nile route and along the Red Sea was mainly in the hands of Muslims, Muslim trading groups in the Christian

⁴⁸ See GENE BALFORD GRAGG, « Lexicography of the Cushitic Languages », in FRANZ JOSEPH HAUSMANN, OSKAR REICHMANN, HERBERT ERNST WIEGAND et al. (eds.), *Wörterbücher - Dictionaries - Dictionnaires. Ein internationales Handbuch zur Lexikographie*, vol. III, Berlin - New York 1991, p. 2461-2469, here p. 2461. See also JAKOBI, « Seetzen der Sprachensammler »: for example, she lists Seetzen's language denominations together with her interpretations: « Sprachen, von denen Seetzen Wortlisten gesammelt hat, 'Phalatija', 'Szauaken', 'Tahâsse', 'Tiggrý', 'Gibberty', 'Argubba' und die beiden nilnubischen Sprachen 'Berberisch' und 'Dúngalisch'... », which she equals with « Ful, Beja, Tigre, Tigrinya, Somali, Gurage sowie Nubisch (Nobiin und Dongolawi) » – thus mixing up Seetzen's Gibberty with Somali. She also lists some words from the 'Gibberty' language without further identification (from SEETZEN, « Über das Land Jédschu in Habbésch »), and notes: « Ungeklärt ist noch die Identität von Seetzen's 'Gibberty,' daher das Fragezeichen ». (« The identity of Seetzen's 'Gibberty' has not been clarified, which is why there is a question mark »). The Ethiopianist Cohen, however, had already identified the language documented by Seetzen quite a time ago as Amharic: MARCEL COHEN, *Etudes d'éthiopien meridional*, Paris 1931 (Société Asiatique. Collection d'ouvrages orientaux), p. 357. On the term see: ABDULKADER, « Čäbärti », p. 597-598, to be differentiated from the Somali Gabarti, which, however, was not a term used by themselves (see on the Somali groups identified with this denomination: GIORGIO BANTI, « Čäbärti », in SIEGBERT UHLIG et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, vol. II, Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2005, p. 598, with further references).

highlands were found all over Ethiopia in different regions. They spoke the respective language of their environs, which is why a « Jeberti » would for example speak Amharic. The term has its own interesting history, which shall not be discussed here, but reflects a long history of trade linking the hinterland to numerous coasts – including the Somali coast of the Indian Ocean. Seetzen's connection of Amharic (not yet called « Amharic » by all its speakers in that period, as we see also in this example) with a Jeberti group adds one aspect to the history of this network of people – one of whom was Seetzen's partner in language documentation.

This observation leads us again back to the term « oral geography », or more precisely the system of ethnic and geographical references in colloquial language terms: Seetzen's collection of terms is precious, as it simply and naively documents what people were telling him – without him correcting them under the influence of a known standard or an established language term. This leads us to exactly the observation mentioned above: People regularly called their language after their group's name or the region of origin, i.e. within a local system of ethnic-geographical territorial concepts, which we can illustrate through several of the language denominations used by Seetzen. Geographical and ethnic-territorial concepts are used for language denomination. A good example is the language treated in this article: « Sprache von Tiggrý », which corresponds exactly to how the term is called still today in traditional settings in central Tigray (« *q^wanq^wa* Tigray », i.e. 'language of Tigray'); the term « Tigrĩña » which is by now the usual term used in standard publications and official discourse in Ethiopia and Eritrea is a rather recent term, constructed based on Amḥarĩña – while in the countryside a much more geographical and region-based system of language denominations can still be observed, as recent studies show – according to regions, people would call their dialect rather vaguely after a much more general term encompassing many groups (*q^wanq^wa* Ḥabesha), or after their precise area (such as Rayyĩna in Rayya ⁴⁹ etc., which Seetzen mentions in his geographical report based on information from the « Gibberty »-speaker, who gave him information about the routes to neighbouring Muslim countries⁵⁰ and mentioned « Réija » as a place in the province of « Tikkry », i.e. Tigray).⁵¹ The reference to Tigray in Seetzen's language denomination follows the described system of geography-based language denominations: Historically, the term Tigray just referred to the center of the Tigrĩña-speaking provinces, which all had their own regional identities from Ḥamasen to Rayya, but were often altogether called « Tigray », by outsiders

⁴⁹ On the self-designation of the language variant of Rayya and the multiple identities of different Tigrĩña-speaking groups: SMIDT, « Tigrinnya-speakers across the Borders ».

⁵⁰ See on this geographical information provided by the Jeberti interviewed by Seetzen, the footnote 7 above (SEETZEN, « Über das Land Jédschu in Habbésch », p. 351–352).

⁵¹ SEETZEN, « Über das Land Jédschu in Habbésch », p. 352.

due to their shared language. This denomination became dominant only because Tigray was the political centre, with the seat of the most important prince respectively governor.

There are a number of similar cases in Seetzen's lists: the « Sprache von Szauaken » is also not denominated with a proper language denomination, but with a geographical reference, to the port town of Sawakin.⁵² Again this should be understood as a reflection of an actual local practice of geography-focused language denominations, in this case by a local group of the North Cushitic-speaking Beja. Systematically, this also corresponds to the denomination of the Amharic word list as « Gibberty », as the identification with the specific group decides about language denomination, not an abstract larger (linguistic) concept of belonging to a language. This, finally, also solves the mystery of the somehow puzzling denomination of the Silt'e Wolane language as « Sprache von Argúbba in Habbésch » – while Argobba is today known as the denomination of another language, spoken by the Muslim Argobba living at the fringes of the Amharic-speaking Ethiopian highlands (which corresponds to the historical term « Habbésch »).⁵³ the Argobba area is historically important as a crossroad of Muslim traders connecting the Ethiopian highland with large networks of trade

⁵² JAKOBI, « Seetzen der Sprachensammler », rightly notes that Seetzen repeatedly uses place names to denominate languages: « Die Namen, die Seetzen zur Bezeichnung der von ihm dokumentierten Sprachen verwendet, sind meist keine Sprachnamen im engeren Sinn, sondern – wie etwa im Fall von 'Szuaken' – Ortsbezeichnungen, hier der Name der am Roten Meer gelegenen Stadt Suakin/Sawakin, woher Seetzens Beja-Informant stammte. » – She also adds, that so far an explanations for these choices has not been undertaken: « Eine detaillierte Aufschlüsselung und Erläuterung der Namen, die Seetzen seinen Sprachen gegeben hat, steht noch aus. »

⁵³ The term « Habbésch » is itself derived from an Arabic derivation from the local « Ḥabesha »; it is not surprising that the Ethiopian inhabitants of Cairo would use this term when referring to their country. Seetzen is also clearly using geographical information coming from his Oromo counterpart when he refers to his language as « Sprache der Galla westwärts von Habbésch », with which he asserts that this language is spoken outside « Habbésch », in regions to the west of it (which is correct of we look at it from the perspective of the southern regions of « Habbésch », such as Shewa and Argobba). The fact that he uses the term « Galla » (a pejorative term which is not a self-denomination used by the members of the group themselves), is to be explained by the fact that due to contacts with Ethiopian highlanders, Europeans had already started, from the 17th century onwards, to use this term when referring to the Oromo. In this case, Seetzen does not document the self-denomination of the language, but instead chooses to refer to an already known term. On this ethnic-geographical term, referring mainly to the Ethiopian highlands inhabited by the « Ḥabesha », i.e. mainly Amharic- and Tigrīñña-speakers (from which also the term « Abyssinia » is derived), WOLBERT G.C. SMIDT, « Selbstbezeichnungen von Təgrāñña-Sprechern (Ḥabāša, Tāgaru, Təgrāñña u.a.) », in BOGDAN BURTEA, JOSEF TROPPER, HELEN YOUNANSARDAROU (eds.), *Studia semitica et Semitothamitica. Festschrift Rainer Voigt*, Ugarit-Verlag, Münster 2005, p. 385–404; WOLBERT G.C. SMIDT, « The Term Ḥabāša: An Ancient Ethnonym of the 'Abyssinian' Highlanders », in HATEM ELLIESIE (ed.), *Multidisciplinary Views on the Horn of Africa*, Köppe Verlag, Köln 2014 (Studien zum Horn von Afrika, 1), p. 37–69.

routes, which also means that we should not imagine this area as ethnically and linguistically homogeneous. Again, the Muslim Silt'e-speaker who was interviewed by Seetzen, must have followed the principle described here: referring to his area of origin to denominate his language. In this sense, the word lists of Northeast-African languages are witnesses of a specific ethnic-territorial concept of identities still known today from mainly rural settings, defying official discourses of unified larger ethnic or language groups – i.e. an oral geography «from below», expressed through self-denominations. In addition, as demonstrated above, Seetzen's lists also provide a wealth of geographical vocabulary referring to settlement patterns (such as the term 'addi, 'settled area' or similar, as discussed above). These provide insights into the geographical reality on the ground, as they document the use of specific territorial concepts.

In conclusion, as this article has demonstrated with its reading of Seetzen's contributions to language documentation, we need to explore new perspectives on these early nineteenth-century research endeavours undertaken by travellers like Seetzen. Despite a high degree of naivety, it is precisely this untrained and very personal approach of Seetzen that had produced a valuable set of original material helping to understand the informal parlance of this period (which actually proves to be very similar to the one found in today's rural context in Tigray), which in turn enables the mapping of what is referred to here as an «oral geography»: A geography of topo- and ethnonyms used in informal exchanges of information and experiences that *reflect an authentic local understanding of terms and locations*. The «dense» new methodology of ethnographic research that was adopted by Seetzen, which necessitated a close personal relationship with informants, offers illustrative insights into contemporary world views – even if there are some problematic shortcomings in proper linguistic documentation or vocabulary comprehension. Seetzen's lists indirectly reveal the existence of (otherwise rarely reported) international networks of exchange, trade, and migration in Northeastern Africa that linked the metropolitan city of Cairo with numerous neighbouring countries all over Northeastern Africa. Through Seetzen's documentations, we can detect the presence of African research partners and scholars (not just «informants») who were willing to cooperate with the European researcher, thus opening a gateway for knowledge about African realities that could be reported back to a Europe still rather detached from the multinational realities of the Eastern Mediterranean and Indian Ocean world.

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« EXCESSIVE STORYTELLING »
SEETZEN AS A PROTAGONIST
IN THE POSTMODERN ADVENTURE NOVEL
EMPTY QUARTER – RUB 'AL-KHALI (1996) BY MICHAEL ROES

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Abstract

In his novel *Empty Quarter – Rub 'al-Khali*, published in 1996, Berlin writer Michael Roes tells of a fictional traveller to the Orient, Ferdinand Alois Schnittke, who is searching for Moses's Tablets of the Law in the late eighteenth century. The reflections of the nameless, first-person narrator living in Yemen serve as a contrafaction to Schnittke's narrative. The postmodern anthropologist has discovered Schnittke's travel records and also starts a journey in search of the Western 'self', anthropological dimensions of games and gaming, and the roots of Orientalism in modern times. Echoing the style of Umberto Eco, Roes has written a brilliantly told postmodern adventure novel, which was also submitted as a Habilitation thesis in the subject of Ethnology at the Free University of Berlin. Moreover, in the appendix, Roes not only listed the various games that he observed and described in Yemen, but also he meticulously breaks down the sources used in the historical narrative section, including Ulrich Jasper Seetzen's *Travels through Syria* (posth. 1854–1859). My essay addresses the question of how (I) Roes's protagonist can be identified with Seetzen and (II) how orientalism, anthropology, and postmodern self-reflection are related in the novel.

Key Words

Orientalism; Postmodernism; Novel; Narration



When Berlin writer Michael Roes – a psychology graduate with an PhD in philosophy and experienced anthropologist (who has conducted field research in Palestine, Yemen, the United States, Mali and China) – published his extensive novel *Empty Quarter – Rub 'al-Khali* in autumn 1996, literary criticism and the public were equally enthusiastic about its narrative quality. The sales figures seemed to justify the reviews. Indeed, Roes had formally leaned on Umberto Eco's *The Name*

of the Rose (1980) in the construction of his novel by developing two plot lines linked by an old manuscript (« Naturally, a manuscript »):¹ On the surface, Roes tells the story of an ethnologist who is doing some field research about Arab games in Yemen during the 1994 Civil War. This postmodern ethnologist carries an old manuscript in his luggage from around 1800 that was written by Ferdinand Alois Schnittke, the director of the Weimar puppet theatre who had been on the hunt for Moses's Tablets of the Law in Yemen almost two-hundred years earlier. As the two plot lines begin to cross, Roes uses the historical perspective as a prism to explore the problems of self-exploration and learning about the 'other' as well as the interplay of travel to the Orient with projections of this seemingly far away place.²

Above all, Schnittke's travel route is strikingly reminiscent of the real Orient traveller Ulrich Jasper Seetzen. Their itineraries have unmistakable parallels, which can be illustrated best in a tabular overview:

Travel route of Ulrich Jasper Seetzen	Travel route of Ferdinand Alois Schnittke
Gotha – Vienna	Weimar, Dresden, Prague, Vienna, Trieste, Venice
Istanbul	Istanbul
Aleppo	Tripolis
Damascus	Damascus
Amman	Mount Hermon
Gerasa (Jerash)	Negev
Jerusalem	Jerusalem
Sinai (Saint Catherine's Monastery)	Sinai (Saint Catherine's Monastery)
Cairo	Cairo
Jeddah	Jeddah
Mecca	—

¹ UMBERTO ECO, *The Name of the Rose*, transl. William Weaver, Harcourt Brace & Co., San Diego – New York – London 1983, p. 3.

² SEIRIOL DAFYDD, *Intercultural and Intertextual Encounters in Michael Roes's Travel Fiction*, Institute of Modern Languages Research, London 2015 (Bithell Series of Dissertations, 42); CHRISTOPH SCHMITT-MAAß, *Das gefährdete Subjekt. Selbst- und Fremdforschung in der deutschsprachigen Ethnopoese der Gegenwart* (Hubert Fichte, Hans Christoph Buch, Michael Roes), Synchron, Bielefeld 2011 (Diskursivitäten, 13).

Medina	—
Sanaa (Yemen)	Sanaa (Yemen)
Sayyan, Dhamar, Ṣafār	Wadi el Ain, Beni Gahim, Bejt Chuth
Aden (Yemen)	Aden (Yemen)
Mocha (Yemen)	Mocha (Yemen)
Ta'izz? / Marib? (lost)	Wadi Denne? / Marib? (lost)

In addition to the geographical parallels and the tradition in the ethnographic indexing of *Arabia felix* in both journeys, there are other similarities in the obsession of both men with the hunt for Arab manuscripts. The real explorer Seetzen and the fictional character Schnittke, for example, both visit St. Catherine's Monastery on Sinai in the hope of discovering particularly rare early Christian manuscripts. In his last message to the Duke of Gotha, Seetzen had in fact counted the manuscripts that he had recently acquired in Yemen among the « most delicious that I have received in the Orient ».³ Ultimately, these elements of a 'hero' plot reminiscent of *Indiana Jones* represent only one of the parallels between these two adventurers.

For instance, both Seetzen and Schnittke disappear: one vanishes in the desert sand of the Rub 'al-Khali, the other dissolves as the novel progresses. But, perhaps more importantly, both converted to Islam, indicating that they tried to adapt as much as possible to the culture that they were studying.⁴ These last two points – self-dissolution and cultural assimilation – form the lens that can be used to

³ Quotation after NORBERT NEBES, « Ulrich Jasper Seetzen im Jemen », in HANS STEIN, *Ulrich Jasper Seetzen (1767–1811). Leben und Werk. Die arabischen Länder und die Nahostforschung im napoleonischen Zeitalter*, Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek, Gotha 1995 (Veröffentlichungen der Forschungs- und Landesbibliothek Gotha, 33), p. 41. All translations are my own, if not otherwise specified.

⁴ Seetzen himself posed as a Muslim when he travelled to areas controlled by Bedouin tribes and because he wanted to visit the holy sites of Mecca and Medina. According to Seetzen, this had been successful: « To get to know the interior of Africa from my own point of view is still as lively and fiery a wish of mine as it was when I made the plan, during which my experience has matured many times over. If I remain alive and healthy, I shall soon, after completing my journey in Arabia, hasten with the greatest expectation towards the goal of my long journey in Africa, in which I hope the mask of Islam will render me as useful a service as it has hitherto rendered me in Arabia » [« Das Innere von Afrika aus eigener Ansicht kennen zu lernen, ist noch ein eben so lebhafter und feuriger Wunsch von mir, wie damals, als ich den Plan fasste, während dem meine Erfahrung vielfach gereift ist. Bleibe ich am Leben und gesund, so werde ich bald nach beendigter Reise in Arabien dem Ziel meiner langen Reise in Afrika mit der größten Erwartung entgegen eilen, wobei mir hoffentlich die Maske des Islam eben so nützliche Dienste leisten wird, als sie mir bisher in Arabien leistete »] (ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, « Auszug aus einem Schreiben des Russ. Kais. Kammer-Assessors Dr. U. J. Seetzen [1810]. », *Monatliche Correspondenz zur Beförderung der Erd- und Himmels-Kunde*, 28 (1813), p. 238). I thank Natalia Bachour for the reference.

analyse the « excessive storytelling »⁵ in Roes's novel and Seetzen's importance in its construction.

In the novel, it is the Arab audience that adds a seemingly oriental quality to the « excessive storytelling » of the narrator Schnittke – this results, in a sense, in a game of double deception that involves two different Orientalisms. Roes interweaves a wide variety of sources into the historical part of his narrative – they are meticulously listed in the novel appendix (assorted in order of their publication).⁶ The following works are mentioned:

Carsten Niebuhr, *Travels through Arabia, and Other Countries in the East*, Perthes – Möller, Copenhagen – Hamburg 1774.

Johann Ludwig Burckhardt, *Travels in Arabia*, Ducal Publishing House, Weimar 1830.

Edward William Lane, *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*, Knight, London 1836.

Ulrich Jasper Seetzen, *Travels through Syria, Palestine, Phenicia, the Trans-Jordan Countries, Arabia Petrae, and Lower Egypt*, Reimer, Berlin 1854.

Charles M. Doughty, *Travels in Arabia Deserta*, CUP, Cambridge 1888.

Julius Euting, *Diary of a Journey through Inner Arabia*, Brill, Leiden 1896.

Leo Hirsch, *Travels in South Arabia, Mahra Country and Hadramut*, Brill, Leiden 1897.

Eduard Glaser, *Journey to Marib*, Hölder, Vienna 1913.

Alois Musil, *The Manners and Customs of the Rwala Bedouins*, American Geographical Society, New York 1928.

Bertram Thomas, *Arabia Felix. Across the Empty Quarter of Arabia*, Cape, London 1932.

Harry St. J. B. Philby, *The Empty Quarter*, Constable & Company, London 1933.

Thomas E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, Cape, London 1936.

⁵ MICHAEL ROES, *Rub' Al-Khali. Leeres Viertel. Invention über das Spiel*, Gatzka, Frankfurt am Main 1996, p. 438: «Maasslosigkeit des Erzählens».

⁶ ROES, *Rub' Al-Khali*, p. 774. Nevertheless, literary critics complained that Roes's historical text compilation is full of anachronisms, cf. for example ANGELA PRAESENT, « Ein erotischer Tourist im Jemen », *Die Weltwoche*, 9 (01.1997), p. 35.

Seetzen's *Travels through Syria* is mentioned in fourth place, published posthumously in 1854 by the Leipzig private scholar Friedrich Karl Hermann Kruse (1790–1866). This publication was based on the travel observations that Seetzen, who disappeared in 1811, had made from 1805 to 1809. From this point of view, it seems that the timing of Seetzen's writings corresponds most closely with the life of the fictional Oriental traveller Schnittke as opposed to those of Niebuhr (1733–1815) or Burkhardt (1784–1817). Since Roes constructed a competitive relationship between Schnittke and Goethe, which is the reason for Schnittke's departure from Weimar, it must be assumed that the 'Prince of Poets' is somewhat older than the character of the novel. Therefore, Schnittke must have been born between 1748 and 1778 (this means he could be one generation younger than Goethe at most).

As precise as Roes's list of sources may be, he does not disrupt the narrative flow by any footnotes or the like, even though his novel was submitted as a university thesis. Nonetheless, with a little philological patience (and referring to the locations noted in the diaries), the correlations between Seetzen and Schnittke can be identified. For example, Roes uses a detailed quotation from Seetzen when Schnittke writes of his time in Jerusalem. By juxtaposing these two passages in which Seetzen and Schnittke concisely describe their visits to the Church of the Resurrection in Jerusalem, one can see how faithful to the text Roes is in his 'oriental' narrative:

From here I have the pleasure of being able to observe the assembly below me undisturbed for a while. The small grave building is the size of a large room. It forms an elongated square and is covered with copper. The Greeks take the place on one side of the tomb, as well as the main part of the church, the Armenians gather on the other side of the tomb. They are reverent and prudent, while the Greeks behave indecently in the highest degree and make a noise that rings in my ears. The younger ones hustle and wrestle; three or four of them ambush and carry another, whether they like it or not, around the grave, while another crowd is running after them with wild shouts. You don't celebrate a service, you go to a bacchanal.⁷

⁷ ROES, *Rub' Al-Khali*, p. 48: « Von hier habe ich das Vergnügen, die Versammlung unter mir eine Zeitlang ungestört beobachten zu können. Das kleine Grabgebäude hat das Ausmaass eines grossen Zimmers. Es bildet ein längliches Viereck und ist mit Kupfer bedeckt. Die Griechen nehmen den Platz auf der einen Seite des Grabes, desgleichen den Haupttheil der Kirche ein, die Armenier versammeln sich auf der anderen Seite des Grabes. Diese verhalten sich andächtig und besonnen, während sich die Griechen im höchsten Grade unanständig benehmen und ein Lärmen machen, das mir in den Ohren gellt. Die Jüngerer drängen und balgen sich; drey oder vier von ihnen überfallen einen Andern und tragen ihn, mag er wollen oder nicht, um das Grab herum, während ein anderer Haufe ihnen mit wildem Geschrey hinterher rennt. Man feyert keinen Gottesdienst, man begeht ein Bacchanal. »

The whole passage is a more or less precise quotation from Seetzen;⁸ and this is only one of many more or less obvious references to Seetzen's writings in the novel *Empty Quarter*.

Of course, Roes also uses this compiled text procedure for all the authors mentioned, including a whole series of quotations not only from Seetzen but also Niebuhr or Burkhardt. However, the text by Seetzen offers Roes a decisive advantage (compared to numerous other sources used for novel compilation) because he can tap into the diary writer's authorial perspective, which matches that of Schnittke in Roes' text. When looking at this process of text montage on the whole in the novel, moreover, it becomes obvious that the older research reports in the tradition of the Enlightenment are cited at the beginning of the Schnittke text, while more recent accounts appear towards the end.

Correspondingly, Roes not only explores how Schnittke turns from an 'enlightened' Critic of the Orient into an empathetic 'romantic' observer, but also he traces how this process parallels the actual history of Western descriptions of the Orient.⁹ The modern-day narrator currently researching in Yemen, in

⁸ ULRICH JASPER SEETZEN, *Reisen durch Syrien, Palästina, Phönicien, die Transjordan-Länder, Arabia Petraea und Unter-Aegypten*, vol. II, ed. Friedrich Kruse, Reimer, Berlin 1854, p. 5: « Von der Gallerie hatte ich das Vergnügen, die Versammlung unten eine Zeitlang ungestört zu beobachten. Das kleine Grabgebäude hat die Grösse eines grossen Zimmers. Es bildet ein länglichtes Viereck, ist mit Kupfer bedeckt, und hat an einem Ende eine kleine Latern-Kuppel. Die Griechen nehmen den Platz auf der einen Seite dieses Grabgebäudes, imgleichen den Haupttheil der Kirche ein, wo sie ihren Gottesdienst verrichten. Die Armenier hatten sich auf der andern Seite des Grabgebäudes versammelt. Diese hielten sich ruhig, die Griechen hingegen betrugen sich im höchsten Grade unanständig und machten einen Lermen, dass mir die Ohren gellten. [...] Die jüngern stiessen und drängten und balgten sich; drey bis vier von ihnen überfielen einen Andern und trugen ihn, er mochte wollen oder nicht, um das Grab herum, während dem ein anderer Haufe ihnen mit wildem Geschrey nachrannte. [...] Es war ein Karneval, und man schien nicht ein christliches Fest, sondern Bacchanalien zu feyern » [« From the gallery, I had the pleasure of observing the gathering below for a while without being disturbed. The small tomb building is the size of a large room. It forms an elongated rectangle, is covered with copper, and has a small lantern dome at one end. The Greeks occupy the space on one side of this tomb, as well as the main part of the church where they worship. The Armenians had gathered on the other side of the tomb. They kept quiet, but the Greeks behaved in the most indecent manner and made a noise that made my ears ring. [...] The younger ones pushed and shoved and fought; three or four of them attacked another and carried him around the tomb, whether he wanted to or not, while another mob ran after them shouting wildly. [...] It was a carnival, and they did not seem to be celebrating a Christian festival, but bacchanalia. »].

⁹ CHRISTOPH SCHMITT-MAAß, « 'mäandernd, ornamentalisch, ohne progression'? Intertextualität in Michael Roes' Freibeutertext *Leeres Viertel* (1996). », *Revista de Filología Alemana*, 15 (2007), p. 95–110; cf. Id., « Ursprünglichkeit, Offenheit, Leere? Zur romantischen Genealogie einer neo-orientalistischen Metapher in der deutschsprachigen Gegenwartsliteratur (Raoul Schrott, Wolfgang Herrndorf, Michael Roes) », in STEFANIE BREMERICH, DIETER BURDORF, ABDALLA ELDIMAGH (eds.), *Orientalismus heute. Perspektiven arabisch-deutscher Literatur- und Kulturwissenschaft*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2021, p. 83–107.

contrast, has set himself the task of narrating « meanderingly, ornamentally, without progression »¹⁰ in order to escape what he sees as Orientalist modes of narration. At the same time, this narrator is aware that even this postcolonial positioning is only the most current iteration of what is still a Western representation:

No matter how emphatic, introspective or neutral I behave, all modes of behaviour remain strategic. They aim to make the encounter with the foreign into a controlled, repeatable and verifiable experiment. [...] Even this critique only represents the state of contemporary anthropological reflection.¹¹

Roes therefore allows his historical protagonist to undergo a transformation instead of making a historical example of unreflective Orientalism in this doppelgänger figure: Schnittke thus undergoes a transformation from Orientalist to critic of Orientalism.

Moreover, both protagonists (the historical more so than the contemporary one) adapt to the host culture, and even become absorbed in it:

On the other hand, my intention was to present all events only quite clearly and without ornamental or boastful style. Now, however, it seems to me that a pure, artless language is just as little possible as a pure and perfect view: we always look from a certain point of view; and we can never see the whole from a certain point of view. It is the same with our speech: every word is a choice, since there is no direct and absolute connection between the events and their description. I listen to myself with reverent silence. And the more I have to recognise the dubiousness of all objectivity, the more the embellishing and ironising style seems to me the only way to escape the lie [...].¹²

The essential difference between ‘Roes’ and Schnittke is that the researcher currently in Yemen has already resigned himself to this position, whereas

¹⁰ ROES, *Rub' Al-Khali*, p. 58: « määndernd, ornamentalisch, ohne progression ».

¹¹ ROES, *Rub' Al-Khali*, p. 224: « Wie emphatisch, introspektiv oder neutral ich mich auch immer verhalte, alle verhaltensweisen bleiben strategisch. Sie zielen darauf ab, die begegnung mit dem fremden zu einem kontrollierten, wiederhol- und überprüfbaren experiment zu machen. [...] Selbst diese kritik repräsentiert nur den stand der gegenwärtigen anthropologischen reflexion. »

¹² ROES, *Rub' Al-Khali*, p. 512: « Hingegen war meine Absicht, alle Vorkommnisse nur recht deutlich und ohne schmückenden oder prahlerischen Stil darzustellen. Nun aber scheint mir eine reine, kunstlose Sprache ebenso wenig möglich wie eine reine und vollkommene Ansicht: Immer blicken wir von einem bestimmten Standpunkte; und nie können wir von einem bestimmten Standpunkte alleyn das Ganze überblicken. So ist es auch mit unserer Rede: Jedes Worth ist eine Wahl, da es keinen unmittelbaren und absoluten Zusammenhang zwischen den Vorkommnissen und ihrer Beschreibung giebt. Mit andächtigem Schweigen höre ich mir selber zu. Und je mehr ich die Fragwürdigkeit jeder Objectivität erkennen muss, um so mehr scheint mir gerade der ausschmückende und ironisierende Stil die einzige Möglichkeit, der Lüge zu entgehen [...]. »

Schnittke only resigns himself to his « own cultural competence »¹³ in the course of the journey. Both feel alienated in their homeland and take flight into a foreign land. While the present-day researcher attempts to approach Yemeni culture reflectively, Schnittke's focus is on the fascinated experience of the foreign, without, however, falling prey to orientalism. One could also say that while Roes reflects the foreign, Schnittke falls into it. This then explains the fact that Schnittke is ultimately absorbed by Arab culture, while the contemporary ethnographer, after being absorbed by this culture, retreats to his own terrain (i.e., writing). In their respective different concepts of what is foreign, there is hesitation and the staging of a rupture.¹⁴ Here, Roes skilfully uses the Schnittke narrative strand to critically reflect on handed-down Orientalisms. In its essayistic form – which Roes takes over from Seetzen – the diary format allows for a window into the documentation of other voices, but also it creates a space for the revision of statements and even statements that have already been made. For Roes, objectivity does not mean the collection of what is understood as reality, but the disclosure of discourse and the resulting forms of redescription and renegotiation.¹⁵ In the face of the death of his friend and leader as well as his own abduction into the Yemeni desert, the author's only concern is his own diary.¹⁶ Although fixated on the Western tradition, he also proves to be open to listening to other perspectives and even engaging in critical self-reflection to the point of silence. The presence of the fictional character of Schnittke (Seetzen's 'double') is thus – beyond the external coincidences (such as travel route, fragmentary, quotations, assimilation into Islamic culture) – imperative for the novel as a whole. On the one hand, it is narratively significant because it makes the novel *Empty Quarter* vivid and readable; on the other hand, it adds reflexivity because the introduction and refraction of Orientalisms (taken from historical travelogues and processed in a historically progressive way in the novel) allows for an almost playful reflection on traditional Orientalisms without having to 'overcome' them.

In sum, Michael Roes achieves five objections by drawing on historical narrative fragments:

- 1) He can re-enact the « excessive storytelling » linked to the Age of Enlightenment and the Romantic era but add a postmodern twist.
- 2) He does not have to invent historical narrative parts, but assembles historical descriptions of the Orient into a new text.

¹³ ROES, *Rub' Al-Khali*, p. 225.

¹⁴ SCHMITT-MAAß, *Das gefährdete Subjekt*, p. 257.

¹⁵ SCHMITT-MAAß, *Das gefährdete Subjekt*, p. 263.

¹⁶ ROES, *Rub' Al-Khali*, p. 499.

- 3) He can use these traditional elements to create reflections of postmodern positions on orientalism and exoticism. In this way, the historical story of the Orient (as a story *from* the Orient) itself becomes something other in the postmodern text that does not have to be appropriated, but can stand for itself.
- 4) Moreover, the reflexive, detached (and sometimes disenchanted or cynic) postmodern storyteller finds his counterpart (or companion) in the curious, eagerly (and sometimes naive) 'hero' of the nineteenth century plot (Schnittke resp. Seetzen).
- 5) He can also provide insight into the fragmentary nature of any ethnographic fieldwork, be it historical or present. This insight is marked in the increasing crypticism of the historical narrator's diary entries; for the postmodern narrator, on the other hand, reflection on the past and present of ethnographic research becomes more prevalent.

Of course, the historical narrative figure Schnittke is not to be read as a true-to-scale translation of the real Ulrich Jasper Seetzen. Rather, Roes has employed a distinct postmodern narrative process that relies on individual and unrelated stories instead of designing the *grand récit* of history. It is therefore not contradictory, but rather only logical that the historical narrator Schnittke comes to conclusions that were discussed in the so-called Writing Culture debate of postmodern ethnology. In order to satisfy the fascination of Arabic listeners, Schnittke had to repeat these 'fantastic adventures' over and over again in an act of « excessive storytelling ».

In other words, the postmodern and anti-orientalist reflexivity of the ethnographic parts of the novel are offset by the integration of modern, sometimes also Orientalistic, set pieces of real historical descriptions of the Orient that allow for narrative filling or saturation. The novel thus heeds the call of the American anthropologist Clifford Geertz, who developed a concept of culture as a network of a 'self-woven cultural webs' by drawing on the work of Max Weber. Geertz noted that, in terms of the postmodern ethnography of Writing Culture, « What is needed, or anyway must serve, is tableaux, anecdotes, parables, tales: mini-narratives with the narrator in them. »¹⁷

It is precisely this art of storytelling that also characterizes the posthumously edited diaries of Seetzen: he records stories from third parties, breaks off to insert an anecdote, proverbs, sketches, or other notes. Ultimately, it is the biographical parallels and the diaristic writing processes that make Seetzen a – if you will –

¹⁷ CLIFFORD GEERTZ, *After the Fact. Two Countries, Four Decades, One Anthropologist*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. – London 1995, p. 65.

«go-between»¹⁸ among cultures and thus a forerunner of postmodern ethnography. By not only quoting Seetzen (as other ethnographers), but also imitating in a part of the plot Seetzen's life and style through his protagonist Schnittke, Roes thus highlights these postmodern qualities in a quite modern text.

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.

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¹⁸ SIMON SCHAFFER et al., «Introduction», in SIMON SCHAFFER et al. (eds.), *The Brokered World. Go-Betweens and Global Intelligence, 1770–1820*, Science History Publications, Sagamore Beach, Mass. 2009 (Uppsala Studies in History of Science, 35), p. ix.

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IN MEMORIAM
JOHN F. WIPPEL
(21.VIII.1933–11.IX.2023)

KEVIN WHITE
THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA



On September 11, 2023, the distinguished scholar of medieval philosophy Monsignor John F. Wippel died just outside of Washington, D.C., where he had spent most of his long life, first as a student and later as a faculty member of the School of Philosophy at The Catholic University of America. A dedicated priest, teacher, and scholar, he had earned an international reputation for his publications on medieval philosophy, in particular on medieval metaphysics, above all the metaphysics of Thomas Aquinas. His two best known publications, and the two in which he took special satisfaction, are representative of his scholarly interests: *The Metaphysical Thought of Godfrey of Fontaines: A Study in Late Thirteenth-Century Philosophy* (1981) and *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas: From Finite Being to Uncreated Being* (2000). The latter, which demonstrates his mastery both of the Thomistic corpus and of twentieth-century scholarly literature on Thomistic metaphysics, is his magnum opus, and it is complemented by three collections of his articles that he published: *Metaphysical Themes in Thomas Aquinas* (1984), *Metaphysical Themes in Thomas Aquinas II* (2007), and *Metaphysical Themes in Thomas Aquinas III* (2021).

Born near Pomeroy, Ohio on August 21, 1933, Wippel was raised on his father's farm. After attending St. John Vianney Minor Seminary in Bloomingdale, Ohio for six years, he was admitted to the Theodore B. Basselin Scholars Program for seminarians in the School of Philosophy at The Catholic University of America, where he earned the B.A. (1955) and the M.A. (1956) in Philosophy. He went on to earn the Licentiate in Sacred Theology at Catholic University (1960), and on May

28, 1960, he was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Steubenville, Ohio. In 1960–1961, he returned to the School of Philosophy as an instructor.

The School of Philosophy granted him a leave during 1961–1963 to pursue doctoral study at the Catholic University of Louvain, which was the name by which he always thought of the institution. He originally planned to write a dissertation on some theme in the metaphysical thought of Aquinas, but the distinguished medievalist at Louvain who became his *Doktorvater*, Fernand Van Steenberghen, persuaded him to change his dissertation topic to the metaphysics of Godfrey of Fontaines. His fellow student at Louvain Robert Sokolowski remembers the day Wippel first went to see Van Steenberghen, with the intention of settling on a dissertation topic in Thomistic metaphysics. That evening, as Sokolowski relates, Wippel returned to their residence carrying an armful of folio-size books that Van Steenberghen had given him, and announced, « I'm going to write on Godfrey of Fontaines ». It was the beginning of Wippel's engagement with the thought of Godfrey, to whom he would often refer later as « my old friend Godfrey ». His study of Godfrey's metaphysics gave him a fresh perspective on the metaphysics of Aquinas, and enlarged his horizon as an emerging medievalist.

Wippel and Sokolowski had been Basselin Scholars together in Washington, but Sokolowski had preceded Wippel at Louvain, earning his Bachelor in Sacred Theology there in 1961. During 1961–1963 the two of them wrote doctoral dissertations at Louvain, Wippel on « Fundamental Metaphysical Themes in the *Quaestiones Quodlibetales* of Godfrey of Fontaines » and Sokolowski on « The Formation of Husserl's Concept of Constitution ». After defending their dissertations in 1963 (Wippel doing so *avec la plus grande distinction*), they both returned to the School of Philosophy, where they remained colleagues until Wippel's retirement in late 2021. The presence of and friendship between these two world-class scholars, Wippel the authority on Thomistic metaphysics and Sokolowski the phenomenologist, for nearly six decades contributed greatly to the distinctive character of the School of Philosophy during this period.

Wippel rose through the ranks at Catholic University to Assistant Professor in 1965, Associate Professor in 1967, and Ordinary or Full Professor in 1972. He was absent from the University for just one semester, as Visiting Associate Professor at the University of California, San Diego, in the Spring of 1969. In 2001, he was appointed the Theodore Basselin Professor of Philosophy; on his retirement at the end of 2021, he was appointed Professor Emeritus. He also served The Catholic University of America in a number of administrative capacities: as Acting Dean of the School of Philosophy in the Spring 1975 semester, as co-founder and Acting Director of the university's Medieval and Byzantine Studies Program, as Director of the university's Early Christian Studies Program, as Assistant Academic Vice-President in the Spring of 1989, and as Academic Vice-President (a position that was renamed Provost in 1995) during 1989–1997.

Wippel always insisted on maintaining, for both himself and others, the highest standards in scholarship, teaching, and administration, and he sometimes did so with an austerity of manner that could be intimidating to students and younger colleagues. On the other hand, his colleague Thérèse-Anne Druart, who often helped him with preparation of his work for publication, detected a subtle sense of humor in him that would sometimes appear in his examination of page proofs or new publications of his work. On one occasion, page proofs indicated that his remark that Aquinas had been sent to Naples to found a *studium* had been ‘corrected’ to have him sent there instead to found a ‘stadium’. On the occasion of the publication of the anthology *Medieval Philosophy: From St. Augustine to Nicholas of Cusa* (1969, co-edited with Allan B. Wolter), he noted with amusement that the table of contents appeared to identify ‘Agent Intellect’ as the author of an early fourteenth-century treatise. He took great pleasure in discovering and pointing out such incongruities.

Beyond The Catholic University of America, Wippel served as a member of the Executive Council of the American Catholic Philosophical Association (1976–1979); as a member of the executive committee, Chairman of the Program Committee, Vice President (1980–1982) and President (1982–1984) of the Society for Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy; as Vice President (1985–1986) and President (1986–1987) of the American Catholic Philosophical Association; and as President of the Metaphysical Society of America (2005–2006). He also served for ten years as member of the Board of Directors of the *Journal of the History of Philosophy*.

His numerous academic awards and distinctions include the National Endowment for the Humanities Younger Humanist Fellowship (1970–1971); the degree of Maître-Agrégé de l’École Saint Thomas d’Aquin (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1981); the Cardinal Mercier Prize for *The Metaphysical Thought of Godfrey of Fontaines* as the « best book on a metaphysical theme in the previous two years » (Louvain, 1981); National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship for Independent Study and Research (1984–1985); Aquinas Medal, American Catholic Philosophical Association (1999); The Catholic University of America’s Alumni Association Achievement Award for Research and Scholarship (2001); Fellow of the Pontifical Academy of Saint Thomas Aquinas (2003, Emeritus 2013); Doctorate of Letters in Mediaeval Studies *honoris causa* (Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, 2005); The Catholic University of America Provost Award for Life Time Excellence in Scholarship, Research, and Teaching (2006); and the Scholarly Excellence Award (American Maritain Society, 2012).

In his published work, Wippel considers in detail the classic distinctions of Aristotelian and Thomistic metaphysics: the distinctions between being and non-being, between the one and the many, between act and potency, between essence and existence, between form and matter, between substance and accident, and between God and creatures. He also makes clear his aim to disengage Aquinas’s

purely metaphysical thought from the predominantly theological Thomistic corpus, and in this respect he is a faithful disciple of his teacher Van Steenberghe, who criticized Etienne Gilson for following the theological, not the philosophical, order in his presentation of what he called Aquinas's 'Christian philosophy'. Wippel periodically criticized Gilson also, as well as Gilson's student Joseph Owens, on this methodological point and on details of Aquinas's metaphysical thought. It is interesting to reflect on the configuration of these two pairs of teacher and student: Van Steenberghe (born in 1904) and Wippel (born in 1933) on the one hand, and Gilson (born in 1884) and Owens (born in 1908) on the other.

Among contemporary students of Aquinas's metaphysics, Owens was arguably Wippel's most important interlocutor, as is suggested by his prominence in both the bibliography and the index of names in Wippel's *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas*. Wippel differed with Owens on a number of issues, including two issues of particular interest to students of Thomistic metaphysics, inasmuch as both issues have to do with the meaning of the crucial word *esse* ('to be') in Aquinas's work. One issue concerns Aquinas's argument in the fourth chapter of *De ente et essentia* that, in all things except God, *esse* is other than essence, quiddity, or nature. In a series of published exchanges that amounted to a sort of metaphysical *disputatio*, Owens affirmed and Wippel denied that it is only after the argument positively establishes the existence of God that this otherness can be known to be a 'real', not merely a 'conceptual', distinction. At one point Wippel suggested that Owens's philosophical reasoning in favor of this conclusion is in keeping with his Gilsonian views concerning 'Christian philosophy' and his Gilsonian presentation of Thomistic metaphysics according to 'the theological order'. The other issue concerns Cornelio Fabro's argument that there is implicit in Aquinas's work a distinction between two senses of the word *esse*, namely, '*esse* as act' and '*existence which is a fact of being*'. Owens flatly denied that there is any such distinction implicit in Aquinas's work. Wippel, with a footnote referencing Owens's denial, defended Fabro's position, although he, Wippel, preferred to describe the distinction as one between '*esse* as facticity' and '*esse* as intrinsic *actus essendi*'. Wippel's public expressions of his differences with Owens and others were models of courteous and erudite scholarly disagreement.

At an early age Wippel acquired a love of baseball that would remain with him throughout his life; before joining the Basselin Program in Washington, he even played on two minor-league baseball teams. It is not hard to see analogies between the game of baseball, in which circumspection, as well as precise and deliberate movement, are crucial, and the style of Wippel's rigorously circumspect, precise, and deliberate scholarly publications. On the many occasions in his publications in which he addresses a question concerning some metaphysical topic in the thought of Aquinas, he invariably provides both a thorough survey of the relevant scholarly literature and a minute analysis of the relevant texts of Aquinas,

arranged in chronological order, with a view to identifying possible developments in Aquinas's thinking on the topic. The reader concludes each article or chapter with a sense of having just witnessed something like a well-executed 'play', a definite move and an advance on the field of scholarship on the metaphysical thought of Aquinas.

A fitting tribute to Wippel's work has appeared in the form of a volume titled *Summa metaphysicae ad mentem Sancti Thomae: Essays in Honor of John F. Wippel* (The Catholic University of America Press, Washington, DC 2024), edited by two of Wippel's students who are now distinguished Thomistic scholars in their own right, Therese Scarpelli Cory and Gregory T. Doolan. The collection contains top-flight essays by Cory, Doolan, and ten other former students of Wippel or careful readers of his work, and it concludes with an account of a biographical interview with Wippel conducted in 2020. In addition to providing a sample of the best contemporary scholarship on Thomistic metaphysics, the volume gives assurance that the beneficial influence of Wippel's important work will continue for many years to come.

IN MEMORIAM

IN MEMORIAM
JAN ASSMANN
(7.VII.1938–19.II.2024)

LORENZO GUARDIANO
UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO



Nel novembre 2017 la Fondazione Internazionale Premio Balzan conferì, su suggerimento dell'allora Rettore dell'Università degli Studi di Milano Enrico Decleva, un premio ai coniugi Jan e Aleida Assmann. Questo riconoscimento aveva, a detta degli stessi vincitori, degli elementi di originalità: innanzitutto perché era attribuito a una coppia sposata e poi perché premiava gli studi su un campo di ricerca ancora molto giovane. Fu proprio questo campo di ricerca, tuttavia, a dare a Jan Assmann la notorietà internazionale che tutti conosciamo, facendo sì che la portata dei suoi studi travalicasse i confini dell'egittologia e delle scienze dell'antichità.

Per ricordare la figura del prof. Assmann non basta un egittologo ed è con un forte senso di inadeguatezza che mi accingo a scrivere queste poche righe, mosso soltanto dal desiderio di contribuire con i miei mezzi umili alla perpetuazione della memoria di chi proprio della memoria fu insigne studioso. Jan Assmann nacque il 7 luglio 1938 a Langesheim e studiò egittologia, archeologia classica e grecistica a Monaco, Heidelberg e Parigi. Dal 1971 tenne la cattedra di egittologia presso l'Università di Heidelberg fino all'anno del suo ritiro, nel 2003. Da allora fu Professore emerito di studi culturali e teoria della religione all'Università di Costanza, città in cui si congedò dalla vita il 19 febbraio 2024 a 85 anni.

