

Vindicatio Aristotelis

Works of George Trebizond
Plato-Aristotle Controversy
of the Fifteenth Century



Protectio Problematum Aristotelis

DE TESTI
III
DE PHILOSOFICIS

BASSARIONE

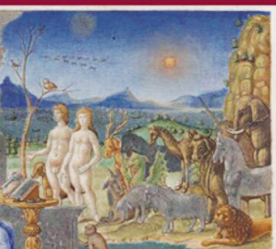
IL CALUNNIATORE
DI PLATONE

Introduzione, traduzione e cura di
EVA DEL SOLDATO

Nota critica di
IVANOE PRIVITERA

Vindicatio Aristotelis

Works of George Trebizond
Plato-Aristotle Controversy
of the Fifteenth Century



Vindicatio Aristotelis

Two Works of George Trebizond
in the Plato-Aristotle Controversy
of the Fifteenth Century



Protectio Problematum Aristotelis
Comparatio Philosophorum Platoni
et De Prestantia Aristotelis

Edited and Translated

QUELLEN UND FORSCHUNGEN
AUS DEM GEBIETE DER GESCHICHTE.
IN VERBINDUNG MIT IHREM HISTORISCHEN INSTITUT IN ROM
HERAUSGEGEBEN VON DER
GÖTTES-GESELLSCHAFT.

XXII BAND.

KARDINAL BESSARION
ALS
THEOLOGE, HUMANIST UND STAATSMANN
VON
LUDWIG MOHLER.

II. BAND.
BESSARIONIS
IN CALUNNIATOREM PLATONIS
LIBRI IV.

PADERBORN,
DRUCK UND VERLAG VON FERDINAND
SCHÖNINGH
MCMXXVII.

BESSARION'S
TREASURE
EDITING, TRANSLATING AND INTERPRETING
BESSARION'S LITERARY HERITAGE
Edited by Sergei Marier

BESSARION'S TREASURE
Edited by Sergei Marier

Philosophische Bibliothek

Bessarion
Über Natur und Kunst
Griechisch-Lateinisch-Deutsch

Meiner

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BASILIO BESSARIONE.
CONTRO IL CALUNNIATORE
DI PLATONE

Introduzione, traduzione e cura di
EVA DEL SOLDATO

Nota critica di
IVANOE PRIVITERA



ROMA 2013
EDIZIONI DI STORIA E LETTERATURA

BASSARIONE
CULTURA DELIBERATA
CULTURA E L'ARTE

Le Accendere
di Ippolito Nievo
Testo greco e latino a fronte
di Ippolito Nievo



BOMPIANI
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Part 3

Scholarly Contributions

Tracking Changes and Corrections in Bessarion’s Manuscripts

Sergei Mariev

Examining the drafts of masterpieces of world literature can often offer some remarkable insights into the creative processes of their authors. An investigation of this kind may be a challenging and very time-consuming task, which entails tracing minimal changes, emendations and alterations of the text through countless drafts and meticulously working through multiple layers of corrections and textual modifications. A good example of such an endeavour might be Kathryn B. Feuer’s *Tolstoy and the Genesis of “War and Peace”* (2018), perhaps in itself a classic on the subject. Having obtained access to the manuscript drafts of the novel, almost 4,000 pages, Feuer examined them in a truly indefatigable fashion and, in the end, was able to produce an exceptional study of how Tolstoy worked towards the final version of his famous opus. Obviously, her study was possible because a significant amount of Tolstoy’s handwritten material is preserved. This is unfortunately not the case with Ancient Greek and Latin texts. No drafts of Plato or Aristotle, Virgil or Tacitus have been transmitted to us. From secondary accounts, however, we can gather some fascinating bits and pieces of information about the fate of many ancient manuscripts and entire textual corpora at the earliest stages of their transmission, including stages for which we find no direct evidence in the extant manuscripts or papyri fragments. We even occasionally have accounts of drafts, changes and corrections. From the remarks of Diogenes Laertius (3.37), we learn, for instance, that Plato frequently revised the famous first words of his dialogue *Politeia*, “Κατέβην χθὲς εἰς Πειραιᾶ μετὰ Γλαύκωνος τοῦ Ἀρίστωνος [...]”, before finding this stylistical-

ly perfect and well-balanced opening sequence of words, which then became the final version, already admired by rhetoricians in Antiquity and known to us today. This situation changes gradually as we move from Late Antiquity into Byzantium, and especially into the Late Byzantine period, from which we do possess a limited number of autographs, manuscripts with autograph remarks by the authors and their collaborators, and even drafts and earlier versions of texts alongside final versions.

In the case of Bessarion (1408-1472), who ‘outlived’ the fatal capture of Constantinople (1453) by almost twenty years, we are in fact fortunate enough to be in possession of several working copies that elucidate the process of revision of his philosophical treatise *In Calumniatorem Platonis* (*ICP*), which constitutes a focal point of the present exhibition in the Correr Museum. Using Bessarion’s material, it appears to be possible, at least in theory – as this research has not yet been completed – to reconstruct the process of revising and correcting a Late Byzantine text, following a very similar approach to Feuer’s charting of Tolstoy’s progression towards the final version of *War and Peace*. Remarkable in itself, such a reconstruction of Bessarion’s working practices would be a pioneering study that could also shed light on previous centuries, if we assume that the techniques Bessarion employed while correcting and revising his text were not his own idiosyncratic invention but a method that was common in Byzantium, not only during his lifetime but also in the preceding period.

Of particular interest to research into Bessarion’s method of correcting and re-writing are the changes he made to the text of book 5 of *In Calumniatorem Platonis*. Book 5 contains Bessarion’s critique of the Latin translation of Plato’s *Laws* by Georgios Trapezuntios. This fifth book was neglected by Ludwig Mohler in his critical edition of Bessarion’s work and is essentially un-

known to the larger scholarly community, with the exception of a few specialists who work on Bessarion and Georgios Trapezuntios, namely my colleagues John Monfasani, Fabio Pagani and the late Viktor Tiftixoglou, who had been working extensively on the text of book 5 during his frequent research stays at the Centro Tedesco di Studi Veneziani between January 1980 and December 1984. The secondary literature on this particular text is virtually non-existent. The few important references to this text are listed in the *Prolegomena* to my forthcoming critical edition of book 5.

The aim of this article is to offer a detailed reconstruction of Bessarion’s successive revisions to a few lines of his text. Given the present state of research into Bessarion’s manuscripts, it is not yet possible to offer an exhaustive and comprehensive overview of the entire compositional process leading to the final version of the *ICP*. Over the following pages, I will limit myself to an analysis of a few palaeographic traces of its textual evolution. I will not simply list the palaeographic evidence pertaining to each individual correction, such as deletions, insertions and other changes, but I intend to combine the available evidence so as to postulate interrelationships between several corrections relating to a single passage, thereby reconstructing not merely the corrections, but the process of making them. In a sense, this contribution will make it possible to ‘peer over Bessarion’s shoulder’, as he is working on a few lines of his text.

In particular, in what follows, I am going to examine the corrections at the bottom of f. 183v of Cod. Marc. Gr. Z. 199 [figs 1-15]. In the course of the corrective process, the first, underlying version of the text on the page was replaced by Bessarion with a new, corrected and enhanced version of the same text, which was subsequently copied into Cod. Marc. Gr. Z. 198 [fig. 16].

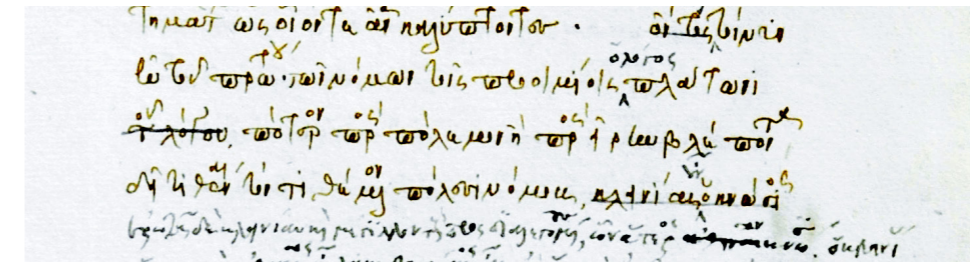


Figure 1
Gr. Z. 199, f. 183v

The underlying text (lines 22-5) [fig. 1] reads as follows:

ὄντος τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίοις Πλάτωνι τοῦ λόγου πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους, Κλεινίας ὁ Κνώσιος [...]

After Bessarion’s corrective intervention, this underlying text was transformed into the following text, which is found in its final version in Cod. Marc. Gr. Z. 198, f. 143v, line 27-f. 144, line 4:

Ἔστι μὲν τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίοις ὁ λόγος Πλάτωνι, πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους. Ἐρωτᾷ δὲ Κλεινίαν καὶ Μέγιστον τοὺς προσδιαλεγόμενους, ὧν ἄτερος Κνώσιος ὁ Κλεινίας, ἄτερος δὲ Λακεδαιμόνιος ἦν, ποία τις περὶ τούτου αὐτοῖς τε καὶ τοῖς αὐτῶν νομοθέταις, Μίνωι τε Κρητῇ καὶ Λυκούργῳ Λακεδαιμονίῳ, εἶη δόξα. Κλεινίας οὖν ὁ Κνώσιος [...]

For the sake of clarity and readability, I will present Bessarion’s handwritten corrections in a way that is now familiar to everybody who uses the ‘track-changes’ function in modern word-processing software. In addition, in the figures that accompany the text I will highlight relevant words and passages in red.

Let us start by looking at the first correction Bessarion made to this passage. It is the deletion of ὄντος, which is replaced by Ἔστι μὲν [fig. 2]:

ὄντος Ἔστι μὲν ἄ τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίαις Πλάτωνι τοῦ λόγου πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους, Κλεινίας ὁ Κνώσιος [...]

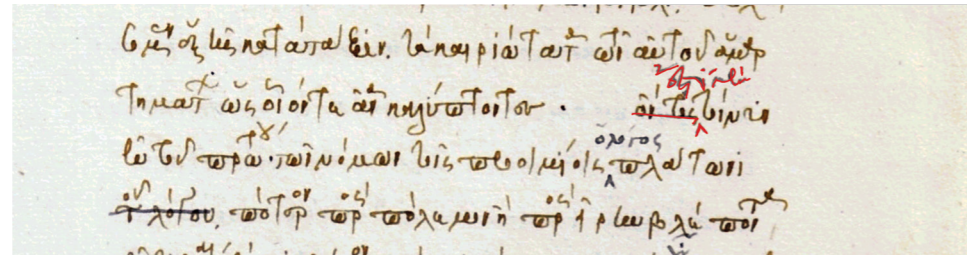


Figure 2

This change affects the participial element of the *genitivus absolutus* construction ὄντος ... τοῦ λόγου. Inevitably, the next change has to be made to the corresponding substantive of the same construction. This is in fact what we observe in the manuscript: Bessarion strikes through the words τοῦ λόγου [fig. 3]:

ὄντος Ἔστι μὲν ἄ τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίαις Πλάτωνι τοῦ λόγου πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους, Κλεινίας ὁ Κνώσιος [...]

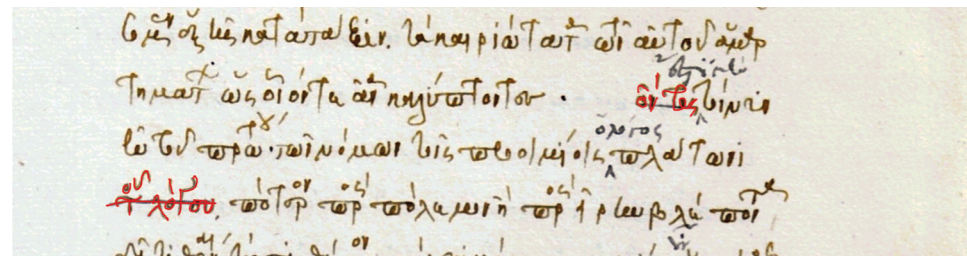


Figure 3

Subsequently, he inserts ὁ λόγος, which is the final stage of the correction of this sentence [fig. 4]:

ὄντος Ἔστι μὲν ἄ τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίαις ὁ λόγος ἄ Πλάτωνι τοῦ λόγου πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους, Κλεινίας ὁ Κνώσιος [...]

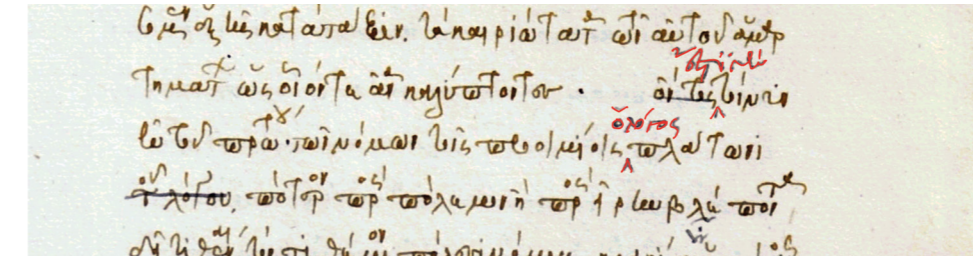


Figure 4

There are no further corrections to the text before the final words that were visible to Bessarion on the page at this point: Κλεινίας ὁ Κνώσιος. And it is to these final three words that Bessarion must have next turned his attention.

ὄντος Ἔστι μὲν ἄ τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίαις ὁ λόγος ἄ Πλάτωνι τοῦ λόγου πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους, Κλεινίας ὁ Κνώσιος [...]

Bessarion applies two changes to these words, one after the other. First, he inserts an οὖν after Κλεινίας [fig. 5]:

ὄντος Ἔστι μὲν ἄ τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίαις ὁ λόγος ἄ Πλάτωνι τοῦ λόγου πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους, Κλεινίας οὖν ὁ Κνώσιος [...]

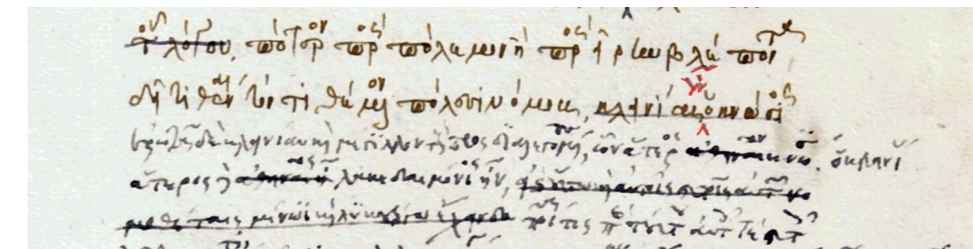


Figure 5

It is difficult, at this stage of the analysis, to provide a conclusive explanation for this insertion. It could be an inferential and transitional οὖν,¹ in other words, it signifies that something follows from what precedes, it states a conclusion or inference. We may thus suppose that, already at this point in the corrective process, Bessarion considers giving the phrase starting Κλεινίας ὁ Κνώσιος an inferential meaning, by separating it more forcefully from the preceding clause and implying a conclusion. Whatever his intention might have been, he is not satisfied with the change he has just made, because immediately after the insertion of οὖν he draws a line through Κλεινίας οὖν ὁ Κνώσιος marking its deletion [fig. 6]. As we shall see in a few lines, Bessarion later returned to these deleted words, picked them up from here and reinserted them into his text at the end of the modified passage, making them again the final words of the emended text.

ὄντος ἔστι μὲν ἄ τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίαις ὁ λόγος ἄ Πλάτωνι τοῦ λόγου πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους, **Κλεινίας οὖν ἄ ὁ Κνώσιος** [...]

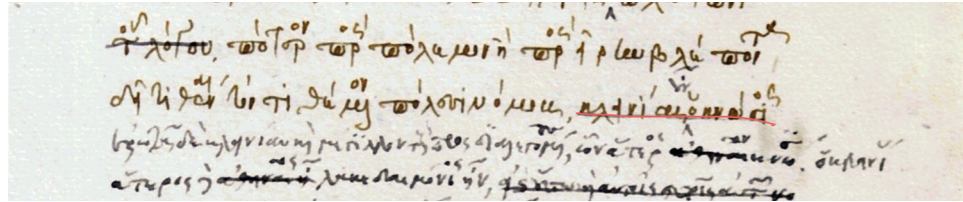


Figure 6

Having deleted the words Κλεινίας οὖν ὁ Κνώσιος, Bessarion moves into the space at the bottom margin of the page by starting a new sentence [fig. 7]:

ὄντος ἔστι μὲν ἄ τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίαις ὁ λόγος ἄ Πλάτωνι τοῦ λόγου πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους, **Κλεινίας οὖν ἄ ὁ Κνώσιος, Ἐρωτᾷ δὲ Κλεινίαν καὶ Μέγιλλον τοὺς προσδιαλεγόμενους, ὧν ἄτερος Ἀθηναῖος**

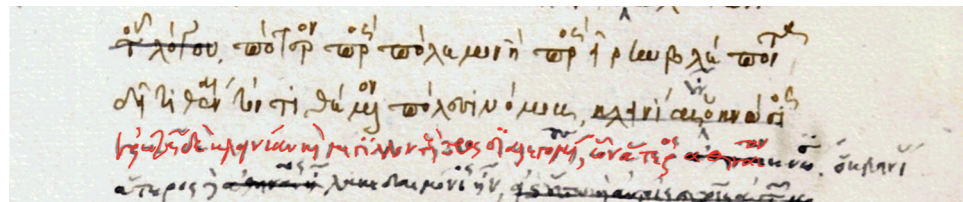


Figure 7

¹ Cf. H.W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, Cambridge (MA), § 2964.

Bessarion first writes this entire passage up to the word Ἀθηναῖος, then takes a step back and strikes through Ἀθηναῖος [fig. 8]:

ὄντος ἔστι μὲν ἄ τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίαις ὁ λόγος ἄ Πλάτωνι τοῦ λόγου πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους, **Κλεινίας οὖν ἄ ὁ Κνώσιος, Ἐρωτᾷ δὲ Κλεινίαν καὶ Μέγιλλον τοὺς προσδιαλεγόμενους, ὧν ἄτερος Ἀθηναῖος**

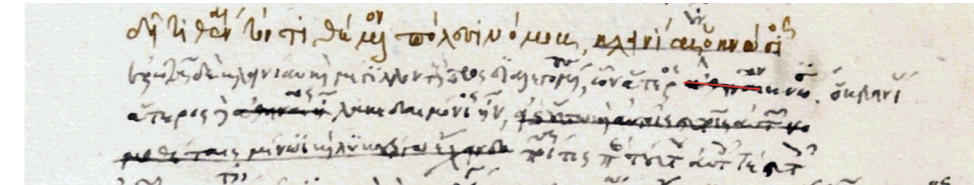


Figure 8

The syntax and sense suggest the reading Ἀθηναῖος at this point. However, a transcription of what is actually on the page yields Ἀθηναῖον. I can offer no explanation for the accusative form.

Bessarion continues by adding the words **Κνώσιος ὁ Κλεινίας, ἄτερος δὲ Ἀθηναῖος ἦ** [fig. 9].

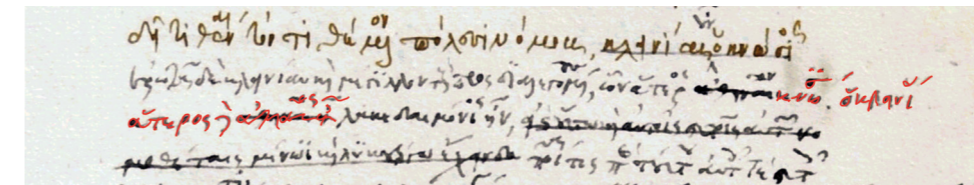


Figure 9

At this point of the corrective process, Bessarion actually has ἦ standing on the page in front of him [fig. 10]. This ἦ is an incomplete ἦν, but as Bessarion did not add the ν, he must have paused before he finished writing this verb. It appears, therefore, that he decided to turn back and strike through the last two words, namely Ἀθηναῖος and incomplete ἦ<ν>.

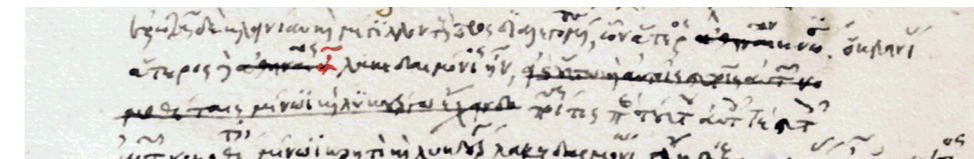


Figure 10

ὄντος ἔστι μὲν ἄ τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίαις ὁ λόγος ἄ Πλάτωνι τοῦ λόγου πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους, Κλεινίας οὖν ἄ ὁ Κνώσιος, Ἐρωτᾶ δὲ Κλεινίαν καὶ Μέγιστον τοὺς προσδιαλεγόμενους, ὧν ἄτερος Ἀθηναῖος Κνώσιος ὁ Κλεινίας, ἄτερος δὲ Ἀθηναῖος ἦ

He does so in order to replace Ἀθηναῖος with Λακεδαιμόνιος. It is probable that we encounter here a minor *lapsus calami* or possibly a *lapsus mentis* of Bessarion, who for a second seems to have forgotten that the other dialogue partner to whom he refers was not an Athenian but a Spartan. He thus immediately corrects himself and now finishes the ἦν that he left incomplete a moment ago [fig. 11]:

ὄντος ἔστι μὲν ἄ τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίαις ὁ λόγος ἄ Πλάτωνι τοῦ λόγου πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους, Κλεινίας οὖν ἄ ὁ Κνώσιος, Ἐρωτᾶ δὲ Κλεινίαν καὶ Μέγιστον τοὺς προσδιαλεγόμενους, ὧν ἄτερος Ἀθηναῖος Κνώσιος ὁ Κλεινίας, ἄτερος δὲ Ἀθηναῖος ἦ Λακεδαιμόνιος ἦν,

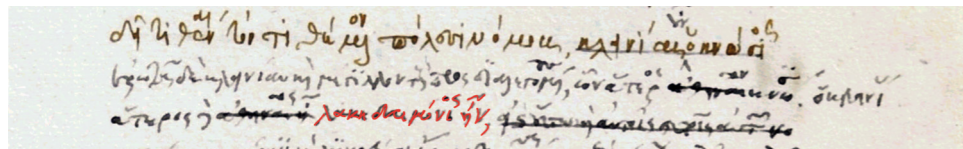


Figure 11

After this self-correction, Bessarion proceeds to write the following words: εἰ καὶ οὕτω καὶ αὐτοῖς καὶ τοῖς αὐτῶν νομοθέταις Μίνωι καὶ Λυκούργω ἔχειν δε. The text at this stage reads as follows [fig. 12]:

ὄντος ἔστι μὲν ἄ τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίαις ὁ λόγος ἄ Πλάτωνι τοῦ λόγου πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους, Κλεινίας οὖν ἄ ὁ Κνώσιος, Ἐρωτᾶ δὲ Κλεινίαν καὶ Μέγιστον τοὺς προσδιαλεγόμενους, ὧν ἄτερος Ἀθηναῖος Κνώσιος ὁ Κλεινίας, ἄτερος δὲ Ἀθηναῖος ἦ Λακεδαιμόνιος ἦν, εἰ καὶ οὕτω καὶ αὐτοῖς καὶ τοῖς αὐτῶν νομοθέταις Μίνωι καὶ Λυκούργω ἔχειν δε

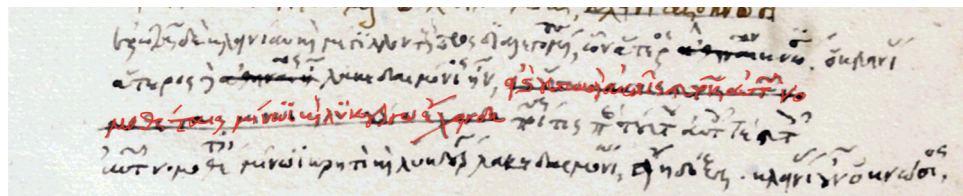


Figure 12

However, immediately after the completion of this sentence, Bessarion decides to delete it [fig. 13]:

ὄντος ἔστι μὲν ἄ τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίαις ὁ λόγος ἄ Πλάτωνι τοῦ λόγου πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους, Κλεινίας οὖν ἄ ὁ Κνώσιος, Ἐρωτᾶ δὲ Κλεινίαν καὶ Μέγιστον τοὺς προσδιαλεγόμενους, ὧν ἄτερος Ἀθηναῖος Κνώσιος ὁ Κλεινίας, ἄτερος δὲ Ἀθηναῖος ἦ Λακεδαιμόνιος ἦν, εἰ καὶ οὕτω καὶ αὐτοῖς καὶ τοῖς αὐτῶν νομοθέταις Μίνωι καὶ Λυκούργω ἔχειν δε

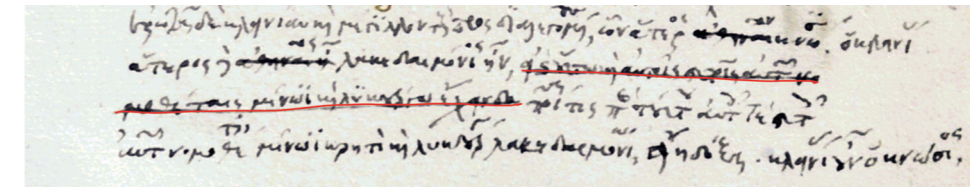


Figure 13

The passage he has deleted is replaced with a new, reformulated version of the same sentence, namely: ποία τις περὶ τούτου αὐτοῖς τε καὶ τοῖς αὐτῶν νομοθέταις, Μίνωι τε Κρητὶ καὶ Λυκούργω Λακεδαιμονίῳ, εἴη δόξα. After this change, the text on the page runs as follows [fig. 14]:

ὄντος ἔστι μὲν ἄ τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίαις ὁ λόγος ἄ Πλάτωνι τοῦ λόγου πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους, Κλεινίας οὖν ἄ ὁ Κνώσιος, Ἐρωτᾶ δὲ Κλεινίαν καὶ Μέγιστον τοὺς προσδιαλεγόμενους, ὧν ἄτερος Ἀθηναῖος Κνώσιος ὁ Κλεινίας, ἄτερος δὲ Ἀθηναῖος ἦ Λακεδαιμόνιος ἦν, εἰ καὶ οὕτω καὶ αὐτοῖς καὶ τοῖς αὐτῶν νομοθέταις Μίνωι καὶ Λυκούργω ἔχειν δε ποία τις περὶ τούτου αὐτοῖς τε καὶ τοῖς αὐτῶν νομοθέταις, Μίνωι τε Κρητὶ καὶ Λυκούργω Λακεδαιμονίῳ, εἴη δόξα.

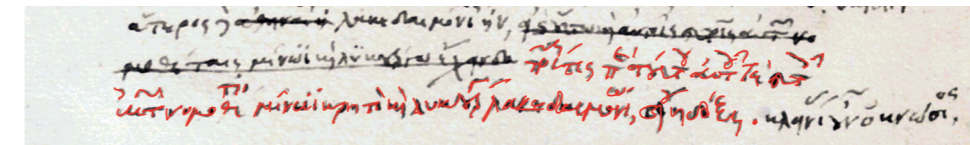


Figure 14

Comparing the two versions, namely the version before the correction “εἰ καὶ οὕτω καὶ αὐτοῖς καὶ τοῖς αὐτῶν νομοθέταις Μίνωι καὶ Λυκούργω ἔχειν δε” with the subsequent “ποία τις περὶ τούτου αὐτοῖς τε καὶ τοῖς αὐτῶν νομοθέταις, Μίνωι τε Κρητὶ καὶ Λυκούργω Λακεδαιμονίῳ, εἴη δόξα”, we discover that Bessarion has provided a more precise wording for the question he wished to express. The somewhat vaguely formulated indirect question: “εἰ οὕτω [...] ἔχειν” (whether [...] is the case) has been reformulated as a pointed question “ποία τις [...] εἴη δόξα” (what is the opinion about [...]).

Having arrived at this point, all Bessarion needs to do is to reconnect the text now in front of him with the rest of the sentence on the following page. This connection already exists: Κλεινίας ὁ Κνώσιος, which used to be the last words on the page before Bessarion started to modify the entire passage, and they links up with the text on the next page: “[...] πρὸς πόλεμον βλέποντα φησὶ [...]”. And so, as a final step in this process, Bessarion re-inserts these words, together with the οὖν that he had decided to insert before he previously deleted them. The text now reads as follows [fig. 15]:

ὄντος ἔστι μὲν τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίαις ὁ λόγος Πλάτωνι τοῦ λόγου πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους, Κλεινίας οὖν ὁ Κνώσιος, Ἐρωτᾶ δὲ Κλεινίαν καὶ Μέγιστον τοὺς προσδιαλεγόμενους, ὧν ἄτερος Ἀθηναῖος Κνώσιος ὁ Κλεινίας, ἄτερος δὲ Ἀθηναῖος ἢ Λακεδαιμόνιος ἦν, εἰ καὶ οὕτω καὶ αὐτοῖς καὶ τοῖς αὐτῶν νομοθέταις Μίνωι καὶ Λυκούργῳ ἔχειν δε ποία τις περὶ τούτου αὐτοῖς τε καὶ τοῖς αὐτῶν νομοθέταις, Μίνωί τε Κρητὶ καὶ Λυκούργῳ Λακεδαιμονίῳ, εἴη δόξα. Κλεινίας οὖν ὁ Κνώσιος

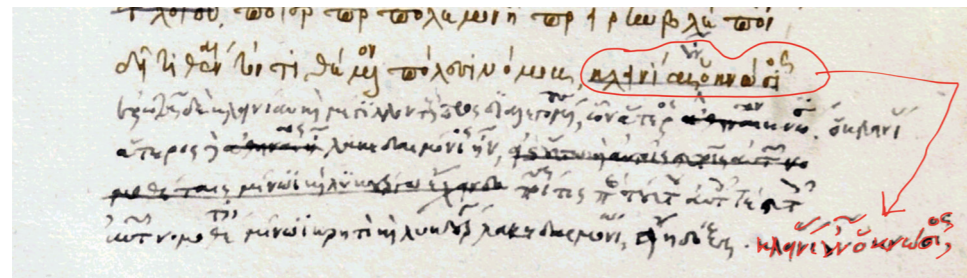


Figure 15

The transformation of text A into text B is complete at this point. If we ‘turn off’ the ‘tracking changes’ that I have employed throughout the text to illustrate the corrective process in way familiar to modern readers, we obtain the final version of the text, which is in fact found in Cod. Marc. Gr. Z. 198 (partially visible in the next figure [fig. 16]):

Ἔστι μὲν τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίαις ὁ λόγος Πλάτωνι, πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους. Ἐρωτᾶ δὲ Κλεινίαν καὶ Μέγιστον τοὺς προσδιαλεγόμενους, ὧν ἄτερος Κνώσιος ὁ Κλεινίας, ἄτερος δὲ Λακεδαιμόνιος ἦν, ποία τις περὶ τούτου αὐτοῖς τε καὶ τοῖς αὐτῶν νομοθέταις, Μίνωί τε Κρητὶ καὶ Λυκούργῳ Λακεδαιμονίῳ, εἴη δόξα. Κλεινίας οὖν ὁ Κνώσιος [...]

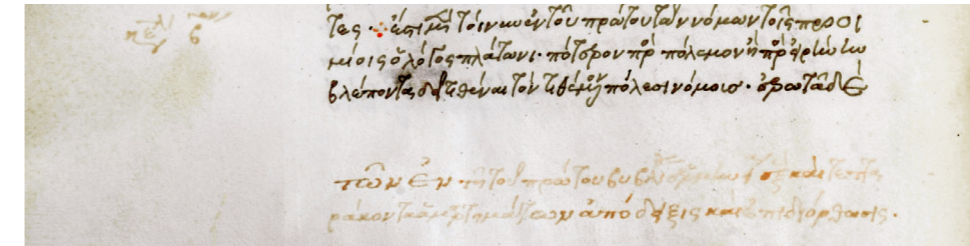


Figure 16
Gr. Z. 198, f. 143v

Having examined the corrections in detail, I would like to point out that, while the palaeographic evidence for each individual correction in this particular case is not ambiguous in itself and can be described in clear terms as an insertion, deletion or addition, the actual order in which the corrections were made cannot be established beyond reasonable doubt and must remain a hypothesis. Specifically, we have no means of determining whether Bessarion in fact started at the beginning of the passage and proceeded from left to right, correcting ὄντος into ἔστι μὲν first and changing τοῦ λόγου into ὁ λόγος subsequently. It is equally possible to imagine that he started in the middle of the sentence with an alteration to the semantic nucleus of the construction, that is with the substantive τοῦ λόγου into ὁ λόγος, and only then glanced up the text to adjust the ὄντος-part of the clause. However, what is beyond reasonable doubt is that both changes belong together and one change requires the other. Similar assumptions can be made about Κλεινίας οὖν ὁ Κνώσιος: the deletion of these words towards the beginning of the passage and their re-insertion at the end form part of one and the same corrective sequence and belong together. Some uncertainties concerning the aim of corrections remain. I have not been able to find a convincing explanation as to why the grammatically correct Ἀθηναῖος actually appears as Ἀθηναῖον in the text. Is the accusative form actually an indication that Bessarion had in mind yet another way

of continuing this sentence at the moment of writing, but never put this hypothetical alternative version onto paper? There are no traces of such a version to validate or refute this supposition. It must equally remain a hypothesis that Bessarion, at the moment of writing, confused an Athenian with a Spartan, but immediately corrected himself. In the light of this auto-correction by Bessarion and in connection with it, it appears plausible that the ἦ is an incomplete ἦ<ν>. Finally, the presence of two versions of the same phrase (εἰ οὕτω [...] ἔχειν and ποία τις [...] εἴη δόξα) illustrates that Bessarion considered stylistic alternatives during the process of writing and gives a clear indication as to which alternative he preferred. On the basis of this single instance analysed here, it is not possible, of course, to draw more general conclusions about Bessarion’s stylistic preferences, but additional examples of this kind, which are easily found throughout the manuscript, may add up during future research to a coherent picture of his stylistic choices and tastes. While we will never know the exact wording of the alternative version(s) of the famous Platonic opening “Κατέβην χθές εἰς Πειραιᾶ μετὰ Γλαύκωνος τοῦ Ἀρίστωνος [...]”, in the case of Bessarion’s text we actually have a large number of alternative versions of the same passages of the same text by the same author and we know which version was deemed better by him, which constitutes, *per se*, a trove of raw material for further research.

διέφθαρκεν. Ἀρξάμενοι τοίνυν ἀπὸ τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων βυβλίου προχωρήσομεν ἐξῆς κατὰ τάξιν, τὰ καιριώτατα τῶν αὐτοῦ ἁμαρτημάτων ὡς οἶόν τε ἀνακαλύπτοντες.