L'opera che segnò la sua consacrazione internazionale fu *Das kulturelle Gedächtnis. Schrift, Erinnerung und politische Identität in frühen Hochkulturen*, C.H. Beck, 1992 (tradotta in italiano da Francesco De Angelis, *La memoria culturale. Scrittura, ricordo e identità politica nelle grandi civiltà antiche*, Einaudi, Torino 1997). Si

tratta di un'opera di ampio respiro, tradotta e ristampata varie volte, che, partendo dal concetto di 'memoria culturale', sviluppato negli anni Venti del secolo scorso da Maurice Halbwachs, ha segnato un nuovo indirizzo di studi cui i coniugi Assmann hanno dedicato i loro sforzi congiunti nei trent'anni successivi favorendo lo sviluppo da un'iniziale 'teoria della memoria' di una vera e propria 'teoria della cultura'.

Nella prima parte del libro, Assmann tentò una teorizzazione del concetto di 'memoria culturale' in tre capitoli: il primo, sulla cultura della memoria, affronta il carattere mnemonico della tradizione nei suoi molteplici supporti, il secondo, sulla cultura scritta, approfondisce il ruolo peculiare della scrittura (e quindi i processi di canonizzazione e commento), mentre il terzo, sull'identità, si concentra sul legame tra passato e identità.

La seconda parte del libro è la più originale e mette a confronto quattro civiltà antiche la cui cultura era indissolubilmente legata alla scrittura: Egitto, Israele, Mesopotamia e Grecia. In quegli anni era in voga la teoria secondo cui, una volta che una società avesse iniziato a usare la scrittura, il suo sviluppo culturale avrebbe inevitabilmente proceduto in un'unica direzione. Assmann fu capace di dimostrare la vacuità di tale teoria. Il nucleo culturale di queste quattro civiltà era infatti diverso: il tempio con i suoi riti in Egitto, le scritture e la loro canonizzazione in Israele, la legge in Mesopotamia e la retorica in Grecia.

L'importanza di questi studi, che sono ormai entrati con forza nel panorama delle scienze sociali, sta anche nell'aver affermato energicamente che ad avere memoria non sono soltanto gli organismi dotati di cervello ma anche le collettività. Questa memoria, che trova espressione nella tradizione, è alla base della costituzione dell'identità della collettività. Non si tratta semplicemente della memoria 'che abbiamo', ma soprattutto della memoria 'che creiamo' per noi stessi e che ci identifica nel gruppo cui apparteniamo, sia esso la famiglia, la nazione, la religione o finanche l'umanità con il suo 'patrimonio culturale mondiale'.

Ci si potrebbe chiedere come mai sia stato un egittologo a definire una teoria così ampia e necessariamente estranea alla costituzione della sua disciplina. Qui sta la grandezza dello studioso: fare della propria scienza il mezzo con cui esplorare nuovi mari e non semplicemente il porto in cui approdare. A ciò si unisce la grande efficacia della scrittura di Assmann che ha permesso a un pubblico molto più vasto rispetto alla comunità accademica di poter intraprendere questo viaggio con lui. Tuttavia, la migliore risposta alla nostra domanda mi sembra l'abbia fornita il Professore stesso, nel discorso tenuto a Berna il 16 novembre 2017, il giorno prima del conferimento di quel premio Balzan da cui le nostre riflessioni hanno avuto scaturigine. In quell'occasione l'egittologo raccontò di essere cresciuto nella bellissima Lubecca e di aver assistito, nella sua infanzia, alla distruzione della città durante la guerra. Da bambino, Jan Assmann riempì innumerevoli fogli di carta con disegni e acquerelli della Lubecca precedente al

bombardamento del 28 marzo 1942 (il primo bombardamento a tappeto sulla Germania) aiutandosi con quadri e foto che ne conservavano la memoria. Il nome di questo comprensibile sentimento è 'nostalgia'. Dice Assmann: « So war es vielleicht kein Wunder, dass ich neben Archäologie und Gräzistik vor allem Ägyptologie studierte, den weiter als ins alte Ägypten kommt man nicht zurück, wenn man sich im Horizont der schriftlichen Überlieferung bewegt ». Più ancora che la Grecia e il mondo classico, non si può non studiare l'Egitto se è del passato che si ha sete. E questa frase, credo, possa essere condivisa nel cuore di tanti di noi che hanno scelto di dedicare la propria vita all'Egitto: la Valle del Nilo e le dune del suo deserto continuano a fornire l'altrove più agognato a chi avverte uno struggente conflitto con il mondo del proprio tempo. E proprio in ciò il premio Balzan, che in quanto premio di coppia aveva sorpreso i suoi stessi vincitori, conserva il suo senso più profondo (ma non rimase un caso isolato: nel 2018 la coppia vinse il Friedenspreis des Deutschen Buchhandels della Börsenverein des Deutschen Buchhandels e nel 2020 il premio prussiano Pour le Mérite): solo insieme i due studiosi potevano dare il giusto carattere di universalità alla loro teoria sulla memoria. Aleida, anglista, con la sua visione del presente più vivo e Jan, egittologo, con il suo sguardo verso il passato più lontano.

L'altro aspetto per cui Assmann è universalmente celebre è legato alla storia delle religioni e, in particolare, del monoteismo. Il libro più importante, in tal senso, è *Moses der Ägypter: Entzifferung einer Gedächtnisspur*, WBG, 1998 (tradotto in italiano da Ezio Bacchetta: *Mosè l'egizio. Decifrazione di una traccia di memoria*, Adelphi, Milano 2000). In questo ormai celeberrimo saggio, Assmann individuò nell'Egitto la culla del monoteismo attraverso l'operato di due personaggi. Il primo è Mosè, nato in Egitto, cui è tradizionalmente legata l'idea stessa di monoteismo per il suo patto con Dio che ha permesso agli ebrei di lasciare l'Egitto e, con esso, le pratiche politeistiche. Ma secondo Assmann, l'inventore del monoteismo sarebbe un altro personaggio egiziano, precedente a Mosè, ossia il 'Mosè egizio': il faraone Akhenaton della XVIII dinastia (1352-1336 a.C.), il quale, contrastando la potente casta dei sacerdoti di Amon a Tebe, inventò un nuovo culto incentrato sul disco solare Aton di cui il re e la sua famiglia erano i principali intermediari. Molto interessante è la dicotomia 'Mosè-Akhenaton': della figura di Mosè non vi sono certezze storiche ma il suo ricordo, indissolubilmente legato al monoteismo, ha percorso i secoli fino ai giorni nostri (si pensi a Sigmund Freud e al suo *Der Mann Moses und die monotheistische Religion. Drei Abhandlungen*, Allert De Lange, Amsterdam 1939), mentre di Akhenaton abbiamo contezza storica ma alla sua memoria hanno attentato ripetutamente i successori distruggendo i suoi cartigli dai monumenti ed escludendo il suo nome dalle liste dei re proprio per l'eresia religiosa di cui era avvertito come colpevole. Per questo motivo Assmann sostenne che Mosè è una figura della memoria ma non della storia mentre Akhenaton è una figura della storia ma non della memoria.

Tuttavia, sebbene sia indubbia l'influenza che la sua opera ha avuto nell'egittologia e nella storia delle religioni, corre l'obbligo di dire che la visione di Assmann in questo caso è stata meno ineccepibile di quanto lo sia stata con lo studio sulla memoria culturale. È senz'altro vero che Akhenaton ha prediletto una sola entità divina, il disco solare appunto, nel suo inedito culto reale. Tuttavia, l'Egitto di Akhenaton non abbandonò affatto le altre divinità. Aton godeva senza dubbio di una preminenza su tutti gli altri dèi, almeno a corte, ma lo stesso faraone quando decise di adottare una nuova titolatura per abbandonare il nome di Amenhotep ('Amon è soddisfatto') e scegliere quello di Akhenaton ('utile ad Aton'), non escluse le divinità tradizionali dal suo *praenomen*, ossia il nome che precede quello con cui è più conosciuto oggi: Neferkheperura-Uaenra ('belle sono le manifestazioni di Ra, l'unico di Ra'). Inoltre, le evidenze archeologiche mostrano come gli stessi operai e artigiani che lavoravano alla nuova capitale per Aton, Akhetaton ('l'orizzonte di Aton'), continuassero ad adorare le divinità della tradizione (fra cui, in particolare, Amon) e non vi sono indizi di alcuna condotta persecutoria nei confronti di tale *pietas*. Ciò dimostra come, fuori dalla corte regale, l'Egitto fosse ancora fedele al suo antico pantheon. Per questo motivo, più che di 'monoteismo', per la religione di Akhenaton si preferisce oggi parlare di 'enoteismo': Aton era la divinità centrale e più importante ma non di certo l'unica. Tuttavia, credo sia interessante notare come un certo atteggiamento enoteistico sia presente anche in alcuni passi del Pentateuco in cui il Dio degli ebrei non parrebbe di per sé annullare l'esistenza delle divinità degli altri popoli. Probabilmente un'indagine di questo tipo nei passi biblici non mancherebbe di dare risultati interessanti e, ancora una volta, valorizzare le riflessioni di Assmann sotto una luce inedita.

La teoria volta a sminuire l'originalità del monoteismo biblico denunciandone, al contempo, il carattere violento (a Mosè fu imputato il 'prezzo del monoteismo' che avrebbe reso sanguinosa la storia dell'Occidente) ha attirato, come era prevedibile, numerosissime critiche che furono raccolte in un libro in cui Jan Assmann tentò di confutarle una per una: *Die Mosaische Unterscheidung; oder der Preis des Monotheismus*, Hanser 2003 (tradotto in italiano da Ada Vigliani: *La distinzione mosaica ovvero il prezzo del monoteismo*, Adelphi, Milano 2011). In questo libro Assmann sostituì la distinzione fra politeismo e monoteismo a vantaggio di una distinzione fra religioni inclusive ed esclusive. In questa 'distinzione mosaica', il Nostro individuò la scaturigine della psiche dell'uomo occidentale.

Un decennio dopo, Assmann ebbe ancora occasione di tornare sull'argomento con una nuova svolta nel libro *Exodus. Die Revolution der Alten Welt*, C.H. Beck 2015 (tradotto in italiano da Ada Vigliani: *Esodo*, Adelphi, Milano 2023), che ripercorre il testo biblico con la lente dell'egittologo facendo tesoro delle critiche che ricevette il primo lavoro ed enfatizzando l'originalità della vicenda di Mosè rispetto a quella di Akhenaton. La narrativa biblica, secondo Assmann, dipinge un monoteismo

della fedeltà, piuttosto che della verità. Proprio questa fedeltà inaugura il binomio fedele/infedele (e dunque amico/nemico). Questo testo mostra una grande capacità di autocritica e il possesso di una solida umiltà, tipica dei Grandi, con cui il Nostro è stato disposto a rimettere sul tavolo le proprie teorie per rivederle alla luce delle obiezioni ricevute.

Tutto quanto è stato detto finora vuole solo rendere un'idea della poliedricità di Jan Assmann. Per quanto riguarda l'egittologo non è qui possibile ripercorrere in dettaglio lo sterminato lascito. Basti dire che allo studioso della religione egizia (si veda, fra i tanti, *Re und Amun. Die Krise des polytheistischen Weltbilds im Ägypten der 18.-20. Dynastie*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1983), universalmente celebrato, si accompagna l'ottimo filologo (sempre a titolo di esempio si veda *Ägyptische Hymnen und Gebete. Übersetzt, kommentiert und eingeleitet. Zweite, verbesserte und erweiterte Auflage*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Göttingen 1999) e l'attento archeologo (molto importanti in tal senso furono le campagne di scavo e registrazione epigrafica delle tombe tebane di epoca ramesside – 1265–1069 a.C. – che Assmann iniziò nel 1978 a ovest di Luxor).

Ma il grande lascito di Jan Assmann sta proprio nell'aver oltrepassato con forza i limiti dell'egittologia, non solo nella formulazione di teorie che dall'Egitto traggono le loro scaturigini per giungere alla più ampia portata delle scienze sociali, ma anche nell'aver saputo dialogare con un pubblico molto più vasto della stretta cerchia degli egittologi attraverso una luminosa dote di chiarezza e forza espositiva (ne sono prova le molteplici traduzioni di cui hanno goduto i suoi libri, destinate a studiosi e appassionati di varie discipline e non solo a egittologi). Assmann ha saputo portare l'Egitto fuori dall'Egitto nella maniera più nobile possibile: ponendo sempre la verità come anelito e senza mai cedere alla ricerca dell'effetto. Per spiegare l'incredibile dirottamento verso la teoria della 'memoria culturale' di un egittologo e un'anglista, Aleida Assmann amava ripetere un verso di *Potrait of a Lady* di Thomas S. Eliot: « Our beginnings never know our ends ». Ripensando alla vita e all'opera di Jan Assmann, però, mi viene in mente anche una frase di Tommaso Vittorini: « C'è una differenza fondamentale tra l'artigiano e l'artista, e cioè che l'artigiano comincia una cosa e sa sempre dove va a finire, mentre l'artista non lo sa mai ». Se volessimo per un'ultima volta ancora, come facevano i greci, porre la scienza sotto l'egida delle muse, potremmo dire che fra tanti artigiani delle scienze Jan Assmann fu un vero artista.

IN MEMORIAM
FRANCISCO RICO MANRIQUE
(28.IV.1942–27.V.2024)

BIENVENIDO MORROS MESTRES
UNIVERSIDAD AUTÓNOMA DE BARCELONA



UNA MIRADA MÁS PERSONAL
FRANCISCO RICO MANRIQUE, MAESTRO Y AMIGO

Cuando estaba acabando COU (hoy segundo de bachillerato) el profesor de literatura que me había dado clase de esa asignatura, Adolfo Sotelo, me habló de Francisco Rico como uno de los mejores filólogos de entonces. La información me la daba porque me había tocado cursar la carrera de filología española en la UAB, a pesar de vivir a veinte minutos andando de la UB. Esa fue la primera noticia que tuve del profesor que ejerció una de las mayores influencias en mi formación en la disciplina que elegí cuando tuve noticia de su existencia (de la disciplina a la par que del profesor Francisco Rico). Antes de ese doble conocimiento había pensado estudiar biología. Por suerte cambié de propósito, y empecé filología española en la UAB, pero tuve que esperar a tercero de carrera para recibir las clases de Francisco Rico en la asignatura de Literatura Medieval.

En sus clases Francisco Rico seguía todo un ritual: empezaba pasando lista (incluso lo hizo en una ocasión en que había dejado grabada la clase porque no podía darla presencialmente), preguntaba aleatoriamente a los alumnos (por eso siempre la primera fila del aula estaba vacía) y finalmente entraba en la materia que según el programa debía explicar. No dejaba nada para la improvisación, porque los temas los tenía escritos en unas hojas que empezaban a amarillear con una caligrafía redonda que a veces tiraba a cursiva. A pesar de depositar esas hojas en la mesa del profesor nunca leía en clase y su discurso era desenvuelto y

espontáneo. En las asignaturas de segundo grado, las consideradas de especialidad, cuando la universidad española no estaba aún sometida al plan Bolonia, nos llegó a dar un curso entero sobre el *Libro de buen amor* y otro de variedades (como lo llamaba él) en que nos permitía a los alumnos la elección de la materia, siempre de literatura medieval, que más nos podía interesar.

Esos dos cursos de especialidad no solo tuvimos el privilegio de recibir sus enseñanzas en clase sino también el de asistir a las tertulias literarias que una vez a la semana solía organizar en las mismas aulas de la UAB con los escritores más conocidos de entonces. Gracias a esas tertulias pude conocer a poetas como Jaime Gil de Biedma o a novelistas como Eduardo Mendoza, Ana María Matute, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Juan y Luis Goytisolo, Ester Tusquets, entre otros muchos. En cada tertulia intervenía solo un escritor, el invitado de esa semana, con quien Rico mantenía un diálogo divertido y directo sobre su obra y pensamiento. Los alumnos disponíamos de un turno de preguntas en los últimos quince minutos de la tertulia. A ese propósito recuerdo los consejos que nos daba Gil de Biedma, que repitió tertulia, sobre la conveniencia de imitar a los poetas mediocres porque, a diferencia de los más grandes, eran susceptibles de ser mejorados.

Una vez licenciado de primer grado hice la tesis con Alberto Blecua porque me había propuesto el tema sobre las polémicas garcilasianas en segundo de carrera. Sin embargo, en esos años, no dejé de colaborar con Francisco Rico, especialmente en su nueva edición del *Lazarillo de Tormes* para Cátedra, que salió a la luz en el año 1987, el mismo en que fue elegido miembro de la Real Academia Española. En los años de esa colaboración asistía cada sábado a su casa de San Cugat para revisar las notas que durante la semana había escrito sobre la novela anónima, mientras él estaba en Madrid, en el Ministerio de Cultura, como director general de Carlos Solana. Eran sesiones en que aprendí realmente en qué consistía el discernimiento filológico que había preconizado para sus ediciones de texto. Me enseñaba qué debía anotar en cada caso y también la forma de hacerlo, procurando siempre la claridad y la brevedad; y si, en ocasiones, el texto objeto de estudio se resistía a la interpretación o a la identificación de la fuente que lo había inspirado me aconsejaba hacerlo constar en la nota correspondiente para no despistar al lector con la omisión de una información que podría darse por supuesta cuando no era el caso. Siempre me inculcó esa honestidad filológica de la que había hecho gala en sus admirables ediciones de los clásicos.

Para esa edición del *Lazarillo* Rico decidió usar el método neolachmanniano, con el que ya estaba familiarizado en el año 1970, como lo demostró en su excelente reseña de la edición crítica de la novela preparada por José Miguel Caso González. En estricta aplicación del estema elaborado por Caso le ayudé a redactar el aparato crítico convirtiendo en notas los acertados análisis que había hecho en su reseña de las variantes del texto. Solo unos años después Francisco Rico apostó por otro tipo de ecdótica, una ecdótica que hiciera frente a los problemas inherentes al

proceso de impresión manual. El resultado fue, como todo el mundo sabe, su excelente edición del *Quijote*, liberado de los muchos errores que se colaron por las prisas del primer impresor y por la improvisación de Cervantes.

Volviendo a sus años de Academia y Ministerio, fue también entonces cuando Francisco Rico me propuso la edición de la obra poética de Garcilaso de la Vega para su Biblioteca Clásica, que pronto echaría a andar con los primeros volúmenes de los ciento y uno programados y todavía no completados. Me había hecho desistir de mi idea inicial de editar el *Cantar de Mio Cid* en colaboración con Alberto Montaner porque debía pensar que dividiendo llegaría a vencer. Afortunadamente los dos, Alberto y un servidor, obedecimos a Rico, y, siguiendo sus instrucciones, Alberto volvió a su *Cantar* y yo ya empecé a anotar los versos de Garcilaso. En el proceso de esa edición me orientó en muchos aspectos, especialmente en los formales, dadas las características tan especiales que presentaban las ediciones de Biblioteca Clásica. Solíamos reunirnos en su casa los domingos por la mañana (ya quedaban atrás los sábados por la tarde). Antes de plantearle las dudas y progresos que me habían llevado allí o debía acompañarle a comprar por diferentes establecimientos de San Cugat o también ayudarle a ordenar libros porque era maniático de las cosas colocadas en su sitio preciso. Al marcharme siempre me regalaba libros, o ejemplares de los primeros volúmenes aparecidos en Biblioteca Clásica, o otros correspondientes a los fondos de colecciones que había dirigido. En esas reuniones introducía el simpático ritual del aperitivo compartido con su hijo pequeño. Era todo un experto en su preparación porque para eso también procedía con la misma meticulosidad que como filólogo.

Como los dos solíamos trabajar de madrugada en muchas ocasiones nos llamábamos por teléfono en horas próximas al alba para tratar cuestiones siempre relativas al trabajo que tenía pendiente con él. Solían ser conversaciones largas porque debía ponerle al corriente del trabajo realizado desde la última vez que habíamos hablado. Incluso en ese medio de comunicación, en la prehistoria del móvil y el wasap, seguía siendo brillante y agudo en todas las observaciones que me hacía. Creo que era plenamente consciente de estar recibiendo las mejores clases sobre literatura por teléfono y a unas horas del todo intempestivas.

A la inversa que Francesco Petrarca, al que dedicó una buena parte de su obra, Francisco Rico creó una imagen de sí mismo que no siempre se correspondió con el hombre que realmente fue. En ocasiones representaba el papel del hombre huraño y antipático porque pretendía ocultar, seguramente por timidez, la faceta del hombre agradable, social y sobre todo generoso que dejaba entrever en las distancias más cortas y, especialmente, en casos en que debía serlo a beneficio de los afortunados que pudimos tener una relación más estrecha con él. Petrarca había hecho todo lo contrario: había ocultado su yo obsesivo y depresivo para inventarse otro yo, falsificando fechas, con una transformación espiritual e intelectual que le confería una personalidad más simpática. Francisco Rico fue

quien descubrió esa doble personalidad de su tocayo y lo había dejado claro desde el título de su gran libro sobre el poeta de Arezzo: *Vida u obra de Petrarca, I: Lectura del 'Secretum'* (Padua 1974).

Francisco Rico fue generoso con prácticamente todos sus discípulos (y utilizo el adverbio porque siempre en la vida puede haber una excepción, que en este caso ignoro), cuando más lo necesitábamos. En tercero de carrera uno de esos discípulos, al quedarse huérfano de padre de forma repentina, debía de abandonar los estudios para buscar un trabajo con que mantener a su madre y a su hermana. Francisco Rico le proporcionó un trabajo por la tarde en una editorial para que por la mañana pudiera seguir asistiendo a clase. Cuando yo no pasaba por un buen momento en mi vida personal, fue capaz de organizar una comida en un magnífico restaurante de San Cugat junto a mis mejores amigos de esa época. Antes de asistir juntos al restaurante me citó en su casa para decirme que nada le debía y para exonerarme de los compromisos que había contraído con él: la segunda edición de Garcilaso y una colectiva del *Libro de buen amor*.

Cuando un tiempo después me recuperé volví, encantado, a asumirlos con unas fechas que por desgracia no he podido cumplir. Rico siempre me llamaba por teléfono, cuando menos lo esperaba, para reclamarme esos dos compromisos: creo que era la excusa para saber de mí y si todo iba bien en mi vida. A veces, ya con las neuronas cansadas por la erosión de los años, pienso que un día de estos volveré a recibir su llamada para recordarme cómo va mi Garcilaso, y que yo le responderé que tenga un poco de paciencia porque pronto podrá leerlo junto a Alberto Blecha, cuya ausencia también llevo fatal. Los dos, Paco y Alberto, seguirán andando juntos todos los caminos, aunque ahora ya no sé por dónde, como cuando los empezaron en una universidad en blanco y negro, la de una Barcelona, pobre y brillante (como el Madrid de Valle-Inclán), que ya no existe.

REVIEW ARTICLES

POLITICAL ANIMALS AND LOGOSFORMELN

ON CARLO GINZBURG'S *THE SOUL OF BRUTES*

MATTIA MANTOVANI
KU LEUVEN



This collection finally makes four essays by Carlo Ginzburg available to a wider English-speaking readership.¹ These include: *Civilization and Barbarism* (2017), the only essay previously published in English; *The Soul of Brutes: A Sixteenth-Century Debate* (2005); *Calvino, Manzoni, and the Gray Area* (2014); and *Schema and Bias: A Historian's Reflection on a Double-Blind Experiment* (2017).

As the titles suggest, the essays cover a wide range of topics and figures, from Plato to Feyerabend, via Polybius and Machiavelli and Goya, Lucretius, and Pomponazzi. It is a *tour de force*, like many of Ginzburg's collections: intriguing, challenging, splendidly written – almost impossible to review. Ginzburg continuously pushes his readers beyond their comfort zones, sometimes even off balance, as his arguments take unexpected turns across centuries, traditions, and media. This is a lucid, crisp booklet. The editor describes it as « scintillating », and this is no marketing boast.

The overarching theme of the collection is never explicitly stated. Like the panther of medieval bestiaries, it is sensed everywhere yet never directly seen. With no introduction to guide them, readers must rely on their wits. Ginzburg, prolific as he is, must have had specific reasons for republishing *The Soul of Brutes* after almost twenty years and making it the title piece of the collection. Indeed, though diverse, the four essays engage in a subtle yet profound dialogue, prompting readers to rethink their nature as cultural animals organized in political communities – a reflection that passes through history. This proves true for the collection itself.

The book was published in celebration of the fortieth anniversary of Seagull Books and its founder, as reflected in Ginzburg's dedication: « These essays, in their diversity, are a small homage to my friend Naveen Kishore: to his inventiveness, his energy, his courage ». And Kishore is indeed a remarkable

¹ CARLO GINZBURG, *The Soul of Brutes*, Seagull Books, Kolkata, India – London – New York 2022.

figure. In 1982, he began publishing Indian theatre pieces in Kolkata. Today, Seagull Books is an internationally renowned publishing house, distributed worldwide by the University of Chicago Press.

Ginzburg's essays serve as tributes to this editorial and cultural endeavour. The second essay of the collection, for instance, discusses a manuscript that remained in Pordenone for a century before Gabriel Naudé published it in 1648 under a slightly altered title to fit the Parisian debates of his time. Ginzburg endorses Kristeller's observation that « in this case, as in many others, the editor was more important than the author » (p. 48): a fitting remark for honouring a publisher. This attention to the editorial process also features prominently in the following chapters, which recount summer gatherings at Rhêmes-Notre-Dame attended by « coworkers and friends of the Einaudi publishing house » and discussions between Calvino and Primo Levi about translating Queneau's *Petite cosmogonie portative* (Einaudi, 1982) (p. 56). The final piece develops a broader reflection on historiography, using the example of ancient manuscript copyists as « editors » (p. 102). The opening essay, which examines encounters between different cultures and languages, underscores the urgency and global significance of Kishore's editorial agenda.

It is difficult to imagine a more elegant homage to a publisher who champions world literature: three-quarters of Seagull's catalogue consists of translations, a paradigmatic case of the 'Transfer of Knowledge' to which the present journal is devoted. It is worth noting that the series featuring Ginzburg's book, *The Italian List*, is one among nine such curated lists at Seagull, alongside numerous other series that are not language-focused. The editorial vision of the series is evident, as seen in its director, Alberto Toscano, the English translator of several works by Alain Badiou. The catalogue includes works by Franco Fortini, Elsa Morante, Sandro Penna, Luigi Pintor, and Rossana Rossanda, along with more recent authors like Giorgio Agamben (*Studiolo, Pinocchio, Hölderlin's Madness*) and Massimo Cacciari (*Hamletics: Shakespeare, Kafka, Beckett*). Ginzburg's *The Soul of the Brutes* is to be read within this context. Moreover, Ginzburg has framed this collection with this readership in mind.

Ginzburg carefully selects the publishers of his books, this attention to editorial and cultural policy is rooted in his personal history. His father, Leone, co-founded the publishing house Einaudi in 1933 and, during the Fascist regime and Nazi occupation of Italy, directed a clandestine newspaper. Carlo Ginzburg published his earliest books with Einaudi, works that earned him international recognition: *I benandanti: Stregoneria e culti agrari tra Cinquecento e Seicento* (1966) and *Il formaggio e i vermi: Il cosmo di un mugnaio del '500* (1976), later translated into English as *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983) and *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980). In 1994, following

Einaudi's acquisition by Gruppo Mondadori, owned by the Berlusconi family, Ginzburg left the publisher. After a decade with Feltrinelli, he moved to Quodlibet and Adelphi. In addition to revised editions of his major works, Ginzburg published with Adelphi a few new collections of essays, including *Nondimanco: Machiavelli, Pascal* (2018), *La lettera uccide* (2021), and *Paura, Reverenza, Terrore* (2015), which launched the 'Imago' series. The latter was published in English in 2017 by Seagull Books as *Fear, Reverence, Terror*.

Therefore, Ginzburg and Naveen Kishore share a bond that goes back many years. Yet, *The Soul of Brutes* is more than an homage to a gifted publisher. It brings together one of the world's leading historians and one of its most significant publishing houses. While the collection certainly reflects a private dialogue between Ginzburg and Kishore, its publication at this moment suggests broader, more urgent reasons, of public concern, which shine throughout all four chapters of the collection.

I. Civilization and Barbarism

The first chapter reconsiders the Aristotelian background of the Valladolid debate (1550–1551) concerning the moral status of the « Indios of the New World ». This debate was a crucial episode in the colonization of the Americas and a dramatic confrontation between different cultures. Indeed, « Sepúlveda argued for the Indios' natural inferiority [...] whereas Las Casas fought for their rights, making a decisive contribution (as it is widely considered today) to the idea of human rights » (p. 10). Sepúlveda employed one of the most infamous concepts from Aristotle's *Politics* to claim that « Indios [...] are slaves by nature ». As Ginzburg notes, for Aristotle, « slavery is a natural phenomenon, like being a woman » (p. 7) – or, one might add, like being rational or not, an argument that takes centre stage in the second chapter of the collection. Ginzburg demonstrates that Sepúlveda, a translator and commentator of Aristotle, interpreted him through the lens of Aquinas' commentary on the *Politics* – a pattern Ginzburg has identified in several early modern thinkers, including Machiavelli.² Expounding on Aristotle, Aquinas asserted:

Hunting is necessary amongst beasts that are naturally subject to man, as well as against barbarian men who are naturally slaves, as one has already stated; and if such a war ever takes place, it is a just war.³

² CARLO GINZBURG, « Letture intricate. Machiavelli, Aristotele, san Tommaso », in Id., *Nondimanco. Machiavelli, Pascal*, Adelphi, Milano 2018, p. 79–99.

³ Quoted by Ginzburg at p. 18 (his emphasis). See p. 11 and 18 for discussion of Aquinas' *Commentaria in octo Politicorum Aristotelis libros* and their humanist editions.

While Aquinas was theorizing in an abstract scenario, Sepúlveda applied this argument to justify the killing of indigenous people by European colonizers, whom he equated to wild animals – a dreadful comparison to which Ginzburg returns in the second essay of the collection (p. 51–51). Aristotle might have approved of this conclusion or, at least, so thought Las Casas, who explicitly distanced himself from « The Philosopher » in the name of « Christian charity and truth » (p. 17–18).

Valeat Aristoteles, « Farewell, Aristotle », wrote Las Casas. Yet, as Ginzburg shows, he countered Sepúlveda using another Aristotelian distinction, drawn from the latter's *On Interpretation*: the contrast between speaking « absolutely » (*haplôs*) and speaking « with reference to time » (*katà chrónon*), which Boethius later translated as *simpliciter* versus *secundum quid*: « absolutely » versus « according to circumstances ». This conceptual opposition was a cornerstone of university teaching for centuries and framed many early modern debates – including Galileo's condemnation, as Ginzburg has argued elsewhere.⁴ Armed with these distinctions, Las Casas argued that Native Americans

are not barbarians *simpliciter* (absolutely) but rather barbarians *secundum quid*: and therefore, they should not be spoken of as proper barbarians but rather as barbarians due to a series of accidental circumstances (*ex accidente*) (p. 13).

« Barbarians » to Europeans, who knew nothing of their languages and cultures; but the opposite is also the case. Still, they are human beings, entitled to full natural rights. Ginzburg argues that while Sepúlveda and Las Casas reached opposite conclusions, they both filtered their understandings of these distant populations through the lenses of ancient and medieval philosophy. Distance in space and time, the technique of *Verfremdung*, and the metaphor of perspective: these are concepts Ginzburg has explored for decades, reflecting on both their potential and their challenges.⁵

Indeed, the contrast between different civilizations has shaped human thought since at least Herodotus' observations on the Persians' « custom » (*nomos*). These ancient debates continue to resonate in contemporary discourse, making such questions « seem more urgent than ever ». In reading Herodotus and Las Casas, Ginzburg notes, we experience « the unsettling feeling [...] that we are facing something contemporary » (p. 4). However, he warns against simplistic analogies:

⁴ GINZBURG, *Nondimanco*.

⁵ See especially CARLO GINZBURG, *Wooden Eyes. Nine Reflections on Distance*, Columbia University Press, New York 2001, p. 113. First Italian edition, *Occhiacci di legno. Nove riflessioni sulla distanza*, Feltrinelli, Milano 1998, more recently reprinted with one additional essay (Quodlibet, Macerata 2019).

Today, somebody would translate the opposition between *physis* and *nomos*, nature and convention, into a question rife with political implications: « Do cultural differences have a biological origin? » (p. 7).

This, Ginzburg argues, would be « a blatant anachronism » (p. 7). A historically grounded answer requires careful attention to « the historical sequence » and the evolving contexts in which ideas emerge. His analysis of the Valladolid debate invites us to reflect on the historical construction of the categories we use to define both ourselves and others. He calls for a case-by-case approach – both as historians and as historical actors confronted with « massive migratory currents » and the tensions they generate (p. 23).

Yet, these conceptual tools extend beyond colonialism. Ginzburg suggests that contemporary bioethical debates provide the most striking modern instance of Boethius' *secundum quid* distinction and its reworkings by Jesuit casuists, all topics to which he has devoted numerous essays in recent years. The conclusion is provocative: « We must learn from the Jesuits – and from Pascal » (p. 23).

This conceptual opposition – absolute versus relative, *simpliciter* versus *secundum quid* – continues to shape contemporary thought, whether we are aware of it or not. Some certainly are. Just months after the publication of this collection, the first Jesuit Pope commemorated the 400th anniversary of Blaise Pascal (1623–1662) and his *Lettres Provinciales*, the most scathing critique ever written against Jesuit casuistry and their theology of grace. « Before concluding, I *must* mention Pascal's relationship with Jansenism »: the embarrassment is palpable, the issue still touchy. « Some of his <Pascal's> own statements, such as those on predestination, drawn from the later theology of Augustine and formulated more severely by Jansen, do not ring true ». Yet even these charges against orthodoxy might be qualified, provided one takes context into account:

We should realize, however, that, just as Saint Augustine sought in the fifth century to combat the Pelagians, who claimed that man can, by his own powers and without God's grace, do good and be saved, so Pascal, for his part, sincerely believed that he was battling an implicit Pelagianism or semi-Pelagianism in the teachings of the 'Molinist' Jesuits [...] Let us credit Pascal with the candour and sincerity of his intentions.⁶

Pascal too, the Jesuit Pope concluded, was in the end a good Catholic – if only *secundum quid*.⁷

⁶ POPE FRANCIS, *Sublimitas et miseria hominis* (Apostolic Letter, 23 June 2023). Available at <https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/20230619-sublimitas-et-miseria-hominis.html>.

⁷ In *La lettera uccide* (Adelphi 2021), Ginzburg brings to light the Jesuit background of another, most contentious statement by Pope Francis: « I believe in God – not in a Catholic God; there is no

II. *The Soul of Brutes*

The second essay in the collection explores the sixteenth-century debate on the soul of brutes and its classical sources, with a particular focus on a dialogue by Gerolamo Rorario, examined in light of Aristotle and Plutarch. Rorario (1485–1556) was active in some of the most important courts and administrations of his day, including those of the Emperors Maximilian and Charles V, and the Popes Leo X and Clement VII. However, his enduring fame stems from a short treatise entitled *Quod animalia bruta saepe ratione utantur melius homine*, often translated as *Brutes Are Often More Rational than Men*. When Gabriel Naudé published this manuscript in 1648, he deliberately suppressed the qualifier *saepe* (« often »), transforming the title into an unqualified assertion of brute superiority over humans: an exemplary case of *libertinage érudit*. This editorial decision turned Rorario's work into a significant contribution to the contemporary *querelle de l'âme des bêtes* and made it into a literary case. Bayle dedicated an entry to « Rorarius » in his *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, using it as a platform to critique Descartes and Leibniz, and further cementing Rorario's posthumous influence.

In his dialogue, Rorario compiles anecdotes purporting to demonstrate that non-human animals – « the brutes » – possess superior cognitive skills and frequently outsmart humans. He blends personal observations with classical examples, drawing primarily from Plutarch's dialogue *Whether Land or Sea Animals Have More Intelligence*, known in Latin as *De sollertia animalium* (the original Greek is *phronesis*). Indeed, Ginzburg suggests that the mid-sixteenth-century vulgarizations of Plutarch's animal treatises may shed light on the development of the text. In particular, a manuscript preserved in Siena, attesting to an earlier version of Rorario's text, remains to be studied in detail (p. 45, 49).

The study of Rorario's dialogue and its reception thus provides a case study of how the rediscovery of ancient texts revealed conceptual possibilities and constraints, shaping the European encounter with new realities (p. 49). This intellectual dynamic was for Ginzburg a defining feature of early modern thought, with far-reaching consequences. Aby Warburg famously coined the concept of *Pathosformeln*, « formulas of emotion », to describe the persistence of ancient visual formulas in Renaissance art. On this model, Ginzburg proposes the notion

Catholic God (*non esiste un Dio cattolico*). There is God, and I believe in Jesus Christ, his incarnation » (*La Repubblica*, 1 October 2023, A Conversation with Eugenio Scalfari). In his recent collection of essays *La lettera uccide*, Ginzburg devoted a fine essay to this statement, tracing its intellectual genealogy back to the 17th- and 18th-century debates on the Chinese Rites controversy. These debates are still shaping our lives. In those same months, asked about the presence of gay persons in the Church, Pope Francis commented « Who am I to judge? ». The statement scandalized the conservative front and deprived them of a powerful weapon. Three years later, after decades of struggles, Italy finally approved a bid to allow same-sex partnerships.

of *Logosformeln*, « formulas of reasoning », the conceptual counterpart of Warburg's iconographic schemes.⁸

A significant portion of Ginzburg's essay is devoted to demonstrating that Plutarch – and, in his wake, Rorario – challenged the notion that humans are the only « rational animals » by exploiting a tension in Aristotle's own psychology. Ginzburg's analysis centres on Aristotle's treatment of *phantasia* (imagination), a topic still widely debated among scholars. Ginzburg argues that the ambiguous status of this faculty, positioned between sensation and intellect, provided conceptual space for blurring the clear-cut divide between human and non-human animals, a divide defended in many other places in Aristotle's corpus, particularly in the *Politics*.

This tension in Aristotle's thought was already recognized by Strato, his second successor at the Lyceum, who asserted that « it is not at all possible to have perception without mental action (*noein*) ». Plutarch interpreted this to mean that sense perception is always accompanied by reason. Consequently, he argued that the difference between human and animal intelligence is one of degree, not kind:

Let us therefore not say of beasts, if their understanding is less keen and their thought processes inferior <to ours>, that they do not understand or think at all, and that they have no reason, but rather that their reason is weak and clouded, like an eye that is dim-sighted and confused.⁹

Plutarch moves fluidly between terms such as *phronesis* (practical wisdom), *dianoia* (thought), *logismos* (reasoning), and *noein* (intellect), treating them as near-synonyms, much to his interpreters' dismay.¹⁰ This lexical flexibility might well reflect Plutarch's rejection of a strict cognitive hierarchy, as if he had embraced the ambiguity of Aristotle's *phantasia* and made it into a feature of his psychology and cognitive vocabulary.¹¹

⁸ See the above-mentioned *Wooden Eyes*.

⁹ PLUTARCH, *De sollertia animalium* 963B, in *Plutarch's Three Treatises on Animals*, ed. and transl. STEPHEN T. NEWMYER, Routledge, London – New York 2021, p. 25.

¹⁰ See PLUTARCH, *De sollertia animalium* 959A–961B.

¹¹ On the issue, see PHILIP SIDNEY HORKY, « The Spectrum of Animal Rationality in Plutarch », *Apeiron*, 50/1 (2017), p. 103–133. The difficulty in interpreting the Greek cognitive vocabulary is especially evident in translations. Thus, for example, in the above-mentioned fragment by Strato, *noein* is variously rendered as « some action of the intelligence » (the translation adopted by Ginzburg, p. 39), as « mental action » (Newmyer, quoted above), or as « thinking », as in Gillian Clark's translation of Porphyry's *On Abstinence from Killing Animals*, 3.21.8, Bloomsbury, London 2000 p. 175, who notes (f. 487) that « usually *nous* and related words are translated 'intellect', but in this passage 'mind' for *nous*, 'thinking' or 'thought' for *noein*, are more natural English ». The same difficulty holds true of *sollertia*, whereby Latin humanists tried to capture the spectrum of Plutarch's terminology.

Aristotle famously argued that « nature does nothing in vain », concluding that non-human animals exist for the benefit of humans. Plutarch, in contrast, used the same principle to argue that non-human animals must possess reasoning skills, since otherwise they would be incapable of providing for their own well-being, rendering their senses useless:

For nature, which they correctly say does everything toward some purpose and goal, did not create a sentient being for the single purpose of perceiving when something is happening to it [...]. But since there exist many things which are akin to it and foreign to it, a being would not survive for a moment if it did not learn to avoid some things and to enter into association with others. Now, perception supplies the knowledge of both of these to each being. Creatures born with no capacity to reason or judge or recollect or attend could not by any means perform those actions of pursuing and seizing upon things that follow upon a perception of usefulness and of steering clear of and fleeing those things that are harmful and troublesome.¹²

Plutarch's primary targets were the Stoics and their emphasis on reason and language as elements that sharply opposed man to all other animals (p. 37). « They don't have syntax, so we can eat them », as Sorabji caustically put it.¹³ In the passage above, Plutarch turns key Stoic concepts – *oikeiosis* and finalism – against them, using their own philosophical principles to reach the opposite conclusion. This was not merely a dialectical manoeuvre but a deeply held conviction, central to Plutarch's philosophy and way of life. Here the lucid, fictional dialogue between Plutarch's father Autobulus and a friend, Soclarus, suddenly becomes emotionally charged and brings back the ring of Plutarch's own voice:

Those creatures that you deprive altogether of expectation, memory, intention, preparation, hope, fear, inclination, and grief, have no use for eyes and ears, though they have them. It would be preferable to be free of all sensation and representation if one has no means of making use of these faculties than to experience pain and distress and anguish if one has no means of evading them!¹⁴

As Ginzburg observes, Plutarch supports his argument by extensively citing Aristotle's *History of Animals* and, « more importantly, he developed [...] concepts put forward by Aristotle, especially in his treatise *On the Soul* » (p. 37).¹⁵

¹² PLUTARCH, *De sollertia animalium* 960E, p. 22.

¹³ RICHARD SORABJI, *Animal Minds and Human Morals. The Origins of the Western Debate*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca 1993.

¹⁴ PLUTARCH, *De sollertia animalium* 960F, p. 22.

¹⁵ Ginzburg makes clear that he is « not opposing Plutarch and Aristotle on this subject » (p. 53).

Ginzburg is undoubtedly right, but the reception of Aristotle's works suggests insisting more on the tensions between Aristotle's psychological and zoological writings: on the one hand, *De anima* and the so-called *Parva Naturalia*; on the other, the works devoted to the 'history', the generation, the movement, the parts, and the 'progression' of animals (*Historia animalium*, *De generatione animalium*, *De motu animalium*, *De partibus animalium*, *De incessu animalium*), sometimes grouped as *De animalibus*.¹⁶ Indeed, in his zoological writings, Aristotle grants non-human animals a vast array of cognitive skills that are not always easy to square with the tripartite model of the 'faculties' defended in *On the Soul*. In particular, in his *History of Animals*, Aristotle went as far as to differentiate animals based on their *nous*, and some passages seem to imply a continuity with humans.¹⁷ Also, in these writings, Aristotle attributed to non-human animals a form of « practical intelligence » (*synesis*), whose exact status and nature are all but clear.

Taken together, Aristotle's writings appear to uphold a rigid distinction between humans and animals based on intellect. However, one can understand how Plutarch could call upon Aristotle's zoological works to argue the opposite. This ambiguity was later exploited by Porphyry, who quoted (often verbatim) and expanded upon Plutarch's key arguments in the third book of *On Abstinence from Killing Animals*, a text that would exert significant influence in the early modern period. Porphyry went even further than Plutarch in enlisting « The Philosopher » to his cause: « Aristotle and Plato, Empedocles and Pythagoras and Democritus, and all who have sought to grasp the truth about animals, have recognized that they share in *logos* ».¹⁸

This tension troubled Aristotelians for centuries. In 1594, the Jesuit commentators of Coimbra were still arguing against Porphyry's and Plutarch's interpretations. More than a century later, Bayle presented all their arguments in his *Dictionnaire*, in the entry on « Pereira », thereby exposing them to an even broader readership – a remarkable set of Chinese boxes, to use one of Ginzburg's favourite metaphors (p. 90).¹⁹

Adding a few intermediary « boxes » may help us better appreciate the nuances between the extremes of this intellectual tradition. In the collection's first essay, Ginzburg already demonstrated that these *Logosformeln* did not remain dormant during the Middle Ages, but instead evolved into slightly different formulations

¹⁶ On Aristotle's reception around Plutarch's times, see RICCARDO CHIARADONNA, « Interpretazione filosofica e ricezione del *corpus*. Il caso di Aristotele (100 a.C.–250 d.C.) », *Quaestio*, 11 (2011), p. 83–114.

¹⁷ Respectively, Aristotle, *Historia animalium* IX.3 (610b20–610b21) and I.1 (488b15–16).