- Ἔστι μὲν^a τοίνυν ἐν τοῦ πρώτου τῶν νόμων τοῖς προοιμίοις ὁ λόγος^b Πλάτωνι,^c πότερον πρὸς πόλεμον ἢ πρὸς εἰρήνην βλέποντα δεῖ τιθέναι τὸν τιθέμενον πόλεσι νόμους.^{de} Ἐρωτᾷ δὲ Κλεινίαν καὶ Μέγιλλον τοὺς προσ-
διαλεγομένους, ὧν ἄτερος Κνώσιος ὁ Κλεινίας, ἄτερος δὲ Λακεδαιμόνιος ἦν, ποία τις περὶ τούτου αὐτοῖς τε καὶ τοῖς αὐτῶν νομοθέταις, Μίνωι τε Κρητὶ καὶ Λυκούργῳ Λακεδαιμονίῳ, εἶη δόξα. Κλεινίας οὖν ὁ Κνώσιος
- ^a ex ὄντος corr. K3 ^b ins. K3
^c post Πλάτωνι del. τοῦ λόγου K3 ^d post νόμους del. Κλεινίας <οὖν> ὁ Κνώσιος K3 ^e post νόμους ins. Ἐρωτᾷ ... [Ἀθηναῖος] Κνώσιος ὁ Κλεινίας, ἄτερος δὲ [Ἀθηναῖος] Λακεδαιμόνιος ἦν, [εἰ καὶ οὕτω καὶ αὐτοῖς καὶ τοῖς αὐτῶν νομοθέταις Μίνωι καὶ Λυκούργῳ ἔχειν δε] ... Κνώσιος deinde corr. K3

1 Τῆς : ἦς 3 Ἴνα : να 6 μὴ δὲ : μηδὲ T 7 ἦκει συνιέναι : ἦμισυ ιέναι T 13 μὴ δὲ : μηδὲ T 17 μὴ δὲ : μηδὲ T 21 τε αὐτὰ : τὲ αὐτὰ 21 τε οὗτος : τὲ οὗτος

9 πάντων ex ἀπάντων corr. K1 18 post ἐατέον puncto et virgula (“;”) distinxit K1 21 ἀπήγγελκεν ex ἀπήγγελκεν [sic!] corr. K1 22 λόγον ex λόγον [sic!] corr. K1 28 ad μεταγεγραμμένα in marg. γράφε μετενηγεμένα U, sed del. K1 30 ad περιλαβόντες in marg. γράφε περιειληφότες U, sed del. K1

Figure 17
Traditional or ‘static’
apparatus criticus
for the text analysed
in the article

In this article I have made an attempt to move beyond a ‘static’ listing of individual corrections, as is frequently found in the apparatuses of critical editions, towards reconstructing the corrective process of a text. While philological scholarship within Byzantine Studies has a relatively well-established traditional ‘instrumentarium’ (inherited from Classical Studies), which allows us to describe singular corrections in an apparatus, we have not yet developed an adequate methodology and terminology that would allow us to describe a corrective process. This is mainly due to the fact that only a limited number of manuscripts from Byzantium is suitable for this kind of analysis. In addition, it is only recently that the interest of Byzantine philology has turned from the paradigm of ‘reconstructing’ a text, with the practical objective of producing a critical edition, towards a more theoretical goal of exploring various aspects of textual production

and transmission. In the absence of such a methodology, the results of the kind of reconstruction I have presented here either remain unpublished and never leave the notes and annotations of a philologist who embarks upon the arduous task of working through changes and corrections or, if the results of this work are published, they are still documented in a ‘traditional’ format, namely by means of creating a ‘static’ critical apparatus, listing individual corrections. The last figure [fig. 17] shows an example of what an apparatus for the text analysed in this study could look like. It makes immediately clear the constraints and limitations of a ‘traditional’ approach. We may hope that advances in digital humanities will help us in the near future to overcome the constraints evident in this example. However, electronic critical editions in turn have their own significant limits and constraints, the discussion of which must remain outside of the scope of this article.

The *Notata* of Giovanni Gatti OP

John Monfasani

By the time Cardinal Bessarion published in 1469 his great defence of Plato, the *In Calumniatorem Platonis*, against the attack of George of Trebizond, he was no longer the young Greek theologian at the Council of Florence whose brilliance and support of the union of churches so impressed the Latins that in 1439 Pope Eugenius IV made him a cardinal. Rather, he had become a man with many heavy responsibilities, from campaigning for a crusade against the Turk and helping fellow Greeks who were the victims of the Turkish conquests to being the Cardinal Protector of the Franciscan Order and a major player in the politics of the papal curia. At the same time he had dedicated his life to salvaging as much of the Greek literary heritage as he could. We may add that as he aged, he frequented the baths of Viterbo to salve his painful infirmities. But power and status also brought another element to Bessarion’s life: wealth. For a man of Bessarion’s great intellectual attainment and wide culture this wealth enabled him to create and support a cardinalitial *famiglia* of exceptionally talented men, even called in his own time the *Academia Bessarionea*; and as he got older, he leaned on his *famiglia* not only to help with his official duties, but also to assist in his intellectual endeavours. Two notably helped with the *In Calumniatorem Platonis*, the humanist Niccolò Perotti who helped to reshape Bessarion’s Latin and contribute references to Latin sources, and the Greek Aristotelian scholar Theodore Gaza, whom Bessarion invited as early 1459 to help revise the *In Calumniatorem Platonis* and who demonstrably contributed references to Greek sources as well as carefully advising on Bessarion’s critique of George of Trebizond’s translation of Pla

to's *Laws*, a critique that came to constitute book 5 of the 1469 edition of the *In Calumniatorem Platonis*. But there was a third major contributor to the 1469 *In Calumniatorem Platonis*, whose part in the enterprise was not understood until the discovery of the *Notata*.

The full title of Gatti's work is *Ista sunt notata per Ioannem Gattum theologum ex libro ineptiis et deliramentis pleno qui inscribitur De Comparatione Philosophorum*. The book "full of ineptitudes and mad ravings" which Gatti addressed was, of course, George of Trebizond's *Comparatio Philosophorum Platonis et Aristotelis et De Aristotelis Prestantia*.

Published at Rome in 1458, George's *Comparatio* was the culminating work of his campaign against Platonism and the Bessarion circle. After arriving in Venice from his native Crete in 1416 as a Greek scribe, George proceeded to make a brilliant career for himself as a teacher of rhetoric and then, starting in the 1440s, after he became a member of the papal curia, as an amazingly prolific translator of Greek patristic, philosophical, and scientific texts. For a time he was also Bessarion's teacher of Latin. Along the way, he conceived an intense hatred of Plato and Platonism, and, no less importantly, he came to see himself as an apocalyptic prophet who understood how Platonism had undermined Greek civilisation leading to its collapse before the Turks and now was threatening to do the same to the West because of Bessarion. The cardinal had been the disciple of the neopagan Platonic philosopher George Gemistus Pletho at Mistra in the Peloponnese; and now he was introducing into the West the subversive teachings of his Platonic pagan master. Consequently, George structured his *Comparatio* in such a way that it culminated in a passionate denunciation of Pletho and a dire warning against allowing a new Plato to sabotage the West from within. George's jeremiads were obviously directed against Bessarion and his clients, from whom he had become alienated in the 1450s. He divided his *Comparatio* into three books. The first compared Pla-

to and Aristotle as to their relative contributions to science and learning in general. Aristotle easily came out on top. The second treated their philosophic doctrines insofar as they compare to Christian dogma. George showed how Aristotle had intuited the trinitarian nature of God, had believed in the creation of the world *ex nihilo* as well as in divine providence, just as he had also asserted the divine creation of each individual soul, human free will, and the reward and punishment of humans in a life after death. Plato, on the contrary, had contradicted Christianity on nearly all these points, and where he agreed it was because he followed the teachings of the poets rather than out of any philosophical profundity. In the third book of the *Comparatio*, George compared the lives and moral teachings of the two philosophers, demonstrating how Plato was a megalomaniac hedonist who had as his successors first Epicurus, and then Mohammed. After explaining the wicked neopaganism of George Gemistus Pletho, George ended with a warning about the coming of a fourth Plato (after Plato, Epicurus, and Mohammed) who would subvert the Latin West.

A devout Platonist and an admirer of Aristotle, who, he believed, was in fundamental agreement with Plato, Bessarion completed the first draft of his response to George rather quickly, by January 1459. Several things about this response are unusual. To be sure, Bessarion sought to respond to George point by point, dividing his response into three books corresponding to George's three books, as he demonstrated in book 1 that Plato was not only a master of Greek science, logic, and rhetoric, but also, in book 2, very much in harmony with Christian beliefs, as opposed to Aristotle, and, in book 3, a paragon of pagan virtue. Yet, though his audience was the educated elite of Latin Christendom, Bessarion wrote his response in Greek. Furthermore, although George's anti-Platonic polemic culminated in an exposé of the Platonic paganism of Bessarion's teacher George Gemistus Pletho, Bessarion ignored completely this crucial aspect of George's *Comparatio* and

limited his work to a defence of Plato exclusively. Finally, though addressing a Latin audience, Bessarion's sources were overwhelmingly Greek, as he quoted only a limited number of Latin classical sources, and virtually no medieval sources despite the vast scholastic philosophical literature available on the issues in question.

Bessarion remedied the first problem by myself translating his Greek text into Latin, calling the resulting text the *Liber Defensionum*. He never addressed the second problem, deciding, quite rightly, that discussing Pletho's religious ideas and teaching would be dangerous for a Roman cardinal. As for the third problem, Bessarion initially ignored it. So, in 1466 he published the *Liber Defensionum*. However, almost immediately he withdrew the work from circulation. He must have taken to heart friendly criticism of the *Liber Defensionum*.

By having the skilled humanist Niccolò Perotti revise the Latin of the *Liber Defensionum* and changing its title to *In Calumniatorem Platonis*, Bessarion took care of the linguistic form in which his work presented itself to a Latin audience. The issue of George Gemistus Pletho he steadfastly continued to avoid like the plague. It was in order to address the third issue, namely, the lack of scholastic sources in a work meant to be read by Latin theologians and philosophers, that Giovanni Gatti enters the story.

Born in Messina about 1420, Gatti entered the Dominican Order in his native city. We know little else about him until 1451 when he scored a spectacular success in a scholastic disputation before Pope Nicholas V in Rome. From that point on we can trace his career as a university professor in various Italian cities and also, most crucially, as a visitor to the Genoese owned Greek island of Chios, where he either learned or greatly improved his knowledge of Greek. His career hit a speed bump, however, when his attempt to establish himself in 1466 at the court of King Matthias Corvinus in Hungary proved abortive and by 1467 he found himself back in Italy, in Rome, to be precise. Luckily for him, Gatti's failed Hungarian

gambit proved to be a *felix culpa* since in Rome Bessarion took him into his cardinalial *famiglia* and in doing so made Gatti's fortune. Eventually, after he had helped Bessarion with the *In Calumniatorem Platonis*, the cardinal rewarded him by using his influence with Pope Sixtus IV to have him named the bishop of Cefalù in his native Sicily. Sixtus even tried to make Gatti the bishop of the larger diocese of Catania, but King John II of Aragon blocked that move. Gatti died in retirement in his birth city of Messina in 1484.

It is easy to see why Bessarion valued Gatti. He was already a diligent reader of Thomas Aquinas before he ever came to Italy because of the fourteenth-century translations into Greek of Thomas' *Summa contra Gentiles*, most of the *Summa Theologiae*, and other works by Demetrius and Prochorus Cydones. Once in Italy, as the evidence of his Latin library suggests, Bessarion absorbed Latin scholasticism primarily as a student of the great Dominican thinker despite being the Cardinal Protector of the Franciscan Order and having Franciscan theologians as part of his household. Probably most importantly, Gatti was a Thomist theologian who knew Greek. As a Roman cardinal, Bessarion always required his closest collaborators to know Greek. This confluence of Bessarion's needs and Gatti's competencies produced the *Notata*.

Initially, the plan was for Gatti to write the *Notata* in Bessarion's voice and for Bessarion to incorporate the *Notata* whole with some minor revisions into the *In Calumniatorem Platonis* as the new book 3, inserted between the original books 2 and 3 of the *In Calumniatorem Platonis*. The new book 3 would answer from a Latin scholastic perspective George of Trebizond's arguments concerning Aristotle's agreement with the fundamental dogmas of Christianity. In the event, the new book 3 took up fully one third of the 1469 *In Calumniatorem Platonis*, as Bessarion's original book 3 now became book 4 of the *In Calumniatorem Platonis*. But when Bessarion began to work on the stylistic revisions that would make Gatti's contribu-

tion more consistent with the style and format of the rest of the *In Calumniatorem Platonis*, he eventually threw up his hands and stopped half way through. Thereafter, he changed from revising the *Notata* to exploiting it as a storehouse of scholastic lore for the new book 3 that he would first write in Greek and then translate into Latin. Subsequently, a humanist, probably Perotti but possibly also another humanist in the cardinal's entourage, revised Bessarion's Latin, and it was this last version that one reads in the 1469 edition of the *In Calumniatorem Platonis*. This process of translation and revision, had one amusing result. The humanist reviser(s), looking at Bessarion's Latin and Greek, invariably and unintentionally gave the Latin of the myriad scholastic quotations of Gatti's *Notata* appropriated by Bessarion a humanistic and classical patina that they quite lacked in the original.