¹⁸ PORPHYRY, *De abstinencia ab esu carnum* 3.6.7 in Id., *On Abstinence from Killing Animals*, transl. GILLIAN CLARK, Bloomsbury, London 2000, p. 84.

¹⁹ PIERRE BAYLE, *Dictionnaire historique et critique*, Brunel et alii, Amsterdam 1740, 5th edition, III 650, « Pereira ». Cf. CECILIA MURATORI, *Renaissance Vegetarianism. The Philosophical Afterlives of Porphyry's On Abstinence*, Legenda, Cambridge 2020, especially p. 177–183.

and meanings, even within the commentary tradition. This is even more evident in independent treatises.

For centuries, Arabic and Latin thinkers struggled to account for animals' responsive behaviour – Plutarch's main argument for their possession of intellect – by expanding Aristotle's psychology. Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), for instance, introduced an additional pre-intellectual « power », known in Latin as the *vis aestimativa*, which allowed animals to « evaluate » things, perceiving them *insofar as they are advantageous or harmful*. Thanks to this faculty, Avicenna argued, a lamb could distinguish between friendly and hostile creatures, and follow its flock, and flee from a wolf. This theory enjoyed immense popularity in the Latin Middle Ages and was further elaborated with the addition of yet more faculties of the sensory soul: the *virtus distinctiva*, the *vis cogitativa*, the *logistica*. The ambiguity Ginzburg detects regarding *phantasia* is just one example of a broader conceptual difficulty.

For Arabic and Latin Aristotelians, a set of « internal senses » existed between the five traditional external senses (touch, taste, smell, hearing, sight) and the intellect. These internal senses included the *imaginativa*, the *sensus communis*, and the *memoria*. Their classification remained a subject of heated debate well into the early modern period. In fact, many Latin thinkers identified the dividing line between humans and animals precisely in terms of the *virtus aestimativa* and the *cogitativa*.

These « internal senses » became so central in the thirteenth century that some thinkers argued for distinctions between humans and non-human animals even at the level of *external* senses. The case of Roger Bacon is particularly telling: he was among the very few to grant « brutes » a *virtus logica*, *id est rationalis* and yet simultaneously proposed a different account of human and animal perception, particularly regarding vision, leading to divergent apprehensions of the so-called « common sensibles ».²⁰

The role of the internal senses becomes even more prominent in cognitive operations beyond sense perception. One of the most striking pieces of evidence comes from Roger Bacon's contemporary (and rival), Albert the Great, who was also Aquinas' teacher. In his massive treatise *On Animals*, composed primarily in the 1260s, Albert devoted nineteen books to presenting Aristotle's zoological writings, before introducing two treatises of his own. A substantial portion of the twenty-first book, *On Perfect and Imperfect Animals*, is dedicated to « pygmies »,

²⁰ See MATTIA MANTOVANI, « *Visio per sillogismum*. Sensation and Cognition in 13th-Century Theories of Vision », in ELENA BĂLTUȚĂ (ed.), *Medieval Perceptual Puzzles. Theories of Sense Perception in the 13th and 14th Centuries*, Brill, Leiden 2020, p. 111–152. Id., « The First of All Natural Sciences. Roger Bacon on *perspectiva* and Human Knowledge », *Vivarium*, 59 (2021), p. 186–214. On the late medieval debate about animal cognitive skills see, more generally, ANSELM OELZE, *Animal Rationality. Later Medieval Theories, 1250–1350*, Brill, Leiden 2018.

which Albert – I would suggest – constructs as a thought experiment to explore the highest possible achievements of the internal senses in the absence of intellect. He discusses their language, crafts, and political organization but ultimately concludes that, despite surface similarities to human behaviour, pygmies differ fundamentally and in kind due to their lack of intellect. Even when pygmies *sound* just like humans, Albert insists that this is no reason to equate them with « us »:

And thus, the pygmy, although it speaks, nevertheless does not argue or speak of the universals of things, but rather its voices are directed at the particular things of which it speaks. Its speech is caused by a shadow echoing in a defect of reason (*causatur enim loquela sua ex umbra resultante in occasu rationis*).²¹

« A certain shadow of reason », « an obscure echo of reason »: Albert is clearly struggling to push to their limits the pre-rational skills of non-human animals and, in want of best, is ready to trade metaphors for concepts. Yet these metaphors would have very real consequences in the long run.

Albert's *pygmei* are a philosopher's thought experiment and a thing of a marvel, the deformed echo of travel reports and fables, such as takes of mortal fights between pygmies and cranes. But his *On Animals* would acquire novel significance in the sixteenth century, as evidenced by its 1513 reprint in Venice, an elegant folio edition curated by Marco Antonio Zimara.²² Indeed, as Ginzburg observes, « from Plato onwards, all discourses on the soul were also, at least implicitly, discourses on the body politic » (p. 39–40). These debates often unfolded, explicitly or implicitly, against the backdrop of Aristotle's definition of human beings as the only « political animals » – a status granted by virtue of intellect.

Following the lines of the first essay in Ginzburg's collection and the wicked legacy of Aquinas' *Commentary on the Politics*, one can thus easily imagine how Sepúlveda and Las Casas might have interpreted Albert's remarks on the pygmies' lack of *civilitas*:

However, perfection of this sort – the « shadow of reason » mentioned above – is next in rank beneath the human, so that the pygmy does not uphold a perfect political system or laws (*etiam pigmeus civilitatem perfectam et leges non custodit*), but rather follows the impulse of nature in such matters, just as other brute animals do.

²¹ ALBERTUS MAGNUS, *De animalibus*, ed. HERMANN STADLER, Aschendorffschen, Münster 1916–1920, I. XXI, c. 2, 1328; Albertus Magnus, *On Animals. A Medieval Summa Zoologica*, transl. KENNETH F. KITCHELL JR., IRVEN MICHAEL RESNICK, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore – London 1999, II 1417: « for his speech is caused by the shadow resulting from the setting of reason ».

²² ALBERTUS MAGNUS, *De animalibus libri vigintisex novissime impressi, emendati per M.A. Zimaram*, heirs of Ottaviano Scotti, Venice 1513. (I could not consult this work). On this edition, and for a presentation of the relevant literature, see LUCA BIANCHI, *Studi sull'aristotelismo del Rinascimento*, Il Poligrafo, Padova 2003, p. 209–223.

For Albert, even the most striking similarities between human and pygmy bodies should not lead us astray. Indeed, what challenged the Aristotelian framework on brutes was not only artificial creations but also the very bodily constitution of these creatures – their ability to produce artifacts in the first place. Albert is perplexed by the pygmies' posture and even more so by their hands, which Aristotle had identified as the « organ of organs », « the instrument of all instruments ». Yet Albert insists that the defining mark of humanity is not the external organs themselves but the hidden faculty that governs them:

But it <the pygmy> walks erect. And it does not use a hand as an instrument of intellect or as a kind of tool (that is, an organ), but rather, just as certain animals use their front feet for various tasks – like some mice that pick up food and direct it to their mouths – so too the pygmy uses its hand for multiple purposes, but not for works of art [...]. For this reason, it always dwells in the forests, belonging to no political system whatsoever (*et ideo semper silvestris manet nullam prorsus civilitatem custodiens*).²³

Here we encounter yet another *Logosformel* dating back to pre-Socratic Greece. Albert clearly has in mind a passage from *On the Parts of Animals*, where Aristotle argues against Anaxagoras, that « it is *not* the possession of these hands the cause of man being of all animals the most intelligent » but, to the contrary, « man has hands *because of* his superior intelligence ». ²⁴ This fragment – one of the few surviving texts from a philosopher exiled from Athens for impiety – was preserved only because an opponent recorded it in order to refute it. But, as Ginzburg wryly notes, « unintended consequences are, as always in human history, the norm » (p. 84).

Thus, we return to the questions raised in the collection's first essay, and this is no coincidence. The uneasy grounding of human culture in its physical embodiment is a problem that has long fascinated Ginzburg. Thus, In *Storia notturna: Una decifrazione del sabba* (Einaudi, 1989), translated as *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath* (Hutchinson Radius, 1990), he attempted to explain

²³ ALBERTUS MAGNUS, *De animalibus*, ed. STADLER, XXI, c. 2, 1328–1329; transl. II 1417. Ginzburg does not quote Albert, but he himself remarks that « even Mexican builders, according to Sepúlveda, could not be regarded as evidence of human ingenuity, since bees and spiders build things no human can imitate » (p. 51). Sepúlveda had clearly in mind the sophisticated debates about animal *techne* (*ars*) by Latin Aristotelians, as in commenting on *Physics* II 8–9 and on the zoological treatise, for example in relation to birds' nesting. On the Medieval discussion about the « political animal » see, more generally, JUHANA TOIVANEN, *The Political Animal in Medieval Philosophy. A Philosophical Study of the Commentary Tradition*, c.1260–c.1410, Brill, Leiden 2020.

²⁴ ARISTOTLE, *De partibus animalium* IV.10, 687a6–8, in *Complete Works of Aristotle*, The Revised Oxford Translation, ed. JONATHAN BARNES, Oxford University Press, Oxford 1984, vol. I, p. 95, modified, emphases added.

the transcultural diffusion of myths and rites centred on asymmetric deambulation, from Oedipus to Cinderella, by appealing to the « elemental, minimal perception that the human species has of itself – of its corporeal image » as a bipedal animal.²⁵ No « cultural universal », therefore, let alone a « collective unconscious » à la Jung, but rather the human body as a matrix for cultural creations. Significantly, *Storia notturna* takes as its epigraph a fragment of another Pre-Socratic thinker, Xenophanes' B15: « If horses and oxen had hands and could draw pictures, their gods would look remarkably like horses and oxen ».

The rational animal, the political one, the only animal with a proper hand, and « gifted by the creator [...] with an upturned face » (*opifex rerum [...] os homini sublime dedit*), « the featherless biped »: so many and diverse were the accounts worked out over the centuries for humans to secure their pre-eminence over all other, « lower » animals. But not all of them – not all of us – felt so far apart from these « brutes », and among them was one of the most skilled draughtsmen of the sixteenth century. Thus, in *The Soul of Brutes*, Ginzburg brilliantly argues that Parmigianino's *Self-Portrait with a Bitch* (Fig. 1) was meant to ridicule Ovid's and Plato's definitions of the human being. According to Ginzburg, the very style of the drawing expresses a quite different understanding of the status of humans and animals: « the fluid, sensitive line conveys the physical and emotional closeness between two very different beings: the sitting man and the standing, pregnant bitch » (p. 26).

²⁵ CARLO GINZBURG, *Storia notturna: Una decifrazione del sabba*, Einaudi, Torino 1989, p. 193: « Il mito <on the origin of humankind, from Ceram Island> ci invita a riconoscere nella simmetria una caratteristica degli esseri viventi. Se ad essa aggiungiamo una caratteristica più specificamente, anche se non esclusivamente, umana – la stazione eretta – ci troviamo di fronte a un essere vivente, simmetrico, bipede. La diffusione transculturale dei miti e dei riti imperniati sull'asimmetria deambulatoria ha verosimilmente la sua origine psicologica in questa percezione elementare, minima, che la specie umana ha di se stessa – della propria immagine corporea. Ciò che altera quest'immagine, su un piano letterale o metaforico, appare quindi particolarmente adatto ad esprimere un'esperienza oltre i limiti dell'umano: il viaggio nel mondo dei morti, compiuto in estati o attraverso i riti d'iniziazione ».



Fig. 1: Parmigianino, *Self-Portrait with a Bitch*.
Public-domain image, from Wikipedia Commons.

A few decades later, Montaigne went one step further and looked at himself through the eyes of his pet: « When I am playing with my cat, who knows whether she has more sport in dallying with me than I have in gaming with her? ».²⁶

²⁶ MONTAIGNE, *Les Essais* II 12, *Apologie de Raymond Sebond*, ed. JEAN BALSAMO, CATHERINE MAGNIEN-SIMONIN and MICHEL MAGNIEN, Gallimard, Pléiade, Paris 2007: « Quand je me joue à ma chatte, qui sait si elle

Plutarch's « most famous sixteenth-century reader » (p. 52) described his and his cat's mutual entertainments as « de singeries réciproques », bringing into play the brute who posed the greatest challenges to mankind's purported exceptionalism.

Albert discussed apes right after the pygmy, remarking in astonishment that they are able to grasp the « intentions » of other animals, humans included – a prototypical « theory of mind » in Michael Tomasello's fashion. The theory of the « internal senses » had ended up posing yet another challenge to any neat opposition between humans and superior mammals.

Albert hastened to explain away this anomaly but only made more visible the conceptual possibilities opened by Aristotle's comparative ethology, leaving it to others to explore them. Still in 1882, just a few months before his death, an acclaimed naturalist of the time pointed out that even his « two gods », Linnaeus and Cuvier, were « mere schoolboys to old Aristotle ». Largely forgotten nowadays, for centuries Aristotle's zoological treatise proved an inspiration to some extraordinary readers: Plutarch, Avicenna, Charles Darwin.²⁷

III. *Calvino, Manzoni, and the Gray Area*

Casuistry features prominently in the third essay of the collection, *Calvino, Manzoni, and the Gray Area*, which is, in fact, an essay on Primo Levi. *La zona grigia* is the title of the key chapter of Levi's last book, *I sommersi e i salvati* (Einaudi, 1986), rendered into English as *The Drowned and the Saved*.

Ginzburg reconstructs the emergence of this theme in Levi's writing, starting from the preface to Levi's 1976 translation of Jacob Presser's *The Night of the Girondins* (1957). In a 1979 interview, Levi explained that he wanted to re-examine his experiences in the concentration camp in order to investigate « the extreme ambiguity of that place, the gray band that separated the oppressed from the oppressors ».²⁸

Manzoni's *The Betrothed* proved crucial for Levi in articulating his ideas and was likely a key source for him: Manzoni's novel was – and still is – mandatory reading in Italian high schools. In Ginzburg's words, « Levi chose Manzoni as a guide for advancing towards the slippery slope of ambiguity » (p. 62):

When Renzo Tramaglino threatens don Abbondio with a knife, Manzoni observes that the oppressor, don Rodrigo, is also responsible for the minor acts of oppression

« passe son temps de moi plus que je fais d'elle? ». As Ginzburg remarks « the uniqueness of human beings was cast into doubt by stressing their similarity with allegedly inferior animals » (p. 31).

²⁷ See ALLAN GOTTHELF, « Darwin on Aristotle », *Journal of the History of Biology*, 32/1 (1999), p. 3–30.

²⁸ PRIMO LEVI, *The Voice of Memory. Interviews, 1961–1987*, ed. MARCO BELPOLITI, DAVID GORDON, Polity, New York 2000, p. 131, emphases added. Quoted by Ginzburg, p. 60.

carried out by his victims. It is a theme that I recognize too well. It is a stupid mistake to see all the demons on one side and all the saints on the other. It was not like that at all [...]. To divide into black and white means not to know human nature.²⁹

Levi insisted that understanding human beings, and the tragedy of the *Lager* specifically, demands that we confront human complexity and « take a stance in front of ambiguity ». The context-sensitive, case-by-case reasoning studied in the first essay of Ginzburg's collection finds here a most dramatic formulation. But « understanding is not pardoning »: the versatility of intelligence does *not* entail the malleability of moral standards. « The condition of the offended does not exclude culpability », Levi wrote, « but I know of no human tribunal to which one could delegate the judgment ».³⁰ As Ginzburg argues, Levi, an atheist of Jewish origins, was here engaging in a mental dialogue with « a Catholic convert who did recognize divine judgment as the decisive appeal » (p. 64). Manzoni was an eager reader of Pascal and strongly opposed the Jesuits' casuistry. Yet their circumstantial analyses provided Manzoni – and, in his footsteps, Levi – with finer cognitive tools for inquiring into human agency.

Ginzburg's reconstruction is convincing, even if indirect: he supports his case by quoting Levi's use of the expression « cases of conscience » in his preface to Langbein's *People in Auschwitz*, which dates, however, to a few years later (1984). But Ginzburg could have cited an earlier text to further support his reading.

Before appearing in *The Drowned and the Saved*, a first version of the concluding part of *The Gray Zone* chapter was published on 20 November 1977 in the Italian newspaper *La Stampa* under the title *Il re dei Giudei* (*The King of the Jews*). The piece centres on Chaim Rumkowski, the head of the Jewish Council of Elders in the Łódź Ghetto, appointed by Nazi Germany during the German occupation of Poland: a profoundly « ambiguous » figure (if any), analogous in many respects to the camps' *Sonderkommandos*. In closing his portrait of Rumkowski, Levi put forward a more general remark:

È tipico dei regimi in cui tutto il potere piovè dall'alto, e nessuna critica può salire dal basso, di svigorire e confondere la capacità di giudizio, e di creare una vasta zona di coscienze grige che stanno fra i grandi del male e le vittime pure: in questa fascia va collocato Rumkowski.³¹

²⁹ PRIMO LEVI, « A Conversation with Primo Levi (1979) », interview by Giuseppe Grassano in LEVI, *The Voice of Memory*, p. 131–132.

³⁰ PRIMO LEVI, *I sommersi e i salvati*, Einaudi, Torino 2007 [ed. or. 1986], p. 30, here too with a reference to Manzoni; PRIMO LEVI, *The Drowned and the Saved*, transl. RAYMOND ROSENTHAL, Vintage, New York 1989, p. 44. Quoted by Ginzburg, p. 64.

³¹ I quote from the 1981 Einaudi's edition of *Il re dei Giudei*, within *Lilit e altri racconti* (p. 85; emphasis mine).

A « vast area » populated by « gray consciences », halfway between the oppressors at the top and the pure victims: for Levi, this was the « band » in which we are to place Rumkowski. In the final version of *The Drowned and the Saved* (1986), Levi shortened the passage to one line, which now seemed slightly out of place:

In questa fascia di mezze coscienze va collocato Rumkowski, figura simbolica e compendiaria.³²

In the book version, « gray » shifted from qualifying « consciences » to the « zone » and « band » in which these ambiguous figures move, and the expression *coscienze grige* disappeared altogether. Arguably, it was while reworking this passage that Levi came to single out *la zona grigia* as the precise expression for articulating his questions and confronting ambiguity. Thus, in the book version Levi added a specific sentence to this effect, amidst the general remarks about Rumkowski's case, already presented in the 1977 piece:

Una storia come questa non è chiusa in sé. È piena, pone più domande di quante ne soddisfa, riassume in sé l'intera tematica della zona grigia, e lascia sospesi.³³

The 1984 interview quoted by Ginzburg re-establishes the link, suggesting that Levi never ceased reflecting on this « gray zone » in relation to consciences and their difficult cases.³⁴

This is further confirmed by yet another addition in the 1986 book version. In *The Drowned and the Saved*, Levi inserted a few lines before the opening already used in *The King of the Jews* of 1977 (« Al mio ritorno da Auschwitz »): a preliminary remark about the « *impotentia judicandi* » that « paralyzes » one when faced with Rumkowski's case.³⁵ A Latin expression, in brackets: Levi clearly had a reference in mind.

A preliminary survey did not bring to light relevant sources. Levi scholars, as far as I have been able to determine, are understandably struck by the phrase, but leave it unexplained. Yet, to decipher it, one only needed to read it against the light. According to Christian theology, *potentia judicandi* and *scientia discernendi* – the « science of discerning » and the « power to judge » sins – were the prerogative

³² LEVI, *I sommersi e i salvati*, p. 51, emphasis mine.

³³ Compare *Il re dei Giudei* of 1977 (p. 84) and *I sommersi e i salvati* (p. 49); emphasis mine.

³⁴ On Ginzburg's understanding of Primo Levi's « gray zone » see also VITTORIO FOA, CARLO GINZBURG, *Un dialogo*, Feltrinelli, Milano 2003, p. 95–114, and especially p. 105–109.

³⁵ LEVI, *I sommersi e i salvati*, p. 44: « La stessa 'impotentia judicandi' ci paralizza davanti al caso Rumkowski. La storia di Chaim Rumkowski non è propriamente una storia di Lager, benché nel Lager si concluda: è una storia di ghetto, ma così eloquente sul tema fondamentale dell'ambiguità umana provocata fatalmente dall'oppressione, che mi pare si attagli fin troppo bene al nostro discorso. La ripeto qui, anche se già l'ho narrata altrove ».

of confessors and the true meaning of the two keys of heaven mentioned in the Gospel of Matthew, the ultimate signs of the Church's authority.³⁶ Ginzburg was right: in his efforts to grapple with « ambiguity », Levi turned to the conceptual tools of Christian examinations of conscience, and concluded that they failed.

Cases like Rumkowski's continue to defy our understanding, but reflecting on them compels all of us to stay alert and watchful of our own « essential frailty ». As Levi described it in *Se questo è un uomo* (1947), it is the frailty of an animal: the « human animal in the struggle for life ».³⁷ Behind Manzoni and the manuals for confessors, one seems to recognize one of the oldest extant statements on the relationship between humans and animals, and their shared fate, from the Hebrew Bible:

For the fate of humans and the fate of animals is the same; as one dies, so dies the other. They all have the same breath, and humans have no advantage over the animals; for all is vanity. (*Ecclesiastes* 3:19)

IV. Schema and Bias. A Historian's Reflection on a Double-Blind Experiment

Ginzburg has long been reflecting on the methodology of historical research and on « the historian's craft » (p. 78, 80, and 95), in the wake of Marc Bloch's *Métier d'historien*. These inquiries have often led Ginzburg to investigate the emergence of history itself as a discipline, modelled, among others, on Arnaldo Momigliano's *History between Medicine and Rhetoric* (1985), another landmark inspiration for Ginzburg. He even considered « History between Medicine and Law » as a possible title for the fourth and last essay of the present collection, had it not been « presumptuous » (p. 90). The essay continues Ginzburg's dialogue with many great intellectuals of the past century, with explicit references to his student years in Pisa (p. 102–103). Many of them happen to be Italian: Momigliano, for one, but also scholars and intellectuals such as Giorgio Pasquali, Arsenio Frugoni, Sebastiano Timpanaro, and Vittorio Foa, some of whose exchanges with Ginzburg were already published in 2003. And, indeed, the essay is dedicated to Foa, an anti-fascist activist who endured nine years of imprisonment, later became a member

³⁶ See notably Peter Lombard, *Sententiae* IV, dist. 18 (*De remissione sacerdotis*), q. 1.

³⁷ PRIMO LEVI, *If This Is a Man and The Truce*, transl. STUART WOOLF, Abacus, London 2002, p. 93. Quoted by Ginzburg at p. 59. In *I sommersi e i salvati* – and especially in chapter *La zona grigia* – Levi insists on the ethological grounding of hierarchical and social oppositions; LEVI, *I sommersi e i salvati*, p. 24: « è talmente forte in noi, forse per ragioni che risalgono alle nostre origini di animali sociali, l'esigenza di dividere il campo fra 'noi' e 'loro' »; Ibid., 32: « è verosimile che una certa misura di dominio dell'uomo sull'uomo sia inscritta nel nostro patrimonio genetico di animali gregari ». Levi's goal is two-fold: knowing « the human species » in general (p. 27), and the innumerable « varietà dell'animale-uomo » (p. 112).

of the Italian Constituent Assembly, and was a leader of the Partito Socialista Italiano (PSI). Non-Italian readers, or those unfamiliar with Ginzburg's work, might find it challenging to follow all the threads and implications of this dense essay. But it is a luxury problem one is glad to confront.

Over the years, these methodological reflections have become increasingly urgent for Ginzburg, in response to the « fashionable, yet superficial scepticism which has, for decades, affected (or infected) the humanities and social sciences », the explicit target of the present essay and several of his earlier writings (p. 104). It is not merely a scholarly debate: for years, top political officials have been speaking of « alternative facts » and govern accordingly. « At stake in this debate », Ginzburg warns, « is the meaning – no more, no less – we ascribe to terms like 'knowledge,' 'truth,' 'reality' » (p. 75).

As a historian, Ginzburg confronts the problem by reflecting on the status of testimony, both in the abstract and in specific historical cases. His reading of *Art and Illusion* (1962) was seminal in this regard. The essay opens with Ginzburg presenting the core argument of Ernst Gombrich's critique of the notion of the « innocent » or « unbiased eye » (p. 76), extending it to all forms of testimony – « visual, verbal, whatever » (as for *Pathosformeln*, Ginzburg reworks ideas from art criticism by extending them to non-visual sources):

Any testimony speaks, first of all, deliberately or not, of itself, of the ways in which it has been produced [...] But it also speaks, in a more or less deliberate, more or less distorted way, of an outside reality (p. 74).

The challenge for historians is to uncover the « schemata » through which historical witnesses – like anyone else – perceive the world, along with the « biases » they carry. Researchers themselves are no exception and must undergo equally rigorous scrutiny: « One must sterilize the instruments of analysis [...] but the first instrument which must be sterilized is, of course, the historian himself (or herself) » (p. 99).

One can thus easily understand Ginzburg's fascination with double-blind experiments in the medical sciences, which he views as a « simplified model » of the perspective from which historians should approach fundamental phenomena of human behaviour (p. 82). He highlights the

coexistence of a concern for proof [...] and an acute and [...] unusual awareness of the possibility that those who do research might unwillingly distort its results through a projection of expectations and biases, along with hypotheses and schemata (p. 99).

For this reason, in randomized clinical trials, the efficacy of medical treatments is tested against a control group, which receives no medication, only a placebo. Both

groups, as well as those administering the treatment, remain unaware of whether they are receiving the so-called « verum treatment » or an inert replica. The aim is to eliminate variations due to emotional responses by ensuring that all participants believe they are receiving the same treatment. A consensual illusion, pursuant to the rituals of a standardized procedure.

With one crucial difference: historians, unlike natural scientists, cannot conduct experiments on historical actors, nor on their contemporaries. As the essay progresses, it becomes clear that Ginzburg is primarily interested in the asymmetries between these two groups of researchers – in their methods, the objects of their inquiries, and the very forms of reasoning they employ. « The rationality which inspires the historian », he argues, « aims, on the contrary, to take the actors' emotions as seriously as possible, and then to turn them into an object of analysis » – their « expectations, hopes, and fears », all the « background noise » that clinical trials are designed to eliminate.³⁸ These pages are among the most complex in the collection, as Ginzburg himself acknowledges: « What I am doing is an experiment on an experiment » (p. 82), further complicated by comparisons between the practices of historians, philologists, and judges – turning it into « a historiographical experiment raised to the square » (p. 89).

The intended conclusion, however, is unmistakable. Against simplistic relativism, Ginzburg makes a forceful case that these data – « indirect, untestable, distorted » as they may be – are still, « first of all, *data*, which are, according to the Latin etymology of the word, given rather than constructed, as in the double-blind experiment » (p. 93–94). Factual truth may be difficult to attain, but this should only strengthen our resolution never to abandon the inquiry. This is the original meaning of *historia* – « inquiry » – a quest that calls the researcher herself into question, and transforms her in the process.

« Research is endless » (p. 104, *explicit*).

³⁸ Respectively, p. 94 and 92. Ginzburg emphasizes that these « expectations, fears and hopes are animal reactions which disregard the boundary between nature and culture » (p. 96), thereby implicitly connecting this essay to the first two chapters of the collection.

NOTES

PLETHON AND THE MALTESE DOGS

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I. Consuming Everything, Reimbursing Nothing: Maltese Dogs in the Court of Mistras

I.1 The Text

Plethon,¹ among his pieces of advice to the despot (1407–1443) of the Peloponnese, Theodore II Palaeologus (c. 1395–1448) in the *Συμβουλευτικός πρὸς τὸν δεσπότην Θεόδωρον περὶ τῆς Πελοποννήσου* (written between 1407 and 1415 or between 1416 and 1418),² issued an exhortation to the young despot. This advice, sound in principle, was particularly pertinent and urgent given the specific circumstances under which Theodore II was required to govern: to abstain from luxury and to prioritize readiness for defensive warfare.³ Following this admonition, Plethon

¹ 'Plethon' is the name he coined in order to allude to his pagan intellectual identity (see GEORGE SCHOLARIOS – GENNADIOS II, *Κατὰ τῶν Πλήθωνος ἀποριῶν ἐπ' Ἀριστοτέλει* II, in MARTIN JUGIE, LOUIS PETIT, ΧΕΝΟΦΩΝ Α. ΣΙΔΕΡΙΔΗΣ (eds.), *Œuvres complètes de Georges (Gennadios) Scholarios. Γενναδίου τοῦ Σχολαρίου ἅπαντα τὰ εὑρισκόμενα*, t. IV: *Polémique contre Pléthon – Œuvres pastorales, ascétiques, liturgiques, poétiques – Correspondance – Chronographie*, Maison de la Bonne Presse, Paris 1935, p. 114,17–115,30). For the implications of this name see, *inter alia*, JOHN A. DEMETRACOPOULOS, « Georgios Gennadios II – Scholarios' *Florilegium Thomisticum II (De fato)* and its anti-Plethonic Tenor », *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie médiévales*, 74/2 (2007), p. 301–376, at p. 369, n. 307.

² See FRANÇOIS MASAI, *Pléthon et le platonisme de Mistras*, Les Belles Lettres, Paris 1956, p. 387; BRIGITTE TAMBRUN, *Pléthon: le retour de Platon*, Vrin, Paris 2006, p. 40. On the date issue, see the bibliography collected in CHRESTOS P. BALOGLU, *Γεώργιος Πλήθων – Γεμιστός. Ἐπὶ [sic] τῶν Πελοποννησιακῶν πραγμάτων. Βυζαντινὸ κείμενο – μετάφρασις – σχόλια*, Ελευθερία Σκέψις, Athens 2002, p. 99. The issue remains unsettled; the text requires an annotated critical edition that would, among other matters, clarify its date. Nevertheless, the question of chronology does not impact my discussion.

³ PLETHON, *Συμβουλευτικός πρὸς τὸν δεσπότην Θεόδωρον περὶ τῆς Πελοποννήσου* 25: « Ἐξελεῖν τε μάλιστα καὶ σαυτοῦ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων τρυφὴν καὶ πολυτέλειαν, ἐπὶ δὲ τὰς πρὸς πόλεμον παρασκευὰς τὸ ἅπαν τρέψαι [...] » (*Παλαιοιολόγια καὶ Πελοποννησιακά*, ed. SPYRIDON P. LAMPROS, vol. IV, Athens 1930, p. 133,4–134,2; JACQUES-PAUL MIGNE (ed.), *Patrologiae cursus completus – Series Graeca*, Paris 1857–1866 [= PG], vol. 160, col. 861D14–862A5). I reproduce the paragraph separation as it appears in the PG, even though it does not accurately represent the structure of the work.

sharply criticized members of Theodore's court who drained the state's resources while lacking either the will or the ability to defend it when called upon. Plethon urged the despot to rid himself of such individuals. To emphasize his point, Plethon employed the following metaphor:

Εἰ δὲ καὶ ποιμένες ἦτε, ποτέρως ἂν τῷ γάλακτι ἐκέχρησθε; Πότερα τοῦ μὲν αὐτοὶ μετρίως ἀπολαύοντες, τῷ ⁴ δὲ κύνας [1] ἂν τρέφοντες [2] ἀλκίμους τε καὶ « προβατευτικούς », τῷ ποιμνίῳ {3} ἐπὶ τὰ ἐπιβουλεύοντα {4} τῶν θηρίων [5] ἀμννοῦντας [6], ἵνα δὴ ὑμῖν τὸ ποίμνιον {3} σωζόμενον παρείχεται ποιμέσι τε εἶναι καὶ ἐπὶ πολὺ ἀπολαύειν τῶν καρπῶν, ἢ ἀμελήσαντες τοῦ μὲν ἀμέτρως ἐνεφορεῖσθ' ἂν καὶ κατὰ τῶν ἱματίων κατεχεῖσθε, τῷ ⁵ δ' ἀντὶ κυνῶν [1] ἀλκίμων {7} Μελιταῖά [8a] τε κυνίδια [8b] καὶ ἀλώπεκας ἐτρέφετε [2] ἢ ἄρκτους, βορώτατα μὲν θηρίων, ἥκιστα δὲ φυλακτικά [9], ὅφ' ὧν ὑμῖν καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἂν, τῶν ἔξωθεν ἐπιβουλεύόντων {4}, ταχὺ ἂν ἔμελλε τὸ ποίμνιον {3} διασπασθὲν οἰχῆσθαι {10}; Παραπλησίους {11} γάρ μοι δοκεῖτε τρέφειν [2] τούτων ἐνίους τῶν πρὸς κολακείαν καὶ δόλον ὑμῖν προσφερομένων ἢ συλλήβην ἅπαντα καταπίεσθαι κεχρηνόντων {12} « οὐδαμοῦ » τε « τῆς ἐπιθυμίας στήναι δυναμένων ».

Let us suppose you were shepherds; how would you use the milk? Option one: You would sufficiently feed yourselves with a portion of it, and with the remaining of it you would feed strong « pastoral » dogs which would defend the flock against the wild animals that plot against it, so that the flock, preserved whole-safe, would keep you being shepherds and allow you enjoy the profits from that. Option two: in a careless way, you would fill in your belly with a portion of milk without measure (even slopping it on your clothes), and then, instead of feeding with the remaining of it strong and brave dogs, you would feed small Maltese dogs, foxes, or bears, which are the most voracious animals and at the same time the least defensive of all, because of which animals, in combination with those that lurk outside and plot, you would be doomed very soon to have your flock torn asunder and extinguished. I am bringing forward this dilemma, because I think you actually feed some of those such-like men, who are evidently prone to flatter you and plot against you,⁶ or, if

⁴ Ex editionum necnon codicum omnium τοῦ correxi; error ex imitatione τοῦ μὲν emersus esse videtur.

⁵ Ex editionum necnon codicum omnium τοῦ correxi; error ex imitatione τοῦ μὲν emersus esse videtur.

⁶ Cf. the *explicatio* of « δόλω » from AESCHYLUS's *Prometheus vinctus* 213 as « κολακεία »: « [...] παρό, 'ἀλλὰ ἐν δόλω' παρό, 'ἀλλὰ κολακεία' » (*Aeschyli tragoediae superstites et deperditarum fragmenta*, t. III: *Scholia Graeca ex codicibus aucta et emendata*, ed. WILHELM DINDORF, E typographeo Academico, Oxford 1851 [repr. Olms, Hildesheim 1962], p. 198).

not plotting against you,⁷ stand with their mouths wide open to swallow everything at a gulp, « unable to restrain their greed at any point ».⁸

The three types of animals mentioned by Plethon appear to correspond one-to-one with the three kinds of vices he identified as afflicting the court. The *Μελιταῖα κυνίδια* correspond to *κολακεία* (cf. *infra*, p. 403: « [...] ἐπὶ τέρψει, ὡς τὰ Μελιταῖα »), the *άλωπεκες* to *δόλος*,⁹ and the *ἄρκτοι* to *ἅπαντα καταπίεσθαι κεχηγνέναι*. However, while voracity is particularly associated with the *ἄρκτοι*, it is a characteristic shared by all three.

1.2 The Sources of Plethon's Reference to the Maltese Dogs

Plethon, in composing the above passage (p. 400–401), drew upon the Hesiodic didactic tradition, particularly its commentary on *Opera et Dies* 604–605¹⁰ as follows:

[...] τοῦ δὲ (sc. τοῦ κυνός [1]) τὸ ἀμυντικόν [6], ἵνα μὴ δι' ἀσθένειαν {7} μάτην τρέφεται [2]. Οὐ θηρατικὸν οὖν οὐδὲ Μελιταῖον [8a] θρέψει [2] κύνα {8b} [1] γεωργός, ἀλλὰ τὸν πρὸς τὸ δάκνειν ἔτοιμον {6} καὶ τὸν « ἡμερόκοιτον ἄνθρωπον » φοβεῖν, ὃς διὰ νυκτὸς

⁷ *Δόλος* occurs three times in Plethon's *Ἐκ τῶν Διοδώρου καὶ Πλουτάρχου περὶ τῶν μετὰ τὴν ἐν Μαντινείᾳ μάχην ἐν κεφαλαίοις διάληψις* (X, 6; XLIV, 2 and 3; *Georgii Gemisti Plethonis opuscula de historia Graeca*, ed. ENRICO V. MALTESE, Teubner, Leipzig 1989, p. 6,28; 24,32; 25,8). In all instances, it refers to successful assassination plots.

⁸ PLETHON, *Συμβουλευτικός πρὸς τὸν δεσπότην Θεόδωρον περὶ τῆς Πελοποννήσου* 26 (ed. LAMPROS, vol. IV, p. 134,3–16; PG 160, col. 864B7–C7). My translation is partially based on the close summary of the passage by CHRISTOPHER M. WOODHOUSE (*George Gemistos Plethon. The Last of the Hellenes*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1986, p. 97). The Latin translation of the passage by GULIELMUS CANTERUS (*Πλήθωνος Πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα Ἐμμανουήλον περὶ τῶν ἐν Πελοποννήσῳ πραγμάτων. Τοῦ αὐτοῦ Συμβουλευτικός πρὸς τὸν δεσπότην Θεόδωρον περὶ τῆς Πελοποννήσου. Ex bibliotheca C. V. Ioannis Sambuci. Georgii Gemisti Plethonis de rebus Peloponnesiacis orationes duae, ex officina Christophori Plantini, Antwerpiae 1575*, p. 228–229; PG 160, col. 853B5–C2; in the reproduction of this edition in the PG, the *lacuna* at the last few lines of the translation, which was due to the *lacuna* in the Greek manuscript used for the edition, was emended), its German translation by ADOLF ELLISSEN (*Analekten der mittel- und neugriechischen Literatur*, pt. IV: *Byzantinische Paralipomena: Timarion – Mazaris – Plethon. Zweite Abtheilung: Plethon's Denkschriften über den Peloponnes*, Otto Wigand, Leipzig 1860, p. 128–129) and its German translation by WILHELM BLUM (*Georgios Gemistos Plethon. Politik, Philosophie und Rhetorik im spätbyzantinischen Reich*, Anton Hiersemann, Stuttgart 1988, p. 168) are fine. BALOGLOU's Modern Greek translation of the passage (*Γεώργιος Πλήθων - Γεμιστός*, p. 181) is not reliable.

⁹ Cf. *inter alia*, CLAUDIUS AELIANUS, *De natura animalium* XIII, 11, ed. MANUELA GARCÍA VALDÉS, LUIS ALFONSO LLERA FUEYO, LUCÍA RODRÍGUEZ, NORIEGA GUILLÉN, De Gruyter, Berlin – Novi Eboraci 2009, p. 314,15–16: « Σοφὸν γὰρ ἀπατᾶν ἄλωπῆξ, καὶ δόλους οἶδεν ».

¹⁰ « [...] κύνα καρχαρόδοντα κομῆν, μὴ φείδεο σίτου, / μὴ ποτέ σ' ἡμερόκοιτος ἀνὴρ ἀπὸ χρήμαθ' ἔληται [...] »; « [...] get a jagged-toothed dog / do not be sparing with its food, lest some day-sleeping man steal your things from you » (HESIOD, *Theogony. Works and Days. Testimonia*, ed. GLENN W. MOST, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA – London 2018, p. 137).

ἀποβλέπει {4a} οὐκ εἰς τὸ ἀπαμύνειν τὸ δῶμα, ἀλλ' εἰς {3b} τὸ τὰ τῶν ἄλλων {3} συλᾶν {10}.¹¹

The *glossa* is also preserved in a slightly different version attributed to Proclus Diadochus:

[...] τοῦ δὲ (sc. τοῦ κυνός [1]) τὸ ἀμυντικόν [6], ἵνα μὴ δι' ἀσθένειαν {7} μάτην τρέφεται [2]. Οὐ θηρατικὸν οὖν οὐδὲ Μελιταῖον [8a] θρέψει [2] κύνα {8b} [1] γεωργός, ἀλλὰ τὸν πρὸς τὸ δάκνειν ἔτοιμον {6} καὶ τὸν « ἡμερόκοιτον ἄνθρωπον » φοβεῖν, ὃς διαπαντὸς ἀποβλέπει {4a} οὐκ εἰς τὸ ἀναπαύειν τὸ σῶμα, ἀλλ' εἰς {3b} τὸ τὰ τῶν ἄλλων {3} συλᾶν {10}.¹²

[...] The advantage of the dog should be its defence ability, so that the farmer would not feed it in vain, because of its infirmity. Therefore, the farmer should feed neither a hunting dog nor a Maltese dog, but a dog which is eager to beat and cause fear to the « day-sleeping man », who during the night does not care about protecting his own home / giving rest to his body, but intends to steal things from the homes of the others.

Although Hesiod refers to farmers, whereas Plethon speaks of herdsmen, these professions share many similarities. As Xenophon notes in a passage where the rare term *προβατευτικός*, also used by Plethon, appears, the two professions are closely interconnected.¹³

¹¹ *Scholia vetera* in « *Opera et dies* » 600–605 (AGOSTINO PERTUSI (ed.), *Scholia vetera in Hesiodi Opera et dies*, Vita e pensiero, Milan 1955, p. 194,21–195,1). Numbers in brackets indicate verbal coincidences, while numbers in braces denote similarities *quoad sensum* (synonyms and paraphrases).

¹² PROCLUS DIADOCHUS, *Σχόλια εἰς τὰ « Ἔργα καὶ ἡμέρας » τοῦ Ἡσιόδου* CCXIX (ad ll. 600b–605), ll. 5–9; PATRIZIA MARZILLO (ed.), *Der Kommentar des Proklos zu Hesiods 'Werken und Tagen'. Edition, Übersetzung und Erläuterung der Fragmente*, Gunter Narr, Tübingen 2010, p. 222. Cf. *Scholia* in « *Opera et dies* » *vetera partim Procli et recentiora partim Moschopuli, Tzetzae et Joannis Galeni* 598 (THOMAS GAISFORD (ed.), *Poetae minores Graeci*, vol. II: *Scholia ad Hesiodum e codd. mss. Editio nova*, F.V. REIZI annotationibus in *Hesiodum, plurium poetarum fragmentis aliisque accessionibus aucta*, Kuehn, Leipzig 1823, p. 350,12–16). This is not the only instance where Plethon exploits Proclus. See the significant borrowings identified by VOJTECH HLADKÝ, *The Philosophy of Gemistos Plethon: Platonism in Late Byzantium, between Hellenism and Orthodoxy*, Ashgate, Burlington, VT 2014, p. 114–122; 124–125; 134; 168–180; 263–266; 275–276 (with a critical *Forschungsbericht*); see also TAMBRUN, *Pléthon*, p. 146–177; 187–188; 232 (who, however, reveals Plethon's discrepancies from Proclus's metaphysics); JOHN A. DEMETRACOPOULOS, « Christian Scepticism: The Reception of Xenophanes's B34 in Heathen and Christian Antiquity and its Sequel in Byzantine Thought », in ALISON K. FRAZIER, PATRICK NOLD (eds.), *Essays in Renaissance Thought and Letters in Honor of John Monfasani*, Brill, Leiden 2015, p. 243–445, at p. 415, n. 575.

¹³ XENOPHON, *Oeconomicus* V, 3: « [...] ἡ προβατευτικὴ τέχνη συνῆπται τῇ γεωργίᾳ [...] »; « [...] the art of breeding stock is closely linked with farming [...] » (*Xenophontis opera omnia*, t. II: *Commentarii, Oeconomicus, Convivium, Apologia Socratis. Editio altera*, ed. EDGAR CARDEW MARCHANT, e typographico Clarendoniano, Oxonii 1901, p. 187,1; XÉNOPHON, *Économique*, ed and transl. PIERRE CHANTRAINE, Les

The Maltese dogs are depicted and categorized in a strikingly similar manner in the *Suda* (likely composed in the 10th century AD):

Μελιταῖον [8a] κυνίδιον [8b] {1}. Τῶν γὰρ κυνῶν [1] οἱ μὲν ἰχνευταί, οἱ δὲ ὁμόσε τοῖς θηρίοις [5] χωροῦσιν, οἱ δὲ ἐπὶ φυλακῇ [9] τῶν κτημάτων {3} οἰκουροί, οἱ δὲ ἐπὶ τέρψει, ὥς τὰ Μελιταῖα [8a] κυνίδια [8b] {1}.¹⁴

‘Maltese small dog’. Some of the dogs are scouts; some others run after the quarries, some others look after the house as guardians, whereas certain other ones are used for the sake of pleasure, such as the Maltese dogs.

Plethon’s [1], [2] and [6] (as well as {3}, {4}, {7} and {10}) coincide exclusively with the wording of Proclus’s comment on Hesiod, whereas [5], [8], and [9] coincide exclusively with the entry from the *Suda*. This indicates that Plethon drew upon both passages.

The final element in Plethon’s depiction of the Maltese dogs is their voracity. I have identified only two relevant texts predating Plethon that address this characteristic. The first is a dictum attributed to Diogenes the Cynic, as recorded by Diogenes Laertius: « Ἐρωτηθεὶς ποδαπὸς εἶη κύων, ἔφη· ‘πεινῶν Μελιταῖος, χορτασθεὶς δὲ Μολοττικός [...]’ » (« [Diogenes], being asked what kind of hound he was, he replied; ‘When hungry, a Maltese; when full, a Molossian’ [...] »). Diogenes goes on by deciphering his allusive reply: « [...] two breeds which most people

Belles Lettres, Paris 1949, p. 51; XENOPHON, *Memorabilia. Oeconomicus. Symposium. Apology*, transl. EDGAR CARDEW MARCHANT, OTIS JOHNSON TODD, rev. JEFFREY HENDERSON, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA – London 2013, p. 427). Plethon concludes his *Συμβουλευτικός πρὸς τὸν δεσπότην Θεόδωρον περὶ τῆς Πελοποννήσου* with a passage from Hesiod’s *Opera et Dies*: « Οὔτε γὰρ ἐγχωρεῖ μέλλειν ἔτι [...] οὔτ’ ἄλλως ἀναβάλλεσθαι τὰ γε τοιαῦτα καλόν, οὐδ’ ὃ γε Ἡσίοδος φαύλως λέγοντι ἔοικεν, ‘αἰεὶ δ’ ἀμβολιεργὸς ἀνὴρ ἄτησι παλαίει’ » (ed. LAMBROS, vol. IV, p. 135,19–22); see HESIOD, *Opera et Dies* 410–413: « Μηδ’ ἀναβάλλεσθαι ἔς τ’ αὐριον ἔς τε ἔνηφιν / οὐ γὰρ ἔτῳσιεργὸς ἀνὴρ πίμπλησι καλιὴν / οὐδ’ ἀναβαλλόμενος μελέτη δέ τοι ἔργον ὀφέλλει / αἰεὶ δ’ ἀμβολιεργὸς ἀνὴρ ἄτησι παλαίει » (ed. MOST, p. 121). Plethon most likely derived the passage via SIMPLICIUS’s reproduction of it: « Καὶ τοῦτο προσήκον ἦν ἀκοῦσαι τὸν τυχόντα τέως τῶν παραινέσεων, τὸ μὴ μέλλειν λοιπὸν μὴδὲ ἀναβάλλεσθαι. Αἰεὶ γὰρ ἀμβολιεργὸς ἀνὴρ ἄτησι παλαίει » (*Commentarius in Epicteti ‘Enchiridion’* LXIX, 3–5, in SIMPLICIUS, *Commentaire sur le Manuel d’Épictète. Introduction et édition critique du texte grec*, ed. ILSETRAUT HADOT, Brill, Leiden – New York – Köln 1996, p. 446–447). Cf. Plethon’s « οὔτε [...] ἐγχωρεῖ μέλλειν ἔτι [...] οὔτ’ [...] ἀναβάλλεσθαι [...] » (ibid.).

¹⁴ *Suda* M 519, in ADA ADLER (ed.), *Suidae Lexicon*, pt. III: *Lexicographi Graeci*, I.3, Teubner, Leipzig 1933, p. 355,24–27. For using Maltese dogs « for amusement », see also *Fabulae Aesopicae – Recensio prima sive Augustana* 73,1–2: « Ἔθος ἐστὶ τοῖς πλέουσιν ἐπάγεσθαι κύνας Μελιταίους καὶ πιθήκους πρὸς παραμυθίαν τοῦ πλοῦ » (BEN EDWIN PARRY (ed.), *Aesopica. A Series of Texts Relating to Aesop or Ascribed to Him or Closely Connected with the Literary Tradition that Bears his Name, Collected and Critically Edited, in Part Translated from Oriental Languages, with a Commentary and Historical Essay*, vol. I: *Greek and Latin Texts*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana 1952, p. 349 = *Fabula* 75,1–2 in AUGUST HAUSRATH, HERBERT HUNGER (eds.), *Corpus fabularum Aesopicarum. Volumen prius: fabulae Aesopicae soluta oratione conscriptae. Fasciculus prior. Editio altera*, Teubner, Leipzig 1970, p. 99). Cf. *infra*, n. 15.

praise, though for fear of fatigue they do not venture to hunt with them. So neither can you live with me, because you are afraid of the discomforts ». ¹⁵ Apart from the fact that the verbal similarity of this text to Plethon's is limited to the terms κύων and Μελιταῖος – the minimal shared vocabulary necessary to link any passage to the Plethonic passage – these terms also appear in Proclus and the *Suda* ([8a/b]; see above, p. 380–381). Furthermore, Diogenes's point is irrelevant to Plethon's argument, as Plethon focuses exclusively on voracity as a defining characteristic of Maltese dogs.

The second and last – indeed, the only – possible source for the gluttony of the Maltese dogs is this brief sentence from Michael Psellos's *Oratoria minora*:

[...] ὥσπερ {11} τὰ Μελιταῖα [8a] κυνίδια [8b] {1} ὅλαις βάσεισι καὶ ὅλαις ὀσφρήσεισι περὶ τὴν λοπάδα λιχνεύη [12] [...]. ¹⁶

¹⁵ DIOGENES LAERTIUS, *Vitae philosophorum* VI, 55 (DIOGENES LAERTIUS, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, ed. TIZIANO DORANDI, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge – New York 2013, p. 439; *Diogenis Laertii Vitae philosophorum*, ed. MIROSLAV MARCOVICH, De Gruyter, Berlin – New York 2008, p. 410,4–5; DIOGENES LAERTIUS, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*, transl. ROBERT DREW HICKS, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA – London 1925, p. 57). See also *Fabulae Aesopi – Recensio prima sive Augustana* 91, 2: « Ἐχων τις κύνα Μελιταῖον [...] διετέλει [...] τῷ κυνὶ προσπαίζων [...]. [...] Ὁ δὲ κύων, ἐσθίων καὶ καθεύδων ὅλην τὴν ἡμέραν καὶ μηδὲν ἐργαζόμενος [...] » (ed. PARRY, p. 357 = 93bis; ed. HAUSRATH, HUNGER, p. 119).

¹⁶ MICHAEL PSELLOS, *Oratoria minora* 18 (Εἰς τὸν Λογγίβαρδον Ἰωάννην καταναγκάζοντα αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ ἐρμηνεύσαι τάχιον τὰ μαθήματα) (To John the Lombard, Who Was Urging Him with Importunity to Faster Deliver the Lessons), ll. 7–8 (Michaelis Pselli *Oratoria minora*, ed. ANTONY ROBERT LITTLEWOOD, Teubner, Leipzig 1985, p. 65). By employing the phrase « ὅλαις βάσεισι », Psellos likely draws a contrast between the Maltese dogs and the reference to Laconian dogs found in SOPHOCLES's *Ajax* 5–8: « [...] μετρούμενον / ἵχνη [...] / [...] Εὐ δέ σ' ἐκφέρει / κυνὸς Λακαίνης ὥς τις εὐρινος βάσις » (see LITTLEWOOD, *ibid.*, app. font., ad loc.). In fact, Psellos explicitly mentions the Laconian dogs in this context (see the complete passage below, p. 417). Cf. THEMISTIUS, *Βασανιστῆς ἢ φιλόσοφος* 248C1–3: « [...] τὴν τε κύνα [...], εἰ Λάκαινα ὄντως γενναία καὶ μὴ πονηρὸν κυνίδιον, ἄλωπεκίς ποθεν ἢ Μελιταῖα » (Themistii *Orationes quae supersunt*, ed. GLANVILLE DOWNEY, ALBERT FRANCIS NORMAN, HEINRICH SCHENKL, vol. II, Teubner, Leipzig 1971, p. 25,10–12); (PS.-) PLUTARCH OF CHAERONEA, *De liberis educandis* 4, 3B4–7: « [...] προσαγαγὼν τοὺς δύο σκύλακας διαφῆκε, καταθεὶς εἰς μέσον λοπάδα καὶ λαγῶν κατευθὺ τῶν σκυλάκων· καὶ ὁ μὲν ἐπὶ τὸν λαγῶν ἦξεν, ὁ δ' ἐπὶ τὴν λοπάδα ὥρμησε » (Plutarchi *Moralia*, vol. I, ed. WILLIAM ROGER PATON, JOHANNES WEGEHaupt, praef. MAX POHLENZ, Teubner, Stuttgartiae – Lipsiae 1993, p. 4,26–28); (PS.-?) PLUTARCH OF CHAERONEA, *Apophthegmata Laconica* 225F3–9: « [...] δύο σκύλακας ἀνέθρεψε ταύτου πατὴρ καὶ μητὴρ γενομένους· καὶ τὸν μὲν εἶθισε περὶ λιχνείας οἶκοι ἑάσας, τὸν δ' ἀπαγόμενος ἤσκησε περὶ κυνηγείας. Ἐπειτα [...] ἔθηκε [...] λιχνείας τινάς, ἀφῆκε δὲ καὶ λαγὼν ἑκατέρου δ' ἐπὶ τὰ συνήθη ὀρμήσαντος καὶ θατέρου τὸν λαγὼν χειρῶσαμένον [...] » (PLUTARQUE, *Œuvres morales*, t. III: *Traité 15 et 16: Apophthegmes de rois et de généraux* – *Apophthegmes laconiens*, ed. and transl. FRANÇOIS FUHRMANN, Les Belles Lettres, Paris 1988, p. 200). Ps.-Plutarch does not refer to a Laconian and a Maltese dog but rather to two dogs born of the same mother and/or father yet raised under different conditions. (These passages are included in the apparatus fontium). – *Χάσκω* means to gape in eager expectation for food (see LSJ, s.v. 1 and 2); *λιχνεύω* means to gormandize (to eat greedily) and to desire greedily (see LSJ, s.v. II).

[...] like the small Maltese dogs, you gormandize to the dish by approaching it from all sides and with all of your smelling power [...].

Unless another source overlooked by me emerges as a plausible candidate for having captured Plethon's attention and accounting for his remarks on the Maltese dogs, Psellos's amusing description of their gluttony – like Plethon's simile, a critique of a human moral failing – stands as the most likely source.¹⁷ Moreover, Psellos's lines are part of a text that is significantly richer in content and more complex. As will be shown below (p. 417–420), this text was also utilized by Plethon in crafting his second and final moral application of the Maltese dogs simile, which targeted Scholarios.

I.3 The Covertly but Recognisably anti-Christian Tenor of Plethon's Denouncement of Greed

The final task in Part I is to elucidate the concluding clause of the passage from Plethon's *Συμβουλευτικός* cited above (p. 400), namely, « οὐδαμοῦ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας στήναι δυναμένων ». This phrase is a direct borrowing from its sole occurrence in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (hereafter; TLG), which appears in the following passage from John Chrysostom's (c. 350–407 AD) *Homilies on John's Gospel*:

Εἰ γὰρ ἐκεῖνοι [sc. the pagans] διὰ δόξαν κενὴν τοσαύτην ἐπεδείξαντο φιλοσοφίαν, πολλῶ μᾶλλον ἡμᾶς [sc. the Christians] διὰ τὸ τῷ Θεῷ δοκοῦν χρητῆς πᾶσαν ἀρετὴν ἐπιέναι· νῦν δὲ οὐδὲ χρημάτων καταφρονοῦμεν. Ἀλλ' ἐκεῖνοι μὲν καὶ τῆς ἑαυτῶν πολλάκις ὑπερίδον ψυχῆς, καὶ παῖδας ἐπέδωκαν ἐν πολέμοις τῇ τῶν δαιμόνων μανίᾳ, καὶ τῆς φύσεως κατεφρόνησαν διὰ τοὺς δαίμονας, ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐδὲ « ἀργυρίου »

¹⁷ Undoubtedly, Plethon had opportunities to observe and interact with Maltese dogs in Constantinople, Mistras, and other locations, gaining knowledge of their behaviour through direct acquaintance. Nevertheless, as books are predominantly written based on other books, and considering the insightful observation that for Plethon, « books » were akin to « events » (AUBREY DILLER, « Pletho and Plutarch », *Scriptorium*, 8 (1954), p. 123–127, at p. 127), the texts cited in this paragraph were undoubtedly the primary sources for his remarks about Maltese lapdogs. A similar notion is articulated in the following Epictetan dictum from JOHN STOBAEUS's *Anthologium* IV, 5, 83: « Ὡς περ εἰ λέοντας ἐβούλου τρέφειν, οὐκ ἂν σοι τῆς πολυτελείας τῶν ζωγρείων ἔμελεν, ἀλλὰ τῆς πράξεως τῶν ζώων, οὕτως εἰ πολιτῶν πειρᾷ προϊστασθαι, μὴ τοσοῦτον τῆς πολυτελείας τῶν ἀναστημάτων φρόντιζε, ὅποσον τῆς ἀνδρείας τῶν ἐνδιατριβόντων ἐπιμελοῦ » (*Ioannis Stobaei Anthologii libri duo posteriores*, ed. OTTO HENSE, vol. II, apud Weidmannos, Berlin, 1909, p. 225, 13–17 = *Stobaei Gnomologion Epicteteum* 62; *Epicteti Dissertationes ab Arriano digestae. Accedunt fragmenta, Enchiridion ex recensione Schweighauseri, gnomologiorum Epicteteorum reliquiae, indices. Editio maior. Adiecta est tabula*, ed. HEINRICH SCHENKL, Teubner, Leipzig 1916, p. 491). Still, there is no verbal similarity between it and Plethon.

διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν¹⁸ οὐδὲ « ὀργῆς » διὰ τὸ δοκοῦν τῷ Θεῷ,¹⁹ ἀλλὰ φλεγμαίνομεν καὶ πυρεπτόντων οὐδὲν ἄμεινον διακείμεθα. Καὶ καθάπερ ἐκεῖνοι τῷ κακῷ κατεχόμενοι διακαεῖς εἰσιν, οὕτω καὶ ἡμεῖς, ὥσπερ ἀπὸ πυρός τινος ἀγχόμενοι, οὐδαμοῦ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας σῆναι δυνάμεθα, καὶ ὀργὴν καὶ φιλοχρηματίαν αὐξοντες. Διὰ ταῦτα αἰσχύνομαι καὶ ἐκπλήττομαι, παρὰ μὲν Ἑλλήσι βλέπων χρημάτων ὑπερορῶντας, παρὰ δὲ ἡμῖν μαινομένους ἅπαντας.

For if they, because of a vain precept, have shown so lofty a morality in their lives, much more ought we to practice all virtue, because it is God's precept to do so; but, in fact, at our time [sc. in the Christian era], we do not even despise wealth; while they have even been careless of their life, and in wars have given up their children to the madness of the devils, and have thereby despised even nature for the sake of their devils,²⁰ we, for our part, do not even despise money for the sake of Christ, nor do we leave anger aside on account of God's will, but are inflamed, and in no better state than the fevered. And just as they, when possessed by their malady, are all burning, so we, suffocated as by some fire, can stop at no point of desire, increasing both anger and avarice. On this account I am ashamed and astonished, when I behold among the Greeks men despising riches, but all mad for riches among us [sc. Christians].²¹

¹⁸ Mt. 10:9; Act. 8:20; 20:33; I Tim. 3:3; II Tim. 3:2; Hebr. 13:5.

¹⁹ Rom. 12:19; Eph. 4:31; Col. 3:8.

²⁰ John Chrysostom appears to reference Agamemnon, the king of Argos and general of the Greeks during the Trojan War, who sacrificed his daughter Iphigenia at Aulis at the behest of the goddess Artemis. Notably, many Christian authors before and after John Chrysostom regarded Artemis, like all the ancient gods, as a demon (cf. Ps. 95:5: « πάντες οἱ θεοὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν δαιμόνια »). Additionally, Chrysostom seems to allude to the proverbial renunciation of wealth associated with certain Cynic philosophers. – Close to the Chrysostomian passage utilized by Plethon is the following excerpt from Plethon's disciple and staunch defender of Plato, Bessarion, where the ideal figure of the φιλόσοφοι (cf. Chrysostom's « φιλοσοφίαν ») is portrayed, explicitly and closely adhering to PLATO's *Republic* V, 485E3–486B7): « Οἷς ἔπεται σῶφρονας αὐτοὺς εἶναι καὶ κοσμίους, χρημάτων καταφρονητάς [cf. Chrysostom's « χρημάτων καταφρονοῦμεν »; « κατεφρόνησαν »; « χρημάτων ὑπερορῶντας »]: φιλοχρηματίαν [cf. Chrysostom's « φιλοχρηματίαν »] γὰρ ἀνελεύθερον καὶ μικρόλογον εἶναι, ταῦτα δὲ ψυχῇ φιλοσόφον (cf. Chrysostom's « φιλοσοφίαν ») μελλούσης τοῦ ὅλου καὶ παντὸς ἀεὶ ἐπορέξεσθαι ἐναντιώτατα εἶναι. – Ἀδεεῖς θανάτου, οὐ δειλούς [cf. Chrysostom's « τῆς ἑαυτῶν πολλάκις ὑπερεῖδον ψυχῆς »] [...] » (BESSARION, *In Calumniatorem Platonis* IV, 3, 7; LUDWIG MOHLER, *Kardinal Bessarion als Theologe, Humanist und Staatsmann. Funde und Forschungen*, Bd. II: *Bessarionis In Calumniatorem Platonis libri IV*, F. Schöningh, Paderborn 1927 [reprint: Scientia, Aalen 1967], p. 502,34–37). This is not the only instance where Bessarion drew upon Plethon; see, e.g., JOHN A. DEMETRACOPOULOS, « *Cydones Redivivus*: Bessarion's Self-placement between Greeks and Latins, the Scholastic Quaestio, and the Hard Quest for Truth », in SERGEI MARIEV (ed.), *Bessarion's Treasure: Editing, Translating and Interpreting Bessarion's Literary Heritage*, De Gruyter, Berlin – New York 2020, p. 23–87, at p. 59–63.

²¹ JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *In « Johannem » homiliae* LXXXIV, 3 (PG 59, col. 458–459); transl. CHARLES MARRIOTT, in PHILIPP SCHAFF (ed.), *A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, vol. XIV: *Saint Chrysostom: Homilies on the Gospel of John and the Epistle to Hebrews*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York 1889, p. 316, substantially emended. THOMAS AQUINAS GOGGIN's translation (SAINT

Plethon, through his exclusive and unmistakable allusion to the passage from John Chrysostom, implicitly conveys to his audience that a prominent Christian moralist like Chrysostom had, as early as the 4th/5th century, condemned the Christians' greed. He also highlighted the vices that often replace it when absent, such as θυμός (anger) and βασκανία (envy). According to Chrysostom, several pagans – remarkably, and to the Christians' shame – demonstrated moral superiority by embodying virtues like frugality, self-negation, and self-sacrifice. Plethon applies Chrysostom's critique of the average Christian to the members of the court, thereby imbuing his statement with a significance that surpasses the conventional notion that courtiers are typically motivated by personal gain at the expense of the very principles they are meant to uphold: Plethon goes further, attributing this moral failing specifically to the courtiers' Christian identity.

This implicit reference to Chrysostom provides additional independent evidence for Plethon's argument. The phrase οὐχ/μὴ ἴστασθαι τῆς ἐπιθυμίας appears frequently in Chrysostom's writings,²² however, it is only in the aforementioned

JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *Commentary on Saint John the Apostle and Evangelist. Homilies 48-88*, The Catholic University of America Press, Washington, DC 1960, p. 425-426), which is employed by PASCHALIS GKORTSILAS in his brief discussion of the passage (« John Chrysostom and the Greeks: Hellenism and Greek Philosophy in the Rhetoric of John Chrysostom », Ph.D. Diss., University of Exeter 2017, p. 138), offers only marginal improvement.

²² See, e.g., JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *De Lazaro homiliae* II, 1: « Ὁ γὰρ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ στήσαι μὴ δυνάμενος ἐπιθυμίαν, κἂν τὰ πάντων [ex editionis πάντως correxi; see, *inter alia*, JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, *In « Epistulam ad Romanos »*, prol. 4, PG 60, col. 400: « [...] ὁ πονηρὰ συνειδὼς ἑαυτῷ, κἂν τὰ πάντων περιβάλληται χρήματα, πάντων ἐστὶν ἀθλιώτερος »; cf. the passage in the Chrysostomian in origin *Eclogae i-xlvi ex diversis homiliis*, PG 63, col. 643-644: « [...] ὁ πονηρὰ συνειδὼς ἑαυτῷ, κἂν τὰ πάντων περιβέβληται χρήματα, πάντων ἐστὶν ἀθλιώτερος »; cf. ID., *In illud: « Salutate Priscillam et Aquilam »* I, 4, PG 51, col. 193: « [...] κἂν τὰ πάντα ἧς περιβεβλημένος πράγματα [...] » περιβέβληται, πῶς οὗτος ἔσται ἐν εὐπορίᾳ ποτέ; » (PG 48, col. 982)]; ID., *In « Genesim » homiliae XXXII*, 7: « [...] τῇ τυραννίδι τῆς τῶν χρημάτων ἐπιθυμίας ἑαυτοῦς ἐκδεδωκότες οὐδέποτε ἴστανται τῆς ἐπιθυμίας, ἀλλ' ὅσῳ ἂν πλείονα περιβάλλωνται, τοσοῦτῳ μάλλον αἴρεται ἡ φλόξ καὶ σφοδροτέρα ἡ κάμινος ἀνάπτεται » (PG 53, col. 292); ID., *In « Epistulam I ad Corinthios » homiliae XIV*, 5: « Ὁ φιλάργυρος οὐδέποτε στήσεται τῆς ἐπιθυμίας ταύτης [...] » (PG 61, col. 120). This is not the only instance that Plethon drew upon John Chrysostom (see JOHN A. DEMETRACOPOULOS, *Απὸ τὴν ἱστορία τοῦ βυζαντινοῦ θωμισμοῦ: Πλήθων καὶ Θωμᾶς Ἀκινάτης (Plethon and Thomas Aquinas; with four Appendices, including a critical edition of Plethon's *Extracta Thomistica*)*, Παρουσία, Athens 2004, p. 103-104; ID., « Georgios Gemistos-Plethon's Dependence on Thomas Aquinas' *Summa contra Gentiles* and *Summa Theologiae* », *Archiv für mittelalterliche Philosophie und Kultur*, 12 (2006), p. 276-341, at p. 318-319). Plethon was very likely introduced to Chrysostom's œuvre by Demetrios Cydones, who is plausibly believed to have been his teacher (see DEMETRACOPOULOS, *Πλήθων καὶ Θωμᾶς Ἀκινάτης*, p. 29, n. 22, with bibliography). Cydones composed an epigram for John Chrysostom (see GIOVANNI MERCATI, *Notizie di Procoro e Demetrio Cidone, Manuele Caleca e Teodoro Meliteniota ed altri appunti per la storia della teologia e della letteratura bizantina del secolo XIV*, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City 1931, p. 157-158), which is notably the only epigram he is known to have written (for an overview of Cydones's literary production, see FRANZ TINNEFELD, *Demetrios Kydones. Briefe. Übersetzt*

passage from the *Homilies on John's Gospel* that the full expression used by Plethon occurs; moreover, this particular passage is unique in that it employs this phrase within a moral comparison, where pagans – despite their ‘sacrilegious’ beliefs – are depicted as paragons of virtue, in contrast to the Christians, who are criticized for their moral shortcomings. Plethon, by invoking this passage, implicitly suggests that the moral accusation leveled against Christians by Chrysostom remains valid a millennium later, thus signaling that it is an ingrained vice within Christian society and governance. To address this moral failing, Plethon implies, a ruler must dismantle Christianity and replace it with a court inspired by the high moral ideals of the pagan figures whom even Chrysostom, despite his vehement anti-pagan rhetoric,²³ still praised.²⁴ In this framework, Plethon categorises the corrupt court members according to the specific vices each exhibits. He explicitly names these vices and also symbolically represents them through the use of three different animals. Among these, the Maltese dogs stand as a metaphor for the most egregious – and most vehemently condemned by Chrysostom – vice: greed.²⁵

II. *On the Margins of the Mid-15th Century Plato-Aristotle Controversy: Scholarios as a Maltese Dog*

II. 1 The Text

Plethon was to use a Maltese dogs simile once more, shortly before the end of his literary career and his life. He employed this metaphor in addressing Scholarios in the conclusion of his *Πρὸς τὰς Σχολαρίου ὑπὲρ Ἀριστοτέλους ἀντιλήψεις* (*Against Scholarios's Defence of Aristotle regarding Certain Particular Points*), a counter-reply

und erläutert. Erster Teil, Erster Halbband (Einleitung und 47 Briefe), Hiersemann, Stuttgart 1981, p. 63–72).

²³ Most of the relevant passages are compiled and analyzed in GKORTSILAS's *John Chrysostom*, p. 71–151.

²⁴ The Συμβουλευτικός πρὸς τὸν δεσπότην Θεόδωρον περὶ τῆς Πελοποννήσου has been convincingly argued by several scholars to embody a distinctly pagan spirit. See, e.g., TAMBRUN, *Pléthon*, p. 40–41; 182–183; DEMETRACOPOULOS, *Πλήθων καὶ Θωμάς Ἀκρινάτης*, p. 47–48; NIKITAS SINIOSSOGLU, *Radical Platonism in Byzantium: Illumination and Utopia in Gemistos Plethon*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2011, p. 331–346 (though this should be read with caution; see, *inter alia*, CHRISTIAAN W. KAPPES, « Idolizing Paganism – Demonizing Christianity: à Propos: N. Siniossoglou, *Radical Platonism in Byzantium: Illumination and Utopia in Gemistos Plethon* », *Archiv für mittelalterliche Philosophie und Kultur*, 19 (2013), p. 210–243).

²⁵ This is not the place to speculate on why Plethon attributes such a deplorable privilege to Christians. One might conjecture that he believed an ill-organized state inevitably fosters greed among its citizens and that adhering to irrational beliefs – such as those upheld by Christians – undermines the rational part of the soul. This, in turn, necessarily allows the irrational parts of the soul, the *irascibilis* and the *concupiscibilis*, to be excessively agitated.

(1448/49)²⁶ to George Scholarios's extensive response (*Κατὰ τῶν Πλήθωνος ἀποριῶν ἐπ' Ἀριστοτέλει* / *Against Plethon's Impasses regarding Aristotle*) (1444/45)²⁷ to Plethon's short *Περὶ ὧν Ἀριστοτέλης πρὸς Πλάτωνα διαφέρεται* (*On the Issues on Which Aristotle Contentiously Disagrees with Plato*)²⁸ (early 1439), which reignited the Plato - Aristotle debate in the mid-15th century:

Εἰ δέ [1a] σε [2a] ὃ τε τυφός {3} ἔτι [2b] κατέχει {2c} καί, ἤτοι Ἀριστοτέλους [4] κηδομένῳ ἢ καὶ ὑπὸ βασκανίας [5] τῆς πρὸς [6] ἡμᾶς [7] δοκεῖ σοι {2a} ἔτι [2b] καὶ πρὸς ταυτὶ τὰ ἡμέτερα ἀντιγράφειν [i1] {i2}, καὶ δὴ ἀντίγραφε [i1] {i2} μάλα θαρρῶν, ὡς ἡμᾶς οὐκέτι οὐδ' {8a *e contrario*} ὁτιοῦν πρὸς γε τὰ σὰ ἐκεῖνα ἀντιγράφοντα. Ἰσμεν γὰρ ὡς, ὅσω ἂν πλείω γράψῃς {i2}, τοσοῦτω καὶ μᾶλλον ἀσχημονήσεις. Εἰ δέ τισι καὶ δόξεις {9} τι λέγειν {i2}, ὅτι οὐκ ἄλλοις ἢ ἀμαθέσι τε ὁμοῦ καὶ μωροῖς {10} δόξεις {9} εὖ δὴ μάλα ἴσμεν· οἷων ἡμῖν ἀνδρῶν τῆς δόξης {9} οὐ πολὺ τι μέλει.²⁹ Οὐκ ὀλίγη δέ σοι εὐπορία {ii1} ἔσται λόγων [ii2]. Εἰ μὲν γὰρ « ἡκρίβους » τὰ « λεγόμενα », παγχάλεπον {ii2 *e contrario*} ἂν σοι ἐγίνετο τὸ ἀντιλέγειν [i1] {i2} ἡμῖν· ἐπεὶ δ' « ἀκριβοῦν » μὲν οὐθ' οἷός τ' εἶ οὐθ' ἴσως σοι πάνυ τι μέλει, ἀγαπᾷς δέ καὶ τὰ ἐπιτυχόντα εἰκῇ³⁰ « ἐμῶν », τῶν γε τοιοῦτων οὐδεμίᾳ σοι ἀπορία {ii1 *e contrario*}. Καὶ μὲν δὴ καὶ διάβαλλε ὃ τι βούλει καὶ τῶν βλασφημιῶν {11} ἐμφοροῦ, ὥσπερ καὶ ἡπείλησας οὐ φείσεσθαι τῶν τοιούτων, καίπερ οὐδὲ νῦν γε πεφεισμένος. Ὅ τι {11a} γὰρ ἂν βλασφημῆσῃς {11b}, ἡμῶν μὲν [12] οὐχ ἄψῃ –οὐ γὰρ οὐδ' ἡμῖν προσόντα ἐρεῖς,³¹

²⁶ For the date, see WOODHOUSE, *George Gemistos Plethon*, p. 270.

²⁷ For the date (as established by M. Jugie), see FRANZ TINNEFELD, « Georgios Gennadios II. Scholarios », in CARMELLO G. CONTICELLO, VASSA CONTICELLO (eds.), *La théologie byzantine et sa tradition*, vol. II: XIII^e-XIX^e s., Brepols, Turnhout 2002, p. 477–549, at p. 515.

²⁸ The title is traditionally rendered in an awkward manner as « De differentiis Platonis et Aristotelis » or « On the Differences between Plato and Aristotle ». For a discussion of its proper translation, see DEMETRACOPOULOS, *Πλήθων καὶ Θωμᾶς Ἀκυνάτης*, p. 76, n. 177; TAMBRUN, *Pléthon*, p. 58.

²⁹ The phrase appears exclusively in PLATO's *Crito* 44C6–7: « ΣΩ. Ἀλλὰ τί ἡμῖν, ὦ μακάριε Κρίτων, οὕτω τῆς τῶν πολλῶν δόξης μέλει; ». Before Plethon, the passage is cited only once (JULIAN, *Εἰς τοὺς ἀπαιδεύτους κύνας* 9; GABRIEL ROCHEFORT (ed.), *L'empereur Julien. Œuvres complètes*, t. II, pt. I: *Discours de Julien Empereur*, Les Belles Lettres, Paris 1963, p. 155).

³⁰ Plethon, in his *Laws* I, 1 and 3, employs similar phrasing to chastise the uncritical endorsement of various opinions: « [...] πᾶσα ἀνάγκη [...] μὴ εἰκῇ ἂν τὰ προστυχόντα [cf. « τὰ ἐπιτυχόντα εἰκῇ »] αἰρεῖσθαι, ἀλλὰ προεξητακώς [cf. « ἡκρίβους » and « ἀκριβοῦν »] ἂν πρότερον ἰκανῶς [...], οὕτω τὴν αἵρεσιν ποιεῖσθαι; »; « Καὶ μὴν [...] ἂν ἄτοπον εἶν [...] τὰ προστυχόντα εἰκῇ ἂν [cf. « τὰ ἐπιτυχόντα εἰκῇ »] καὶ ἀβασανίστως παραδέχεσθαι » (CHARLES ALEXANDRE (ed.), *Πλήθωνος Νόμων συγγραφῆς τὰ σωζόμενα*. PLÉTHON, *Traité des Lois, ou recueil des fragments, en partie inédits, de cet ouvrage. Texte revu sur les manuscrits; précédé d'une notice historique et critique*, transl. AUGUSTIN PELLISSIER, Firmin Didot, Paris 1858, p. 20,23–22,4; 40,14–18). For the origins of Plethon's use of ἀκριβοῦν, see *infra*, p. 429–431.

³¹ The rare expression λέγειν προσεῖναι τί τι, meaning 'to accuse somebody of something', appears in ORIGEN's *Contra Celsum* VII, 40, 20–22: « [...] οἰόμενος ἡμῖν προσεῖναι τὰ ἐκεῖνους προσαγόμενα ἐγκλήματα ταῦτα λέγει πρὸς ἡμᾶς οὐ προσόντα ἡμῖν [...] » (ORIGÈNE, *Contre Celse*, t. IV: *Livres VII et VIII*, ed. MARCEL BORRET, Cerf, Paris 1969, p. 106; ORIGÈNES, *Contra Celsum libri VIII*, ed. MIROSLAV

φλναρήσεις {13} δὲ τηνάλλως καὶ σαυτὸν μόνον αἰσχυνεῖς, τὴν σαυτοῦ σκαιότητα ἔτι καὶ μάλλον ἐπιδείξας–, ἡμῖν δέ [14] σου τὰ τοιαῦτα ἴσα {iv} {15} καὶ κυνιδίου [v1] [16a] Μελιταίου [v2] [16b] τινὸς ὑλακαῖς [vi] [17] λελόγισται τε ἤδη καὶ αὐθις λογισθήσεται [18].

If, however, pomp still [i.e. even after reading Plethon's refutation of his own *Κατὰ τῶν Πλήθωνος ἀποριῶν ἐπ' Ἀριστοτέλει*] occupies your soul and you, either out of a wish to protect Aristotle or out of envy for me, set out to write against this work of mine, too, no problem at all for my part! Go for writing against it quite with much self-confidence, because I shall not write a single word against whatever you would write. For, I know that, the longer the text you would write be, the more you will disgrace yourself. And if it turns out that some think that your writing is of some value, I very well know for sure that this will be the judgment of nobody else than those who are both ignorant and foolish, namely of persons whose opinion I, for myself, do not actually pay any attention to. Besides, you will show high facility in producing texts. In fact, if you put your claims under proper scrutiny in order to verify them, refuting me would become for you an extremely difficult task; since, though, you are not capable of scrutinizing and verifying them and perhaps you don't even care of doing so but you are content just with vomiting a flood of words in any manner whatsoever, you quite naturally have no problem at all with doing so. So, launch against me any slander you want and inflict on me whatever insult, just as you have already threatened me that you will not refrain from doing so – which, in fact, you have already let yourself do. Whatever insults you will launch, you will not affect me, because you will not be launching against me any charge that holds true, but simply prattling in a way irrelevant to the point and put shame only on yourself by exhibiting your uncouthness in a higher degree. For my part, I have so far considered, and will consider again, the base things written or to-be-written by you as if they were howls of a small Maltese dog.³²

MARCOVICH, Brill, Leiden – Boston – Köln 2001, p. 493,18–19). Plethon likely read Origen's *Contra Celsum* (see HLADKÝ, *The Philosophy of Gemistos Plethon*, p. 116).

³² PLETHON, *Πρὸς τὰς Σχολαρίων ὑπὲρ Ἀριστοτέλους ἀντιλήψεις* XXXI, 14 (*Georgii Gemisti Plethonis Contra Scholarii pro Aristotele obiectiones*, ed. ENRICO V. MALTESE, Teubner, Lipsiae 1988, p. 46,4–23 = XXXI, 10 in BERNADETTE LAGARDE (ed.), « Georges Gémiste Pléthon: *Contre les objections de Scholarios en faveur d'Aristote (Réplique)* », Byzantion, 59 (1989), p. 354–507, at p. 500,6–24). My translation is partially based on the close summary of a part of the passage by WOODHOUSE (*George Gemistos Plethon*, p. 307), which I have corrected and improved where necessary. The passage is a partly repetitive expansion of an earlier section of the same work: « Ἐπεὶ δὲ σὺ ἡξίωσας ἀντιλαβέσθαι, ἡμεῖς καὶ ἔτι ἀμυνοῦμεν Πλάτωνι τε καὶ ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς, οὐδὲν φροντίσαντες ὧν σὺ ἡμᾶς δεδίττη, οὐ φείσεσθαι τῶν ἐς ἡμᾶς λοιδοριῶν ἀπειλῶν, ὅς γε οὐδὲ νῦν πέφισαι. [...] Ἐροῦμεν δ' ἃ ἐροῦμεν, οὐ πρὸς ἅπαν σου μῆκος τῶν λόγων – μωρία γάρ ἂν ἦν πρὸς κενὸν μῆκος λόγων ἔτερον μῆκος καὶ αὐτοὺς ἀντιπαραινέειν –, ἀλλ' ἡμῖν μέν, ὅπου καίριον εἴη τι εἰπεῖν, εἰρήσεται, ἢ τοι ἐν οἷς δόξαις ἂν ἐνίοις οὐ πάντοι σοφοῖς λέγειν τι ἢ καὶ ἐν οἷς ἀάπολυ τοῦ ὑγιοῦς ἀποπεπλάνησαι, ἐάνπερ ἐλεγχόμενος ὑφῆς τι τοῦ τύφου. Τὰ δ' ἄλλα ἄλλοις παρήσομεν καταγελᾶν, οἳ ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ τῶν τε κενῶν ὑπὲρ σεαυτοῦ αὐχημάτων τῶν τε ἐς ἡμᾶς σου ἡμῶν οὐχ ἀπομένων βλασφημιῶν καταγελάσσονται » (V, 6–7; ed. LAGARDE, p. 380,20–382,13; ed. MALTESE, p. 5,28–6,7). Latin numbers in parentheses and

The text is clear, except for the final sentence, whose bitter simile warrants further discussion. I will first examine its direct literary context and then revisit the entire passage to draw additional conclusions about Scholarios's relationship to Plethon.

II.2 Suggestions Hitherto Made

W. Blum³³ has drawn a parallel between Plethon's reference to the Maltese lapdogs and Aristotle's *Historia animalium*, where « Μελιταῖον κυνίδιον » is mentioned (IX, 6; 612b10–11). While it is not unlikely that Plethon may have read this Aristotelian text,³⁴ there is no reason to believe, as B. Lagarde, too, seems to suggest,³⁵ that this passing reference to the Maltese dogs served as a direct source for Plethon's use of the simile. In this passage, Aristotle does not discuss the Maltese dogs themselves but instead refers to the « ἰκτίς » (yellow-breasted marten), stating that this animal is as small as a Maltese lapdog.³⁶ Furthermore, Blum's reference to Theophrastus's *Characteres* XXI, 9 does not illuminate Plethon's use of the Maltese dog simile either;³⁷ Theophrastus notes that individuals who overly focus on trivial matters might, among other absurdities, erect a tomb for a deceased Maltese dog and even inscribe the breed of the dog on the tombstone.

B. Lagarde³⁸ has compared Plethon's simile to a passage from Plato's *Laws* (XII, 967C5–D1), which reads:

braces refer to verbal and content similarities between the texts and their sources (which are cited below in the same paragraph). Arabic numbers in parentheses and braces refer to verbal and content similarities between the text and the reception of it by Andronicus Callistus and Michael Apostolius in the passages quoted below in Appendix III (p. 440–442).

³³ BLUM, *Georgios Gemistos Plethon*, p. 27, n. 42.

³⁴ See one of the concluding remarks in PLETHON's *De Differentiis*: « Τί οὖν; – ἂν φαίη τις – ‘Οὐκ ἄξια τὰ Ἀριστοτέλους βιβλία μετιέναι;’. Καὶ πάνυ, τῶν γε ἐν αὐτοῖς χρησίμων ἔνεκα [...] » (BERNADETTE LAGARDE (ed.), « Georges Gémiste Pléthon: *Des différences entre Platon et Aristote* », *Byzantion*, 43 (1973), p. 312–343, at p. 343,9–12; « ‘What then? – someone might say – Are not Aristotle's books worth reading?’ Certainly, for the useful content contained within them »). Plethon repeats this in his reply to Scholarios (5,1 and 30,14; ed. LAGARDE, p. 376,16–20 and 488,29–31; ed. MALTESE, p. 4 and 42). Plethon is clear: Aristotle's writings are a must for *uti*, but not – at least non unconditionally – for *frui*.

³⁵ LAGARDE (ed.), « Georges Gémiste Pléthon: *Contre les objections* », p. 501, n. 311.

³⁶ See, e.g., ARISTOTELES, *Werke in deutscher Übersetzung*, Band 16: *Zoologische Schriften*, I: *Historia animalium*, Teil V: *Buch VIII und IX*, ed. STEFAN SCHNIEDERS, De Gruyter, Berlin – Boston 2019, p. 742 ad loc.

³⁷ « Καὶ κυναρίου δὲ Μελιταίου τελευτήσαντος αὐτῷ, μνήμα ποιῆσαι καὶ σπηλίδιον, ποιήσας ἐπιγράψαι ‘Κλάδος Μελιταῖος’ » (THEOPHRAST, *Charaktere. Herausgegeben und erklärt*, Band I: *Textgeschichte und Text*, ed. PETER STEINMETZ, Max Hueber, Munich 1960, p. 241).

³⁸ LAGARDE (ed.), « Georges Gémiste Pléthon: *Contre les objections* », p. 501, n. 311.

Ταῦτ' ἦν τὰ τότε ἐξειργασμένα πολλὰς ἀθεότητος καὶ δυσχερείας τῶν τοιούτων ἄπτεσθαι, καὶ δὴ καὶ λοιδορήσεις γε ἐπῆλθον ποιηταῖς, τοὺς φιλοσοφοῦντας κυσὶ ματαίαις ἀπεικάζοντας χρωμέναισιν ὕλακαῖς, ἄλλα τε αὐτὸν ἀνόητ' εἰπεῖν.

These were the views which, at that time, caused these thinkers to incur many charges of atheism and much odium, and which also incited the poets to abuse them – by likening philosophers to ‘dogs howling at the moon’, with other such senseless slanders.³⁹

It was perhaps the words « ἀπεικάζοντας » and « ὕλακαῖς » that led her to believe this was Plethon's source. However, although Plethon had certainly read Plato's *Laws*,⁴⁰ the point in the quoted Platonic passage is irrelevant to Plethon's argument. The Platonic passage does not mention Maltese dogs but refers to dogs in general. Moreover, as is clear from the context of these lines, Plato is illustrating how certain unnamed poets mocked materialist philosophers who, in their overconfidence, mistakenly equated the nature of the heavenly bodies with that of the terrestrial ones, failing to recognize the divine souls that govern the former. This serves as a depiction of philosophers whose biases led them to fall short of the grandeur of their subject matter. Could it be that Plethon, in a similar manner, compared the writings and ideas of a bad philosopher, namely Scholarios, to those of his own? I believe this would involve stretching Plato's passage to fit Plethon's argument while overlooking the important differences between them.

B. Lagarde⁴¹ also directs readers of Plethon's passage to a humorous episode from Lucian's *Symposium seu Lapithae* 19, apparently considering it Plethon's actual source:

Ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ εἰς τὸν Ἀλκιδάμαντα ὁμοίον τι ἀπέρριψε Ἑμελιταῖον κυνίδιον' προσειπὼν αὐτόν, ἀγανακτήσας ἐκεῖνος – καὶ πάλαι δὲ δῆλος ἦν φθονῶν αὐτῷ εὐδοκιμοῦντι καὶ κατέχοντι τὸ συμπόσιον – ἀπορρίψας τὸν τρίβωνα προὔκαλετό οἱ

³⁹ PLATO, *Laws*, vol. II: Books 7–12, transl. ROBERT GREGG BURY, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA – London 1926, p. 563. Cf. PLATO, *Republic* X, 607B7–8: « [...] ἡ ἰακέρυζα πρὸς δεσπότην κύων ἐκείνη κραυγάζουσα [...] » / « [...] the 'yelping hound barking at her master [...] » (PLATO, *The Republic*, vol. II: Books VI–X, transl. PAUL SHOREY, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA – London 1937², p. 465).

⁴⁰ A strict demonstration of this can be found in Plethon's careful reproduction of certain specific phrases that appear only in Plato's *Laws* (see DEMETRACOPOULOS, « Christian Scepticism », p. 416–417; 420; 424. Cf. ID., « Τὰ προβλήματα τῆς μεθόδου (*modus sciendi*) καὶ τῆς γνωσιμότητος τῶν ὄντων στὴ Νόμων συγγραφὴν τοῦ Γεωργίου Γεμιστοῦ ἢ Πλήθωνος: ἱστορικὴ καὶ κριτικὴ προσέγγιση » (« The Problems of Method (*modus sciendi*) and Degree of Knowledge in Plethon's *Laws*: An Historical and Critical Approach »), *Νέα Κοινωνιολογία*, 15/3 (« Αφιέρωμα στὸν Γεώργιο Γεμιστό-Πλήθωνα ») (2001), p. 41–55, at p. 50, n. 4. See also RUTH WEBB, « The *Nomoi* of Gemistos Plethon in the Light of Plato's *Laws* », *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 52 (1989), p. 214–219, at p. 217–219.

⁴¹ LAGARDE (ed.), « Georges Gémiste Pléthon: *Contre les objections* », p. 501, n. 311.

παγκρατίζειν, εἰ δὲ μή, κατοίσειν αὐτοῦ ἔφη τὴν βακτηρίαν. Οὕτω δὲ ὁ κακοδαίμων ὁ Σατυρίων – τοῦτο γὰρ ὁ γελωτοποιὸς ἐκαλεῖτο – συστὰς ἐπαγκρατίζε. Καὶ τὸ πρᾶγμα ὑπερήδιστον ἦν, φιλόσοφος ἀνὴρ γελωτοποιῶ ἀνταιρόμενος καὶ παίων καὶ παιόμενος ἐν τῷ μέρει. Οἱ παρόντες δὲ οἱ μὲν ἠδoῦντο, οἱ δὲ ἐγέλων, ἄχρι ἀπηγόρευσε παιόμενος ὁ Ἀλκιδάμας ὑπὸ συγκεκροτημένου ἀνθρωπίσκου καταγωνισθεῖς. Γέλως οὖν πολὺς ἐξεχύθη ἐπ’ αὐτοῖς.