So, one may ask, what sort of scholastic storehouse did Gatti provide Bessarion? Not all of the *Notata* survives, but we have about four-fifths of it and therefore certainly enough to form well founded judgments about the work. Ridiculing the way George formulated his arguments, Gatti reframed them into what he deemed proper propositions, which he then methodically proceeded to refute. For instance, in what he called "chapter two" of book 2 of George's *Comparatio*, Gatti identified eighteen propositions deserving of refutation. He then answered them in order: *ad primum*, *ad secundum*, *ad tertium*, and so on. The result was that nowhere did Gatti actually quote George. Rather Gatti always responded to his own scholastic formulations. Also, though he might revise Gatti's Latin style, Bessarion really could not escape the scholastic structure of Gatti's text without discarding most of it, which of course he did not do. Not surprisingly, therefore, in the sixteenth century the French humanist Aristotelian Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples criticised the *In Calumniatorem Platonis* as the product of a team rather than of Bessarion himself because of the obvious heterogeneity of style and structure one found in the work. We may

note, however, that Bessarion did not carry over into the *In Calumniatorem Platonis* one striking characteristic of the *Notata*, namely, the scorn that Gatti, the professional theologian, expressed for the humanist George of Trebizond as a mere *grammaticus* who had made a fool of himself trying to navigate the deep waters of philosophy and theology. For Bessarion in the *In Calumniatorem Platonis* to mock George as a humanist would have meant deeply offending not only important members of his own entourage, but also a significant segment of the audience that he wanted to win over to his side.

The contentions of George that Gatti specifically refuted were: that Plato was a polytheist, worshipping not only multiple gods but also demons, and that Plato got his ideas on the immortality of the soul from the poets; that Aristotle placed God outside the universe beyond the first sphere and not within the first sphere; that Aristotle believed God to be the efficient cause of the universe, creating the universe freely *ex nihilo*; that Aristotle did not call God a divine animal; that Aristotle had an inkling of the divine Trinity based on the trinitarian vestiges imprinted all over creation and that he expressed this opinion in book 2 of his book *On the Heavens*. Gatti no doubt refuted George's arguments concerning Aristotle's belief in the divine creation of each individual soul and on the immortality of the soul as well as on human free will, but we have lost these sections of the *Notata*. I do believe, however, that it can be shown that Bessarion's arguments on these points in the new book 3 of the *In Calumniatorem Platonis* were directly taken from the lost parts of the *Notata*.

In any case, on all these points Gatti heavily relied on quotations and citations of scholastic authorities to demonstrate the falsity of George's assertions. As to be expected and no doubt to Bessarion's satisfaction, the scholastic authority Gatti most cited by far was Thomas Aquinas. Indeed, to show how wrong George was, Gatti, speaking we should remember, in Bessarion's voice,

called Thomas a "great Platonist" (*magnus Platonicus*). Bessarion refrained from repeating this claim in the *In Calumniatorem Platonis*, but otherwise appropriated whole cloth almost all of Gatti's quotations and citations of Thomas. Gatti's second most cited authority was Averroes, an author whom we may well doubt the extent to which Bessarion had read. Gatti also liked to cite the other great Arab authority, Avicenna, with whom, again, it is dubious that Bessarion had much familiarity through reading his works, though he did have at least one work of Avicenna in his library. To be sure, Gatti happily quoted Augustine's statements on Plato's compatibility with Christianity, but he quoted far more often medieval scholastic sources. As a Dominican, he of course quoted Albert the Great. However, he quoted many more times John Duns Scotus and other theologians of the Franciscan school. To this mix he added the Augustinian theologian Gregory of Rimini and secular theologians such as Henry of Ghent, Walter Burley, and John Wylton. In short, Gatti was intent on showing that the whole medieval scholastic tradition was arraigned against George's interpretation of Plato and Aristotle. Oddly enough, Gatti twice let slip that this depiction of the scholastic tradition may not have been as unanimous as he pretended, and both times he seems to have been referring to the views of fellow Dominicans, one of whom may have been the inquisitor and papal theologian Salvo Cassetta.

Bessarion accepted into the *In Calumniatorem Platonis* the majority of Gatti's scholastic citations, but he was more judicious when it came to Gatti's attempts to flaunt his Greek erudition. True, he took over Gatti's reference to what were at the time still untranslated orations of Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzenus, but he completely ignored Gatti's attempt to pronounce on the views of Plotinus and Proclus. One demonstration of Gatti's knowledge of Greek, however, is striking. George had argued that the medieval translator was wrong to translate as *animale* Aristotle's reference to God in *Metaphysics* XII

as the divine ζῳον when what was meant was a living thing, a being. Gatti condemned George as an ignorant and dishonest translator for rejecting *animale* as the correct translation. In his own translation of the *Metaphysics*, made in the 1440s and eventually dedicated to King Alfonso of Naples, Bessarion preemptively agreed with George and translated ζῳον as *vivens*, not *animale*; but now, in the *In Calumniatorem Platonis*, reflecting the polemical spirit of the work, he appropriated Gatti's criticism and stated that George was quite wrong to change *animale* to *vivens*.

Gatti's *Notata* was never intended for publication. It was an in-house memorandum written by a client for the use of his patron. So, we are immensely lucky to have it at all, let alone something like four fifths of it. It has survived because when Bessarion left for his legation to France in April 1472 to promote the Crusade, he packed up his whole library and deposited it with Duke Federigo of Montefeltro on his way north. After Bessarion died on the way back to Rimini on 18 November 1472, Duke Federigo kept faith with his old friend and saw to the transfer of Bessarion's library to Venice as the cardinal's will specified. Gatti's *Notata*, as an unbound bundle of fascicles that had been kept in the library as still potentially useful in Bessarion's ongoing battle with George of Trebizond, was caught up in these movements. At some subsequent moment after arriving in Venice, the bundle containing the fascicles of the *Notata* escaped – if that is the right word – the cases containing Bessarion's manuscripts. Where it went is anybody's guess, but fortunately it remained in the Venetian book market and made it back to the Marciana as an external acquisition, bound in Lat. VI, 61 (coll. 2592), since at some point it was bound as part of a miscellaneous volume that consisted of an early draft of the new book 3 of the *In Calumniatorem Platonis*, which made sense, and a work of Antonius Lull, to which, of course, the *Notata* had no connection. Before the fascicles of the *Notata* were bound into Lat. VI,

61, however, some of them were lost as were also some individual folios and the surviving remainder was partly bound in the wrong order so that until recently it was difficult to understand its exact nature. Thus, inasmuch as Giovanni Gatti could never acknowledge the relationship of the *Notata* to the *In Calumniatorem Platonis*, up

to today the spectacular display of scholastic erudition that appeared in the 1469 edition of the *In Calumniatorem Platonis* plausibly seemed to have been the product of Bessarion's own broad culture, just as he and Gatti had planned it to be after the latter entered the cardinal's household in 1467.

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The Greek Sources of George of Trebizond's Translation of Plato's *Laws*

Fabio Pagani

There is nothing new in the observation that Cardinal Bessarion was a highly erudite collector of Greek manuscripts who played a critical role in the effort to rescue Greek books at the time of the Fall of Constantinople.¹ In recent years, however, scholars have shed much light not only on the cardinal's work as a collector of manuscripts (both Greek and Latin), but also on the complex network of relationships and intellectual activities that developed around those manuscripts. The study of his extraordinary *Nachlass*,² in combination with new historical information, has allowed modern scholars to reconstruct in greater detail, and therefore to appreciate more fully, the intellectual life of the *Academia Bessarionea*.³

The current exhibition hosted in the Libreria Pisani at the Museo Correr in Venice is designed to document precisely this aspect of Bessarion's work, by focusing on his most important philosophical treatise, the *In Calumniatorem Platonis* (henceforth, *ICP*). In the eleven years between 1458 and 1469, Bessarion worked on the *ICP* in close connection with various members of his intellectual circle. While studying the text of Plato and jotting down his first Greek drafts, the cardinal was helped by Theodore Gaza, as we can see from Gaza's notes in MS Marc. Gr. Z. 199. To serve as the source of Bessarion's *ICP* book 3, the Dominican Giovanni Gatti assembled the treatise of *Notata* (Gatt. *Not.*), recently edited by John Monfasani. For the Latin text published in August 1469, the cardinal was indebted to his secretary Niccolò Perotti, as Monfasani has shown in a pair of ground-breaking studies from the beginning of the 1980s.⁴ Gaza, Gatti, and Perotti, along with many others, were members

of Bessarion's *Academia*. So, too, up to a certain point, was George of Trebizond, the 'slanderer' (*calumniator*) of Plato, against whom the *ICP* was aimed.⁵ In an effort to expand our knowledge of those who belonged to this complex network of scholars, this chapter focuses on Trebizond and provides a study of the Greek manuscripts he used for his translation of Plato's *Laws* (Trap., *Plat. Lg.*).⁶ Indeed, it was precisely on the basis of his own translation of the *Laws* that George composed some of the harshest passages of his *Comparatio philosophorum Aristotelis et Platonis* (Trap. *Comp.*),⁷ the vehement attack against Plato that prompted Bessarion to write the *ICP*.

George of Trebizond, a Cretan by birth who made a career in Italy as a professor of Latin rhetoric, was introduced to the Roman Pontiff by none other than Cardinal Bessarion himself at the time of the Council of Florence. Subsequently hired as *secretarius* in the papal curia, George became under Nicholas V (1447-55) one of the most prolific translators in Rome, producing a long list of Latin versions of Greek patristic and philosophical texts in the space of only a few years.⁸

Trebizond's extensive corpus of translations, still confined to unedited manuscripts (with only a few exceptions),⁹ has been largely neglected by modern scholars.¹⁰ No doubt this is due to the traditionally bad press given to humanistic translations, which have been judged to be biased (at best) or entirely unreliable (at worse).¹¹ It is true that the methodological assumptions of humanists make their work of little value, when not entirely misleading, for textual critics attempting to reconstruct the original form of an ancient text. Yet, for those who are interested in the re-appropriation and reception of classical texts during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, it is a serious mistake to ignore the pivotal role played by translations in this process. For even if they do not fare well among modern philologists, some humanistic translations were widely disseminated among contemporaries. This was certainly the case for Trebizond's translation of Eusebius' *Praeparatio Evangelica*, which became

a milestone of Renaissance humanism. George's translation of Plato's *Laws* can hardly claim such an impact, since it circulated for no more than a few decades. This was certainly because of the devastating review, the *Correctio Legum*, that Cardinal Bessarion first published as the fifth book of his *ICP* in 1469. Yet, as I have argued in a recent article, the combined study of the translation and its review provides a treasure trove of information about scholarly practices of the fifteenth century, as well as representing the basis for Ficino's own translation of the *Laws*.¹²

In that same article, I presented some preliminary results of my work on both the translation and the review by Cardinal Bessarion; this research pointed to the necessity of philological study of the material as a whole.¹³ To be effective, such a study needs to examine not only the accuracy of Bessarion's criticisms of George's translation, but also their fairness. In the case of a humanistic translation produced before the invention of printing, no comprehensive assessment of its quality is possible as long as there is no precise knowledge of the sources from which the translation was made.¹⁴ We can have no real discussion of the translator's method, his fidelity, or linguistic competence without preliminary research into what was the actual Greek text he translated.¹⁵ Since we still stand in need of such an investigation for Trebizond's translation of the *Laws*,¹⁶ in what follows, I provide a first attempt to identify the sources employed for the translation. Based on my results, I conclude that George used at least two manuscripts for his translation, namely Laur. Plut. 80.17 (L) and Marc. Gr. Z. 187 (N). By placing these identifications in their historical context, in the final part of this chapter I compare George's Greek sources for his translation with those available to Bessarion, therefore bringing my contribution to a better understanding of the relationship between the two men within the broader context of the *Academia Bessarionea*.

A few words to clarify the methodology of this study and its limits. First, humanists generally translated *ad*

sententiam, that is, they sought to render the general sense more than the exact words of the original text. Consequently, the reconstruction of the Greek text underlying their translations is often speculative. In the particular case of George of Trebizond, the difficulties are even greater, since he regarded as his prerogative to skip passages that he did not want to translate. He only accepted literal renderings as a working methodology for the translation of the Bible, following Jerome, and for the treatises of Aristotle, where he *had left out nothing, and added nothing, and tried everywhere to render the very word order without alterations*.¹⁷ For other 'profane' texts, such as historical works and Plato himself, he not only allowed more freedom in translating, but even recommended adopting a non-literal approach. So, from George of Trebizond's point of view, Poggio Bracciolini (with whom he was otherwise on bad terms) should not be criticised for his free rendering of Diodorus Siculus.¹⁸

1 George of Trebizond gives us no direct information to identify his Greek source(s) for his translation. Furthermore, no conclusive result could be achieved by merely gathering historical information about the circulation of manuscripts of the *Laws* at the time. The only way to define Trebizond's Greek text with certainty is to study the Latin text of the translation and identify passages that correspond to distinctive readings of the different branches of the manuscript transmission of Plato's *Laws*.

Second, my study compares large samples of the Latin translation with significant portions of the Greek manuscript transmission, but, due to the length of Plato's *Laws*, I cannot claim to have collated the entirety of the evidence available. In particular, I rely on the study of books 1-4 and of selected sections of books 6 (= Plat. *Lg.* 751a-762c), 8 (= Plat. *Lg.* 828a-836b), 10 (= Plat. *Lg.* 884a-893b), and 12 (= Plat. *Lg.* 941a-948a). On the other hand, the extensive portions of the text collated provide enough evidence to back my conclusions.

Therefore, the remaining part of this chapter is divided into the following sections: 1 identification of the textual family on which the translation should be placed through the examination of the readings; 2 within the textual family, identification of the principal manuscript used by Trebizond; 3 discussion about the second manuscript used by Trebizond; 4 consequences of the identifications.

It is Levi Arnold Post who has drawn up the *stemma codicum* of Plato's *Laws*. As Post has argued, the manuscript tradition of this dialogue is subdivided into two distinct families (codices A and O) from the beginning to the fifth book (*Lg.* 1.625-5.746b8). From book 5 to 12, O becomes a copy of A and the two families are reduced to one.¹⁹ Therefore, it is the first part of the text that allows us to place Trebizond's translation into the family of one or the other of these two codices.

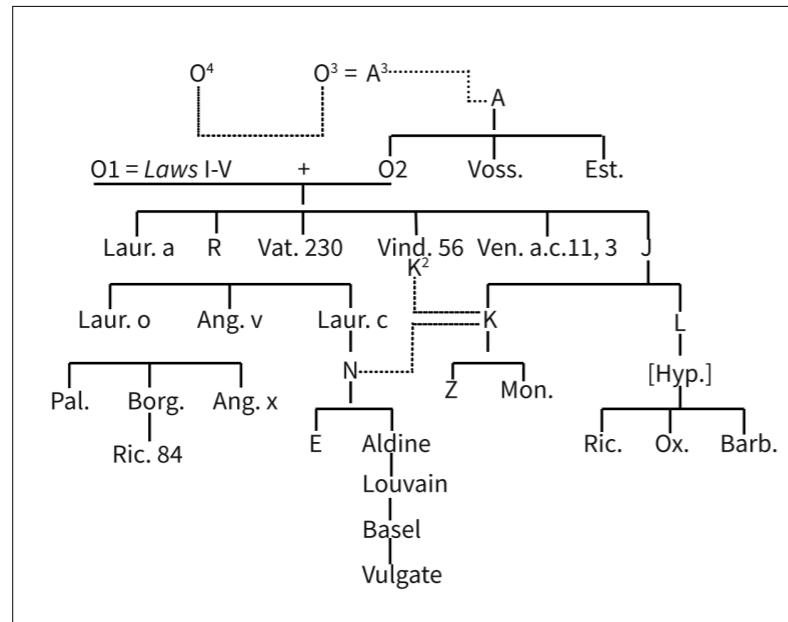


Figure 1
Plato's Laws: Stemma codicum
by L.A. Post (1934)

One need only skim the apparatus of Des Places' edition to realise that Trebizond's translation always follows the second family of the text of the *Laws*, namely O, against the readings of A. The following cases demonstrate this:²⁰

Book I 625a1 *affirmamus* (φαῖμεν AO : φαμέν O^c [i eraso]) 625a6 *nos* [...] *iocundius* (ἀηδῶς A : ἀηδῶς ἡμᾶς O) 627d6 *mihi quoque* (ἐμοὶ A : καὶ ἐμοὶ O [sed καὶ p.n.]) 635b4 *solis* (μόνοις O et i.m. a² : νόμοις A)²¹ 638b4 *de ipsa re* (περὶ αὐτοῦ [...] ἐπιτηδεύματος O : περὶ αὐτοῦ [...] ἐπιτηδεύματος A) 638d4 *utentes* (χρώμενοι O : om. A) 640e1 *rem ipsam* (αὐτῷ τῷ πράγματι O⁴ [i i.r. ex v et i s.v.] : αὐτῶν AO) 644b3 *per totam uitam* (διὰ βίου παντὶ A Eus. Πι.μ.Ο⁴ et (i s.v.) O⁴ : διὰ βίου παντὸς O) 645e4 *certe* (ναὶ O : om. A et alii sec. O⁴ i.m. [τὸ ναὶ ἐν ἄλλοις οὐ κεῖται])
Book II 654c1 *utrum et bona* (πότερον εἰ καὶ καλὰ A : πότερον καὶ καλὰ O) 659a4 *alio* (θεάτρον A Eus. et ἄ. i.m.Ο⁴ : θατέρου O) 665b6 *saliat* (χορεύουσιν A : χορεύουσιν O) 668b6 *diximus* (ἔφαμεν O : φαμέν A Πι.μ.Ο⁴) 670a7 *nostris* (χωρικῆς A Πι.μ.Ο⁴ et [o s.v.] O⁴ : χωρικῆς O) 674a7 *seruo uel serue* (δούλην μήτε δοῦλον A cum Eusebii ION Stobaei SMA : δοῦλον μήτε δούλην O Stobaei L δούλους Gal.)

Book III 678d3 *aliquid* (πού τι O : που A) 679b8 *iustissime* (γενναιότατα A Stob. et γρ. i.m.Ο³ [Π sine τὸ βιβλίον superscr. O⁴] : δικαιοτάτα O) 682e4 *exules* (τὰς τότε φυγάδας A Πι.μ.Ο⁴ et [ὰς et ἄς s.v.] O⁴ : τοὺς τότε φυγάδας O [sed τοὺς O^c ex τὰς]) 683a8 *nunc* (νῦν O : πρὸ νῦν A Πι.μ.Ο⁴) 687c10 *uiri et* (ἄνδρες A et [ἐν τοῖς ἀντιγράφοις] i.m.Ο⁴ : ἄνδρες καὶ O) 687d1 *precamur* (ξυνευχοίμεθ' ἂν A [υχ i.r.] : ξυνευχοίμεθ' ἂν O)
Book IV 708d6 *tamen* (ὅντως A Πι.μ.Ο⁴ et [spir. len. et vt s.v.] O⁴ : ὅμως O et γρ. i.m.a³ γρ. οὕτως [eadem manu] superscr. i.m.a³) 712b5 *exaudiat*- (ἀκούσας A : ὑπακούσας O) 714c1 *si qua* (ἤτις A [sed in ἄλλ' alt. λ i.r. loco duar. litt. : an εἴ τις?] et [ἤ s.v.] O⁴ : εἴ τις O) 716c5 *si* (ἤ A Πι.μ.Ο⁴ : εἴ O) 719b6 *ut dicant* (ποιεῖν A Πι.μ.Ο⁴ et s.v. O⁴ : λέγειν O) 723c2 *prooemium* (προοίμια A Πι.μ.Ο⁴ et [α s.v.] O⁴ : προοίμιον O).

Once we exclude codex A, we can automatically exclude its apographs, namely Est. and Voss.²²

2 So far I have established that Trebizond used either O or one of its copies. Now the question becomes: did he use O itself or a copy? And if a copy, which one(s)? At this point, the situation becomes more complex. According to Post's work, there are fifteen²³ complete²⁴ manuscripts of the text of the *Laws* that could correspond to Trebizond's working copy/copies.²⁵

Since Post did not publish his own collations, we can know the readings of only nine of these fifteen manuscripts, thanks to the collations of Bekker²⁶ (O, Pal.,

Ang. v, E, R) and Stallbaum²⁷ (Laur. a, c, o, L). For the remaining six witnesses (J, Ox., K, N, Vat. 230, Vind. 56) we must rely on selected readings published by other scholars, especially Post himself. Based on the analysis of the available readings, I was unable to identify one single codex that George used as a constant exemplar.

If we follow Des Places' apparatus, we can observe how Trebizond systematically ignores the readings of A, but he occasionally deviates from O as well.

Lg. 1.644a6 *Sed nos de verbo* (Ἡμεῖς δὲ μὴδὲν ὀνόματι A O] Ἡμεῖς δὲ μὴδὲν ὀνόματι Eus.).

Lg. 5.744d7 *nam hec utraque ab utrisque hiis pariuntur* (ὡς ἀμφοτέρων τικτόντων ταῦτα ἀμφοτέρα ἀπογρ.] ὡς ἀμφοτέρα τικτόντων ταῦτα ἀμφοτέρα A O Stob.). As he often does, Trebizond turns an active sentence into a passive one. Nevertheless, one can clearly see how Trebizond identified in *uterque* (here: *ab utrisque*) the subject of the verb *pario*. Since, however, the verb in Greek is expressed with a genitive absolute, the subject translated by Trebizond with *ab utrisque* could only be in the genitive.

Lg. 8.842b3 *in Creta uero nullus negabit re ipsa fieri* (ἐν Κρήτῃ δὲ οὐδεὶς ἄλλως ἂν ὑπολάβοι δεῖν γίγνεσθαι] ἐν Κρήτῃ δὲ οὐδεὶς ἄλλος ἂν ὑπολάβοι δεῖν γίγνεσθαι O). Critical apparatus by Des Places: ἄλλως L² : ἄλλος AOL. The translation with the verb *negabit* presupposes that the reading translated by Trebizond is ἄλλως rather than ἄλλος, because in this second case the verb would have no reason to be negative.

By their nature, such punctual correspondences could still have occurred by chance. Nevertheless, while according to the critical apparatus by Des Places, it would seem that Trebizond's translation reflects three different sources,²⁸ the collations printed by Stallbaum make it clear that there is only one manuscript where these various readings occur *all together*, namely MS L.²⁹ As Post has demonstrated, L contains some good conjectures not otherwise attested in the O family (except for L's copies, of course).³⁰ Since Trebizond's translation generally reflects readings of the O family, but also contains in some rare cases individual variant readings of L, I decided to study L in Florence.³¹

One only needs to leaf through the Laurentian codex to realise that the text of the *Laws* and the *Epinomis* has been submitted to careful study. Almost all of L's *folia* present *capitulatio* notes in a hand that writes using a rather sloppy script full of abbreviations.³² These notes are no random thoughts about the text. Rather, they furnish the manuscript with an index that goes from the first to the last *folium* of the text of the *Laws* and *Epinomis*. This alone suggests a somewhat professional interest in these two dialogues, rather than Plato more generally.