But when he [sc. Satyrion the joker] took a fling at Alcidas in the same way, calling him a Maltese lapdog, Alcidas got angry: indeed, for a long time it had been plain that he was jealous because the other fellow was making a hit and holding the attention of the room. So, throwing off his philosopher's cloak, he challenged him to fight, or else, he said, he would lay his staff on him. Then the poor Satyrion, for that was the clown's name, stood up to him and fought. It was delicious to see a philosopher squaring off at a clown, and giving and receiving blows in turn. Though some of onlookers were disgusted, others kept laughing, until finally Alcidas had enough of his punishment, well beaten by a tough little dwarf. So they got roundly laughed at.⁴²

One may surmise that Satyrion's description of the *persona* of the Cynic philosopher Alcidas as « a Maltese lapdog » was related to a recurring critique of philosophers in Lucian's works, specifically their tendency to speak profusely without adhering to their own teachings, or even act in direct contradiction to their precepts.⁴³ This flaw was presumably emphasized by the etymology of Alcidas's name and was evidently substantiated by the fact that Alcidas was eventually defeated by the joker. The situation is further complicated by Alcidas's association with Cynicism, as Cynics were expected either to remain unaffected by insults⁴⁴ or to robustly defend themselves when necessary.⁴⁵

⁴² *Luciani opera*, t. I: *Libelli 10–25*, ed. MATTHEW DONALD MACLEOD, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1972, p. 151,23–152,4; transl. AUSTIN MORRIS HARMON (LUCIAN, *Phalaris. Hippias or The Bath. Dionysus. Heracles. Amber or The Swans. The Fly. Nigrinus. Demonax. The Hall. My Native Land. Octogenarians. A True Story. Slander. The Consonants at Law. The Carousal (Symposium) or The Lapiths*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA – London 1913, p. 431–433).

⁴³ See, e.g., LUCIAN, *Reviviscences sive piscator* 44–45 (*Luciani opera*, t. II: *Libelli 26–43*, ed. MATTHEW DONALD MACLEOD, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1974, p. 78,10–79,5). For Lucian's attitude to Cynics, see, *inter alia*, the critical *Forschungsbericht* by PHILIP R. BOSMAN, « Lucian among the Cynics: the Zeus Refuted and Cynic Tradition », *Classical Quarterly*, 62/2 (2012), p. 785–795.

⁴⁴ See, e.g., DIOGENES LAERTIUS, *Vitae philosophorum* VI, 54: « Πρὸς τὸν εἰπόντα, ‘πολλοὶ σου καταγελῶσιν,’ ἄλλ’ ἐγὼ, ἔφη, ‘οὐ καταγελῶμαι’ » (« When he was told that many people laugh at him, he made answer, ‘But I am not laughed down’ »; ed. DORANDI, p. 439, ll. 400–402; ed. MARCOVICH, p. 409,10–11; transl. HICKS, p. 57).

⁴⁵ There is no evidence to suggest that the Alcidas portrayed as a *dramatis persona* in LUCIAN'S *Symposium*, the Alcidas mentioned in (Ps.-) LUCIAN'S *Demosthenis encomium* and Alcidas of Elea are the same individual (see, e.g., RICHARD GOULET, « Alcidas », in RICHARD GOULET (ed.), *Dictionnaire des philosophes antiques*, vol. I, Centre National de Recherche Scientifique, Paris 1994,

However, except for the insult of calling someone ‘a small Maltese dog’, there is nothing in Lucian’s text that parallels Plethon’s use of this metaphor. In Lucian, both the joker and the philosopher are portrayed as light, somewhat comedic figures. The philosopher, by feeling offended and reacting awkwardly to the joke, becomes more ridiculous than the joker, who is absurd by nature. Clearly, neither of the figures in Lucian’s narrative corresponds to Scholarios or Plethon; in fact, Plethon does not make himself part of the simile he applies so bitterly to his adversary.

III. *The Actual Sources and Their Import*

III.1 First Source

So, what was the actual source of Plethon’s use of the Maltese dog simile, and what did it signify? From the occurrences of *Μελιταῖον κυνίδιον* in Greek literature prior to Plethon, two references – both from the *corpus Psellianum* – are particularly close to Plethon’s usage. The first is found in Ps.-Michael Psellos’s *Introductio in « Psalmos »*. The fact that this text is preserved in two 13th-century manuscripts and one from the 14th century⁴⁶ indicates that it predates Plethon and could have served as a source for him. The relevant passage, verses 122–137 of the poem, read:

Ἐγὼ δ’ ὁ ταῦτα γεγραφὼς ἔρῳ σοι καὶ τι πλέον.
Εἰδὼν ποτε κυνίδιον [v1] ἀπὸ τῶν Μελιταίων [v2],
παρῆν δὲ καὶ τις αὐλητῆς ἀπὸ τῶν ἀγοραίων,
καλάμῳ μέλος ἐνηχῶν μετὰ κιθαρωδίας.
Ὅταν δ’ αὐτὸς ἐνέπνευσε τὸ μέλος τῷ καλάμῳ,
ἐκεῖνο τὸ κυνίδιον [v1], ἃν ἔτυχεν ἐσθίον,
ἐνέκοπτε τὰ τῆς τροφῆς, ἀπέρριπτε τὸ βρῶμα,

p. 101, n° 87; MICHEL NARCY, « Alcidas d’Élée », in GOULET (ed.), op. cit., p. 101–110, at p. 101–102). However, if one were to entertain the possibility of such a connection, another layer of irony emerges. Alcidas of Elea is reported to have said: « Ἐλευθέρους ἀφῆκε πάντας θεός οὐδένα δοῦλον ἢ φύσις πεποίηκεν » (fr. 3; ALCIDAMANTE, *Orazioni e frammenti*, ed. and transl. GUIDO AVEZZÙ, ‘L’Erma’ di Bretschneider, Rome 1982, p. 36). This egalitarian proclamation stands in stark contrast to Alcidas’s disparagement of the trickster Satyrion. Furthermore, the fact that Alcidas was eventually defeated by a dwarf served as a harsh lesson: such seemingly degenerate or defective individuals can, in fact, prove superior to so-called ‘normal’ humans, even those who are considered superior, such as philosophers.

⁴⁶ See Michaelis Pselli *poemata*, ed. LEENDERT G. WESTERINK, Teubner, Leipzig, 1992, p. X. Cf. ELPIDIO MIONI, *Bibliothecae divi Marci Venetiarum codices graeci manuscripti*, vol. II: *Thesaurus antiquus: codices 300–625*, Istituto Poligrafico e Zecca dello Stato, Rome 1985, p. 490–491; PAUL MOORE, *Iter Psellianum. A Detailed List of Manuscript Sources for All Works Attributed to Michael Psellos, Including a Comprehensive Bibliography*, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto 2005, p. 505 (N° 1105).

ἡρέμα τε προσέβαινε τοῦ μουσικοῦ πλησίον,
καὶ τοῦτον βλέπον ἀτενῶς ἅμα καὶ περισαῖνον
ἐκ λεπτοτάτης ὑλακῆς [v1] ὥσπερ {iv} ἀντεμελώδει [i1] {i2}.
Ἦνικά δὲ κατέπαυεν ὁ τραγῳδὸς τὸ μέλος {vi},
ἐπὶ τὸ λείπον τῆς τροφῆς ὑπέστρεφεν ὁ κύων·
ὅταν δὲ πάλιν τὸν αὐλὸν ὑπέπνευσεν ἐκεῖνος,
καὶ πάλιν τὸ κυνίδιον [v1] τὴν βρῶσιν διωθεῖτο
καὶ γαληνῶς προσυλακτοῦν [vi] ἀντάδειν [i1] {i2} πῶς ἐώκει {4}.
Ἄπλῶς δ', ὅσάκις ἦσθετο τὸν αὐλητὴν αὐλοῦντα,
τῶν ἄλλων πάντων ἀμελοῦν ἐξήρητο τοῦ μέλους.⁴⁷

I, who wrote this poem, will tell you yet one thing more.
Once I saw a small dog, of the Maltese breed,
and there was an itinerant piper somewhere nearby,
who was playing a song with guitar accompaniment.
As soon as he began to play the flute,
that little dog, if it happened to eat,
stopped eating, gave up food,
walked slowly to the musician,
and, staring at him and wagging his tail,
it made a thin voice as if it was singing to him too.
When the musician stopped playing,
the dog returned to the food he had left.
But as soon as he began to play again,
the little dog gave up the food again
and uttering a calm voice it looked like singing to him too.
And generally, whenever it heard the piper play,
it would drop whatever he was doing and hang on to the music he was
listening to.

In Ps.-Psellos's text, the terms *ἐσθίειν*, *τροφή*, *βρῶμα* and *βρῶσις* coincide or are synonyms with [2] (*τρέφειν*) in the Plethonic passage from *De rebus Peloponnesiacis oratio I* quoted above (p. 400–401). However, these terms do not present – at least explicitly – the Maltese lapdogs as voracious but merely depict them as eating food, a simple activity that is interrupted whenever they listen to music. In such cases, Ps.-Psellos reports, eating is replaced by *ὑλακή* (howling) or *ἀντιμελωδεῖν* (counter-melody singing) or *ἀντάδειν* (responding with song), which he finds remarkable. Ps.-Psellos's aim in this section of his poem⁴⁸ is to emphasize the power of music, illustrating its effects even on beings that are not naturally inclined to or susceptible to it, such as non-human animals, including horses, other tame animals, and Maltese dogs. Aside from the very name of the dog in the simile, i.e.,

⁴⁷ Ps.-MICHAEL PSELLOS, *Poema* 53, ll. 122–137 (ed. WESTERINK, p. 307). On the manuscript tradition of the writing, see *Ibid.*, p. VIII; x; xxvii.

⁴⁸ Ps.-MICHAEL PSELLOS, *Poema* 53, ll. 113–137 (ed. WESTERINK, p. 306–307).

κύων Μελιταῖος or κυνίδιον Μελιταῖον, and the broadly shared reference to eating as an activity of these dogs, the sources of Plethon's simile in the *De rebus Peloponnesiacis oratio I* (see above, p. 401–405) do not explain either the phrasing or the content of the simile used by Plethon in his reply to Scholarios.

III.2 Second Source

Let us now consider the context of the couple of lines from Michael Psellos quoted above (p. 404–405). These lines come from a text addressed by Psellos (1018–1078) to his disciple, John Italos (c. 1025–?), during the latter's apprenticeship under him. In this text, the teacher reprimands the disciple for rashly urging him to deliver lessons more quickly. Psellos responds authoritatively, explaining that such promptness is not to be praised, as it stems from overconfidence and a failure to appreciate the complexity and depth of the scientific subjects the student is meant to master:

[...] Οὐπω ἔγνωκας ὅποιον τῶν μαθημάτων τὸ μέγεθος καὶ ἡλικὸν τὸ ὕψος καὶ ὅτι οὐ διὰ ῥαδίας ἡ πρὸς ἐκεῖνα ἄνοδος [...]. Σὺ δὲ ἄρα, ὥσπερ τὰς ἐπὶ τῶν αἰγιαλῶν ψηφίδας ἀναιρήσεσθαι μέλλων, οὕτως ἐπὶ τὴν γεωμετρίαν ἀπεριμερίμνως χωρεῖς, καὶ οὐδὲν πρᾶγμα εἰ καὶ ἄλλοθί ποι βαδίζεις· θελῆσαι γὰρ δεῖ μόνον πρὸς τὴν κατάληψιν, καὶ κατείληπται ἡ ἀπόδειξις!⁴⁹

You have not yet become aware of the grandeur and the height of the disciplines; you ignore that the way which leads to their height is not an easy one. [...] You, however, move to understand geometry carelessly, as if you were going to pick up pebbles from the beaches, and you do not care if it happens that you go the wrong way; you think that, to understand a proof, all you have to do is want it, and once you want it, bang! You get it!

In the opening paragraph of his letter to Italos, Psellos employs the Maltese dog metaphor:

Ἡ περὶ τὰς ἐπιστήμας προθυμία σου πολλοῦ ἂν ἀξία ἦν, εἰ, καθάπερ ἐπὶ ζυγοῦ σταθμωμένη, πραγμάτων ἐναντίων ὅλῳ βάρει καὶ ὅλαις ῥοπαῖς, πρὸς τὸ κρεῖττον ἀπένευεν. Ἐπεὶ δὲ μεῖζον τῆς ἀληθείας τὸ ὑπονοούμενόν σοι πεφώρταται, καὶ οὐχ, ὥσπερ αἱ Λάκαιναι κύνες, λαγῶ καὶ λοπάδος προτεθειμένων ἐπὶ τὸ ζῶον ὁρμαῖς, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ {iv} τὰ Μελιταῖα [v2] κυνίδια [v1] ὅλαις βάσεισι⁵⁰ καὶ ὅλαις ὁσφρήσεσι περὶ τὴν

⁴⁹ MICHAEL PSELLOS, *Oratoria minora* 18 (Εἰς τὸν Λογγίβαρδον Ἰωάννην καταναγκάζοντα αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ ἐρμηνεύσαι τάχιον τὰ μαθήματα) (To John the Lombard, Who Was Urging Him with Importunity to Faster Deliver the Lessons), ll. 37–44 (ed. LITTLEWOOD, p. 66–67).

⁵⁰ Cf. above, p. 404, n. 16.

λοπάδα λιχνεύη, οὐ πάνυ σου τὸ ἐν λόγοις « πρόθυμον »⁵¹ « ἄγαμαι ». Εὐκολός {ii1} γὰρ ἡ γλῶττα {ii1} τὰ κρείττω εἰπεῖν {ii2} καὶ ῥάστη πρὸς ἅμφω τὰ μέρη τῶν λόγων μεταπεσεῖν, ἀλλ' οἱ καιροὶ ἐλέγχουσι τὰς ἀσυμβάτους φωνὰς πρὸς τὰ πράγματα.⁵² [...]

Your zeal for laying hold of the various disciplines would be quite praiseworthy, if, tested by means of a beam of balance against all the casting, counter-balancing weights, eventually bent towards the good and noble things. Since, however, the point of your words has been caught to exceed the truth, and, unlike what the female Laconian dogs do when standing between hare and a dish of food, you don't run after the animal, but, like the small Maltese dogs, you gormandize to the dish with all your steps and with all of your smelling power, I do not approve at all of your eagerness to study. Indeed, it is easy for one to speak in lofty terms and, at the same time, it is absolutely and equally easy for one's tongue to be eventually verified or falsified; it is the crucial, the test moment, so to speak, that disproves the statements that are not in conformity with things.

Psellos contrasts « female Laconian dogs » with « Maltese dogs » to illustrate his point. Elsewhere, he describes the former as exceptionally skilled in scouting, owing to both their superior sense of smell and their intelligence.⁵³ He portrays them similarly to the so-called Chrysippus-dog,⁵⁴ which, as if being rational, when chasing a quarry, reaches a point where three roads converge; after sniffing the air of two of the paths and finding no trace of the quarry, the dog skips smelling the air of the third path, intuitively choosing it as the correct one and immediately running down it. Furthermore, to carry out their task as scouts, these dogs set aside

⁵¹ The phrase ἐν λόγοις προθυμεῖσθαι is extremely rare; for an occurrence of it, see EUSTATHIUS OF THESSALONICA, *Epitaphius in imperatorem Manuelem I Comnenum* 3 (EMMANUEL BOURBOUHAKIS (ed.), *Not Composed in a Chance Manner: the Epitaphios for Manuel I Komnenos by Eustathios of Thessalonike*, Uppsala University Press, Uppsala 2017, p. 4). Psellos's προθυμία derives from the Proclean passage to be cited right away.

⁵² MICHAEL PSELLOS, *Oratoria minora* 18, ll. 1–11 (ed. LITTLEWOOD, p. 65–66). For the identification of Ἰωάννης Λογγίβαρδος to John Italos, see Ibid. p. 65; cf. MOORE, *Iter Psellianum*, p. 347 (n° 912); 582 s.v.

⁵³ Cf. ARISTOTLE's mention that the females are by nature smarter than the males (*Historia animalium* IX, 1, 608a27–28: « [...] αἱ Λάκαιναι κύνες αἱ θήλειαι εὐφρέστεραι τῶν ἀρρένων εἰσιν »).

⁵⁴ MICHAEL PSELLOS, *Epistle* 54, l. 11: « [...] τὰς Λακαίνας [...] κύνας ῥινηλατούσας τὸ ἐκπεφευγός »; *Epistle* 142, ll. 60–61: « Ἰχνηλατοῖη δέ σοι καλῶς καὶ ἡ Λάκαινα κύων »; *Epistle* 391, ll. 30–34: « Ἐμοὶ δὲ τεθαύμασται μᾶλλον ἡ ἰχνηλάτις Λάκαινα, ὅτι φιλοσοφεῖ πως καὶ συλλογίζεται ἐν ὁσφρήσειν· ἀμέλει καὶ ἐν τρισὶν ἀπολειφθεῖσα ὁδοῖς, καὶ τὸν ἀέρα τῶν δυεῖν ἀναπνεύσασα, εἴτα δὴ τοῦ φυγάδος μὴ ὁσφρανθεῖσα θηρὸς τὸν τρίτον οὐδ' ἀξιοῖ ἀναπνεῖν » (MICHAEL PSELLUS, *Epistulae*, ed. STRATIS PAPAIOANNOU, De Gruyter, Berlin–Boston 2019, p. 120–121; 385–386; 812). On the so-called Chrysippus-dog, see the primary and secondary literature collected in JOHN A. DEMETRACOPOULOS, « Thomas Aquinas' Impact on Late Byzantine Philosophy: The Issues of Method or *Modus Sciendi* and *Dignitas Homini* », in ANDREAS SPEER, PHILIPP STEINKRÜGER (eds.), *Knotenpunkt Byzanz. Wissensformen und kulturelle Wechselbeziehungen*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2012, p. 333–410, at p. 392, n. 324.

the food provided to them in a dish and pursue a hare instead. In contrast, Psellos presents the Maltese dogs as using their sense of smell not for a noble purpose but simply to satisfy their desire to consume the food that is readily available to them in a dish provided by others.

Thus, it seems that Psellos likens John Italos's studiousness to the behaviour of the Maltese dogs, suggesting that his approach to knowledge was more about consuming it quickly and superficially, rather than engaging with it actively and deeply. Psellos implies that Italos's desire for knowledge lacked the intellectual vigor and serious involvement necessary to truly grasp the subject matter and achieve a profound understanding.

The background to Psellos's text seems to be Proclus's *explanatio* of Zeno's reserved metaphorical praise of Socrates as a female Laconian dog in Plato's *Parmenides* 128B7–C2 (« Σὺ δ' οὖν τὴν ἀλήθειαν τοῦ γράμματος οὐ πανταχοῦ ἦσθησαι. Καίτοι ὥσπερ γε αἱ Λάκαιναι σκύλακες εὖ μεταθεῖς τε καὶ ἰχνεύεις τὰ λεχθέντα· ἀλλὰ [...] »):

« Φιλόσοφον » τοῦτο τὸ θηρίον καὶ ἐν Πολιτείᾳ (II, 376A–C) Σωκράτης ὀνομάζειν ἤξιωσε, τὸν κύνα λέγω. Πρόσκειται δὲ ἐνταῦθα [sc. in *Parmenides*] καὶ τὸ « Λάκαιναι » τὸ θηρατικὸν αὐτῷ παρεχόμενον, ὃ δὲ σύμβολόν ἐστι « τῆς τοῦ ὄντος θήρας » (PLATO, *Phaedo* 66C2): τοιοῦτον δὲ καὶ τὸ « ἰχνεύειν », τὸ ἀπὸ τῶν γραμμάτων, οἷον ἰχνῶν ὄντων τῆς τοῦ λέγοντος ἐννοίας, αὐτὴν μεταδιώκειν καὶ θηρᾶν τὴν τοῦ λέγοντος ἀληθεστάτην νόησιν· καὶ τὸ « μεταθεῖν » δὲ οἰκεῖόν ἐστι πρὸς τὴν δξύτητα τοῦ νοοῦντος καὶ τὴν προθυμίαν πρὸς τὴν μέθοδον τῆς εὐρέσεως. Ἐκ δὲ ἀπάντων τούτων εὐδηλὸς ἐστὶν ὁ Ζήνων ἀγάμενος μὲν τὴν ἀγχίνοιαν καὶ τὴν εὐφυΐαν τοῦ Σωκράτους καὶ κινῶν αὐτήν, ὅσον δὲ αὐτοῦ παρασφάλλεται τοῦ ἀληθοῦς ἀπευθύνων.

In the *Republic*, too, Socrates, mentioning the dog, says this animal deserves to be called « philosophic ». Here Zeno adds « Laconian », which gives Socrates the character of a hunter, clearly a symbol of « the hunt for being ». Symbolical also is « following the track », i.e. following Zeno's writings. These writings being, so to speak, the traces of the writer's thought, Socrates pursues and hunts down the precise meaning of what the writer says. And « picking up the scent » appropriately expresses the acuteness of the thinker in discovering the path of the argument. From all this it is clear that Zeno admires Socrates's keenness and ability, is stirring it to activity, but correcting it as far as it misses the truth, which is what is all about.⁵⁵

Psellos, in subtly adapting this Plato-based Proclean passage and applying it to Italos, replaces the Laconic dogs with Maltese ones. In doing so, he criticizes Italos

⁵⁵ PROCLUS DIADOCHUS, *In Platonis « Parmenidem » I* (Procli in Platonis *Parmenidem* *Commentaria. Tomus I, libros I–III continens*, ed. CARLOS G. STEEL, CAROLINE MACÉ, PIERRE D'HOINE, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 2007, p. 111,10–21); *Proclus' Commentary on Plato's Parmenides*, transl. GLENN R. MORROW, intr. and notes JOHN M. DILLON, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ 1992², p. 85–86), slightly adapted.

far more harshly than Zeno criticized Socrates. Psellos's point is that Italos is heading in the wrong direction (cf. his remark cited above, p. 416: « [...] you do not care if it happens that you go the wrong way »).

In light of the above, it should be added that Plethon's Psellian and Proclean-derived *προθυμία* partially overlaps with *ἐπιθυμία*, the term used by both Plethon in *De Rebus Peloponnesiacis Oratio I* and Psellos in his letter to Italos. Plethon uses *ἐπιθυμία* in reference to the irrational desire of the Maltese-dog-like courtiers to devour everything (p. 400–401), whereas Psellos refers to Italos's irrational, reckless desire to consume as much « knowledge » as possible, which is limited to « wanting » (*θελῆσαι* [...] *μόνον*), a mere desire devoid of any thoughtful approach or method for its realization.

This interpretation is supported by the fact that Psellos's phrase « ῥάστη πρὸς ἅμφω τὰ μέρη τῶν λόγων μεταπεσεῖν » closely mirrors the following moral maxim, which, as far as I can determine, is preserved only in Dionysius of Halicarnassus's *Antiquitates Romanae* XI, 61, 2: « [...] κοῦφόν τι πρᾶγμά ἐστιν ἐπιθυμία δίχᾳ λόγου γινομένη καὶ ταχὺ μεταπίπτον ἐπὶ θάτερα μέρη [...] » (« [...] such a fickle thing, it seems, is desire apart from reason and so quickly does it veer the other way [...] »).⁵⁶ This maxim highlights the instability of irrational desire: it is fleeting, dissipating as quickly as it arises. Strictly speaking, Psellos applies this to the « εὐκόλος γλῶττα » (easy tongue), not directly to « desire »; however, what « εὐκόλος γλῶττα » represents here is a particular *προθυμία*, i.e. Italos's excessive, superficial, and therefore irrational eagerness to absorb the various disciplines as rapidly as possible. If Psellos were to comply with his disciple's request, the educational process would bypass the necessary method of learning, which requires time and mental effort, proceeding through demonstration. In essence, Psellos refers to Italos's « εὐκόλος γλῶττα » as an expression of Italos's desire and his belief that he could manage faster, more intensive courses. Ultimately, the core issue remains the same.

IV. Plethon's Two Implicit Points

The striking and exclusive similarity of the diction of Plethon's depiction of Scholarios as a Maltese lapdog to the two passages from the *corpus Psellianum* quoted and discussed above (p. 414–419) shows that these passages were the actual sources Plethon had resort to. What are the intellectual and moral defects that Plethon intends to impute to Scholarios through this simile?

⁵⁶ DIONYSIUS OF HALICARNASSUS, *Antiquitates Romanae* XI, 61, 2 (*The Roman Antiquities of Dionysius of Halicarnassus. With an English Translation on the Basis of the Version of E. Spelman*, ed. EARNEST CARY, vol. VII, Harvard University Press, London – Cambridge, MA, 1950, p. 188–189).

IV.1 Scholarios as a Heteronomous Author

By applying the Ps.-Psellian Maltese dog simile to Scholarios, Plethon implies that his Christian adversary, despite his self-image, was incapable of initiating or completing any intellectual project of his own – particularly not something as ambitious as resolving the long-standing and complex Plato-Aristotle controversy, an issue of immense significance to both Plethon and Scholarios. Unlike Plethon, whose *De Differentiis* was not a response to another's work but stemmed from his own decision to reignite the Plato vs. Aristotle debate in Florence, where he sided with Plato against the centuries-long Aristotelian preference in the West, Scholarios only began addressing this issue in response to Plethon's work. Even worse, in his reply, Scholarios slavishly followed Plethon's lead: in order to argue for Aristotle's superiority to Plato, he simply addressed Plethon's points one by one,⁵⁷ crafting a text that mirrored the structure of Plethon's own. Scholarios, like the Maltese dog in Ps.-Psellos's metaphor, produced inferior 'music' (i.e., philosophical literature); subject to the limitations of his own nature, he could only generate a ridiculous 'accompaniment' to Plethon's true 'music', namely philosophy. Moreover, whenever Plethon remained silent, Scholarios produced nothing; only when Plethon wrote would Scholarios awkwardly react, transforming himself into an author by responding to Plethon's 'music'.

In addition, Scholarios, in his refutation of *De Differentiis*, had accused Plethon of a lack of originality and of recklessly stirring up anti-Aristotelian arguments from other sources.⁵⁸ Plethon's application of the (Ps.-Psellian in origins) Maltese dog simile was, in essence, a counter-accusation.

Further, one can reasonably apply Plethon's words to Scholarios's entire literary output on philosophical and theological issues up until 1448/49, when Plethon called him a «small Maltese dog». Scholarios's works on Aristotle amounted to a series of derivative pieces – translations, adaptations, and excerpts from commentaries by some Latin and Greek authors.⁵⁹ Plethon's phrase

⁵⁷ See JOHN A. DEMETRACOPOULOS, «Philosophy and Christianity in George Scholarios - Gennadios II: an Overview of the Main Issues», *Philosophia*, 47 (2017), p. 243–268, at p. 246–258.

⁵⁸ SCHOLARIOS, *Κατὰ τῶν Πλήθωνος ἀποριῶν ἐπ' Ἀριστοτέλει* II: «[...] Πλήθων [...], τὰ πολλοῖς ἄλλοις ἐξευρημένα καὶ πρὸ αὐτοῦ καλῶς εἰς μέσον ἤνεγκε συναθροίσας τε καὶ ἐπιτεμῶν, τοῦτο καὶ νῦν δῆλόν ἐστιν»; «[...] πολλά τε κατ' Ἀριστοτέλους ἐν πολλῷ συνήθροισε χρόνῳ, καὶ ὅτε πρῶτον οἷός τε ἐγένετο ταῦτα ἐν ἐνὶ συμφορῇσαι βιβλίῳ, συνέθηκέ τε καὶ ἀπεριμερίμνως ἐκδέδωκεν» (*Œuvres complètes de Georges (Gennadios) Scholarios*, ed. MARTIN JUGIE et al., t. IV, p. 113,40–114,3; 116,22–25).

⁵⁹ A comprehensive list of Scholarios's Aristotle-based writings can be found in JOHN A. DEMETRACOPOULOS, «The Sources of George - Gennadios II Scholarios' *Paraphrasis* of the *Parva Naturalia* and its Place in his Thought», in BÖRJE BYDÉN, FILIP RADOVIC (eds.), *Supplementing the Science of Soul: The 'Parva Naturalia' in Greek, Arabic and Latin Aristotelianism. 2014 Conference, Gothenburg*, 6–8

« φλυαρήσεις τηνάλλως » likely incorporates Scholarios's uncritical admiration for Aquinas, from whom, as Plethon observes, Scholarios draws irrelevant and futile material in his refutation of *De Differentiis* (« τηνάλλως μακρολογῶν »).⁶⁰ Plethon's remark about this reinforces the idea that Scholarios, in defending Aristotle, would continue to rely on derivative (mainly Thomistic) material, demonstrating again his inability to produce truly original philosophical work.

Similarly, most of Scholarios's numerous theological writings concerned minor issues like the Filioque, focusing on ecclesiastical debates between the Church of Constantinople and the Church of Rome during the 1430s and 40s. Even the sermons Scholarios delivered in the churches of the palace⁶¹ were mainly adaptations of works by Aquinas and others.⁶²

Plethon's allusion to Scholarios's inability to establish his own intellectual agenda extends to Scholarios's reaction to Plethon's *Laws*. In 1450, Scholarios, in

June, Springer, Dordrecht – Heidelberg – London – New York 2018, p. 233–315, at p. 240–256. Scholarios's Aquinas-based writings are also discussed in JOHN A. DEMETRACOPOULOS, « Scholarios' *On Almsgiving*, or How to Convert a Scholastic *Quaestio* into a *Sermon* », in DENIS M. SEARBY (ed.), *'Never the Twain Shall Meet'? Latins and Greeks Learning from Each Other in Byzantium. A Conference at Stockholm, June 24–26, 2015*, De Gruyter, Berlin 2017, p. 131–178, at p. 163–167. Additional Scholastic-related findings are noted in IRINI BALCOYIANNPOULOU, « 'Η μετάφραση (1433/35) τοῦ ἡμιτελοῦς 'Υπομνήματος τοῦ Θωμᾶ Ἀκρινάτη στό ἀριστοτελικό *Περὶ ἐρμηνείας* (1271) καὶ μιᾶς ἀνέκδοτης Σχολαστικῆς *continuatio* τοῦ 'Υπομνήματος ἀπό τόν Γεώργιο Σχολάριο (ca. 1400 – paulo post 1472) » (with an English Summary: « George Scholarios' (ca. 1400–paulo post 1472) Translation (1433/35) of Thomas Aquinas' Unfinished *Commentary* on Aristotle's *De Interpretatione* (1271) and of an Unedited *Continuatio* to the *Commentary* »), in JOHN A. DEMETRACOPOULOS, CHARALAMBOS DENDRINOS (eds.), *Thomas Latinus – Thomas Graecus: Thomas Aquinas and his Reception in Byzantium. Proceedings of an International Conference Held at the Stavros Niarchos Culture Centre, Athens, 15–16 December 2017*, Artos Zois Foundation, Athens 2022, p. 435–469, at p. 449–455.

⁶⁰ PLETHON, *Πρὸς τὰς Σχολαρίου ὑπὲρ Ἀριστοτέλους ἀντιλήψεις* XX, 2: « [...] ἔστι δ' ἃ καὶ τῶν Θωμᾶ ἐνείρων οὐκ ἐν καιρῷ, ἀλλὰ τηνάλλως μακρολογῶν [...] » (ed. LAGARDE, p. 418,9–10; ed. MALTESE, p. 17,21–22). Cf. DEMETRACOPOULOS, *Πλήθων καὶ Θωμᾶς Ἀκρινάτης*, p. 71–72.

⁶¹ *Œuvres complètes de Georges (Gennadios) Scholarios. Γενναδίου τοῦ Σχολαρίου ἅπαντα τὰ εὑρισκόμενα*, t. I: *Œuvres oratoires – Traités théologiques sur la Providence et sur l'âme*, ed. MARTIN JUGIE, LOUIS PETIT, XÉNOPHON A. SIDÉRIDÈS, Maison de la Bonne Presse, Paris 1928, p. 1–122; cf. TINNEFELD, « Georgios Gennadios II. Scholarios », 507–508.

⁶² See DEMETRACOPOULOS, « Scholarios' *On Almsgiving* », p. 129–162. Plethon was able to recognize Scholarios's profound dependence on Aquinas due to his careful examination of Demetrios Cydones's translation of Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae* (I^a, I^a II^{ae} and II^a II^{ae}). It was through this thorough engagement that he identified Scholarios's incorporation of certain material from the I^a into the *Κατὰ τῶν Πλήθωνος ἀποριῶν ἐπ' Ἀριστοτέλει*. For a detailed discussion of this (still not fully traced) material, see DEMETRACOPOULOS, « Philosophy and Christianity », p. 246; 247; 249; 251–253; 254; 257; ID., « Georgios Gennadios II. Scholarios », in ALEXANDER BRUNGS, GEORGI KAPRIEV, VILEM MUDROCH (eds.), *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie. Begründet von F. ÜBERWEG. Die Philosophie des Mittelalters, Band I: Jüdische und byzantinische Philosophie, Bandteil: Byzanz*, Schwabe, Basel 2019, p. 224–239, at p. 231–237. Regarding Plethon's (still not fully explored but undoubtedly extensive) familiarity with *Thomas Graecus*, see DEMETRACOPOULOS, *Ἀπὸ τὴν ἱστορίᾳ τοῦ βυζαντινοῦ θωμισμοῦ, in toto*; ID., « Georgios Gemistos-Plethon's Dependence », *in toto*.

his *Ἐπιστολὴ τῇ βασιλίσσει περὶ τοῦ βιβλίου τοῦ Γεμιστοῦ* (An Epistle to the Queen on the Book of Gemistos [i.e. the Laws]), stated his intention to refute it,⁶³ though after Plethon's death, he ultimately chose to burn the work. Once again, Scholarios was poised to produce 'music' only in reaction to another's 'music'.

In light of all this, Plethon's use of « ὕλακαῖς » does not refer to barking, but to howling. Plethon's conclusion in *Πρὸς τὰς Σχολαρίου ὑπὲρ Ἀριστοτέλους ἀντιλήψεις* is not that Scholarios's writings are like the harmless barking of a small dog, ridiculing itself by attempting to threaten or harm others. Instead, Plethon is saying that Scholarios's contribution to the major philosophical debate – the Plato-Aristotle controversy – was heteronomous, lacking any true originality or independent intellectual spark. Plethon's writings, by contrast, are the true 'music'. In other words, Plethon's metaphor equates Scholarios's writings to human-like animal sounds, implying that Scholarios's approach to the Plato-Aristotle debate was as inferior to Plethon's as a dog's howling is to human singing.

Even more, Plethon implies that Scholarios's *Κατὰ τῶν Πλήθωνος ἀποριῶν ἐπ' Ἀριστοτέλει*, as it was produced only occasionally – that is, as a reaction to someone else's philosophical discourse – was doomed to become silent, meaning it would not be read in the future.⁶⁴ This sharply contrasts with how Plethon, adapting a celebrated passage from Thucydides, depicted his *magnum opus* – the fundamentally and expressly Plato-based *Laws*:

Ἄγετε δὴ, ὦ θεοὶ λόγιοι [...], [...] ὑμεῖς ἡμῖν τῶνδε τῶν λόγων ἡγήσασθέ τε καὶ δότε τήνδε τὴν συγγραφὴν ὡς ἐπιτυχαστάτην γενέσθαι, κτῆμα αἰὲ προκεισομένην τῶν ἀνθρώπων τοῖς ἐθέλουσιν ἂν [...] τὸν αὐτῶν βίον ὡς κάλλιστά τε καὶ ἄριστα καθισταμένοις ζῆν.

So, come on, o gods of literature [...]. [...] Do you be my leader in this work of mine, and grant that this book may have all success, to be set as a possession for ever for

⁶³ « [...] ἀντιγράφειν αὐτῷ [sc. against Plethon] παρεσκευαζόμεθα πρότερον [...] » (*Œuvres complètes de Georges (Gennadios) Scholarios*, ed. JUGIE et al., t. IV, p. 154,31–32). Regarding his preparation for this endeavour and the subsequent use of the material he produced in this context, see JOHN A. DEMETRACOPOULOS, « Georgios Gennadios II - Scholarios' *Florilegium Thomisticum*. His Early Abridgment of Various Chapters and *Quaestiones* of Thomas Aquinas' *Summae* and His anti-Plethonism », *Recherches de Théologie et Philosophie médiévales*, 69/1 (2002), p. 117–171; *Id.*, « Georgios Gennadios II - Scholarios' *Florilegium Thomisticum* II » in *totalo*; IOANNIS KASSIDIS, « Γεωργίου Γενναδίου Β' του Σχολαρίου *Περὶ θείας προνοίας καὶ προορισμοῦ*: εἰσαγωγή καὶ κριτικὴ ἐκδόση » (with an English Summary: « George Gennadios II - Scholarios' *On the Divine Providence and Predestination*: an Annotated Critical Edition »), Ph.D. Diss., Ionian University, Corfu 2023 (<<https://www.ekt.gr/el/library/didaktorika>>; accessed December 2024), p. 28*–29*; 40*–42*.

⁶⁴ Interestingly, Plethon's suggestion proved to be accurate: Scholarios's work survives in only a few manuscripts and was first published as late as 1858 (*Œuvres complètes de Georges (Gennadios) Scholarios*, ed. JUGIE et al., t. IV, p. I–IV; 1).

those of mankind who wish to pass their lives [...] established in the best and noblest fashion.⁶⁵

Plethon, inspired by eternal truth, could hope for lasting influence through his writing; Scholarios, however, was rooted in the recent past – the Christian past of human history – which was destined to be eclipsed by that truth.⁶⁶

IV.2 Scholarios: « Voracious » but Failed and Ungrateful Disciple of Plethon?

The fact that Plethon criticised Scholarios by referencing a text addressed by a prominent Byzantine Platonist teacher⁶⁷ to a disciple of his may carry significant implications.

The elements [iia-b] and {iia-b} (Plethon: οὐκ ὀλίγη εὐπορία λόγων, τὰ λεγόμενα and οὐδεμία ἀπορία; Psellos: εὐκολος [...] γλῶττα and εἰπεῖν) do not coincide in full; Psellos emphasizes his disciple's ease in articulating an ardent desire for accelerated learning, whereas Plethon critiques an author's rash and careless production of texts. However, this difference is not absolute. A competent disciple is expected to be trained in becoming an author, and the *conditio sine qua non* for a serious author is mastery of various disciplines, including the art of writing. Since Plethon was addressing an adult, he also drew inspiration from a letter by another

⁶⁵ PLETHON, *Laws* I, 4, ed. ALEXANDRE, p. 44,1–11; transl. WOODHOUSE, p. 328–329, slightly improved. This is a bold *imitatio* of THUCYDIDES's *History* I, 22, 4: « [...] ὅσοι δὲ βουλῆσονται τῶν τε γενομένων τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ποτὲ αὖθις κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον τοιοῦτων καὶ παραπλησίων ἔσεσθαι, ὠφέλιμα κρίνειν αὐτὰ ἀρκούντως ἔξει. Κτῆμά τε ἐς αἰεὶ μᾶλλον ἢ ἀγώνισμα ἐς τὸ παραχρήμα ἀκούειν ξύγκειται » (see DEMETRACOPOULOS, « Τὰ προβλήματα τῆς μεθόδου », p. 50, n. 11). Of course, Plethon's conception of history differs significantly from that of Thucydides, whose central idea is that history repeats itself, making knowledge of past major events valuable for shaping the present and future. In contrast, Plethon's work, written for the benefit of humanity, is not a historical account but a philosophical and political treatise, deeply influenced by Platonic and Pythagorean principles regarding the philosophy of history. Plethon's imitation of Thucydides can be viewed as one of many *paradiorthoseis* in Greek literature.

⁶⁶ Cf., *inter alia*, George of Trebizond's report that, while in Florence, Plethon predicted that a few years after his death, Christianity and Islam would fade away and be replaced by a form of 'gentilitas' (GEORGE OF TREBIZOND, *Comparatio philosophorum Platonis et Aristotelis et de Aristotelis prestantia* III, 20, 6 and 59; JOHN MONFASANI (ed.), *Vindicatio Aristotelis. Two Works of George of Trebizond in the Plato-Aristotle Controversy of the Fifteenth Century: Protectio Problematum Aristotelis – Comparatio philosophorum Platonis et Aristotelis et de Aristotelis prestantia*, Arizona Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Tempe, Arizona 2021, p. 958,21–25; 970,13–15).

⁶⁷ MICHAEL PSELLOS, *Opuscula theologica* 53, ll. 26–29: « Ὁ δαιμόνιος Ἀριστοτέλης, πρὸς τὴν πρεσβυτέραν Ἀκαδημίαν ἀντιταττόμενος καὶ αὐτῷ διαμαχόμενος Πλάτωνι [...]. Ὁ μὲν γὰρ Πλάτων, αὐτῆς τῆς ἀληθείας ἀψάμενος [...] » (ed. PAUL GAUTIER, *Michaelis Pselli theologica*, vol. I, Teubner, Leipzig 1989, p. 204); ID., *Opuscula logica, physica, allegorica, alia* 55, ll. 1279–1280: « [...] ὁ θεῖος Πλάτων [...] » (MICHAELIS PSELLI *philosophica minora*, vol. I: *Opuscula logica, physica, allegorica, alia*, ed. JOHN M. DUFFY, Teubner, Leipzig 1992, p. 278).

Byzantine Platonist, Nicephorus Gregoras (c. 1295–1361), who critiqued certain individuals who were once his « compatriots », « disciples », and « admirers », but later disparaged one of his major works, the *Commentary on Synesius's « De Insomniis »*.⁶⁸ Could Plethon have been suggesting that Scholarios was a failed disciple who later displayed ingratitude toward his former teacher? Let us examine Gregoras's text, emphasizing the wording which Plethon (Pl.) drew upon it:

[...] οὐ μόνον ἐχθρῶν προφανῶν ἐξ ἁλλοδαπῆς τε κατὰ πλῆθος ἰόντων καὶ ἁμαθίᾳ συντετραμμένων ἁλλοδαπῇ κὰν τῷ λοιδορεῖν {Pl.: « τῶν βλασφημιῶν »; « βλασφημίας »; « διάβαλλε »} ἀνέδην οὐς οὐκ ἐχρῆν φιλοτιμουμένων μᾶλλον αὐτῶν ἢ κατὰ τὸν Ὀμηρικὸν ἐκείνον θερσίτην ἐπὶ τῇ ἀκρασίᾳ τῆς γλώττης {Plethon: « οὐκ ὀλίγη εὐπορία λόγων », ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἐκ πολλοῦ γειτόνων καὶ μαθητῶν καὶ φίλων πόρρω που διωσαμένων εὐγνωμον ἅπαν ἄρτι καὶ τὰς ἐμὰς ἡδομένων ἀκούειν τοιαύτας ἀδίκους ὕβρεις {Pl.: « τῶν βλασφημιῶν »; « βλασφημίας »; « διάβαλλε »} [...]}. Οὐκ ἔστιν ἐντυχεῖν οὐδενὶ τῷ τῶν βίων μὴ πλείους τοὺς ἁμαθείς {Pl.: « ἁμαθείς »} καὶ βασκάνους {Pl.: « βασκανίας »} προφαίνοντί τε καὶ γλώτταν ὀπλίζοντας ἀκρατῇ {cf. Pl.'s « εὐπορία λόγων »; « τῶν τοιούτων οὐδεμία ἀπορία »} τε καὶ λοιδορον {Pl.: « τῶν βλασφημιῶν »; « βλασφημίας »; « διάβαλλε »}, οἷς εὐδοκίμειν ἐξεγένετο [...]. Μάρτυρες τῶν λεγομένων σαφεῖς οἷς τε ἐπὶ λόγοις περιβοήτους ἄνδρας πάλαι γενέσθαι τετύχηκε καὶ οὐς κατὰ τῶν βασκάνων {Pl.: « βασκανίας »} οὗτοι [...] ἐξήνεγκαν λόγους [...], τοὺς φθονουμένους {Pl.: « βασκανίας »} καρτερικωτέρους τε εἶναι διδάσκοντες [...]. Σωκράτεις καὶ Πλάτωνα οὗτοι, Δημοσθένεις θ' ἅμα καὶ Κικέρωνες, Ἀριστείδαι τε καὶ Συνέσιοι καὶ ὁ μυρίος τῶν ὁμοίων θίσος [...], οἱ [...] βίβλους τοῖς ὀψιγόνους κατέλιπον, μάλα τοι ἐν καιρῷ τῆς τῶν ἐχθρῶν ἀγνωμοσύνης τὸ βάσκανον {Pl.: « βασκανίας »} στηλιτεῦειν ἐχούσας. [...] Κριτὰς γὰρ ἑαυτοὺς οἱ μηδὲν ὑγιὲς εἰδέναι δυνάμενοι χειροτονοῦντες, συκοφαντοῦσι {Pl.: « διάβαλλε »} μὲν πρὸς τὸν δῆμον τάμᾳ {Pl.: « τὰ ἡμέτερα », τὰ δὲ τῶν φαύλων καὶ μηδαμῇ ποτ' εὐδοκίμειν εἰωθότων αὐξοῦσι κακοήθως, ἴν' ἑαυτοῖς μὲν οὕτως πῶς ὀψὲ γοῦν περιποιήσωνται δόξαν, ἡμῖν δ' ἀδοξίαν, παραπλήσια δρῶντες τοῖς παρασίτοις, οἱ διαπαντὸς « ἄκαπνα θύοντες »⁶⁹ οἴκοι τοὺς ἐτέρων περισκοποῦντες ἔωθεν καπνούς, ἐκεῖθεν τὸν ἡμερήσιον τῇ γαστρὶ πορίζουσι δασμὸν αἰεί. Καὶ γὰρ καὶ αὐτοί, μηδὲν εἰς ἐπίδειξιν « ἔχοντες οἴκοθεν » ἀγαθόν {Pl.: « τὴν σαυτοῦ σκασιότητα ἐπιδείξας »}, τὰς τῶν εὐδοκίμων ἀτόπους ὕβρεις {Pl.: « τῶν βλασφημιῶν »; « βλασφημίας »} τῇ γαστρὶ τῆς ἑαυτῶν βασκανίας {Plethon: « βασκανίας »} ἡμερήσιον ἐκπορίζουσι τράπεζαν [...]. [...] Τῇ ἑαυτῶν αἰσχύνῃ {Pl.: « σαυτὸν ... αἰσχυνεῖς »} λανθάνουσιν αἰεὶ περιπετεῖς γιγνώμενοι καὶ περιφανῇ κακίας ἀνδράποδα σφᾶς ἀποδεικνύντες {Pl.: « ἐπιδείξας »} ὄντας αὐτούς, οὐχ ἅπαξ

⁶⁸ *Nicephori Gregorae Explicatio in librum Synesii « De insomniis »: scholia cum glossis*, ed. PAOLO PIETROSANTI, Levante, Bari 1999.