Second, the hand bears certain similarities to that George of Trebizond himself.³³ A few letter's forms

In II circa principium. Indoctus ergo atque indisciplinatus ille dicendus qui nunquam chorea usus est.

This comment lends itself to comparison with a note written in the lower right margin on f. 22r of the Florentine codex L:

Ση(μείωσαι) ὁ ἀπαίδευτος ἀχόρευτος

seem characteristic: bilobular β, or what we might call 'telephone-receiver' with an enlarged upper lobe (β), an almost cruciform ψ with the middle stroke almost flattened, ξ inclined to the left, groups αρ and ερ with ρ always suspended. Nevertheless, the Trebizond of the autograph notes to Vat. Lat. 4534 generally writes a low γ, while the hand annotating MS L uses both the low and high forms of the same letter (an example of the low γ is 17r: λογισμός), and in the high form the letter is slightly curved. These slight divergences could be explained by the passage of time between the first notes and the second. Since we still have no study of the evolution of Trebizond's writing, this must remain only a hypothesis.

But the final settlement of this issue is only secondary, because there is additional evidence to be considered. There are tell-tell correspondences between Trebizond's writings and marginal notes in MS L. Already in 1984, Monfasani was able to discover and publish in MS Torino BNU G.II.36, some comments in Trebizond's hand.³⁴ These comments are no fully finished treatise, but they represent George's personal observations on various books of Plato's *Laws*. One of these comments in George's hand, about book 2, reads:

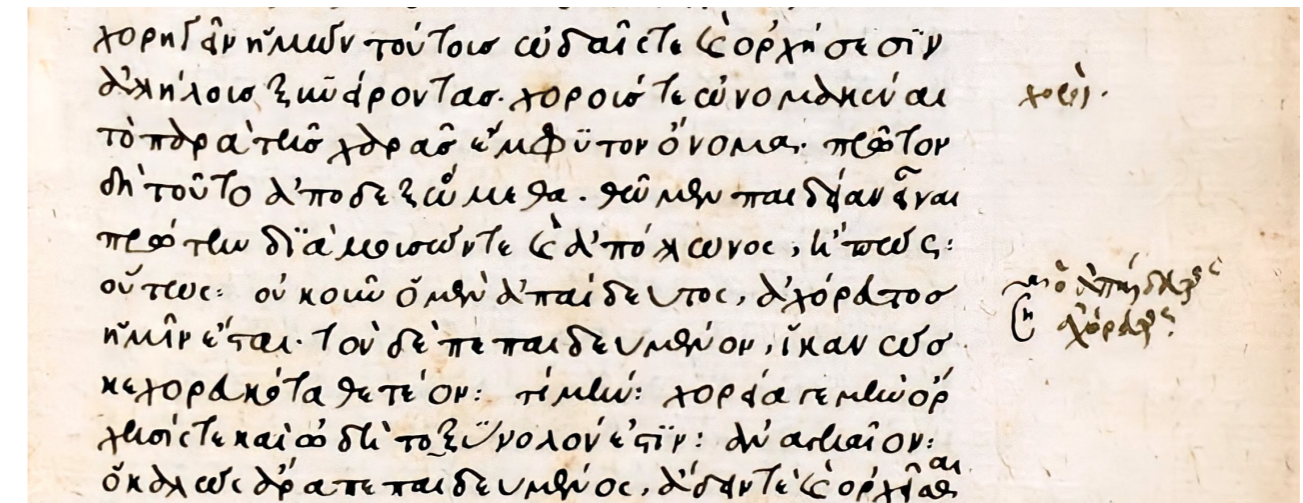


Figure 2 Florence, The Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Ms. Plut. 80.17 (L), f. 22r. (= Plat. Lg. 2.653d-654c)

It is evident that the annotator of L was struck by the essential correlation established by Plato between choirs and authentic *paideia*. This is another element that links the manuscript to Trebizond. But, in addition, it is also possible to cite two other pieces of evidence. First, the Latin *In II circa principium* coincides perfectly with the position in which the marginal note in manuscript L is located: on the second leaf from the beginning of book 2 of the *Laws*. It is therefore clear that both refer to precisely the same passage. (Incidentally, a generic reference, like the one given by Trebizond, would only seem useful in the presence of a system of indexing within the codex.) Second, Trebizond habitually uses either *indoctus* or *indisciplinatus* to translate the Greek ἀπαίδευτος, while *qui nunquam chorea usus est* is a clear rendering of the Greek ἀχόρευτος. Plainly, therefore, the Latin note is a slightly expanded translation (*dicendus*) of the Greek marginal note.

Nor is the case of f. 22r an isolated one. One may also cite some cases of general correspondence between

George's autograph comments in the Turin manuscript and the notes contained in L. For example, there is a shared interest in the notes of L (42v ὄρα ἄργος μεσσήνη λακεδαίμων. ἱστορία.) and Trebizond's notes on the affairs of the Doric states. In particular, the Dorians mentioned in Trebizond's Latin notes (*ubi Dorios et constitutionem factam post bellum Troianum reprehendit*) correspond to the marginal note δωριεῖς in L that spans the entire *folium* at f. 43v. And the attack against Plato for allegedly acting as a second Nestor (*quod Nestor ipse alter sit*), matches the note νέστωρ in MS L.

If all the arguments put forward so far are not enough to demonstrate the identity of the annotator of the Laurentian codex L, then further, unequivocal proof can be adduced. At f. 65v, Plat. Lg. 716c5, where Plato quotes the celebrated passage by Protagoras about God being the measure of all things, a marginal note, in a hand that can be identified with certainty as George of Trebizond's, writes: μέτρον ὁ θεὸς πάντων (God is the measure of all things).

In light of the philological correlation between the variants of L and Trebizond's translation, the 'professional' indexing of L, the identification of Trebizond's hand in L, and the relationship of dependence between the marginalia of the Laurentian codex and the comments written by Trebizond in his own hand, we can now conclude

that he must have used codex L as a Greek source for his Latin translation.³⁵ Although we cannot yet say how it came into his possession, there are two possibilities: either the manuscript was given to Nicholas V by a Florentine library (most likely that of St. Mark's),³⁶ or it was Trebizond's personal codex.³⁷

3 This conclusion, however, raises new questions. I stated above that my analysis of the readings known by Bekker and Stallbaum did not lead to the identification of *one sole* witness. In fact, L itself has mistakes from

which Trebizond's translation is immune. For example, L contains two large *lacunae* which do not affect George's translation.³⁸

Lg. 1.634a3-4 πρὸς τὰ δεξιὰ καὶ κομψὰ καὶ θεωπευτικά ἀδυνατοῦσαν· ἢ πρὸς ἀμφοτέρω;] κομψὰ καὶ θεωπευτικά ἀδυνατοῦσαν ἢ πρὸς *om.* J. (and therefore L) George translates: *secundis uero atque iocundis ac assentatiunculis nullo pacto fortitudinem esse sanxerunt? An qua utrisque?*³⁹

Lg. 1.635a8-b1 ἀλλὰ ἴασιν ἐξ αὐτοῦ συμβαίνει γίγνεσθαι τῷ μὴ φθόνῳ τὰ λεγόμενα ἀλλ' εὐνοίᾳ δεχομένῳ] τῷ μὴ φθόνῳ τὰ λεγόμενα ἀλλ' εὐνοίᾳ δεχομένῳ *om.* J. (and therefore L) Trebizond's translation reads: *cum facile hinc, si quis non cum inuidia sed cum beniuolentia accipiat, remedium inueniatur.*

There is only one possible explanation: George had to have at least a second manuscript available for his use. Yet, before exploring this route, we should perhaps consider whether the use of a second manuscript would be uncharacteristic of George's translation habits.

Only for less than half of Trebizond's translations are we now able to define the particular recension of the Greek text with some precision.⁴⁰ Yet, it is a fact that for some of those translations for which we have information about the Greek recension, such as Basil's *Adversus Eunomium*, Aristotle's *De generatione et corruptione* and *Historia animalium*, Trebizond used two or even three different manuscripts (see "Appendix II"). Indeed, on occasion he even made use of previous Latin translations. This is not to say that occasionally he did not use one manuscript only, as he says about his translation of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. But the use of multiple sources for the translation

was certainly normal for him. Nor was Trebizond's practice as a translator an exception to that of other contemporary humanists active in Rome.⁴¹ As a result, the philological necessity to postulate a second manuscript source is not contradicted by the historic evidence.

Which other manuscript(s) did Trebizond use? From a philological point of view, the best approach would be to study systematically the text of Trebizond's translation and discover which manuscript(s) complement those readings carried by L. Indeed, the additional source(s) should contain all the readings that could not have been derived from L. But since the text of Plato's *Laws* is very long and collations are not available for all the surviving manuscripts, we must at least choose portions of the text for careful analysis.

If we exclude those codices belonging to the same branch in the *stemma* as L, and therefore characterised

by the same *lacunae* (J, Ox., Ric., Barb.) and if we exclude those codices that arrived in the West only after George's death, there remains only a handful of manuscripts to examine (O, Vat. 230, Vind. 56, Laur. c, Laur. o, K, N, R). Yet, it is hardly necessary to collate all of them. We can start the investigation by looking at those manuscripts that were more readily available to Trebizond in Rome. Based on the information gathered in "Appendix II", the Greek codices with which Trebizond worked were generally obtained either from Bessarion's collection or from the papal library. In the papal library, which was growing rapidly in those years thanks to the hard work done by Nicholas V and his emissary Giovanni Tortelli, there are now only two Platonic manuscripts from the period that could be useful for our investigations: codex R and Vat. 230. In Bessarion's collection, there are three manuscripts of Plato's *Laws* to be considered. The famous MS E, the luxury codex written by John Rhosus was only

commissioned by Bessarion at a later date, which excludes it from consideration. Then, there is MS K, which had formerly been part of the library of his teacher Gemistos Pletho; yet, the significant textual differences⁴² between this manuscript and Trebizond's own text allow us to rule out this option. Finally, Bessarion also owned MS N, which seems to be the most plausible candidate for Trebizond's second codex. Yet, no firm claims can be ventured as long as one cannot prove that Trebizond's translation depends from distinctive readings contained in N only.

Having fully collated MS N for *Laws* 1-4 and selected passages of books 6, 8, 10, 12,⁴³ I can furnish more solid evidence. A good example of the relationship between Trebizond's translation and MS N is provided by Plat. *Lg.* 3.700c5 δεδογμένον] δεδομένον (γ erased) N. Trap.: *tribuebatur.*

Des Places prints the following text:

τὸ δὲ κύριον τούτων γινῶναι τε καὶ ἅμα γινόντα δικάσαι, ζημιῶν τε αὖ τὸν μὴ πειθόμενον, οὐ σύριγξ ἦν οὐδέ τινες ἄμουσοι βοαὶ πλήθους, καθάπερ τὰ νῦν, οὐδ' αὖ κρότοι ἐπαίνους ἀποδιδόντες, ἀλλὰ τοῖς μὲν γεγρονόσι περὶ παιδείων δεδογμένον ἀκούειν ἦν αὐτοῖς μετὰ σιγῆς διὰ τέλους, παισὶ δὲ καὶ παιδαγωγοῖς καὶ τῷ πλείστῳ ὄχλῳ ῥάβδου κοσμοῦσης ἢ νοθετήσις ἐγίγνετο (The authority whose duty it was to know these regulations, and, when known, to apply them in its judgments and to penalise the disobedient, was not a pipe nor, as now, the mob's unmusical shoutings, nor yet the clappings which mark applause: in place of this, it was a rule made by those in control of education that they themselves should listen throughout in silence, while the children and their ushers and the general crowd were kept in order by the discipline of the rod). (Transl. by Bury)

In Trebizond's translation (Trap., *Plat. Lg.*), the passage reads as follows:⁴⁴

cognoscere vero ac iudicare et contra facientes damnare non clamoribus multitudinis, ut modo, sed prestantibus in doctrina tribuebatur, qui ad finem usque magno cum silentio audiebant, adulescentes vero pedagogos ac plebem universam virge castigatio exornabat.