⁶⁹ A Callimachean verse quoted by ATHENAEUS (*Deipnosophistae* I, 14; *Athenaei Naucraticae Deipnosophistarum libri XV*, vol. I: *Libri I–V*, ed. GEORGIUS KAIBEL, Teubner, Leipzig 1887, p. 18,4) and certain Byzantine authors before Gregoras (Michael Psellos, Eustathius of Thessalonica, Constantine Manasses, Nicephorus Basilaces, and Nicetas Choniates).

οὐδ' ἐνίοτε καὶ ὀλιγάκις, ἀλλὰ πολλάκις {Plethon: « ἔτι καὶ μάλλον »}, φάναι καὶ διηνεκῶς· μηδὲ γὰρ δυνάμενα μηδ' ἐπὶ βραχὺ τὰ τῆς βασκανίου [Pl.: « ὑπὸ βασκανίας »] ψυχῆς ἔμβρυα πρὸς τὴν ἀφανὴ ταμιεύεσθαι χώραν, τῆς ἀτόπου γαστρὸς ἀμβλωθρίδιά τινα ῥήγνυνται [...]. Εἶναι δ' αὐτοὺς [...], οἱ διὰ τὴν πρὸς ἐμὲ βασκανίαν [Pl.: « ὑπὸ βασκανίας τῆς πρὸς ἡμᾶς »] [...] ὧν μέγα μὲν τὸ τυφωνικὸν {cf. perhaps Pl.'s « τῦφος »} ἄσθμα, μάλα δ' ἀδρανὲς τὸ τοῦ νοῦ καὶ τῆς γλώττης δυνάμενον, συμφυοῦς πως οὔσης αἰὲ τῆς οἰήσεως τῇ κουφότητι καὶ ῥᾶστα πειθοῦσης ἃ μὴ καθήκει. [...]. Ὦν γὰρ ἡ διάνοια δι' ἀμβλύτητα βασκανίας [Pl.: « ὑπὸ βασκανίας »] ἅπαξ γένηται μήτηρ, οὐ μέγα ἔργον νῦν μὲν ῥημάτων χαλκεύειν ὄγκους {Pl.: « οὐκ ὀλίγη εὐπορία λόγων »} ὑπὲρ πάντας μὲν βορείους Καυκάσους, ὑπὲρ πάντας δὲ Θετταλικούς Παρνασσούς, νῦν δ' ἑτέρας ῥάπτειν ἐπιβουλάς ἐφ' ἑτέραις {Pl.: « ἔτι [...] ἀντιγράφειν »} [...]. Τοιοῦτοί μοι Τελχῖνες {Pl.: « βασκανίας »} διηνεκῶς ἐπιφύονται [...], Ἄνυτοί τινες καὶ Μέλητοι καὶ Καλλικλεῖς καὶ Πῶλοι, γαῦροι νεανίσκοι, γηγῶντι φάναι Σωκράτει [...].⁷⁰

[...] Not only do we encounter open enemies from foreign lands, countless in number and reared in ignorance abroad, who seek to vaunt themselves in abusive speech – much like that Homeric Thersites, notorious for the intemperance of his tongue – rather than behave as they ought; but we also face those long since our neighbours, our pupils, and our friends, who have strayed far from sound judgment and now take delight in hearing such unjust insults against me. [...] For no human life is exempt from the emergence of a majority of such ignorant and spiteful individuals, who appear and arm their tongue with unbridled vilification, by which means they manage to thrive. Clear witnesses to these assertions are those men who, in times past, became famous on account of their words, as well as the speeches they delivered against malicious slanderers – thus proving that those who are envied show themselves to be more steadfast. [...] These include Socrates and Plato, together with Demosthenes and Cicero, Aristides and Synesius, and the innumerable company of their peers [...] men who [...] have left behind, for posterity, writings well fitted to denounce, at the opportune moment, the malice of the ingratitude of one's enemies. [...] For indeed, those who can perceive nothing sound appoint themselves as judges of my writings, slandering me before the public, while maliciously exalting the writings of the worthless men – people who have never once enjoyed good repute – in order that they themselves may, in this manner, belatedly secure a reputation of their own, and at the same time bring disrepute upon me. In so doing, they act much like parasites who, offering « smokeless sacrifice » in their own homes, watch from early morning for the smoke rising from others' houses, and from that obtain the daily tribute for their belly. Indeed, lacking anything good to show from their own store, they procure their daily meal for the belly of their spitefulness by spewing outlandish insults against reputable men. [...] And all the while, they remain unaware that they ever bring shame upon themselves, continually proving themselves – quite visibly – to be the enslaved

⁷⁰ NICEPHORUS GREGORAS, *Epistle 148*, ll. 95–202 (*Nicephori Gregorae epistulae. Accedunt epistulae ad Gregoram missae. Volumen II epistulas continens*, ed. PETRUS ALOISIUS M. LEONE, Tipografia di Matino, Matino 1982, p. 359–363).

instruments of vice, not just once, nor sometimes, nor seldom, but time and again, in an unbroken series of transgressions. For, as they are incapable even briefly of hiding away the malformed offspring of their malicious soul in some unseen place, some broodings, like monstrous abortions from an unnatural womb, burst forth. [...] They are the ones [...] who, on account of their envy of me [...]. Great indeed is their Typhonic roar, yet feeble is the potency of their mind and tongue, since conceit is somehow innately connected to frivolity and very easily persuades people to do what is unbecoming. [...] For, once the mind of those people – dulled by maliciousness – becomes pregnant, it is no great labour for them to forge bombastic utterances of a size surpassing every northern Caucasus or every Thessalian Parnassus, or else to stitch together fresh conspiracies upon fresh ones. [...] It is in this way that such Telchines perpetually afflict me – some Anytus or Meletus or Callicles or Polus, proud young men who once assaulted the elderly Socrates.

The frequent use of identical or closely similar words in Gregoras's and Plethon's condemnation of the same immoral attitude – namely, the unfair denigration of an author's literary works – strongly suggests that Gregoras's text likely served as a source for Plethon's.⁷¹ Let us examine Plethon's phrase, « ὑπὸ βασκανίας τῆς πρὸς ἡμᾶς », alongside Gregoras's « διὰ τὴν πρὸς ἐμὲ βασκανίαν ». The phrase *βασκανία πρὸς* + personal pronoun appears several dozen times in the TLG, but only three instances pertain to the denigration of literary works; in addition to Gregoras and Plethon, the phrase was used by Gregoras's teacher, Theodore Metochites (1270–1330), in reference to Nicephorus Choumnus's (c. 1250–1327) critique of Metochites's Platonism and Plato himself. Like Gregoras and Plethon, Metochites had already observed that such immoral behaviour ultimately tarnishes not the target of the attack, but the one who perpetrates it. Let us quote Metochites's text, highlighting the wording that Gregoras (Gr.) drew upon:

Καίτοι τί ταῦτα λέγεις, ὦ βέλτιστε σύ; Τί δὲ διὰ τὴν πρὸς ἡμᾶς σου βασκανίαν καὶ δύσνοιαν καὶ ἐπιβουλήν καὶ μάχην ἀγνοεῖς ἐπειγόμενος κατὰ σεαυτοῦ; [...] Σὺ [...] κατὰ σεαυτοῦ μᾶλλον τὴν γλώσσαν ὀπλίζεις [Gr.: « γλώτταν ὀπλίζοντας »] καὶ κινεῖς, ἐχθροὺς [Gr.: « ἐχθρῶν »; « τῶν ἐχθρῶν »] συκοφαντεῖν [Gr.: « συκοφαντοῦσι »] αἰρούμενος. Τί γὰρ [...] ἐπιλέξῃς τῶν σεαυτοῦ [Gr.: « λανθάνουσιν [...] σφᾶς »]; Ὅποτε γὰρ πᾶσα πρὸς τὸν θαυμαστὸν Πλάτωνα εὐλάβεια καὶ αἰδὼς ὀφείλεται, καὶ μαίνοιτ'

⁷¹ This is not the only instance of Plethon's borrowing from Gregoras; see, e.g., JOHN A. DEMETRACOPOULOS, « Ὁ ἀντιπληθωνισμός τοῦ Γεωργίου Γενναδίου-Σχολαρίου ὡς ρίζα τοῦ φιλοθωμισμοῦ τοῦ καὶ ὁ ἀντιχριστιανισμός τοῦ Γεωργίου Πλήθωνος-Γεμιστοῦ ὡς ρίζα τοῦ ἀνταριστοτελισμοῦ τοῦ » (« George Scholarios' Aristotelianism as the Root of his Thomism and George Gemistos Plethon's anti-Christianism as the Root of his Anti-Aristotelianism »), in LINOS G. BENAKIS (ed.), *Διεθνὴς Ἐπιστημονικὴ Ἑταιρεία Πληθωνικῶν καὶ Βυζαντινῶν Μελετῶν. Πρακτικὰ Ἀ' Ἐπιστημονικῆς Συνάντησης: « Βυζάντιο: ὁ κόσμος τοῦ καὶ ἡ Εὐρώπη »* / *International Society of Plethonic and Byzantine Studies. Proceedings of the 1st Conference: « Byzantium: Its World and Europe »* (Mistras, 26–28 May 2000), Διεθνὴς Ἐπιστημονικὴ Ἑταιρεία Πληθωνικῶν καὶ Βυζαντινῶν Μελετῶν, Athens – Mistras 2002, p. 109–127, at p. 124–126.

ἂν ὅστις πρὸς τὴν ἐκείνου σοφίαν ἀντιβλέπειν ὅλως αἰροῖτ' ἂν καὶ ἀντιφιλοσοφεῖν καὶ ἀντιφθέγγεσθαι, τί κρίνεις [Gr.: « κριτὰς »] περὶ σεαυτοῦ; Τίνα τὴν δίκην ἐπάγεις; Ποῦ σοι τὰ θαυμαστὰ βιβλία χωρήσει, ἃ κατὰ Πλάτωνος [Gr.: « Πλάτωνες »] ἀντιφιλοσοφεῖς [...]; [...] Λέληθας [Gr.: « λανθάνουσιν [...] σφᾶς »] ἐπηρεάζων, ὃ γενναῖε, σαυτῷ καὶ τοῖς σοῖς κατὰ τοῦ Πλάτωνος [Gr.: « Πλάτωνες »] συντάγμασι [...].⁷²

Why do you say these things, my most excellent friend? Why, driven by your envy, ill will, scheming, and hostility toward me, do you fail to recognize that you are acting to your own detriment? [...] You [...] are arming and wielding your tongue against yourself, choosing to slander enemies. Have you [...] forgotten your own standing? For when every reverence and respect is due to the admirable Plato, and one would have to be utterly mad to oppose his wisdom, to engage in counter-philosophy, or to speak against him in any way, what do you think of yourself? What judgment do you render upon yourself? Where will your esteemed writings find their place, those through which you argue against Plato [...]? [...] You fail to see, noble friend, that in attacking Plato, you harm both yourself and your own writings.

While it is not impossible that Plethon had also read Metochites's text – which, after all, critiques a reckless adversary of Plato – there is no evidence to suggest that Plethon used it directly as a source for the conclusion of his *Πρὸς τὰς Σχολαρίου ὑπὲρ Ἀριστοτέλους ἀντιλήψεις*. Instead, his engagement with the text appears to have been indirect, mediated through Gregoras's incorporation of certain elements from Metochites's wording into his *Epistle 148*. In this epistle, Gregoras portrays some of his former disciples and current adversaries as pseudo-authors who produce writings « in their homes » by merely observing what true authors produce and disseminate beyond their own spaces. This critique aligns with Plethon's application of the Maltese dog simile to Scholarios, as previously discussed (p. 419–423). Additionally, Gregoras characterizes those who attack his writings as youthful, boastful, malign, and envious individuals (« γαῦροι νεανίσκοι »; « βάσκανοι »), who channel the erudition they gained from him into their own moral deficiencies, producing voluminous writings in an attempt to undermine their teacher's work. This characterization aptly describes the Scholarios vs. Plethon tension: Scholarios, around the age of forty, attacked Plethon's *De Differentiis*, while Plethon, approximately ninety years old, responded to Scholarios's refutation.

It is unnecessary to enumerate the remaining evident similarities. However, it is worth considering Plethon's contrast between *ἐμεῖν* and *ἀκριβοῦν*. As observed, Plethon was familiar with Gregoras's metaphorical parallelism – rooted in Plato's *Theaetetus* 149A–151D) – that compares inferior authors (such as former disciples

⁷² THEODORE METOCHITES, *Oratio XIV*, 18, 1–13 and 32–34 (THEODORUS METOCHITES, *Orationes*, ed. ELENI KALTSOGIANNI, JOHN POLEMIS, De Gruyter, Berlin – Boston 2019, p. 603–604).

who criticize their teacher's work) to wombs incapable of nurturing an embryo to life, resulting in abortion. Gregoras's source, overlooked until now, is Synesius of Cyrene's (c. 370–c. 413 AD) *Dio* XII, 9 – XIII, 2, wherein Synesius blesses himself for not being a mere teacher of grammar, which would involve memorizing handbooks and stifling critical thinking, but a true philosopher:

Ἡπιστάμην γὰρ πολὺ τῆς ἐλευθερίας ὑποτεμούμενος, εἰ πρῶτον μὲν ἀνάγκην ἔξω βιβλίον ἐξονυχίζειν, ὅφ' οὗ γίνεται τὸ κατὰ μνήμην ἐνεργεῖν, τὴν δὲ ἐπιβολὴν ἀγύμναστον εἶναι καὶ ἄγονον, ἣν δεῖ κριτὴν εἶναι βιβλίων· ἐπεὶ δὴ κατὰ τοῦτο ὁ φιλόσοφος μᾶλλον, ἐκεῖνο δὲ ἀποδεδόσθω γραμματικοῖς. Εἴεν δ' ἂν καὶ φιλοσόφων βιβλίων γραμματικοὶ τινες ἀποδεδειγμένοι, τὰς συλλαβὰς εὖ μάλα συγκρίνοντές τε καὶ διακρίνοντες, οἰκεῖον δὲ οὐδὲν οὐδέποτε μαιευσόμενοι· ὅ τι δὲ καὶ τέκοιεν, ὑπὸ θράσους τυφλὸν καὶ ἀνεμαιοῖν· οὐ γὰρ ἐκθάλλει τὸν εἶσω λόγον, ὅτῳ καθ' ἡμέραν ἐμεῖν ἀνάγκη τό τε σπουδῇ « σχεδιάζειν », ⁷³ ἐν μὴ δέοντι τῇ σπουδῇ χρώμενον, ἐξίτηλον αὐτὴν ἀποφαίνει. Φύονται μὲν γὰρ ἐπὶ « λόγοις » ὠδίνες ψυχῶν ὥσπερ ἐπὶ τόκοις σωμάτων· ὅστις δὲ ἁώροις αὐταῖς συνεθίζεται, καὶ τὰ λοιπὰ πέπονθε παραπλήσια τοῖς ἐπὶ τῶν σωμάτων συμβαίνουσιν· ὀλισθοῦσα δὲ ἔξις εἰς τὸ ἀμβλίσκειν οὐδὲν ἂν ὠδινήσειεν ἀρτιμελὲς καὶ βιώσιμον.

I knew that I should cut off a great part of my freedom if I had to make a minute study of a book beforehand, a practice by which it comes to pass that the faculty of memory is energetic, but the critical faculty untrained and sterile, that faculty which must needs be the judge of books. It is through this above all that the philosopher exists; let the other be considered as the grammarians' task. And indeed some authors of philosophical books might be presented as grammarians who combine and separate syllables very well, but never succeed in bringing to birth anything of their own. Whatsoever they have actually brought forth is blinded by rashness and is empty; for a man cannot cherish the word that is within him [i.e., thought], who must perforce vomit words out [i.e. produce written or oral texts] every day; and writing intensely on the spur of the moment where intense is uncalled for, eventually proves the latter futile. In producing texts, birth pangs of the souls take place just as birth pangs take place in births of bodies; and to whomsoever accustoms himself to the untimely pangs for begetting texts the same things happen as those happening to whom suffers in the body: he who has been accustomed to a premature delivery can bring to birth nothing sound of limb or likely to live.⁷⁴

⁷³ (Ps.-) PLATO, *Sisyphus* 387E3: « [...] σχεδιάζοντα λέγειν ὅ τι ἂν τύχη [...] »; 390B2–4: « [...] αὐτοσχεδιάζοντες καὶ διαμαντεύμενοι [...], περὶ ὧν οὐκ ἠπίστασθε [...] ».

⁷⁴ *Synésios de Cyrène*, t. IV: *Opuscles. I*, ed. JACQUES LAMOUREUX, transl. and comm. NOËL AUJOULAT, Les Belles Lettres, Paris 2004, p. 174–175 (I correct « ἐπειδὴ » to « ἐπεὶ δὴ »); *The Essays and Hymns of Synesius of Cyrene: Including the Address to the Emperor Arcadius and the Political Speeches*, transl. AUGUSTINE FITZGERALD, vol. I, Oxford University Press, London 1930, p. 174, substantially revised; DIONYSIUS PETAVIUS's Latin translation (PG 66, col. 1151B) and AUJOULAT's French translation (ibid.) are much more accurate. Synesius's *Dio* begins with an explicit mention of Philostratus's *Vitae Sophistarum*.

As is well known, Synesius's critique of « vomiting speeches » (or « writings ») – an activity pertaining not to « philosophers » but to « philologists » – can be traced to a maxim attributed to the (anti-Christian)⁷⁵ Aelius Aristides, as preserved in Philostratus's (c. 170–c. 240 AD) *Vitae Sophistarum* 2 as well as in Eunapius of Sardis's (c. 349–c. 420 AD) *Vitae Philosophorum et Sophistarum* X, 41: « Οὐ γάρ ἐσμεν τῶν ἐμούντων, ἀλλὰ τῶν ἀκριβούντων » (« For I am one of those who do not vomit speeches but try to carefully investigate in their speeches the issue at stake »); « [...] προενεγκόντων [...] ὡς 'οὐκ εἰσὶ τῶν ἐμούντων ἀλλὰ τῶν ἀκριβούντων' [...] » (« [...] saying that their custom was 'not to vomit speeches but to carefully investigate in their speeches the issue at stake' [...] »).⁷⁶ Plethon appears to have been aware of both Gregoras's appropriation of Synesius's passage and Synesius's use of Aristides's dictum as reported by Philostratus and/or Eunapius. Plethon substituted Synesius's and Gregoras's metaphor with that found in Aristides's statement, contrasting ἐμεῖν (« throwing up a flood of words ») – a characteristic he attributed to Scholarios – with ἀκριβοῦν (« carefully investigating an issue »), which is the mark of serious thinkers and authors. Viewed through Aristides's dictum, Plethon's application of this metaphor implied that Scholarios tended to hastily produce voluminous texts whose content was necessarily shallow. From the perspective of Synesius's reception of Aristides's saying, this critique suggests that Scholarios's facility in producing writings (such as those attacking Plethon) stemmed from his reliance on philosophical handbooks, which he reproduced uncritically, forfeiting the opportunity for independent philosophical inquiry.

In Plethon's texts the phrase « [...] τὰ ἐπιτυχόντα εἰκῇ [...] » stands in contrast to ἀκριβοῦν. It is highly probable that « τὰ ἐπιτυχόντα » is Plethon's adaptation of « ὅ τι ἂν τύχη » from (Ps.-) Plato's *Sisyphus* 387E3: « [...] σχεδιάζοντα λέγειν ὅ τι ἂν τύχη [...] » (cf. above, p. 428, n. 73). The use of « σχεδιάζοντα » indicates that both the diction and content of this (Ps.-) Platonic passage influenced Synesius's term *σχεδιάζειν*. Furthermore, (Ps.-) Plato's « λέγειν » was adapted by Synesius as « λόγον » and « λόγοις » and by Plethon as « λέγειν », « λόγων », and « τὰ λεγόμενα » (see above, p. 409; 429). This intertextuality suggests Plethon was keenly aware of Synesius's dependence on (Ps.-) Plato and crafted his critique of Scholarios as a summation of the reception history of (Ps.-) Plato, Philostratus/Eunapius, Synesius, and Nicephorus Gregoras.

⁷⁵ See, e.g., F. GERALD DOWNING, *Cynics and Christian Origins*, T & T. Clark, Edinburgh 1993, p. 19–20.

⁷⁶ EUNAPIE DE SARDES, *Vies de philosophes et de sophistes*, ed. RICHARD GOULET, t. II, Les Belles Lettres, Paris 2014, p. 73, 20–21 (see also op. cit., p. 253, n. 7); PHILOSTRATUS AND EUNAPIUS, *The Lives of the Sophists*, transl. WILMER C. F. WRIGHT, William Heinemann – G. P. Putnam's Sons, London – New York 1921, p. 217; 493 (adapted). For the relation of the Synesian to the Philostratean passage, see transl. WRIGHT, p. 216, n. 5. For ἀκριβοῦν, see also AELIUS ARISTIDES's *Περὶ ὁμοιοῦς ταῖς πόλεσιν*: « [...] ἴσως ἂν ὥσπερ ἄλλο τι πρᾶγμα τῆς προσηκούσης μελέτης τυγχάνον καὶ τοῦθ' ὑμῖν ἀκριβωθεῖ [...] » (JEBB 536; *Aristides*, ed. WILHELM DINDORF, vol. I, Reimer, Leipzig 1829, p. 793).

What was the intended outcome of this layered engagement with the reception history of these texts? The key lies in Synesius's phrase « κριτὴν εἶναι βιβλίων » and Gregoras's adaptation, « κριτὰς [...] ἑαυτοὺς [...] χειροτονοῦντες ». For Synesius, only philosophers – not philologists or philosophy teachers bound by handbooks – are capable of assessing the value of books. To Plethon, Scholarios did not belong to the former category.

Was Scholarios's profession as a teacher of philosophy necessarily an impediment to his philosophical aptitude? Not inherently; it depended on his disposition as a disciple. Drawing directly on Gregoras's rebuke of certain former disciples who had erroneously – and immorally – judged his writings (see above, p. 424–426), Plethon hints that Scholarios had been a deficient disciple. This is further evidenced in Plethon's phrase « τὴν σαυτοῦ σκαιότητα [...] ἐπιδείξας », which seems to echo Gregoras's « μηδὲν εἰς ἐπιδείξιν ἔχοντες οἴκοθεν ἀγαθόν ». However, Plethon replaces « μηδὲν ἀγαθόν » with « τὴν σκαιότητα ». Why this substitution? One common meaning of σκαῖος, as documented in Byzantine lexicons, is « stupid » or « unable to learn ». For example: « 'Σκαῖός': [...] Οὕτως ἐκάλουν τοὺς ἀμαθεῖς καὶ δυσπαρακολουθήτους καὶ τοὺς μωροὺς »;⁷⁷ « 'Σκαῖός' [...]: Μωρός, ἀπαίδευτος, ἀμαθής »;⁷⁸ « 'Σκαῖοί': [...] ἀμαθεῖς καὶ ἀπαίδευτοι. 'Σκαῖός': ὁ ἀμαθής, παρὰ τὸ 'σκάζειν' τῇ μαθήσει πρὸς τὸν διδάσκαλον ».⁷⁹ Thus, Plethon's charge of σκαιότης may suggest that Scholarios had been his disciple – perhaps decades earlier – but failed to grasp essential lessons or even abandoned them prematurely.⁸⁰ This failure could explain why Scholarios, in his later years,

⁷⁷ SUDA, *Lexicon* Σ 548, in ADA ADLER (ed.), *Suidae Lexicon*, pt. IV: Π–Ψ, *Lexicographi Graeci*, I.4, Teubner, Leipzig 1935, p. 373,3–4.

⁷⁸ HESYCHIUS, *Lexicon* Σ 800 (ἩΣΥΧΙΟΣ. HESYCHII ALEXANDRINI *Lexicon*, vol. IV: Σ–Ω. *Editio altera*, ed. MAURICIUS SCHMIDT, sumptibus Hermannii Dufftii (Libraria Maukiana), Jena 1867, p. 1358,10–13).

⁷⁹ *Etymologicum Graecae linguae Gudianum et alia grammaticorum scripta e codicibus manuscriptis nunc primum edita*, ed. FRIEDRICH WILHELM STURZ, apud I. A. G. Weigel, Leipzig 1818 (repr. Hildesheim 1973), p. 502,27. Cf. PLATO's *Republic* 411E1–2: « [...] ἐν ἀμαθίᾳ καὶ σκαιότητι [...] »; ARISTOPHANES, *Vespa* 1183: « ὦ σκαῖε ἀπαίδευτε [...] »; LYSIAS, *In Theomnestum* 15: « [...] τοῦτον δὲ οὕτω σκαῖον εἶναι, ὥστε οὐ δύνασθαι μαθεῖν τὰ λεγόμενα » (*Lysiae orationes cum fragmentis*, ed. CHRISTOPHER CAREY, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2007, p. 92,24–25).

⁸⁰ The following passage from Scholarios's *Περὶ τοῦ βιβλίου τοῦ Γεμιστοῦ, καὶ κατὰ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς πολυθεΐας* reveals that, prior to his journey to Ferrara, Scholarios had spent some undetermined time in the Peloponnese and had some level of contact with Plethon: « Ἐκεῖνος [sc. Plethon] τοίνυν, ὁποῖος ἦν, ἐκ πολλοῦ δηλὸς ἡμῖν ἐγεγόνει, καὶ ὅτι τοιοῦτο βιβλίον ἐν πλείοσι χρόνοις εἶχε συγγεγραφώς, πολλῶν τε ἐξηγουμένων ἀξίων πιστεύεσθαι καὶ ἡμῶν πολλαῖς καὶ φανεραῖς ἀποδείξεσιν ἐν Πελοποννήσῳ μὲν πρῶτον, εἴτ' ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ κατελιγφότων » (*Œuvres complètes de Georges (Gennadios) Scholarios*, ed. JUGIE et al., t. IV, p. 155,29–156,1; « His [i.e., Plethon's] intellectual identity had long been evident to me, and I knew that he had written such a book [i.e., the sacrilegious *Laws*] over the course of several years; many trustworthy individuals reported these matters to me [while I was still in Constantinople], and I myself became aware of these things

was unable to adequately assess Plethon's *De Differentiis*, a concise 8,609-word text, and responded with an unwieldy 48,428-word refutation. His failure, both as a disciple and later as an author, was not due to inherent dullness but, as Michael Psellos had noted about his disciple John Italos, due to an immature eagerness to accumulate information without grasping its essence (see above, p. 416–419). Scholarios's moral failure as an author lay in the ignominy he brought upon his mentor, paralleling Gregoras's criticism of certain disciples who turned against their teacher.⁸¹

through numerous clear and irrefutable pieces of evidence, first in the Peloponnese and later in Italy »). Scholarios's reference to Plethon's pagan teaching in Florence not only aligns with his interpretation of the anti-Aristotelianism of Plethon's *De Differentiis* as having a distinctly anti-Christian intent (SCHOLARIOS, *Περὶ τοῦ βιβλίου τοῦ Γεμιστοῦ, καὶ κατὰ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς πολυθείας*, ed. JUGIE et al., t. IV, p. 156,1–7; cf. ID., *Κατὰ τῶν Πλήθωνος ἀποριῶν ἐπ' Ἀριστοτέλει II*; ed. JUGIE et al., t. IV, p. 114,12–115,30), but also intersects with George of Trebizond's account of Plethon's views in Italy regarding the fate of Christianity (p. 423, n. 66). CHRISTOPHER J. G. TURNER (« The Career of George-Gennadius Scholarios », *Byzantion*, 39 (1969), p. 420–455, at p. 428) suggests that Scholarios's stay in the Peloponnese was « a brief visit ». This interpretation is plausible, especially since later, in a letter to Bessarion, Scholarios refers to Plethon as « your teacher » (« [...] τὸν σὸν [sc. Bessarion's] διδάσκαλον [...] »); SCHOLARIOS, *Epistle 18*; ed. JUGIE et al., t. IV, p. 437,34). The dating of the epistle is provided in MARIE-HÉLÈNE BLANCHET's *Georges-Gennadius Scholarios (vers 1400 – vers 1472): un intellectuel orthodoxe face à la disparition de l'Empire byzantine*, Institut Français d'Études Byzantines, Paris 2008, p. 293–294 and 482. However, it is not implausible to assume that Scholarios might have been reluctant to publicly associate himself with a thinker whose pagan intellectual identity was well known to him and others. Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that Scholarios's brief engagement with Plethon, if it occurred, was short-lived. Plethon may have excluded him from his inner circle, as he did with many of his disciples (e.g., Hermonymos Christonymos Charitonymos), or Scholarios himself may have distanced himself. From that point on, Scholarios would likely have avoided being regarded as a disciple of Plethon, just as Plethon would have refrained from acknowledging Scholarios as one of his disciples, due to the latter's perceived « bluntness » as a follower. Therefore, Scholarios's awareness of Plethon's paganism likely stemmed from this initial, brief encounter, and this awareness may have influenced his decision to refrain from insisting on further involvement in Plethon's inner circle. Unlike Charitonymos, Scholarios never needed to clear his reputation as a Christian, despite any potential admiration for Plethon. Charitonymos, on the other hand, faced such a need after Plethon's death and Scholarios's official condemnation of Plethon's paganism (see JOHN A. DEMETRACOPOULOS, « Hermonymos Christonymos Charitonymos' *Capita decem pro divinitate Christi*: a Posthumous Reaction to Plethon's Anti-Christianism », in PAUL R. BLUM, JOSEF MATULA (eds.), *Georgios Gemistos Plethon: The Byzantine and the Latin Renaissance*, Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci, Olomouc 2014, p. 143–259, at p. 224–233). Scholarios was born c. 1400, and Plethon had settled in Mistras by the end of the first decade of the 15th century (see, e.g., TAMBRUN, *Pléthon*, p. 39). Therefore, their brief association would have likely occurred sometime in the early 1420s.

⁸¹ Cf. THEODORE GAZA, *Epistle 3* (written in March 1450), ll. 131–135: « [...] ὄρα, ἄνθρωπε, εἰ, τούτων οὕτως ἔχόντων, οὐ τὰ τῶν μοχθηρῶν καὶ σκαιῶν καὶ ἀχαρίστων σὺ ὁ πρότερόν μοι οἰκειῶς ἔχων ἐποίεις, μαίνόμενος ἐπ' ἐμὲ καὶ κατορχούμενος τοῦ σὲ καὶ φιλήσαντος καὶ διδάξαντος καὶ τὰ δυνατὰ πάντα εὐεργετήσαντος » (*Theodori Gazae epistolae*, ed. PETRUS ALOISIUS M. LEONE, M. D'Auria, Napoli 1990, p. 44).

Psellos, in a letter addressed to John Italos, praised his disciple for producing literary works that, although imperfect, were not devoid of qualities and demonstrated that Italos was finally on the correct path.⁸² Italos's eventual success might have been due to the fact that, after initially appearing to share in the Maltese dogs' insatiable appetite for indiscriminately absorbing various disciplines, he ultimately adopted the proper *modus discendi* as prescribed by his teacher. Scholarios, however, in stark contrast to Italos, never received such commendation from Plethon, assuming he was indeed taught, either directly or indirectly, by him. To Plethon, Scholarios remained forever a « Maltese dog », a characterization that aligned with Gregoras's description of certain former disciples who severely criticized his literary work. These individuals, as Gregoras remarked in his epistle exploited by Plethon, were merely 'parasites', analogous to the courtiers at Mistras whom Plethon had earlier denounced using the same Maltese dog simile (see above, Section I). Scholarios's status as such a parasite encapsulated not only his relationship with his teacher but also the character of his philosophical and literary endeavours.

V. *The Maltese Dog's Reply: Purus grammaticus purus asinus!*

Scholarios did not produce a counter-reply to Plethon's rebuttal of his refutation of Plethon's *De Differentiis*. Some members of the intellectual circle surrounding Plethon and Bessarion, far less skilled in philosophy than Plethon, Scholarios, or Bessarion, were to take up the thread of the Plato-Aristotle controversy, thereby contributing to this body of literature. Nevertheless, Scholarios presumably recognized, at least in part, the literary context underlying the concluding paragraph of Plethon's counter-reply. Around 1456, or shortly thereafter, he authored the overtly anti-pagan and vehemently anti-Plethonic treatise *Περὶ τοῦ ἑνὸς ἐν Τριάδι Θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ πάντων τῶν ὄντων δημιουργοῦ, καὶ κατὰ ἀθέων ἤτοι αὐτοματιστῶν καὶ κατὰ πολυθέων* (*On the One in the Trinity of Our God and Creator of All Beings, Against Atheists or Automatists, and Against Polytheists*). Reflecting on Plethon's regrettable relapse into paganism, he remarks:

Μαθημάτων [1] μὲν γὰρ τῆς ὑπτιότητος μόνης μετέσχευ, ἄλλο δ' οὐδὲν ἄξιον αὐτῶν τε ἀπώνατο καὶ τῆς ἐπικοσμούσης {2a} ταῦτα σοφίας [2b]. Εὐφραδείας {3a} δὲ ἐπεμελήθη {4} μὲν καλῶς τῆς ἀρχαίας {3b}, ἀλλ' ἐν ἀσεβεστάτῳ καὶ ἀφρονεστάτῳ συγγράμματι [4] [sc. the Νόμων συγγραφῇ], ἣν ἡ Λατίνων παροιμία διὰ τοῦτο προσηκόντως τιμᾷ ἐν τοῖς « εἰλικρινῶς » καὶ μόνης αὐτῆς ἐπμεληθεῖσιν {5}. Ἐν τούτοις μὲν οὖν, κἂν εἴχῃ τις αὐτὸν ἐπαινεῖν, οὕτω δ' ἀπλοῦς πάνυ καὶ τῶν χυδαίων οὐδὲν σχεδὸν διαφέρων ἦν περὶ τὸ δύνασθαι κρίνειν ἀληθείας [6a] πέρι καὶ ψεύδους

⁸² MICHAEL PSELLOS, *Oratoria minora* 19 (*Ἐπαινος τοῦ Ἰταλοῦ*) (ed. LITTLEWOOD, p. 69–72).

[6b], ὥστε καὶ παῖς [7] αὐτὸν ἐξήλεγχεν {7} ἄν, καὶ παιδί [7] ἀντιλέγειν οὐκ ἂν οἶός τ' ἦν πειραστικῶς ψευδομένῳ [6b] διὸ καὶ τὴν πλάνην ὑπέστη ταύτην [...].⁸³

He studied the various subjects in education only superficially, and so from these disciplines he gained nothing further, nor, of course, the wisdom that comes at the end and adorns them. He successfully cultivated the ability to write very fine

⁸³ SCHOLARIOS, *Περὶ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἐν Τριάδι Θεοῦ ἡμῶν καὶ πάντων τῶν ὄντων δημιουργοῦ, καὶ κατὰ ἀθέων ἤτοι αὐτοματιστῶν καὶ κατὰ πολυθέων* (ed. JUGIE et al., t. IV, p. 180,21–30). Cf. two similar Scholarian passages: « [...] ἐνὶ τὰ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς παιδείας ὑπελείφθη καλὰ πρεσβυτή, καὶ οὗτος ἀπώνατο τῆς περὶ ταῦτα σπουδῆς φρενῶν αἰσχροῦν ἔκστασιν [...]». Ἠλγοῦμεν ἐπὶ τοῖς πόνοις τοῦ γέροντος, οὐδ' ἀπώλεσε, τὴν περὶ τὴν λέξιν τε καὶ συνθήκην φιλοτιμίαν ὑποθέσσει φαυλοτάταις συναναλώσας [...]. [...] Μέχρι τοσούτου τὴν περὶ τὸν Ἑλληνισμὸν ἐκτεῖνας σπουδὴν [...], ὅτι μὴ μόνον τὴν λέξιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ψυχὴν τὴν οἰκείαν οὕτω διενεόηθη κοσμεῖν » (SCHOLARIOS, *Περὶ τοῦ βιβλίου τοῦ Γεμιστοῦ, καὶ κατὰ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς πολυθείας*; ed. JUGIE et al., t. IV, p. 160,17–30); « Πάντων οὖν ἐκείνων ἀφρονέστερος οὗτος γέγονε σοφιστής, ὥσπερ οὐ πρεσβυτικοῦ φρονήματος ὢν ἢ συνεστῶτος ὅλως, ἀλλὰ παιδαριώδους ἢ παρατετραμμένου· καὶ τὸ ἀδόκονον περὶ τῆς ἐν λόγοις δυνάμεως, ὡς ἄρα ἐν ψυχῇ ἀνοήτου αὐτῆς ὡς μάχαιρά ἐστιν ἐν χειρὶ μαινομένου, τοῦτο καὶ τούτῳ συνέβη. Δύναμιν γὰρ λαβὼν τοῦ συντιθέναι λόγους, καὶ ἴσως οὐ[κ] φαυλοτέρᾳ συνθήκῃ, κατεχρήσατο τῇ δυνάμει πρὸς καταστροφὴν ἑαυτοῦ [...], δι' ἑλλειψιν [...] λογισμοῦ ἔμφρονος καὶ σοφίας ἀληθινῆς καὶ διαλεκτικῆς ἐπιστήμης τὴν πλάνην παθὼν, κουφότητι δὲ καὶ τῇ εἰρημένῃ δυνάμει καὶ φανερώσαι οὕτως αὐτὴν προαχθεῖς. Τοιοῦτος γὰρ ἦν καὶ τοιοῦτος ἐγνωρίζετο τοῖς δυναμένοις κρίνειν. Εἰ γάρ τι καὶ τῆς περὶ σοφίας δεινότητος προσεγένετο αὐτῷ [...], ἄχρηστον αὐτῷ πρὸς τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας εὑρεσιν γέγονεν [...] » (SCHOLARIOS, *Ἐπιστολὴ τῇ βασιλίσει περὶ τοῦ βιβλίου τοῦ Γεμιστοῦ*; ed. JUGIE et al., t. IV, p. 152,11–23). Regarding Cicero's dictum referenced by Scholarios, which supports his characterization of Plethon as a gifted yet deranged author, see the following note in Scholarios's *Προλεγόμενα εἰς τὴν Λογικὴν καὶ εἰς τὴν Πορφυρίου « Εἰσαγωγὴν », ἐκ διαφόρων συλλεγέμενα βιβλίων, μετὰ ἰδίων ἐπιστασιῶν IV*: « [...] ὥς γὰρ φησιν ὁ Τούλλιος ἐν τῇ *Δευτέρᾳ ῥητορικῇ*, ὅτι ἡ σοφία χωρὶς τῆς λεκτικῆς ἐστὶ μάχαιρα ἐν χειρὶ παραλυτικοῦ, καὶ ἡ εὐγλωττία χωρὶς σοφίας ἐστὶ μάχαιρα ἐν χειρὶ μαινομένου' (cf. CICERO, *De oratore* III, 14, 55: « Est enim eloquentia una quaedam de summis virtutibus; [...] quarum virtutum expertibus si dicendi copiam tradiderimus, non eos quidem oratores effecerimus, sed furentibus quaedam arma dederimus »; cf., *inter perplura alia*, GIOVANNI DI BONANDREA, *Commentary on Brevis introductio ad dictamen* 313–315: « Sapientia est talis sine eloquentia qualis est paraliticus cum ense in manu, et talis eloquentia sine sapientia qualis est furiosus cum gladio acuto. Et ratio est quia sicut paraliticus non potest operari ensem, ita sapiens non potest sapientiam sine eloquentia et sicut furiosus huius gladium acutum percutit omnes abstantes, ita eloquentia percutit omnes suis viribus dicendo malum vel bonum de quo licet ut sibi accidit », in CHIARA ZENNARO, « Il Commento alla *Brevis introductio ad dictamen* di Giovanni di Bonandrea del ms. Perugia, Biblioteca Augusta, lat. B 56: Edizione critica », Tesi di laurea, Università Ca' Foscari, Venezia 2019, p. 59), καὶ διὰ τοῦτο οὐ δεῖ μόνον ἐπιστήμης ἔχειν πραγματικὰς πρὸς τὴν σοφίαν τεταγμένας, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπιστήμης λογικὰς, εἴτουν λεκτικὰς πρὸς τὴν εὐτακτον ὁμιλίαν. Ἀς δὲ λογικὰς ἐπιστήμης καὶ διακρίνουσι κατὰ τὴν διάκρισιν τοῦ λόγου, διαφόρως λαμβάνεσθαι δυναμένου. Ἐν γὰρ τῷ λόγῳ τρία εἰσίν, ἡ οὐσία τοῦ λόγου, ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ἀγαθότης εἴτουν ἡ εὐπρέπεια. Τῷ μὲν οὖν πρώτῳ τρόπῳ περὶ τοῦ λόγου ἔστιν ἡ γραμματικὴ, τῷ δευτέρῳ ἡ λογικὴ, τῷ δὲ τρίτῳ ἡ ῥητορικὴ » (ed. JUGIE et al., t. VII: *Commentaires et résumés des ouvrages d'Aristote*, Maison de la Bonne Presse, Paris, 1936, p. 29,16–25). The note is clearly a translation of some Scholastic text; for Scholarios's direct Latin source, see IRINI BALCOYIANNOPOULOU, « George Scholarios' *Praenotationes Philosophicae (cum Axiomatibus Aristotelicis)*: an Annotated Editio Princeps », forthcoming.

ancient Greek, but he did this by writing a text that was sacrilegious and insane; for this reason, this skill of his is finely described by the relevant Latin proverb, that is, the proverb that refers to people who are « exclusively » occupied with writing in a fine style. In this work, then, even if one accepts that he may be justifiably praised, nevertheless, as to the question of the distinction between truth and error he was so naive, and not superior at all in this respect even to the illiterate men, that even a teenager could refute him, and he would be unable to contradict him, should the teenager assert something false just to test him. That was the reason why he fell into this error.

As will be demonstrated, Scholarios drew extensively on Themistius's *Βασανιστῆς ἢ φιλόσοφος* (*The Examiner or the Philosopher*), employing Themistius's criteria for distinguishing between a genuine philosopher and a pseudo-philosopher to argue that Plethon falls into the latter category. As previously noted (p. 404, n. 16), in this work, Themistius contrasts the *Λάκαινα κύων* (Spartan dog) with a *πονηρόν κυνίδιον* (malicious little dog) such as the *Μελιταιά κύων* (Maltese dog). However, this is not the aspect on which Scholarios focuses. In this speech, Themistius aims to delineate the distinctive traits of a genuine philosopher, as identified by Plato; the fourth of these traits is particularly relevant:

Τέταρτον δὲ τύπον εἶναι φησι « τὴν ἀψευδίαν {6a} [6b *e contrario*] καὶ τὸ ἐκόντας εἶναι μηδὲν μηδαμῇ προσδέχεσθαι τὸ ψεῦδος [6b], ἀλλὰ μισεῖν, τὴν δὲ ἀλήθειαν [6a] στέργειν » [PLATO, *Republic* VI, 485C3–4]. Ἄγαμαι οὖν ἐγὼ καὶ ταύτη τὸν « νομοθέτην » [sc. Plato] οἶω « θριγκῶ » [PLATO, *Republic* VII, 534E1–4] περιβάλλει {2a} τὴν σοφίαν [2b] εἰς πάντα ἀληθῆ [6a]. [...] Ἔστι που τάληθές [6a] καὶ τὸ ψεῦδος [6b] πολὺ μὲν ἐν τοῖς μαθήμασι [1], πολὺ δὲ ἐν συμβολαίοις καὶ συναλλάγμασιν. Ὁ οὖν μηδενὶ μηδαμῇ τῷ ψεύδει [6b] πάροδον ἀφίεις [...].

Plato says that the fourth mark of the true philosopher is « the absence of falsehood, the determination to hate what is false and never under any circumstances to embrace it, and love of the truth ». Here too, then, I marvel at the wall our legislator builds around a wisdom that is faithful to the truth in every respect. [...] One finds, no doubt, much truth and also much falsity in the various fields of learning, just as one does in business dealings and transactions. Now surely [...] a person who does not let falsehood in under any circumstances [...].⁸⁴

Scholarios appears to have been aware that Themistius relied heavily on Plato's *Republic*, Books VI and VII. Like Plato, Scholarios emphasizes that what safeguards philosophy and must continually oversee its practices, as though from above, is

⁸⁴ *Themistii orationes. II*, ed. DOWNEY et al., p. 39,13–20; transl. ROBERT J. PENELLA, *The Private Orations of Themistius*, Berkeley – Los Angeles – London 2000, p. 78–79.

logic – particularly the method of distinction. To Scholarios, this was Plethon's greatest weakness and one of the primary sources of his philosophical errors.⁸⁵

The Latin proverb to which Scholarios alludes is « *purus grammaticus purus asinus* » (« Pure philologist, absolute ass »). Indeed, this saying appears in the margins of three out of the four autographed copies of the relevant text, seemingly written in Scholarios's own hand: « Παροιμία Λατίνων: Πώρους γραμματικούς, πώρους ἄσινους. Εἰλικρινῆς γραμματικὸς εἰλικρινῆς ὄνος [9] »;⁸⁶ « Παροιμία Λατίνων: Πούρους γραμματικούς, πούρους ἄσινους. Εἰλικρινῆς γραμματικὸς εἰλικρινῆς ὄνος [9]. *Purus grammaticus purus asinus* ».⁸⁷ His insult functions as an implicit response to Plethon's claim that Scholarios could only « vomit » texts, rather than genuinely « beget » them – essentially accusing him of being incapable of truly grasping the essence of philosophical issues or articulating serious thoughts about them. Scholarios uses the above insult as part of his characterization of Plethon as a learned man who, captivated by the elevated style of Greek literature, embraced its content uncritically. In light of Synesius's depiction of the *γραμματικός* (see above, p. 428–429) – a term also employed by Scholarios – this stance resembles that of a teacher so fixated on the texts he reads and teaches that he becomes incapable of distancing himself from them to form independent judgments. Furthermore, Scholarios accuses Plethon of being incapable of discerning (« κρίνειν ») the truth, including the truth contained in the books he studied, attributing Plethon's fundamental error of abandoning Christianity to this inability. In so doing, Scholarios simply reverses the accusation which Plethon had launched against him by implicitly referring to Synesius's « κριτὴν [...] βιβλίῳ » a quality explicitly attributed to the *φιλόσοφος* rather than to the *γραμματικοί*. Synesius cautions against mistaking individuals who are, in reality, « philologists » for genuine philosophers, even if such individuals produce « philosophical books » that engage with philosophical themes but lack substantive philosophical content.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ SCHOLARIOS, *Κατὰ τῶν Πλήθωνος ἀποριῶν ἐπ' Ἀριστοτέλει* II: « Ἀλλὰ Πλήθων, διὰ τὸ λογικῆς μεθόδου παντάπασιν ἐστερηθῆσαι (δῆλος γάρ ἐστιν οὐ τὴν ἐντεριώνην τῶν Ἀριστοτέλους λόγων – καὶ παντὸς δὲ οἶμαι λόγου –, ἀλλὰ τὰ ἔξω μόνον ὀρῶν) [...] »; « [...] ὡς μὴ ἂν ποτε πλάνης αἴτιον γενέσθαι τινί, εἰ μὴ νοῦ τε ὁμοίως καὶ λογικῶν μεθόδων ἄμοιρος εἶη » (ed. JUGIE et al., t. IV, p. 74,30–32; 108,36–37). He presumably combines this with Plethon's denigration of Aristotle, the champion of logic.

⁸⁶ MS. *Par. gr.* 1292 (Diktyon 50901), fol. 136^v.

⁸⁷ MS. *Par. gr.* 1289 (Diktyon 50898), fol. 254^v; MS. *Pantocr.* 127 (= *Hagiou Orous* 1161) (Diktyon 29146), fol. 15^r. Cf. the app. crit. in M. JUGIE's edition of the writing.

⁸⁸ To the best of my knowledge, there is no other evidence that Scholarios had read Synesius's *Dio*. However, this is not improbable, given the points mentioned above, as well as the fact that he was drawn to the *Hymns* of Synesius, the « blessed and wise » convert to Christianity, one of which he took care to rephrase in more accessible language (SCHOLARIOS, *Τοῦ μακαρίου καὶ σοφοῦ Συνεσίου Εὐχὴ δι' ἐπῶν μὲν ἐμμέτρων ὑπ' αὐτοῦ συντεθεῖσα, μεταφρασθεῖσα δὲ ὑφ' ἡμῶν εἰς τὸ σαφέστερον τοῖς πολλοῖς*; ed. JUGIE et al., t. IV, p. 369–371).

A brief remark on Scholarios's use of the Latin proverb as an insult toward Plethon is warranted. Scholarios was likely inspired in this regard by Themistius's reference to an Aesopian fable:

Νεμεσῶ γὰρ καὶ τῷ ὄνῳ [9] Αἰσώπου ἀκούων ὅτι ὄνος [9] ὢν ὅμως ἡμπίσχετο λεοντῆν. Ταύτη τοι καὶ ξυνελθόντα παιδάρια [7] ξαίνει {8} τε αὐτὸν τοῖς ῥοπάλοις καὶ ἀφαιρεῖται τῆς δορᾶς τε καὶ τοῦ φρονήματος.

I am also indignant at Aesop's ass when I hear that, although an ass, the animal dressed up in a lion's skin. So a group of children beat the ass with clubs and deprive him both of his lion's skin and his presumption.⁸⁹

In addition to referencing the « ass » (i.e., the philologist) who pretends to be a lion (i.e., the philosopher), Themistius's passage can also shed light on Scholarios's somewhat peculiar assertion that even the average brat could refute the arguments presented by Plethon in his *Laws*.

Furthermore, it appears that Scholarios, in his effort to dismantle Plethon's claims in the passage cited above (p. 433–434), drew upon yet another work by Themistius. In the preface to his *Ἐπιτάφιος ἐπὶ τῷ πατρὶ* (*Funeral Oration for His Father*), Themistius contrasts the philosopher's endeavors with the purely literary activity of crafting meticulously polished texts in an Atticizing style and delighting in their aesthetic refinement:

Ὁ λόγος ἡμῖν οὐ φιλοτιμίας καὶ ἐπιδείξεως [...] στοχάζεται [...]. Τῇ λέξει {3a} δὲ εἴ τι ἐλλείπειν εἰς παλαιότητα {3b} εὐρίσκοιτε, οὐ θαυμαστόν. Χαλεπὸν γὰρ ἐφικέσθαι τῆς ἐν συγγραφῇ [4] ἀκριβείας μὴ τοῦτο συνεχῶς ἐκμελετῶντας {5} [...], καὶ ἅμα οὐχ οὕτω φροντιστέον {5} τῷ φιλοσόφῳ καλλιπερίας {3a–b}, ἀλλ' ἐκείνο μάλιστα φυλακτέον ὑμῖν, εἰ τὸ πρέπον ἀπανταχῇ διεσώσατο καὶ [...] φιλοσοφεῖν ἐπιχειροῦντι [...].

This oration of mine does not have as its goal the winning of honour or the display of oratorical talent [...]. If you should find that, in its style, this oration does not fully measure up to the ancient models, there would be nothing astonishing about that. It is difficult to achieve this level of precision in one's writing if one does not work at it constantly [...]. Also, a philosopher should not be that concerned with beauty of language; you should mainly pay heed to whether or not he has, on all occasions, be true to his sense of what befits [...] one who is himself trying to be a philosopher.⁹⁰

To summarize, Scholarios relied on a Plato-inspired discourse by Themistius to refute Plethon's assertion that he was a genuine philosopher while casting Scholarios as someone who merely produced ineffectual writings on philosophical

⁸⁹ *Themistii orationes. II*, ed. DOWNEY et al., p. 20,14–19; transl. PENELLA, p. 63.

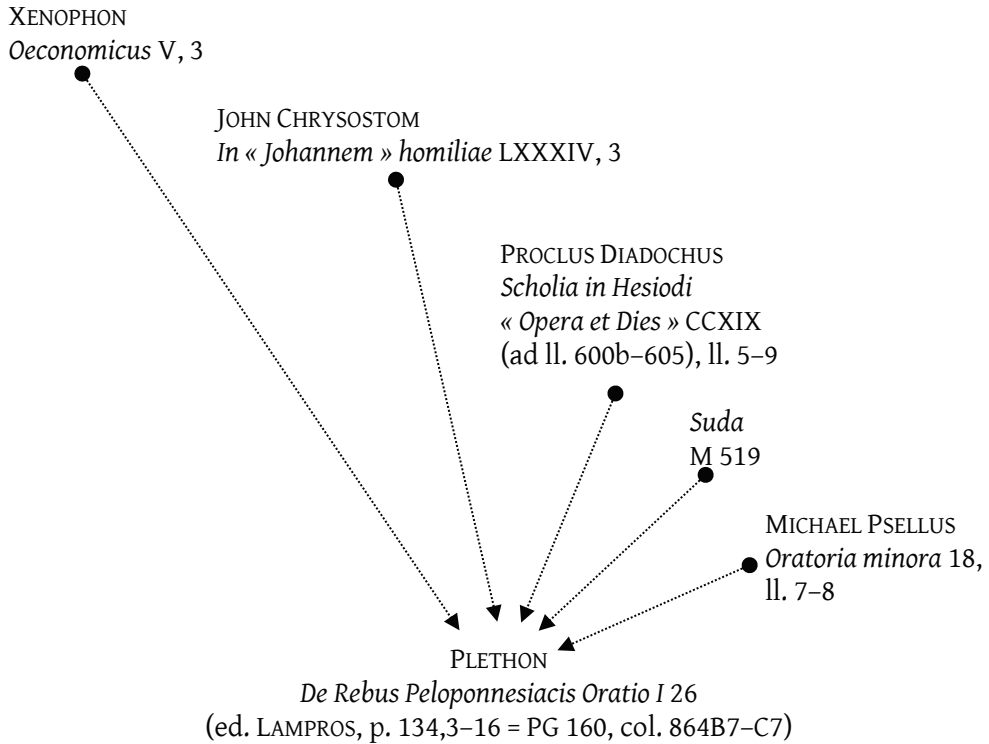
⁹⁰ *Themistii orationes. II*, ed. DOWNEY et al., p. 2,2–19; transl. PENELLA, p. 51–52.

subjects. In Scholarios's view, it was he who embodied the true philosophical author, not Plethon. This distinction, in turn, mirrors the philosophical allegiances of the two Georges: Scholarios championed Aristotle, whom he regarded as a philosopher *stricto sensu*, in contrast to Plato, whom he dismissed as a lover of myths more concerned with stylistic elegance in his writings than with the pursuit of truth.⁹¹

⁹¹ « [...] τὸ δὲ Πλάτωνος ἐπικεχρωσμένον ποιητῇ μάλιστα, ὡς ἂν μὴ λέγω χείρωνι ἐπιτηδεύματι, πρέπον ἔστιν εἰπεῖν » (SCHOLARIOS, *Κατὰ τῶν Πλήθωνος ἀποριῶν ἐπ' Ἀριστοτέλει* I; ed. JUGIE et al., t. IV, p. 8,27–29; cf. op. cit., p. 4,8: « [...] τῆς Πλάτωνος ἐαλωκότης Μούσης [...] »; p. 14,5–7: « Χάριν οὖν Πλάτωνι δικαίαν ὁμολογῶν (sc. Aristotle) τῆς πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν ὁδηγίας, ὅμως τὰ αὐτοῦ τε Πλάτωνος καὶ τῶν ἄλλων οὐκ ἄνευ τῆς προσηκούσης ἐπιστασίας ἐδέξατο, ἀλλ' ἐν τῇ κρίσει τῶν τοιούτων τὴν ἀλήθειαν προεστήσατο [...] »; p. 108,21–26: « [...] Πλάτωνα μὲν εὐρίσκω καθόλου τε καὶ συγκεκριμένως μετιόντα τοὺς λόγους, εἴτε διὰ τὸ ῥητορικὴ φιλοσοφίαν ἐπιχρωννύειν οὕτω δοκοῦντα, εἴτε καὶ δόξαν αὐτῷ βέλτιον εἶναι τῇδε φιλοσοφεῖν Ἀριστοτέλη δὲ διωρισμένως τε καὶ σαφῶς καὶ οἰκείως πάντῃ τοῖς λόγοις χρησάμενον, πρᾶγμα φιλοσόφῳ τε καὶ φιλοσοφίας ἐσομένῳ καθηγεμόνι πρέπον πεποιηκότα »). For Scholarios's view of Plato, cf. DEMETRACOPOULOS, « The Sources of George - Gennadios II Scholarios' *Paraphrasis* of the *Parva Naturalia* », p. 234–236.

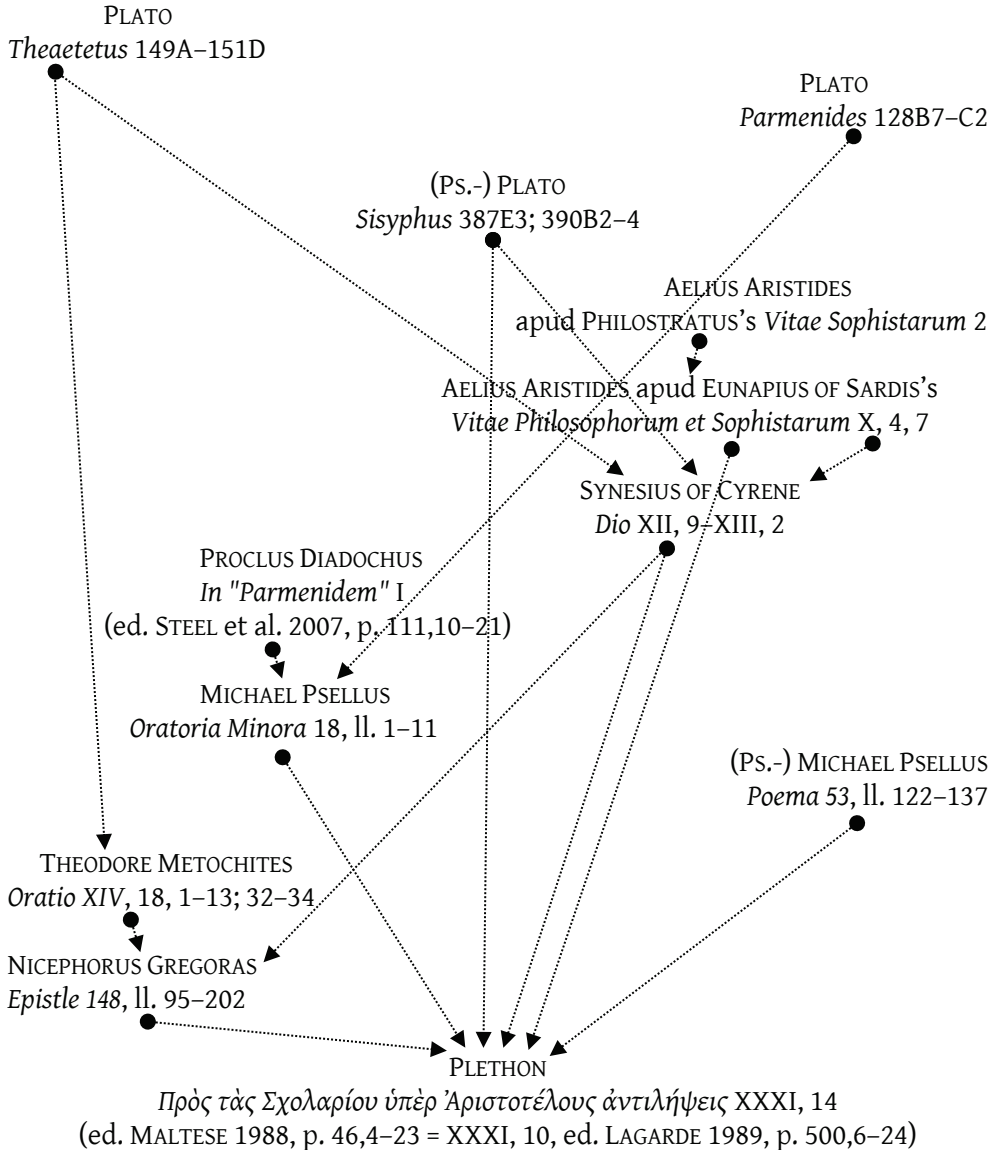
Appendix I

This is a schematic representation of the textual dependences established in Section I concerning Plethon's *De Rebus Peloponnesiacis Oratio I 26*.



Appendix II

This is a stemmatic representation of the cases of dependency established in Section II regarding Plethon's *Πρὸς τὰς Σχολαρίου ὑπὲρ Ἀριστοτέλους ἀντιλήψεις* XXXI, 14, including the interconnections between the ancient Greek and Byzantine texts utilized by Plethon in the composition of his own text.



Appendix III
The short Byzantine aftermath of the Maltese dog simile

Plethon's second use of the Maltese dog simile had a brief afterlife in 15th-century Greek literature on the Plato-Aristotle controversy. This is evident in Andronicus Callistus's (c. 1400–1478) oblique reproduction of the simile in his *Defensio Theodori Gazae adversus Michaellem Apostolium* (Πρὸς τὰς Μιχαήλου Ἀποστόλου κατὰ Θεοδώρου ἀντιλήψεις), written in 1462 (before May 19):

Οὕτω δ' ἦττων ὁ βδελυρὸς [sc. Michael Apostolius] τῆς πρὸς [6] Ἀριστοτέλη [4] τε καὶ Θεόδωρον βασκανίας {5} ἐστίν, ὥστ' ἀπόδειξιν [19] μὲν τοῦ ζητουμένου χάριν [...] οὐδ' ἠντιναοῦν λέγει, καθάπερ {15} δὲ Μελιταῖον [16b] κυνίδιον [16a] ὑλακτῶν [17] οὐ παύεται {2a-c}, δῆξαι μὲν καὶ διασπαράξαι βουλόμενος, οὐ δυνάμενος δὲ «δοξομανεῖς» καὶ «ἀνοήτους» {11} καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα αὐτοὺς ὀνομάζων, αὐτὸς ὦν ὁ τῶν ὄντι δοξομανῆς καὶ ἀναίσθητος {10} [...].⁹²

This abominable man is so much subjected to the passion of malignity against Aristotle and Theodore that he does not construct any demonstration that could contribute to resolving the issue at stake at all, but instead ceaselessly barks like a small Maltese lapdog, wishing to beat them and tear them into pieces, and, because he is unable to do so, calls them «avid for glory», «fools» etc., whereas it is in fact he who is avid for glory and dummy [...].

It is not unreasonable at all to interpret some of the Maltese dogs' barking as a threat. Still, as the detailed diction comparison above – using numbers in brackets and braces (see above, p. 402, n. 11) – demonstrates, Callistus's Maltese dogs simile is derived from Plethon's. This implies that Callistus's application of Plethon's depiction of Scholarios as a Maltese dog to Michael Apostolius represents a misinterpretation of what Plethon had actually meant regarding Scholarios (see above, Section II, § 4).

In fact, this error was derivative. Callistus's opponent, Michael Apostolius, had already appropriated the Plethonic simile. This is evident in the conclusion of his refutation (Πρὸς τὰς ὑπὲρ Ἀριστοτέλους περὶ οὐσίας κατὰ Πλήθωνος Θεοδώρου τοῦ Γαζῆ ἀντιλήψεις) of Theodore Gaza's *Adversus Plethonem de substantia* (Πρὸς Πλήθωνα ὑπὲρ Ἀριστοτέλους), which dates from 1461:

⁹² ANDRONICUS CALLISTUS, *Defensio Theodori Gazae adversus Michaellem Apostolium* XXVII, 2, in LUIGI ORLANDI, *Andronikos Kallistos: a Byzantine Scholar and His Manuscripts in Italian Humanism*, De Gruyter, Berlin – Boston 2023, p. 452,13–19 (previous edition: LUDWIG MOHLER, *Kardinal Bessarion als Theologe, Humanist und Staatsman. Funde und Forschungen*, Band III: *Aus Bessarions Gelehrtenkreis. Abhandlungen, Reden, Briefe von Bessarion, Theodoros Gazes, Michael Apostolios, Andronikos Kallistos, Georgios Trapezuntios, Niccolò Perotti, Niccolò Capranica*, F. Schöningh, Paderborn 1941 [reprint: Scientia, Aalen 1967], p. 202,10–16). The translation is mine. For the date of the writing, see ORLANDI, *Andronikos Kallistos*, p. 32–33; 365.

Ἡμῖν μὲν [12] δὴ ὅσα δυνατὰ ἦν περὶ οὐσίας εἰπεῖν ὑπεραπολογουμένοις τοῦ Πλήθωνος {7} εἴρηται ἱκανὰ καὶ διὰ βραχέων {13 *e contrario*} [...] Ὅσα δέ σοι [1; 2a] ἀπεραντολογοῦντι {13} εἴρηται ἐφεξῆς, οὐδέν τι ἀναγκαῖον οὐδ' ἄξιον λόγου ἀποδεικνύοντι [19], [...] ταῦτα οὐδὲ λόγου τυχεῖν ἠξιώσαμεν, Μελιταίου [16b] κυνιδίου [16a] ὡς {15} ὕλακην [17] λογισάμενοι [18], ἵνα μὴ καὶ αὐτοὶ τὰ αὐτὰ περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν ἀεὶ λέγοντες ἀνόητοι {10} φανῶμεν {9}, ὡς σύ, καὶ ἀπεραντολόγοι {13} τοῖς σώφροσιν {10 *e contrario*}. Ἰκανὰ μέντοι σου καὶ ταῦτα περιτρέψαι τὸ φρόνημα {3}. [...] Εἰ δέ [1] καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἔτι [2b] μενεῖς {3a/c} τῇ ἰδίᾳ συνηγορῶν ἀφροσύνη {10}, ἡμεῖς [8a; 14] [...] δικαίως ἂν σιωπήσομεν {8b/c} [...].⁹³

This is what I was able to say about the 'substance' issue as a defence of Plethon, in a way both sufficient and succinct [...]. As for the remaining things you have said without any measure and without showing anything in a logically cogent way and without saying anything of some import at all [...]. I did not pay any attention to them whatsoever, considering them as barking by some Maltese lapdog, as I wanted to abstain from saying the same things about the same issues and thereby giving the wise men the impression that I am, just like you, foolish and a never-ending babbler. Besides, what I have said suffices to overturn your confidence. [...] However, if it happens that you, even after reading what I have written, keep defending your senselessness, I, for my part, shall quite reasonably remain silent [...].

As is evident, what Apostolius imputes to Gaza by depicting him as a « Maltese dog » is not that he did nothing more than join a discussion on an intellectual agenda set by somebody else (which, of course, is quite true, and even truer than Plethon's depreciation of Scholarios on the same account), but that, unaware of his own intellectual limitations, he dared to attack a giant such as Plethon and, of course, the only thing he managed was to ridicule himself.

That Apostolius's reproduction of Plethon's application of the Maltese dog simile should be seen as an interpretation of the relevant passage from Plethon's writing is corroborated by the fact that, in both Apostolius's and Plethon's writings, the simile occurs in the epilogue. Furthermore, Apostolius's epilogue is, in its entirety and down to certain fine details in diction, an imitation of Plethon's epilogue. Additionally, [5] is common only between Plethon and Callistus, which suggests that the latter had definitely read and adapted the former.

⁹³ MICHAEL APOSTOLIUS, *Ad Theodori Gazae pro Aristotele de substantia adversus Plethonem obiectiones* 7 (ed. MOHLER, Bd. III, p. 169,25–36). That all the items of the set of writings produced by BESSARION (*Πρὸς τὰ Πλήθωνος πρὸς Ἀριστοτέλη περὶ οὐσίας*; ed. MOHLER, Bd. III, p. 149–150), Theodore Gaza, Michael Apostolius, and Andronicus Callistus as a continuation of the Scholarios vs. Plethon quarrel are directly based on the writings of Plethon and Scholarios is evidenced by the fact that the very titles of these polemical works are strikingly close adaptations of the titles of the relevant writings by Plethon and Scholarios.

From the above, the conclusion is clear: neither Apostolius nor Callistus were aware of the sources of Plethon's use of the Maltese lapdog simile, and this is why, in reproducing it, they missed its point. Therefore, knowing that Plethon's « ὕλακαῖς » does not mean barking but howling (see above, p. 422) is important for the additional reason that the earliest interpretations of Plethon's passage misconstrued « ὕλακαῖς » as barking, thereby obscuring its intended moral significance.

REVIEWS

MARIO CASARI, MONICA PRETI, MICHAEL WYATT (EDS.), *ARIOSTO AND THE ARABS: CONTEXTS FOR THE ORLANDO FURIOSO*, I TATTI – OFFICINA LIBRARIA, FIRENZE – ROMA 2022 (I TATTI RESEARCH SERIES, 4), 468 PP., ISBN: 9788833671529.

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Come illustrato nella introduzione firmata dai tre curatori Mario Casari, Monica Preti e Michael Wyatt (« Investigating Landscapes around ‘Ariosto and the Arabs’ », p. 11–22), il volume in esame – frutto di un seminario di studi tenuto a Villa I Tatti nel 2016 e di una conferenza internazionale organizzata l’anno successivo – nasce su stimolo della poesia « Ariosto y los Arabes » di Jorge Luis Borges, componimento attraverso il quale l’*Orlando furioso* è presentato come chiave di passaggio tra la cultura medievale e la modernità, ma anche come strumento di incontro e dialogo in un Mediterraneo inteso come « a political, religious, ethnic, and linguistic melting pot, in which relations between dominant regimes and minorities were in constant flux » (p. 12).

Il volume è suddiviso in quattro sezioni, la prima delle quali è incentrata su « Textual Contexts: Inside the *Furioso* ». Il contributo di apertura di Mario Casari (« Ariosto and Arabic: Notes on an Unaccomplished Contiguity – A Prologue », p. 25–53) muove da un approccio di carattere linguistico e, anticipando gli altri saggi del volume, si pone come riflessione complessiva sul ruolo della lingua araba (o, più correttamente, delle lingue arabe, in virtù della profonda varietà della lingua parlata rispetto all’omogeneità dell’arabo scritto) in tre ambiti: nel testo del *Furioso* – ascendenze arabe si possono infatti riconoscere nell’etimologia dei nomi propri di personaggi e oggetti, ma anche nella trama di episodi come quelli di Astolfo e Iocondo e di Isabella e Rodomonte –, nel contesto in cui opera Ariosto – come testimonia l’interesse per la lingua in circoli umanistici come quello raccolto intorno ad Alberto Pio, nipote di Giovanni Pico e sodale di Ariosto –, e quindi nella ricezione del poema, mai tradotto in arabo, nonostante le affermazioni di alcuni commentatori cinquecenteschi (come Giovan Battista Pigna e Camillo Pellegrino) e il crescente interesse da parte di studiosi internazionali.

Un taglio linguistico caratterizza anche il saggio di Jacopo Gesiot (« Chivalric Plurilingualism as a Motif in Italian Literature: From the Franco-Italian Tradition to Ariosto », p. 55–73), che esamina la presenza e il trattamento del motivo del plurilinguismo nella poesia cavalleresca composta in Italia tra il XIV e il XVI secolo. La poliglossia, già presente come *topos* nella tradizione franco-italiana, acquista

infatti significati diversi nel corso del tempo, generando nel *Morgante* effetti comici legati all'incapacità di comprensione tra cavalieri, e divenendo strumento per contrapporre l'unità alla diversità nell'*Inamoramento de Orlando* e nel *Mambriano*, poemi in cui viene elogiata l'attitudine alla comunicazione dei cristiani rispetto alla *canina eloquentia* dei barbari e dei pagani. Ariosto attinge direttamente a tale doppia tradizione ribaltandone i termini: è la conoscenza delle lingue il motivo scatenante che conduce Orlando alla follia in un poema in cui l'incomprensione, intesa quale cifra di alterità e simbolo di corruzione delle facoltà intellettive, minaccia quasi esclusivamente il mondo occidentale.

Sui circa 140 personaggi saraceni del *Furioso* si sofferma invece Maria Pavlova (« *Orlando Furioso: The Saracen Perspective* », p. 75-97), che riprende alcune linee sviluppate nella sua recente monografia sul tema (*Saracens and Their World in Boiardo and Ariosto*, Cambridge, Legenda 2020). In particolare, Pavlova evidenzia l'approccio originale con cui Ariosto racconta le donne e i cavalieri saraceni in relazione ai temi delle armi e degli amori, ora evidenziandone limiti e difetti, ora invece riaffermando aspetti come la cortesia e la lealtà familiare, valori che ben si adattano anche agli Este, eredi del saraceno Ruggiero; a differenza di Boiardo, infatti, Ariosto non idealizza né mortifica gli antagonisti dei cristiani, bensì li usa « to provide multiple perspectives on issues such as honor, *fides* and love, as well as to probe a number of themes – among which are death, defeat, and betrayal – that are merely hinted at Boiardo's *Inamoramento* but come to the fore in the last third of the *Furioso* » (p. 92).

Alla « Ariosto's Religion » è dedicato il saggio di Stefano Jossa (p. 99-130), che riconosce nel conflitto (storico e letterario) tra cristiani e musulmani uno strumento per affrontare argomenti al centro della coeva riflessione (non solo) religiosa. Dopo aver rimarcato l'importanza del tema, anche alla luce delle acquisizioni della più recente riflessione critica, Jossa analizza tre episodi di preghiera: anzitutto quella che Carlo Magno rivolge a Dio nel canto XIV, episodio che chiama in causa il valore epico-politico, e dunque anche narrativo-strumentale, della religione, ma che permette anche di ragionare sulla dottrina luterana e savonaroliana della giustificazione *sola fide* e sul recente dibattito filosofico che coinvolge personaggi vicini ad Ariosto, come il già ricordato Alberto Pio e Mario Equicola; la seconda preghiera è quella di Medoro alla luna nel canto XVIII, preghiera pagana e non musulmana, intrisa di reminiscenze classiche, che dimostra più punti di contatto con gli scritti cinquecenteschi relativi all'efficacia della magia naturale; e infine l'invocazione che l'innamorata Fiordispina rivolge a Macone nel canto XXV per trasformare Bradamante in un uomo, richiama che, nonostante la sua intrinseca immoralità, viene esaudita tramite l'inganno e la menzogna di Ricciardetto, vicenda che getta una nuova luce sul tema religioso e invita a leggere anche in chiave paradossale l'opposizione tradizionale tra cristiani e pagani.

Dai « Textual Contexts: Inside the *Furioso* », la seconda sezione del volume ci conduce ai « Textual Contexts: Around the *Furioso* », ossia la tradizione testuale esterna al poema ariostesco. Thomas Bauer (« Literary Life in Mamluk Egypt and Syria (1250–1517): A Forgotten Heyday of Arabic Culture », p. 133–152) ricostruisce la ricezione e la circolazione della cultura letteraria in Egitto e in Siria fino al 1517, anno della sconfitta definitiva dei mamelucchi da parte dell'Impero ottomano. Il confronto tra i territori soggetti al sultanato e l'Italia della medesima epoca rivela sorprendenti analogie in merito alla fortuna di una letteratura in 'volgare', al successo di una produzione di genere epico, e al tessuto sociale presso il quale si diffondono tali interessi, quella classe media che si raccoglie nelle moschee, nelle cancellerie e nelle scuole coraniche, luoghi che a partire dal XIII secolo prendono progressivamente il posto delle corti (senza mai sostituirle completamente) quali centri di produzione e diffusione di gusti e tendenze: accanto alla persistenza di una cultura popolare di carattere orale, la circolazione di testi rivolti all'educazione e all'intrattenimento, la creazione di generi letterari di corrispondenza ed elogio, l'ampliamento del mercato librario e la proliferazione di piccole biblioteche pubbliche testimoniano così di strategie di divulgazione e accesso alla cultura non lontane da quelle in atto nell'Europa coeva.

I contatti sono ulteriormente riaffermati da Claudia Ott (« From al-Barqā to Albracca: *Orlando Furioso* and the World of the *Arabian Nights* », p. 153–168), che individua nella cornice della raccolta medievale di novellistica araba intitolata *Cento e una notte* una fonte per la novella ariostesca di Astolfo e Iocondo. Se il modo in cui Ariosto possa essere venuto a conoscenza della silloge è ancora da dimostrare, il recente ritrovamento del più antico manoscritto di area andalusa del novelliere, databile al 1234/1235 e oggi conservato presso l'Aga Khan Museum di Toronto, permette a Ott di avanzare una proposta suggestiva: l'ipotesi, cioè, che la città che Ariosto (ma già Boiardo) chiama Albracca sia modellata sulla remotissima al-Barqā, città di un racconto delle *Cento e una notte*, indicata però con tale nome soltanto nel codice di Toronto.

Ulteriori indagini andranno condotte, non solamente su Ariosto, ma appunto anche su Boiardo e più in generale sull'ambiente ferrarese tra Quattro e Cinquecento, ambiente in cui circolava non solo la cultura araba, ma anche quella ebraica, come ricostruisce Fabrizio Lelli (« Jews and Judaism in Ariosto's Literary Production », p. 169–194): fin dal ducato di Ercole I d'Este, infatti, si assiste a un notevole incremento del numero di ebrei che si trasferiscono a Ferrara, che raggiungono la quota di circa duemila individui su una popolazione complessiva di oltre trentamila persone. Di conseguenza, « like many Christians, Ariosto probably saw them as neighbors, not as strangers or infidels » (p. 187). Lo testimoniano opere come *La Lena* (peraltro tradotta e riadattata in ebraico da Leone de' Sommi), in cui vengono ricordati i tre principali banchi di pegni ferraresi

gestiti da ebrei, e *Il negromante*, il cui protagonista è esemplato sul modello rinascimentale dell'ebreo esperto di sapienza arcana (come ad esempio Leone Ebreo), un tipo di conoscenza verso la quale Ariosto nutre un discreto interesse, come testimoniano ancora i suoi *Carmina* e il *Furioso*.

Dalla Spagna araba e giudaica, il contributo che conclude la sezione, quello di Vincent Barletta (« 'A un giovane Aphrican si donò in tutto': The Marriage of Africa and India in Ariosto and Camões », p. 195–212), ci conduce invece nel Portogallo di Luís de Camões, per osservare la distanza che intercorre tra la descrizione fisica di personaggi provenienti dall'Africa e dall'Asia nel *Furioso* (in cui, ad esempio, Medoro e Angelica sono entrambi rappresentati come giovani dalla pelle candida) e la rappresentazione della bellezza di una schiava nera nel poema *Aquela cativa* di Camões.

La terza sezione del volume è dedicata a « Geographical and Visual Contexts », cioè alla percezione del mondo (non solo) arabo diffusa in Italia nell'età di Ariosto, tanto da un punto di vista di conoscenze, quanto da un punto di vista di rappresentazione. In questo contesto, Giovanni Ricci (« 'Popul la più parte circonciso': Ariosto in Ferrara and the Muslim World of His Time », p. 215–231) riflette sulla presenza di mercanti e schiavi musulmani a Ferrara, e sulla circolazione di notizie circa i casi di conversione (dall'Islam al Cristianesimo e viceversa), le lotte tra cristiani e turchi, e la figura di Maometto, riconoscendo alcune linee di affinità tra quell'immaginario e il modo in cui tali temi vengono affrontati nel poema di Ariosto, il quale appare così come « a tangential intermediary with the contemporary Muslim » (p. 223).

Massimo Rossi (« Ariosto, the Arabs, and the Geo-cartographic Culture of the Este Court », p. 233–263) guarda invece agli interessi geografici di Ariosto, confluiti nelle descrizioni, visionarie e allo stesso tempo concretissime, dei viaggi sull'ippogrifo di Ruggiero e Astolfo. Tale *curiositas* era stimolata dalla considerevole presenza di mappamondi, opere di geografia e mappe presso la corte degli Este, tra le prime ad essere informate dei viaggi di Cristoforo Colombo e Amerigo Vespucci, nonché dalla diffusione di una solida cultura cartografica che, a Ferrara come in altre realtà italiane (a partire da Venezia), affondava le proprie radici nella tradizione delle carte nautiche e nella lettura della *Geographia* di Tolomeo.

A stimolare la fantasia di Ariosto non sono però soltanto persone, notizie e documenti provenienti dal mondo orientale, ma anche quei prodotti, come libri e oggetti d'arte, che trovano diffusione e apprezzamento sul mercato italiano: su « The Middle Eastern Intellectual and Artistic Context at the Time of Ariosto » si sofferma Anna Contadini (p. 265–311) in un contributo ricco di immagini – ma quasi ogni saggio è accompagnato da un considerevole apparato iconografico – che permettono di avere un'idea più precisa dell'alta qualità di tale produzione

culturale e materiale. Prendendo in considerazione fonti documentarie diverse, dai ritratti di Gentile Bellini alle medaglie di personaggi illustri, dagli *Elogia* di Paolo Giovio ad artefatti in tessuto e metallo, Contadini ricostruisce la circolazione in Italia della cultura mediorientale, per poi soffermarsi sui manoscritti, analizzati tanto dal punto di vista dei contenuti, veicolati e resi disponibili anche dalle traduzioni umanistiche, quanto dal punto di vista materiale, con attenzione per le rilegature che recano traccia di motivi ornamentali di gusto orientale, motivi poi diffusi anche attraverso i libri di ricamo.

Ma se l'arte orientale può influenzare l'immaginario ariostesco, lo stesso *Furioso* diventa strumento di creazione di nuove immagini ed iconografie, come illustra Vincenzo Farinella (« Images of Rodomonte: The Ambiguous Allure of the Enemy in the *Furioso* and in the Ariostan Figurative Tradition », p. 313–340) a partire dalla figura del nemico per eccellenza, il pagano Rodomonte. Ripercorrere le vicende e la caratterizzazione del re di Sarza nell'*Inamoramento de Orlando* e nell'*Orlando furioso* permette di osservare che il poema ariostesco rivela « a patent fascination with a character who seems to synthesize the defects and merits of the great antiheroes of literature » (p. 320), una fascinazione che porta Farinella ad avanzare l'ipotesi di riconoscere in Rodomonte un omaggio al sultano ottomano Selīm I, e quindi a cercare tracce del medesimo interesse nell'iconografia del guerriero pagano attraverso affreschi, incisioni, xilografie delle edizioni cinquecentesche del poema e più recenti illustrazioni. Se la ricerca di possibili referenti reali dietro i personaggi ariosteschi è un esercizio non sempre produttivo, la ricostruzione del modo in cui vengono raffigurati donne e cavalieri del *Furioso* si rivela operazione molto convincente, che andrebbe applicata sistematicamente a tutti i protagonisti del poema, prendendo in considerazione anche il valore simbolico e allegorico attribuito a tali figure tra Cinque e Seicento.

Su un episodio di tale forma di ricezione richiama l'attenzione Monica Preti (« Intercultural Threads in the Figurative Legacy of the *Orlando Furioso*: Two Ariostan Plates of Otto Vaenius on the Chastity and Indecency of Women », p. 341–377), che analizza due incisioni poco note e senza data dell'artista fiammingo Otto van Veen (o Vaenius) intitolate *Vero essemplio d'impudicitia cavato da M. L. Ariosto* (che riproduce la novella di Iocondo e Astolfo del canto XXVIII) e *Vero essemplio di castità cavato da M. L. Ariosto* (che raffigura l'episodio di Isabella e Rodomonte nel canto XXIX). Le due vicende romanzesche acquistano dunque valore morale, coerentemente con le letture allegoriche fornite nei paratesti delle edizioni del *Furioso*, ma anche con la pubblicazione in forma autonoma di altre novelle ariostesche (ne è un esempio la traduzione inglese delle novelle del canto XLIII pubblicata da Robert Tofte a Londra nel 1597 con il titolo *Two tales, translated out of Ariosto: the one in dispraise of men, the other in disgrace of women*); diversa è invece l'iconografia delle scene, che si discosta da quella delle incisioni che illustrano il poema o i suoi *excerpta*: è il caso della stampina popolare che nel XVI secolo circola

con il titolo di *Historia del re di Pavia*, che altro non è che la novella di Iocondo e Astolfo pubblicata in forma autonoma ed anonima, testo di grande successo anche oltralpe se è corretta la sua identificazione come una delle fonti di ispirazione per la traduzione inglese del *Furioso* realizzata da John Harington nel 1591 (in proposito cfr. Luca Degl’Innocenti, « Reading the Poem ‘in the Very Picture’: New Evidence on Harington’s Original Sin », in Jane Everson, Andrew Hiscock, Stefano Jossa (eds.), *Ariosto, the Orlando furioso and English Culture*, Oxford University Press for the British Academy, Oxford, p. 50–68). La caratterizzazione delle figure e la disposizione delle scene sembrano piuttosto evocare un primo interesse da parte di Vaenius per quegli emblemi che sarebbero poi diventati centrali nelle sue principali raccolte di incisioni, emblemi incentrati su temi oraziani e amorosi, ossia argomenti molto presenti nel *Furioso*.

L’ultima sezione del volume è dedicata ai « Performative Contexts » nel Mediterraneo tra Medioevo ed età moderna, e si apre con uno studio di Dwight F. Reynolds (« And of These Things a Dream was left behind called ‘Antar’: Arabic Performance Traditions of Heroic Poetry », p. 381–399) incentrato sui racconti eroici di origine araba: in particolare, viene ricostruita l’evoluzione di un genere che, dopo i primi esempi di prosimetro, acquista nell’XI secolo i caratteri di una vera e propria narrativa epica popolare definita *sīra*, che si presenta sotto forma di componimenti improvvisati e di opere recitate a partire da una versione scritta, secondo una modalità di circolazione che caratterizza anche i cantari di argomento cavalleresco.

Al mondo bizantino guardano invece Adam J. Goldwyn e Przemysław T. Marciniak (« Performing the Medieval Greek Romance from *Digenis Akritis* to the *Erotokritos* », p. 401–424), che discutono le caratteristiche, e i riferimenti alla dimensione performativa, delle principali tipologie narrative della Grecia medievale: i racconti dell’età dei Comneni, modellati sulla letteratura greca classica e caratterizzati da un forte realismo, e i romanzi dell’età dei Palaiologi, dominati da prospettive più fiabesche ed esemplati sulla narrativa occidentale.

Completa quindi la sezione, offrendo una più generale conclusione all’intero volume, il saggio di Michael Wyatt (« *Trobar, Cantar, Recitar*: Performative Poetics across the Middle Sea – An Epilogue », p. 425–452): al centro dell’analisi è la relazione tra oralità e materialità, tra recitazione e scrittura, in una parabola che va dalla poesia trobadorica e dalla poesia delle corti andaluse dell’XI e del XII secolo, ai cantari e ai poemi di Boiardo e Ariosto, fino all’opera dei pupi dei nostri giorni (argomento, quest’ultimo, per il quale si potrebbe rinviare anche allo studio di Anna Carocci, *Il poema che cammina. La letteratura cavalleresca nell’opera dei pupi*, Museo Pasqualino, Palermo, 2019). In un percorso, fatto di voci e parole, che dalla Francia medievale conduce alla Sicilia contemporanea attraversando le corti spagnole e italiane, Wyatt riassume il senso di un volume che si presenta esso

stesso come un affascinante viaggio tra le immagini, i suoni, gli oggetti, i personaggi, le lingue, le culture e le sensibilità di un Mediterraneo caratterizzato dalla *varietas* e dalla continua ricerca di radici e identità, proprio come l'*Orlando furioso* e i suoi personaggi.

DANIEL DE SMET, *LES FATIMIDES. DE L'ESOTERISME EN ISLAM*, CERF, PARIS 2022, (ISLAM. NOUVELLES APPROCHES), 265 PP., ISBN: 9782204151535.

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In recent decades, our knowledge of the political and religious history of the Fatimid Caliphate has increased considerably, thanks to fundamental works by authors such as Wilferd Madelung, Farhad Daftary, Michael Brett, Paul Walker, Shainool Jiwa and other important scholars who are part of the praiseworthy Institute of Ismaili Studies in London. *Les Fatimides. De l'ésotérisme en Islam* by Daniel De Smet, on the one hand, is placed within the framework of this new flowering of studies on the Fatimids; on the other hand, it presents itself as a splendid novelty, both in terms of content and methodology. The book collects and reworks a series of essays by the author – one of the greatest contemporary authorities on Ismaili thought – on Fatimid themes with a very precise common thread, which primarily concerns the field of philosophical-religious thought but at the same time touches on strictly historical-political topics, helping to clarify many historiographical enigmas and providing new keys to understanding the phenomenon of Ismailism in power.

Les Fatimides. De l'ésotérisme en Islam includes an introduction (p. 11–30), a rich bibliography (p. 221–248), a list of Ismaili imams and Fatimid caliphs (p. 249–250), an *index nominum* (p. 251–258) and an index of Arabic terms (p. 259–262). The book is structured into eleven chapters (p. 31–219), guiding the reader through the doctrinal and political history of an Islamic state ruled by an *elite* of initiates. It places particular emphasis on seemingly marginal topics – such as semi-legendary traditions, ceremonies, festivals, cult of relics, food customs, and both ancient and modern myths – which, nevertheless, provide new perspectives on fundamental issues. These include the relations between Shiites and Sunnis in the Fatimid Caliphate, the importance of Druze documentation in understanding the most problematic aspects of Ismaili philosophical-religious thought, and the exchange between the Ismaili and Druze intellectual elites and the medieval, modern, and contemporary West.

In the introduction, the author outlines a brief history of the Ismaili phenomenon from both a historical-political and a philosophical-religious point of view. He clearly and distinctly highlights the controversial points of the

tradition – such as the issue of the so-called ‘*taqiyya* of names’, the split between Ismailis and Qarmatians, the Druze revolt – at the origin of the ‘imbroglio’ connected to the formation of the Fatimid dynasty.

The first chapter of the work (p. 31–51) focuses on the question of Ismaili Shiite propaganda in Fatimid Egypt, pointing out the root of what Henry Corbin calls the «drama of the Fatimids» – that is, the need to make an esoteric community compatible with the official organization of a state. In particular, De Smet analyzes the various forms of Ismaili preaching (from exoteric preaching to the various levels of esoteric preaching), the problem of *taqiyya*, and the complex relations between the Ismaili elite and the Sunni substratum of Egypt.

Chapters two (p. 53–63) and three (p. 65–77) are dedicated to festivals and games, used by the Fatimid caliphs as an instrument of propaganda and a vehicle of consensus. In this regard, De Smet highlights the different role of specifically Shiite festivals (‘*Āshūrā*’, the feast of Ghadīr Khumm) compared to festivals that involve the whole *umma*, such as the feast of the Prophet’s birth (*Mawlid*), which, although originally from the Shiite tradition, over time became one of the most important Egyptian festivals even for Sunnis. In addition, the author dwells on the role of games (also destined to great fortune in the post-Fatimid epoch), whose ideological function, in the Fatimid context, is to tacitly encourage transgression of Prophetic law (which calls for avoiding frivolity) and to promote the typically Ismaili concept of the divinity of futile things.

Chapter four (p. 80–94) deals with the apparently specious but, in reality, fundamental problem of calculating the beginning and end of the fast during the month of Ramaḍān. Following the events related to the imposition of the Ismaili calculation (the Sunni tradition was based on simple observation), De Smet shows, on the one hand, how the Fatimid intellectual elite perceived the Ismaili method as being linked to Greek wisdom and a rational worldview, and on the other hand, how the oscillation between tolerance and imposition of the Ismaili method reflects the various attitudes of the Fatimid caliphs towards their Sunni subjects.

The fifth (p. 95–113) and sixth chapters (p. 115–129) contain a very interesting analysis of the complex of traditions concerning the most important ‘relics’ of the Islamic world: the corpse of the prophet Muḥammad and the head of Ḥusayn ibn ‘Alī, the famous Shiite martyr of the battle of Karbalā’. Using archaeological, epigraphic, hagiographic, and historical sources, the author highlights the political use of the relics (especially in an anti-Abbasid function) implemented by the Fatimid elite, and in particular by the caliph al-Ḥakim, the most enigmatic and interesting caliph of the dynasty, to whom we also owe some mysterious food prohibitions discussed in the seventh chapter of De Smet’s book (p. 131–150). The author considers these dietary rules as part of an Ismaili ‘messianic’ program based on food taboos of Pythagorean and Neoplatonic origin.

The eighth chapter (p. 151–168) and the ninth chapter (p. 169–187) are dedicated to topics concerning the Druze cult. In particular, the eighth chapter, starting from the question of the various places of worship of the sect, examines in a broad and detailed way some fundamental characteristics of the Druze rites, highlighting the close relations between Druze and Ismaili doctrines, while the following chapter deconstructs the belief, very widespread in the academic field, of a supposed Druze cult of the Golden Calf.

The last two chapters of the book (chapter ten, p. 189–203, chapter eleven, p. 205–219) respectively address the idea, initially widespread in the West and then transplanted in the Druze world, of a supposed Druze origin of European Freemasonry – where esoteric motifs are combined with elements of colonial propaganda – and the famous ‘theory of the three impostors’, which the author masterfully traces back to anti-Ismaili pamphlets composed within the Sunni sphere.

Even the simple summary of the contents of De Smet’s book highlights the breadth and variety of the topics covered, the sophistication of its analysis and the usefulness of this kind of work, positioned at the intersection of history, philology and philosophy. An innovative and unique book, destined to become a classic of the Ismaili and Fatimid studies.

RICHARD L. KAGAN, *THE INQUISITION'S INQUISITOR. HENRY CHARLES LEA OF PHILADELPHIA*, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA PRESS, PHILADELPHIA 2025, VIII, 364 PP., ISBN 9781512825985 (HARDCOVER), 9781512825992 (EBOOK).

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Most scholarly books have short shelf lives, extending from their publication only for a decade or even less before being replaced by new research and methodologies. Some of the great historical contributions of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – Ranke, Michelet and others – are read today as historiographical or methodological landmarks in the discipline's evolution but not for what they tell us about past historical periods. Others, as is the case of Gibbon's great eighteenth-century work about Rome's decline, are read because of their rhetorical clarity. A gifted few, as with Jacob Burckhardt's celebrated work on the Renaissance in Italy or Max Weber's fundamental studies about the sociology of the past, endure and inspire further work to this day. Henry C. Lea's works, certainly those on the Medieval inquisition and on the inquisition in Spain, endure as well.

They endure, as Richard L. Kagan's magisterial study of Lea shows in this striking monograph, but not without criticism, and charges of faults and bias. Commenting on Lea's *History of the Inquisition in Spain*, completed in the first decade of the twentieth century when Lea was in his 80s, Kagan writes « Virtually all the research and writing about the history of the Spanish Inquisition since the publication of Lea's book is best seen as a gloss on this foundational work... » (p. 274–275). In his insightful concluding chapter to *The Inquisition's Inquisitor*, Kagan, one of the most consequential scholars of early modern Iberia, traces the scholarly legacies and genealogical lines of whole generation of historians who were either inspired by or who engaged with Lea's works in the United States and in Europe as the foundation for their own research. These historians – Ullmann, Haskins, Maitland, Norton, Baer, Beinart, Kamen, Kagan himself, R.I. Moore, Nirenberg, and many others – have had a profound impact on all the medievalists and early modern scholars of my generation. They were and are, as Kagan describes it, often the carriers of Lea's enormous legacy and of research, whether dissenting or agreeing, in a continuous conversation with Lea's works.

How then to tackle a book covering the life of such a towering and complex figure? How to assess Kagan's superb skills in crafting this work? I called it work because, although purportedly a biography, *The Inquisition's Inquisitor* is also a great deal more. Lea led a remarkable life, one that may be impossible to replicate in this fragmented world in which we live today. Scholars nowadays are, with just a few exceptions, fully committed to their discipline: to teach it, to write about it. We are all increasingly professionalized. Lea was what we may call today a part-time historian. As important as his passion for history was and the almost incomprehensible, sheer volume of his scholarly work, he fully lived other lives. His main dedication for more than six decades was to his publishing business. He was also deeply involved in Philadelphia politics and a major philanthropist. He was an exemplary family man.

In Kagan's depiction, Lea was a man of the world, investing wisely in the booming Philadelphia urban real estate market. His earnings and financial wealth subsidized his scholarship. Elected president of the American Historical Association, a contributor to the first issue of the *American Historical Review*, his scholarship was fully recognized by his contemporaries, as Ivy League universities bestowed him with honorary degrees in recognition of his contributions to history. He also collected Italian early modern prints, later donated by his son to anchor an important art venue in Philadelphia. Each of these pursuits could make for a separate book, revealing aspects of his life that would have made him an important historical figure even if he had not ever written a word. But he did write and published many words.

Born in Philadelphia in 1823 and dying there in 1909, he was an intellectual child of the Enlightenment, intellectually connected through his family (the Leas and the Careys) to Benjamin Franklin's influence. With a Quaker paternal inheritance and a Catholic mother, he came from what Kagan describes as a « 'mixed' or interfaith marriage » (p. 11). As an adult, Lea joined the Unitarian Church because he was a man committed to freedom of religion and against rituals and miracles. He loathed fanaticism and what he saw as the nefarious relationship between the Inquisition's harsh disciplinary policies, the Catholic Church, and papal theocracy. His commitment to freedom of belief shaped his research and writing, often drawing criticism from Catholic historians and accusations of bias against the Church, even though in his youth he had defended Catholic Churches in the city from the attacks of 'nativists' who saw Irish Catholic immigrants as a threat, attacks that eerily evoke the intolerance of twenty-first century America.

Through Lea, in Kagan's rendering, we can follow the evolution of a recently nascent United States, and the transformation of Philadelphia from the early nineteenth century through the Civil War and the beginning of the Gilded Age. Lea was an active participant in this evolution as a proud and active citizen, and as a successful businessman. The Lea Brothers publishing house (it went through

several iterations of the name) enjoyed great success as one of the main sources for medical text in the United States. Henry C. Lea's life was mainly a dutiful dedication to the family business. The writing of history was his calling, his compensation for those duties, and fun.

The city's expansive urban development, new health policies, founding of erudite societies, museums, and centers of learning, and contentious politics serve as a context for his long and productive life. They were also the focus of Lea's substantial philanthropic gifts. Kagan adroitly subtitled his book *Henry Charles Lea of Philadelphia* because *The Inquisition's Inquisitor* is also an intimate look at the city and its symbiotic ties to Lea's career. Except for a trip to France and England very early in his life, and summer visits to the New Jersey shore, the entirety of Lea's life was in the city, close to his workplace and to his beloved library. What an extraordinary life! At six years old, an age in which most of us are barely reading, he kept a diary and was learning French. In fact, his linguistic skills were formidable, serving as a gateway to his research into medieval and early modern archival material. At the age of 16, he translated works from the Classics and began his early publications on conchology and mollusks. Science's loss was history's gain. He also wrote poetry, and one must be grateful that it was not very good, turning him to his long love for history. In his eighties when many of us are 'rusting out', he completed a major multi-volume work on the Inquisition in Spain and began another major project on witchcraft. As with his history books, he was not too keen on criticism of his conchology or poetry. And he could be stubborn. When his family forbade his marriage to his cousin Anne, he waited until his family relented and was rewarded by a long and seemingly happy conjugal life. As Kagan describes it, Lea wished to « wear out rather than to rust out ». His was an example of a highly ordered life aimed at never 'rusting out': work in the morning, exercise, afternoons and evenings dedicated to research and historical scholarship. It was a search for truth to be found in the documents, the 'facts'; it was not work but for him clearly a pleasure.

If Lea was an extraordinary man, he has found in Richard Kagan an extraordinary narrator and interpreter of his life and scholarly work. Not a hagiographical rendering, *The Inquisition's Inquisitor* follows faithfully Lea's emphasis on primary sources. Kagan has mined every possible available piece of evidence. From documenting his family (Leas and Careys) and their influence on the intellectual development of young Henry to describing the politics of Philadelphia, his correspondence, and many other aspects, Kagan has provided us with as accurate a portrait of Lea's life and work as the sources would permit. In placing different facets of Lea's career within expansive contexts, Kagan presents a complex and nuanced assessment of Lea's intellectual and disciplinary trajectory.

Combining the chronological arc of Lea's life with a thematic 'thick description' of his work, Kagan presents us with a complex portrait of the making of an inquisition's historian. Later chapters in *The Inquisition's Inquisitor* focus on Lea's earlier publications on clerical celibacy, the ordeal, superstition, and what he called «sacerdotalism» – a sweeping term condemning the Church's accumulation of wealth and power and its resistance to reform. Although his life as a historian began with an interest on Hugh Capet, it soon turned to the history of religious intolerance. Kagan asks what led him to the Inquisition's history beginning with his monumental *A History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages* followed by the even more impressive *A History of the Inquisition in Spain*. As noted earlier, the answer is to be found in Kagan's early discussion of Lea's religious tolerance and Unitarian beliefs. Cruelty and hatred, which he identified with the Inquisition, had no place in his life. In truth, to summarize Kagan's detailed reconstruction of Lea's intellectual trajectory and Lea's attachment and life-long dedication to what he described as «my first love, the Inquisition», would require far more pages than are proper in a review. Here I turn to two central themes in Kagan's book: 1) Kagan's incisive (but always respectful and fair) assessment of the scholarly values, historical impact, and faults of Lea's books on the Inquisition; 2) the way in which Lea carried on his work without ever visiting the archives or disrupting (except from health reasons) his many activities as a businessman and as a political activist.

Besides a mastery of the documentary evidence for Lea's life and context, Kagan has undertaken exhaustive research of Lea's correspondence and other sources – exploring the scholarly response to Lea's work on the Inquisition by his contemporaries and later scholarship. In writing his study of Lea Kagan, who is intimately familiar with the Inquisition's documentation and historiography, above all in Spain, engages thoroughly with contemporary and later critique and praise for the books on the Inquisition. Voicing his own reservations as well as agreements with Lea's interpretations and evidentiary choices, Kagan notes throughout his work Lea's emphasis (following Ranke) on 'facts' to tell the story (p. 167 et al). Overwhelming factual evidence would yield, Lea argued, some semblance of truth and contribute (in a rather utopian fashion) to ethical rewards. True history as a cure for the ills of the world! What a concept!

Kagan seconds critics and provides examples of Lea's 'cherry picking' of the evidence to buttress his depiction of the Inquisition. He also notes Lea's 'bias' against the Catholic Church and papal theocracy. Choosing from the immense quantity (still daunting today) of inquisitorial documents, Lea tended to choose those documents that helped him make his point and to present the Church and the Inquisition as 'a force for evil' in a period, the Middle Ages, which for him, as Kagan argues, were darker than dark. Most of all, the Church's intolerance, «cruelty, and hatred» (p. 131–135) were impediments to human progress. Lea

embraced Comte's ideas about the progress of society, as such views resonated with his own political life, philanthropic deeds, and deep-set belief in education and the power of history to map the road to progress.

To me, one of the most fascinating discussions in this book was Kagan's extensive reconstruction and analysis of Lea's research and writing. Most historians, medievalists at the forefront of this trend, have long placed a great deal of importance on the archive, on the unique tactile experience of being part of the past by working on that are hundreds of years old. Beyond often asserting that this was the only way to do history correctly, it sent many of us to Europe as a reward for our dutifulness. Lea never went to the archives; instead, the archives came to him. Also, and this is important, he had the wealth to pay a whole host of European assistants in Europe. Today's reality is closer, I think, to Lea than to the generation of historians coming now to the end of our careers. I could have written my dissertation today without ever leaving my study. All the documents that I saw in the archives decades ago have now been published or digitalized. And then there was the agony of rolls and rolls of documents in microfilms which were very hard to read (for me at least).

Lea's path was different. Dependent on the good will of archivists and on a wide group of helpers and young scholars who identified important documents, made abstracts or copied them, Lea gathered a remarkable trove of primary sources: the 'facts' for his great works. Kagan leads us to the Bodleian Library, to Paris's National Archives, to Alcalá, Munich, and other places that loaned Lea important samples of their manuscripts on the Inquisition. This is hard to imagine today. Kagan also provides a plethora of information on the agents and collaborators without whom Lea's work would have not been possible, including brief biographies of all those who partook in the great task of lending, copying, and abstracting the past for Lea's benefit, as he sat in Philadelphia hard at work in the hours after his businessman duties were done. Kagan gives special attention to Ignacio Hernández Figueroa, Lea's go-between in Madrid, whose wise advice and labor was essential for Lea's work on the Inquisition in Spain.

This is as engaging and as thorough a biography as I have ever read. It has taught me many things I did not know about Lea, his context, and those who helped and collaborated with him. It is also a very pleasurable and engaging read. Kagan's capacious gaze uses Lea's writings on the Inquisition as the centerpiece of his research and writing, but it also deploys its protagonist as a lens to illustrate Philadelphia and American life from its early decades as a republic to the beginnings of its hegemony in a wider world. Above all, what shines through despite the critical assessment of Lea's contributions is Kagan's admiration, albeit his criticism, for Lea's enduring commitment to 'truth'. In felicitous concluding sentences, describing Lea's « long search for a vocational niche that would enable

him to 'be known and to be handed down to posterity as one of the leading spirits of the age'» (p. 296). Kagan writes:

With a gentle push from Clio, the muse of history, Lea eventually found that niche, only to struggle, and not always successfully, to balance an inherited insistence on the importance of Baconian-style 'scientific' objectivity with his own deeply internalized conviction that history should be used as a vehicle to teach moral lessons and convey ethical concerns. Finding such a balance is a challenge that historians of every age regularly confront, and for this reason Lea deserves our admiration for his repeated and remarkably learned attempts to get it right. (p. 296)

What more may one wish for as a historian and, more importantly, as a human being but to get it 'right'. Although we may not always agree with Lea's notions of right, he was indefatigably committed to his ideal of history and human progress. By this and any other standard, Richard Kagan also deserves our unreserved admiration and gratitude for his heroic and persevering work on this and many other books throughout his stellar life as a scholar. By 'getting it right', he has gifted us and those who come after us with a remarkable, enduring, and profound scholarly triumph.

ALFARABI, *BOOK OF LETTERS* (KITĀB AL-ḤURŪF), ENGLISH TRANSLATION WITH INTRODUCTION, INTERPRETIVE ESSAY, AND ANNOTATIONS, PLUS MUHSIN MAHDI'S REVISED EDITION OF THE ARABIC TEXT BY CHARLES E. BUTTERWORTH, FOREWORD BY HAMZA YUSUF, ZAYTOUNA COLLEGE, BERKELEY, CA 2024 (THE ZAYTUNA CURRICULUM SERIES), 576 PP., ISBN: 9781733836340.

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In his autobiography, Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā, d. 1037) confesses that he struggled to understand Aristotle's *Metaphysics* until he bought « Abū Naṣr al-Fārābī's Book (*kitāb*) on the Objects of the Metaphysics » in the booksellers' quarter of Bukhara. He read Alfarabi's text « and the objects of this book became clear to *him* », leading to his comprehension of metaphysics.¹

There are at least two possible works that Avicenna might have read. Butterworth thinks – and he has good arguments to believe so – that Alfarabi's succinct *Treatise* (*maqāla*) on the Purposes of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* was this book.² On the other hand, William Gohlman, the editor and English translator of Avicenna's autobiography, suggests in a footnote: « There is more likelihood of its being the recently [1968] discovered *Kitāb al-ḥurūf*, edited by Muhsin Mahdi as Alfarabi's *Book of Letters* » (p. 122, n. 30).³

¹ *The Life of Ibn Sīnā. A Critical Edition and Annotated Translation*, ed. WILLIAM E. GOHLMAN, SUNY, Albany, NY 1974, p. 34 (Arabic), p. 35 (English).

² CHARLES E. BUTTERWORTH, « Farabi's Purposes of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* and Avicenna's 'Eastern' Philosophy », in ALI GHEISSARI, JOHN WALLBRIDGE, AHMED ALWISHAH (eds.), *Illuminationist Texts and Textual Studies: Essays in Memory of Hussein Ziai*, Brill, Leiden 2018, p. 365–389.

³ Here is Gohlman's full quotation: « There are two extant works by al-Fārabi which could be the book Ibn Sīnā bought. The first of these, 'On the Objects of the Philosopher (*al-ḥakīm*) in Each Section of the Book Marked by Letters, Being a Determination of the Object of Aristotle in the *Metaphysics*', was edited by Friedrich Dieterici, *Alfarābī's Philosophische Abhandlungen* (Brill, Leiden 1890), p. 34–38. However, this work is little more than a table of contents of the *Metaphysics* and would hardly be the book which so profoundly impressed Ibn Sina. There is more likelihood of its being the recently discovered *Kitāb al-ḥurūf*, ed. by Muhsin Mahdi as Alfarabi's *Book of Letters* (Dar el-Machreq, Beirut 1969). This is a much longer work – over 160 pages in the edition – in which al-Farabi analyzes the *Metaphysics* in some detail » (*The Life of Ibn Sīnā*, ed. GOHLMAN p. 122, fn. 30).

Upon reading the *Book of Letters*, I am inclined to agree with Gohlman's intuition. Although Mahdi's edition has been available for over half a century, the lack of an English translation and a thorough study – such as the one undertaken by Butterworth – has contributed to the *Kitāb al-hurūf* being overshadowed by Alfarabi's more wide-ranging writings, such as the *Book of the Opinions of the Inhabitants of the Virtuous City*, which are clear examples of Neoplatonic political philosophy.

The *Book of Letters* is divided into three sections, which are to some extent independent treatises. Butterworth has translated their headings as «The Particles and the Names of the Categories», «The Origin of Utterances, Philosophy, and Religion», and «Interrogative Particles». It is possible that Avicenna's discovery referred only to the first section. Butterworth's translation is accompanied by an interpretive essay in which he addresses the difficulties of bringing the three sections together.

Mahdi's first and only edition, which is still valid, was based solely on a manuscript from the Central Library of the University of Tehran, but he found two other manuscripts, one from the Baku Institute of Manuscripts and the other from the Ayatollah Mar'ashi Library in Qom, and he prepared a new edition, which Butterworth has printed posthumously in this volume. In contrast to the Qom manuscript, the Tehran and Baku manuscripts usually have common readings. In very few cases, the three manuscripts differ – for instance, in paragraph 251. There, the Qom manuscript reads *al-khissa* ('vileness'), Baku, *juththa* ('corpse'), and Tehran, *al-hissiyah?* (maybe 'sensitive'). There is no doubt that *al-khissa* is the correct reading, which was adopted by Mahdi and followed by Butterworth.

Butterworth's translation is the key to understanding the development of ontological concepts that have been the preoccupation of philosophers for centuries, and I am going to dwell on a few of them. Chapter 1 of the First Section is very significant. Butterworth's translation begins with:

Now then, indeed, the meaning of *inna* [indeed] is firmness, permanence, perfection, and sureness concerning a thing's existence and knowledge of it. That there is a place in all languages for *inna* and *anna*⁴ is evident. In Persian it is sometimes *ki* and sometimes *ka*. More apparent than that are *on* and *ôn* in Greek (p. 26).

Alfarabi continues with his personal interpretation, but the terminology used shows that Arabic philosophy in his time had evolved beyond the terms found in Aristotle. The philosophers say, according to Alfarabi, that: «what is the indeedness of the thing», meaning what is its most perfect existence «that is its

⁴ I choose the reading presented by the Baku manuscript.

whatness ». The sentence may seem a puzzle, but its translator helps us to understand it.

At the beginning of *Posterior Analytics* II, Aristotle distinguishes four kinds of questions that we should ask, as « it is in the answers to these questions that our knowledge consists » (*An. Post.* II, 89b23–24) and they are following:

Is this that? *to hoti*,
Why is this that? *to dioti*,
Does this or that exist? *ei esti*,
What is that? *ti esti*.

Since *hoti* is *inna* ('indeed'), *to hoti* is *innīya* ('indeedness'); and since *ti esti* is 'what is that?', and *to ti esti* is found in other passages, the abstract concept is *māhīya* ('whatness').⁵

The term 'existence' is not found in Aristotle, but the Arabs introduced *wujūd*, and Alfarabi examines it below in Part One, Chapter 15. Here, he equates the most perfect existence (*wujūd*) with indeedness and whatness, a way to express that God has the most perfect existence, which means that *innīya* and *māhīya* are both identical in Him.

Whatness in Aristotle is said in a different way: *to ti ēn einai*, 'that which should be', the so-called quiddity of a thing. However, it is not certain that Alfarabi was aware of this possible distinction. On the contrary, *dhāt* is a new concept, not easily traced in Aristotle, which Alfarabi analyzes in detail in Chapter 14, and which Butterworth accurately translates as 'essence'. *Dhāt* appears in pre-Islamic poetry and in the Koran, mostly with the meaning 'endowed with', and the construction *bi-dhāti-hi*, 'by itself', belongs to ordinary language. Alfarabi goes further in analyzing the uses of *bi-dhāti-hi*, and Butterworth has been very cautious in rendering its variants. Alfarabi distinguishes *dhāt* from *māhīya* but the translation is not easy.

Now, unless one is speaking with laxity, it is nonsensical to claim that our saying 'the essence of the thing' is relative to a particular thing, insofar as there is no otherness in any way between the relative and the object to which it is relative. For our saying *nafs al-shay'* [the thing itself] has this meaning as well – namely, the whatness of the thing – and that is precisely the meaning of our saying 'the substance of the thing' (p. 126).

⁵ Shukri Abed and Ilai Alon give 'quiddity'. Cf. *Al-Fārābī's Philosophical Lexicon*, Gibb Memorial Trust, Warminster 2002.

‘The essence of the thing’ translates *dhāt al-shay’*, ‘relative’ *muḍāf*, ‘a particular thing’ *shay’ mā*, ‘the whatness of the thing’ *māhīyat al-shay’*, and ‘the substance of the thing’ *jawhar al-shay’*. Butterworth’s careful use of technical terms helps us to see that Alfarabi distinguishes between the particular essence (*māhīya*, whatness), and the universal essence (*dhāt*).

Aquinas wrote in *De Veritate* q.1, a.1: «But that which the intellect first conceives as the most familiar, and into which it resolves all conceptions, is being, as Avicenna says at the beginning of his metaphysics». That Avicenna read Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* has been already mentioned. That Aristotle is an antecedent is also known, as for him the principles of being (*to on*) and unity are the most universal of all predicates (*Met.* X.2, 1053b 20). That Alfarabi contributed to the doctrine can be shown through this book.

To on is an active participle and *esti* is the corresponding present tense. Although they belong to different roots, as is the case with ‘being’ and ‘is’ in English, the identification is obvious to any speaker. However, the Arabic language does not use any form in the present tense to express predication – only for the past and future tenses.

Alfarabi admits the absence of an utterance to express the connection between subject and predicate in ordinary language «yet this utterance is definitely needed for the theoretical sciences» (p. 140, §83). He gives two utterances in Arabic to fill this absence: *huwa*, the pronominal ‘it/he’, and *mawjūd* the participial ‘found/findable’. Alfarabi has no preference for one term over the other, but he generally uses *mawjūd*, which Butterworth consistently translates as ‘existent’.

That *mawjūd* is the first known is no longer a matter of debate, and the richness of its meanings becomes central. Butterworth chooses to translate *ishtirāk al-ism* as ‘ambiguity’, but one could use the terms ‘homonymy’, or ‘equivocity’ instead: ‘Existent’ is an ambiguous utterance said of all categories (p. 146, §88) and ‘whatness’ (‘quiddity’) intervenes in defining and explaining the categories. Alfarabi laid the groundwork for Avicenna’s ontology and Butterworth provides us with a translation that accompanies the process.

The three sections are apparently independent works, but Butterworth has written an Interpretive essay that shows the connection between them. The connection between «The Particles and the Names of the Categories» and «Interrogative Particles» is strong, as we can show.

The chosen example concerns *māhīya* and *mā*, the interrogative particle ‘what’ that we examined. Alfarabi investigates the various uses of ‘what’ that correspond to different levels of knowledge. The translator confronts many difficulties, and the case of ‘substance’ comes out as exemplary.

The ancients call the ultimate subject and the universal conditions predicated of it by way of what is ‘substance’ unqualifiedly. And they call the

rest of the predicates of the ultimate subject that are predicated of it NOT by the way of what is [...] ‘accidents’, that is, when they are predicate of substance, for they are predicated of it not by the way of what is (p. 304, §181).

Alfarabi was using technical terms provided by the Arabic translation of the *Metaphysics*: *mawḍūʿ* (subject), *jawhar* (substance), *ʿalā al-itḥāq* (unqualified), *maḥmūl* (predicate), *aʿrāḍ* (accidents), and *mā huwa* (what is). However, some terms are post-Aristotelian, and *kullīyāt*, which Butterworth has translated as ‘universal conditions’, is one of them.

In Aristotle we find *katholou* and *to katholou*, which in Arabic is *al-kullī*, for example, in *Met.* 1071a17–24, and in the phrase: « ‘man’ in general (*bi-l-kullīya*) is the principle of ‘man’ in general, but there is no such person as *man* ». However, this is not the sense in which some Medieval philosophers understood *al-kullīyāt*, i.e. as mental entities, so that they became the subject of a long discussion. Alain de Libera’s monograph, *L’art des généralités*, explores this discussion and highlights the contribution of Alexander of Aphrodisia. De Libera even includes the translation of an important passage attributed to Alexander, made by the late Marc Geoffroy from the extant Arabic.⁶

By adopting the expression ‘universal conditions’, Butterworth offers the reader the opportunity to remain faithful to Aristotle’s doctrine, insofar as we understand *al-kullīyāt* as universal, common attributes of a thing. Then, and by posing the question ‘What?’ in a variety of contexts and identifying adequate responses, we can ascertain the essence of substance and its primacy in all forms of being.

« The Origin of Utterances, Philosophy, and Religion » is placed between the two examined sections. It is not immediately apparent how the initial section, entitled « The Particles and the Names of the Categories », connects with it, but Alfarabi provides explanations that help clarify the link.

Alfarabi opposes the damage caused by dialectical theology and jurisprudence in Islam. He searches for the causes and finds them in the instruments used for their development – namely, dialectical, sophistical, and poetic reasoning. These instruments do not provide the required certain knowledge, which can only be achieved through demonstration. In his interpretive section, Butterworth writes:

⁶ MARC GEOFFROY, « Alexandre d’Aphrodise: Deux versions arabes de la *Quaestio* 1.11A, sur le statut de l’universel », in ALAIN DE LIBERA, *L’art des généralités*, Aubier, Paris 1999, p. 639–644.

To prove that certain philosophy based on demonstration represents a stage in human reasoning higher than religion insofar as the latter relies on rhetorical and poetical methods, Alfarabi presents a broad history of intellectual development (p. 488).

And in fact, the greater part of the section is devoted to the evolution of language and logical structures across different nations. By doing so, Alfarabi integrates his analysis of particles and interrogative particles into a broader system, demonstrating that his thinking is highly systematic despite the apparent discordances between its parts. Thanks to Charles E. Butterworth's accurate and precise translation, the English reader can now gain a comprehensive view of Alfarabi's thought.

KATJA KRAUSE, RICHARD TAYLOR (EDS.), *ALBERT THE GREAT AND HIS ARABIC SOURCES. MEDIEVAL SCIENCE BETWEEN INHERITANCE AND EMERGENCE*, BREPOLS, TURNHOUT 2024 (PHILOSOPHY IN THE ABRAHAMIC TRADITIONS OF THE MIDDLE AGES, 5), 473 PP., ISBN: 9782503609379.

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Collective volumes gathering contributions from scholars who work in the same field are common. They overcome the limitations of individual work and enrich our perspective, although sometimes they are not sufficiently interconnected. The volume under review focuses on Albert the Great and his Arabic sources, so it is a real challenge to put together articles on the subject that give an accurate picture. In this regard, we can say in advance that Arabic philosophy was as important to Albert as the Greek tradition. What is more, this collective volume deals with complex issues not only in the Latin context but also in the Arabic origins of texts and doctrines. In accord with the request of the editors of this journal, in what follows I will provide a descriptive account of this work to which I am myself also a contributor.

Katja Krause and Richard Taylor, the editors of the volume, open with an essay on the intrinsic value of philosophy for Albert. They stress that Albert sought a philosophical *scientia* « in service of the human scientist who studies it » (reviewed book, p. 15). Theology was the other *scientia* and its goal is eternal, the union with God, where everything is studied « under the aspect of this final causality of the beatifying end » (p. 18). The book is devoted to his philosophical *scientia* as Krause and Taylor explain:

Our book is framed by two contributions by Jorge Uscatescu Barrón and David Twetten – that bracket the whole range of Albert’s scholarly activity from the nascent stage of his *scientia*, in *De natura boni*, to the matured and fully independent development of the two *scientiae* of philosophy and theology, in *De causis* and *Summa theologiae* respectively (p. 24).

Twelve chapters contribute to the effort of describing the development of the philosophical *scientia*. The initial chapter deals with the concept of the good, which plays a pivotal role in Albert, as Uscatescu, Anzulewicz, and other scholars have

pointed out. In his chapter,¹ Uscatescu goes through Albert's treatises *De bono* (1236–37) and *Summa theologiae* (1280), as well as *Super Dionysium De divinis nominibus* (1248–50). Albert gives several definitions of the good, and Uscatescu shows how he accepts Avicenna's definition of the good as the actuality of potentiality, and how he enhances the formula developed by Philip the Chancellor, who had also benefited from Avicenna's distinctions. That Albert ultimately adopts a definition nested in the Aristotelian tradition in which form is preponderant does not overshadow the importance of Avicenna in the process leading to this doctrine and Uscatescu is right to keep the balance between the two of them.

The good is one of Albert's four transcendentals – *ens, unum, verum, bonum* –, and Amos Bertolacci complements their study with his chapter on 'One' and 'Existent'.² Bertolacci notes that there is need for an updated enquiry on Albert's role in the transmission of the doctrine from Arabic into Latin and he aims at fulfilling this need. He pays tribute to the pioneering work of Alain de Libera on the reception of Avicenna's doctrine of the transcendental unity, and among the texts analysed by De Libera, he mentions the passage of Albert's commentary on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* IV to which Bertolacci devotes his chapter. He first analyses Averroes' criticism of Avicenna, and I would like to quote his translation of an often-quoted paragraph of Averroes' Long Commentary: « Ibn Sīnā made a great mistake in this regard, since he believed that 'one' and 'existent' signified attributes that are added to the thing's essence » (p. 342); as required, Bertolacci accompanies his translations with relevant passages from Avicenna's *Al-Shifā'*, his philosophical encyclopedia. In a painstaking examination, he dismantles Averroes' interpretation and makes the case for Avicenna's awareness that 'existent' and 'one' « are not only associated with different concepts, but also predicated in different ways » (p. 352). As for Albert's reception, or 'inheritance', Bertolacci reproduces the Latin text of Albert's digression, *In Metaphysicam*, IV.1.5, and he contrasts it with the Latin translation of some fragments of the above-mentioned Long Commentary by Averroes, of Avicenna's Latin *Al-Shifā'*s, and of the *Liber de causis*.³ The selected texts lay the groundwork for his defense of Albert who strives for the harmonization of both, Avicenna and Averroes.

As I indicate in my own contribution, two major themes permeate the writings of medieval Christian, Jewish and Muslim thinkers, namely, the essence of the intellect and the creation of the world. The enquiry on the latter revolves around

¹ Chapter 2: « Albert the Great's Definition of the Good ».

² Chapter 12: « Inheritance and Emergence of Transcendentals ».

³ The *Liber de causis* is the Latin translation of a 12th-century Arabic text that was composed in Baghdad in the 9th century by the circle of Al-Kindī, mainly from the Arabic translations of Proclus' *Elements of Theology*.

the eternal character of motion,⁴ and has consequences for the eternity of the world. Albert was very definite that God and motion are not 'coeternal' (p. 148). And Averroes is very present in the discussion of both questions, as Richard Taylor proves in his chapter.⁵

Taylor masterfully summarizes the three main stages of Averroes' doctrine on the Material and Agent Intellect. Averroes always considered the agent intellect to be transcendent, but he first considered the material intellect to be a power of imagination in each individual human being. The final stage, represented by the *Long Commentary on the Soul*, shows us an elaborate discussion of how the two transcendent intellects cooperate in order for the human being to acquire knowledge of the intelligibles, a stage in which Averroes follows Themistius in declaring that « human beings are made like unto God » when they go through this process (*assimilatur Deo*, p. 82).

The issue of the life after death is inseparably connected with the former issue of the Material and Agent Intellect. Taylor turns to the *Long Commentary on the Metaphysics* and presents several passages concordant with the doctrine expounded in the *Long Commentary on the Soul*: human happiness is attained through the conjunction of the human being with the Agent Intellect and the Material Intellect: it is pure intellectual activity. However, Taylor points out that « such happiness takes place only during short earthly lives » (p. 89) as he claims that for Averroes there is no proof for individual afterlife.

Averroes' works reached the Latin world as early as 1225 and this time limit would apply validity to the two Long Commentaries mentioned; his earlier views in his Short and Middle Commentaries remained unknown. However, Avicenna's views on the transcendent Agent Intellect were known and subject to debate. Taylor agrees with B. Bazan that the view that the Agent Intellect is a power that must be in each individual was an original contribution of the Latin theologians (p. 96). The reviewed book deals with Albert the Great and Taylor leads us to the connection. He argues that Albert's *De homine* incorrectly attributes to Averroes the doctrine that the Agent Intellect as well as the Material Intellect are inherent in man and adopts it for himself. Later, however, he realizes the mistake and his commentary *Super Ethica* bases its criticism on the reading of Averroes' Long Commentaries and, as Taylor claims, the translation of the Arabic *bi-ākhirat*^m (afterwards, after all) as *in postremo* led Albert to consider misconstruing the meaning as 'in the afterlife' which means that there is an afterlife in which *one soul* endures thanks to the conjunction of both intellects, that is, Albert reads Averroes as a defender of monopsychism. Consequently, the complexities of the texts of Averroes and their interpretations must be taken into account when confronting

⁴ Chapter 5: « Albert and 'the Arabs'. On the Eternity of Motion ».

⁵ Chapter 3: « Albert the Great and Two Momentous Interpretive Accounts of Averroes ».

Albert's doctrine of the soul since they are essential elements of his own development.

The *Super Ethica* (1252), Albert's commentary on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, also takes into account Averroes' Middle Commentary on the same text. The harmony of faith and reason is sustained by Averroes, who never admitted that Aristotle's teachings could breach those of Islamic Divine Law. Martin J. Tracey shows that Albert was not so convinced and gives four instances, the first of which is related to Averroes.⁶ Tracey writes: « In *Super Ethica* I.13, Albert states that nothing can be demonstrated contrary to what is determined by faith » (p. 121), and this tenet is close to Averroes' hermeneutic solution to any apparent conflict between the Koran and philosophy. Surprisingly, Albert's understanding of Averroes is highly problematic, since he attributes to him the doctrine that only a universal soul survives after death (p. 123, n. 25), which he considers heretical; yet we have read above that Taylor states that Albert did not believe this when he wrote the *De homine* around 1242 but in his later writings. Although both share the belief that reason is not opposed to faith, Albert ignores this and accuses Averroes of being a heretic, while rescuing Aristotle. Nevertheless, Albert knows that there are places where Aristotle and faith cannot be reconciled, and Tracey sees there « a source of inspiration for the doctrine of the twofold truth » (p. 139), and so we are introduced to Latin Averroism!

Intellectual knowledge was an object of study and discussion in several works of Albert the Great, Luis X. Lopez Farjeat reminds us.⁷ Farjeat looks at his *De Anima* where Albert presents Avempace's view of the conjunction of the material intellect with separate substances and Farjeat shows that Albert relies on Averroes for his account of Avempace. As for Avicenna and Al-Ghazzali, Farjeat explains that Albert read Avicenna, and saw him as an authority, with whom he sometimes agreed and sometimes did not. Albert rejected Avicenna's view of the agent intellect as the emanator of the intelligible forms, although Farjeat remarks that Avicenna also has a doctrine of abstraction, and that the agent intellect intervenes in the process of abstraction. Albert elaborates his own doctrine of intellectual knowledge and Farjeat shows that Averroes is his referent: his doctrine can only be understood in his dialogue with 'the Arabs' and in particular with him.

Memory and knowledge are closely linked to each other, and Jörn Müller enquires about the possibility of an intellectual memory in the individual soul.⁸ Memory plays an essential role in Augustine, since memory, intellectual

⁶ Chapter 4: « Albert's Invocations of Averroes in his Account in *Super Ethica* of the Relation between Philosophical and Theological Ethics ».

⁷ Chapter 8: « Albert the Great's Use of Averroes in his Digressions on Human Intellectual Knowledge (*De anima* III.3.8-11) ».

⁸ Chapter 9: « Is there an Intellectual Memory in the Individual Human Soul? Albert the Great between Avicenna and Aquinas ».

knowledge and will are the mirror image of the Holy Trinity in the human nature, and Albert was familiar with Augustine's doctrine. On the other hand, Aristotle considered memory as a so-called 'internal sense' and Avicenna strengthened the sensitive dimension of memory, rejecting an intellectual memory in man « in which intelligible species are stored » (p. 254). Aquinas did not follow in Avicenna's footsteps, and one of the reasons for turning away from him was theological, since Aquinas needed the separated soul to be endowed with intellectual memory as one source of knowledge in the individual afterlife. Müller observes that Albert walks a difficult line of balance between Avicenna and Aquinas, he says graphically that Albert « sits on the fence » (p. 263). In Book III of his commentary on *De Anima*, Albert expresses the view that the *intellectus adeptus*, the acquired intellect in Arabic epistemology, requires intellectual memory to ensure its sustenance. Müller offers us a fresh, challenging exposition of Albert in relation to his famous disciple.

Henryk Anzulewicz, the renowned editor of several volumes of Albert's works, looks at another aspect of his epistemology, the role of the will in cognitive processes, although his main objective in the chapter⁹ is « to present certain aspects of Albert the Great's view regarding the natural prerequisites of human scientific aptitude » (p. 284). Anzulewicz studies his *Metaphysica*, *De anima* and *De homine*, as well as naturalist writings such as his *Quaestiones super De animalibus*, or *De natura loci*. That all human beings naturally desire to know is an Aristotelian saying that Albert also subscribes to, but he observes that people have varying degrees of desire, and that some have none at all. Anzulewicz shows how Albert searches for internal and external conditions that explain the differences between people, and how Avicenna is also an authority that he considers in his search.

As a naturalist, Albert does indeed have an extraordinary dimension. In his work *On Vegetables and Plants* we find their systematic classification, accurate and innovative, but the contribution of Arabic science is present too in this and other writings. Irven M. Resnick¹⁰ writes that Avicenna was the Arab philosopher whom Albert « most admired and most often cited » (p. 168) and who shaped his natural thinking. Resnick mentions Avicenna as being decisively influential on Albert's defense of celestial causes for a universal flood (p. 175). Resnick observes that Avicenna and Averroes disagree on important topics and attempts to reconcile them. The hypothesis of a universal flood destroying all kinds of animals is raised by Albert, who sees that Avicenna sustains that their spontaneous regeneration can be produced by celestial causes, while Averroes restricts the possibility to some species of simple animals. Resnick shows that Albert follows Averroes: he admits the spontaneous regeneration of so-called imperfect animals « like the

⁹ Chapter 10: « What Makes a Genius? Albert the Great on the Roots of Scientific Aptitude ».

¹⁰ Chapter 6: « Albert the Great's Treatment of Avicenna and Averroes on a Universal Flood and the Regeneration of Species ».

mice and the bat » and excludes the regeneration of the perfect animals « like the lion, the ox and the human » (p 184). In any case, Avicenna and Averroes are taken very seriously as sources by Albert.

The natural world is the world of generation and corruption, i.e., of material substances that come to be and pass away. Adam Takahashi analyses the Aristotelian doctrine of substantial change found in the treatise *On Generation and Destruction*,¹¹ and draws our attention to GC II.1-4 where Aristotle explains how « the so-called elements of the bodies are composed and how they transmute into each other ». The elements are four: earth, water, air, and fire; they distinguish from each other because of a combination of two primary qualities: hot/cold, dry/moist, which determines their essence (*ousia*).

Aristotle did not specify how hylomorphism applies here, but both Avicenna and Averroes addressed the issue. Avicenna did not admit that the primary qualities are the substantial form of the element. On the contrary, and according to Takahashi, « Averroes regards the combination of the primary qualities of an element, to be the form of that element » (p. 203). Albert wrote a commentary on *De Generatione et Corruptione* and he took his own stand on this and other issues. His view comes closer to that of Avicenna, although he was not able to read his treatise on the subject, and Takahashi writes that « Albert rejects the reduction of the formal cause of the elements to their primary qualities » (p. 209). There are other cases, such as that of spontaneous generation, where Albert quotes Averroes and decides whether to accept his view or not, always respecting his authority.

Katja Krause also studies the natural philosophy of Albert the Great, focusing on the epistemic dimension.¹² She chooses two cases: pain and teeth, and taste and flavor, to show that Albert had his own epistemic concerns, so that he « mined » the Arabic sources that served his concerns, and that he was not interested in the concerns that their authors actually had. We know that Albert incorporated large parts of Avicenna's medical *Canon* into his anatomy and physiology of the human body. Avicenna, in turn, had extensively incorporated texts from Galen, who stated that the teeth were the only bones that had sensation, adding – in this case – that Galen had established it by *experimentum*. According to Krause, Albert « transhistorizes » the evidence and « privileges the evidentiary value of experience over its authoritative value » (p. 315). Therefore, the epistemic dimension that she studies reveals that Albert intended to gain a universal truth, when he explained sensation in the teeth.

The book under review begins with two chapters on ontology, the discipline newly established by Avicenna, and ends with a chapter on the doctrine of

¹¹ Chapter 7: « Against Averroes' Naturalism. The Generation of Material Substances in Albert the Great's *De generatione et corruptione*, and *Meteorologica* IV ».

¹² Chapter 11: « Source Mining. Arabic Natural Philosophy and *experiential* in Albert the Great's Scientific Practices ».

emanation in Albert the Great, which also has deep roots in Avicenna; the chapter could easily be a monograph, since David Twetten has undertaken a long and detailed investigation that should be the subject of an independent review.

The *Liber de causis*, i.e., the Latin translation of the *Kitāb al-Idāh fī al-Khayr al-Mahd*, gave the Latin philosophers a distorted image of Aristotle, who was transformed into a Neoplatonist. His explanation of the universe was « complete » with an emanationist account. Many difficulties plagued the account, and the most serious concerned the conflict with the Christian doctrine that God created the world in an act of free will. Albert the Great wrote a commentary on the *Liber de causis* and developed his own scheme of emanation aimed at preserving God's freedom. Twetten analyses the development of Albert's doctrine and obviously quotes texts from his writings to support his analysis. Among them I would mention this passage from his *Physica*, where we can read: « We say, however, that [the heavens] flow absolutely from the First Cause according to the choice of His will » (p. 377). Twetten argues that Albert is successful in his endeavor, but we should leave it to the reader, or to a more comprehensive review, to decide about that.

Despite the diversity of subjects and categories – ontology, epistemology, natural sciences – as well as the stages of Albert the Great's intellectual development, the collective volume succeeds in providing a comprehensive approach to his philosophy. More importantly, the book maintains a unity not only in the inclusion of Arabic philosophy, but also in the appreciation of its influence on Albert's philosophy.