As usual, George has exercised a degree of freedom in his rendering. He omitted altogether certain portions of the Greek text which he regarded as redundant, such as the reference to the ‘pipe’ (σύριγξ) and the ‘clappings’ (οὐδ’ αὖ κρότοι ἐπαίνους ἀποδιδόντες).⁴⁵ Then, in an effort to simplify the syntactic structure, he turned the series of infinitives depending upon τὸ δὲ κῦρος into subjects. Yet, in the second part of the sentence, it is hard to see why George would have translated the verb δεδογμένον ἦν (lit. ‘was established, decided’) with *tribuebatur* (lit. ‘was attributed, given’). Even less clear is the reason why George introduced the relative *qui* that has no equivalent in the

Greek text. But if we consider the corruption δεδομένον ἦν (lit. ‘was given’) carried only by MS N,⁴⁶ George’s translation becomes understandable. Having rendered δεδομένον ἦν with *tribuebatur*, George was 1) misled to take the dative as an indirect object (‘to those outstanding in knowledge’) rather than as the agent (‘by those in control of education’) and 2) he was unable to connect *tribuebatur* with the following ἀκούειν (originally an infinitive clause depending from δεδογμένον ἦν), a difficulty which Trebizond resolved by arbitrarily introducing a relative clause.

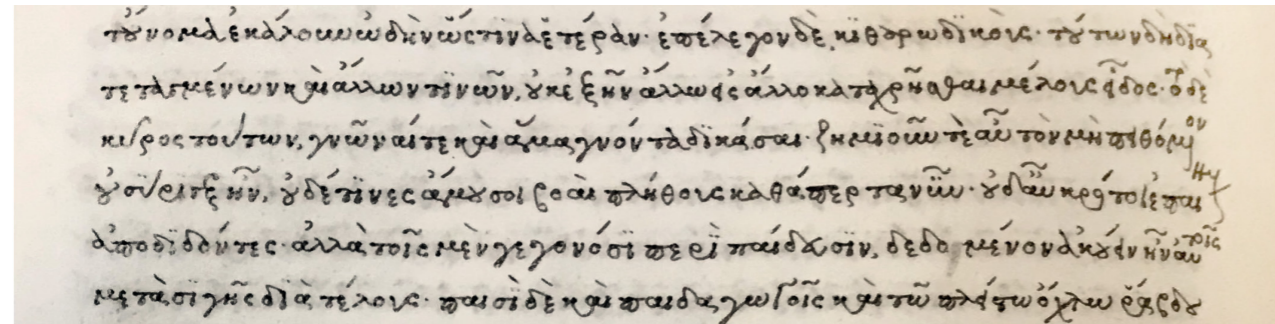


Figure 3 Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Gr. Z. 187 (= 742) (N), f. 192v (= Plat. Lg. 3.700c)

In addition to Lg. 3.700c5, there are also some small omissions in the context of sentences that have been rendered

fairly literally. These omissions are specific to N and are reflected in George’s translation.⁴⁷

[f. 167v] ὀρθῶς] *om.* N (post Trapezuntii versionem scripsit Bessarion s.l.) et Trap.

Plat. Lg. 1.627b5-8 δικαίους ἐλάττους ὄντας βιάσονται δουλούμενοι, καὶ ὅταν μὲν κρατήσωσιν, ἥπτων ἢ πόλις αὐτῆς ὀρθῶς αὐτὴ λέγοιτ’ ἂν ἅμα καὶ κακῆ, ὅπου δ’ ἂν ἥττωνται, κρείττων τε καὶ ἀγαθῆ.

Trap., Plat. Lg. *iustos quoniam pauciores sint insurrexerint, cum quidem vicerint, tum civitas inferior se ipsa pravaque appellabitur, cum vero victi fuerint, superior atque proba.*

τότε] *om.* N (post Trapezuntii versionem scripsit Bessarion s.l.) et Trap.

Plat. Lg. 678c5-9 ΑΘ. Ἄρ’ οὐχ ἄσμενοι μὲν ἑαυτοὺς ἐώρων δι’ ὀλιγότητα ἐν τοῖς περὶ ἐκεῖνον τὸν χρόνον, πορεία δέ, ὥστ’ ἐπ’ ἀλλήλους τότε πορεύεσθαι κατὰ γῆν ἢ κατὰ θάλατταν, σὺν ταῖς τέχναις ὡς ἔπος εἰπεῖν πάντα σχεδὸν ἀπωλώλει; συμμίσγειν οὖν ἀλλήλοις οὐκ ἦν οἶμαι σφόδρα δυνατόν.

Trap., Plat. Lg. *Nonne igitur libenter propter paucitatem alteri alteros temporibus illis conspiciebant? Presertim cum neque terra neque mari transitus ad alios facilis fuerit, omnibus fere deletis una cum artibus, quamobrem conventus hominum non erat ita possibilis.*

καὶ] *om.* N et Trap.

Plat. Lg. 10.892b5 σκληρῶν καὶ μαλακῶν καὶ βαρέων καὶ κούφων

Trap., Plat. Lg. *duris et mollibus ponderosis et levibus.*

One could object that George deliberately omitted distinctive readings of MS N that are reflected in his those words while translating. Yet, there are also some translation:

[f. 208v] Plat. Lg. 6.752c1 μηδένας] μηδένα N. Trap.: *neminem.*

[f. 209r] Plat. Lg. 6.753c7 πινακίων] πινακῶν N. Trap.: *tabulas.*

And there are free renderings by Trebizond that can be explained in the light of a reading contained in MS N:

[f. 191v] ἄπειρον] ἄπειρον N. Trap.: *tantam ut.*

Plat. Lg. 698b7-c3 καὶ πρὸς τούτοις διὰ τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ στόλου κατὰ τε γῆν καὶ κατὰ θάλατταν γενόμενον, φόβον ἄπειρον ἐμβαλόν, δουλείαν ἔτι μείζονα ἐποίησεν ἡμᾶς τοῖς τε ἄρχουσιν καὶ τοῖς νόμοις δουλεῦσαι, καὶ διὰ πάντα ταῦθ’ ἡμῖν συνέπεσε πρὸς ἡμᾶς αὐτοὺς σφόδρα φιλία.

Trap., Plat. Lg. *Et ad hec magnitudo terrestrium marinarumque copiarum tantam formidinem incussit, ut maiore nos et legibus et magistratibus servitute subiecerit, propter hec igitur omnia magnus amor nos alterum ad alterum connectebat.*

The decision to opt for a consecutive clause (*tantam ut...*) can only be explained as a (rather free) rendering for ἄπειρον, not for ἄπορον.

While one or two of these renderings might be attributed to chance, taken *all together* the various passages discussed above provide evidence that George had access to MS N and used it, at least to some extent, for his translation of Plato’s *Laws*. As he had done with his

translations of Basil’s *In Eunomium*, Ptolemy, and Aristotle’s *Historia animalium* and *Problemata*,⁴⁸ this secretary at the papal curia relied on Cardinal Bessarion’s library for the Greek manuscripts he needed for his Latin version of the *Laws*.

⁴ This conclusion provokes a few additional thoughts. First, from a philological point of view, it is now possible to define the role played by George of Trebizond in the manuscript transmission of Plato's *Laws*. For his Latin translation, George employed a Greek text usually based on L, but he also took into account MS N as a secondary source, at a time before N acquired the signs of Bessarion's collation of it with K.

Second, it provides further evidence that George of Trebizond belonged to Bessarion's circle for a number of years and relied on the cardinal's collection for his translation of the *Laws*, as he had done for many of his other Latin versions. Bessarion did not merely lend his manuscripts to co-operate in the larger papal project of translating Greek texts into Latin, but he was directly supportive of George himself. As late as Autumn of 1453 (just 18 months after the fight between George and Poggio), Bessarion was still writing to George to express his personal support for his fellow Byzantine's financial difficulties and was even prepared to apologise to him, if any of his recommendations had caused him offense.⁴⁹

As is well known, their relationship deteriorated catastrophically in the following years.⁵⁰ At first, controversy arose between George and Theodore Gaza, one of Bessarion's closest acolytes within the *Academia*.⁵¹ Then, George felt the Cardinal was threatening the position of his son Andrea within the papal curia.⁵² Finally, George published his controversial *Comparatio Philosophorum Aristotelis et Platonis*. In that treatise, he used his knowledge of the text of Plato, and especially of the *Laws*, to attack not only the ancient philosopher, but also Cardinal Bessarion himself, whose Platonism George regarded as a dangerous threat to Christendom. Reacting to this onslaught, in 1458 Bessarion started to work on his *ICP*. As part of a broader plan to destroy George's scholarly reputation, in the *Correctio Legum* (*ICP* book 5) Bessarion set himself the goal of demonstrating his opponent's incompetence as a translator of Plato. The rationale for this

undertaking was simple – if George was not a competent translator of Plato's text, then his authority as an interpreter of Plato's philosophy was thoroughly undermined.

We are now in a position to compare the Greek sources used by George with those used by Bessarion for *ICP* book 5. George primarily worked with L. Yet, it was N, which figures prominently in this exhibition, that played a pivotal role in this story. A copy of the celebrated Laur. Plut. 85.9, N was produced for Cardinal Bessarion at the time of the Council of Ferrara-Florence by a scribe who has not yet been identified. After the council, the manuscript followed Bessarion to Rome, where it entered his personal library at the headquarters of the *Academia Bessarionea*. It was there that George of Trebizond found it, when in 1450 he started working on his translation of Plato's *Laws* for Pope Nicholas V. By the time George left Rome to go to Naples in 1452, and after his notorious fight with Poggio Bracciolini, the manuscript was returned to Bessarion's library, and George likely had no access to Greek manuscripts of the *Laws* while being away from Rome.⁵³ When Bessarion started working on the *Correctio* in 1458, it was once again MS N that was his primary source. But by that time he had also acquired a second manuscript of Plato's *Laws* (K), which ultimately came from his teacher Pletho's library. It was at this point that Bessarion produced his systematic collation of N against K (and vice versa), which is represented in Post's *stemma codicum* (see above, esp. the dotted line). This collation, by no means a purely mechanical process, yielded the present state of N. In short, the cardinal collated one of the sources of George's translation (MS N) against the manuscript previously owned by Pletho (MS K). Without mentioning him by name, Bessarion deployed Pletho's critical work on the text of the *Laws* as a weapon against George, by using it to improve MS N, which had been one of the codices used by George himself for his Latin translation. This manuscript was not only the starting point of the collation of the Greek text that represents the

first stage of Bessarion's work on the *Correctio Legum*, but also later served as the model for the Aldine edition, therefore leaving a lasting mark on the textual history of Plato's *Laws*.

This reconstruction lends itself to a comparison with the textual history of Aristotle's *Problemata*. George was charged with translating both Plato's *Laws* and Aristotle's *Problemata* from Greek into Latin, a task which he fulfilled in the space of a few months using a manuscript from Bessarion's library (alone or in combination with other codices, as we have seen). At least in the case of Aristotle's *Problemata*, the cardinal was aware of the less than satisfying quality of the text contained in his copy.⁵⁴ Therefore, the cardinal's incessant thirst for new books led him to acquire additional copies of both Greek texts,⁵⁵ which proved to be of better quality than those that were initially available to him and to the circle of scholars who were allowed access to his library (including Trebizond). These newly acquired sources provided

the basis for Gaza's translation of Aristotle's *Problemata* and for Bessarion's *Correctio Legum*. In the controversies of the following years, George's (admittedly hasty) translations were compared with scholarship based on access to a substantially better Greek text than was available to him. While the distinction was not as important in the fifteenth century as it is now, the translator was judged as if he were a textual critic, with no sense of the difference between their resources, methodologies, and approaches.

Instead, a fair assessment of both George's and Bessarion's scholarly achievements will have now to take into account the Greek sources that were available to both of them at the time of their work, and acknowledge the difference between the responsibilities of a translator and those of the textual critic. Now that the dust on those centuries-old controversies has long settled, this investigation provides results that can help us to making better sense of this fascinating chapter in the history of Platonism.

Appendix I

Already in 1962 Nigel Wilson noted the shortcomings of Post's work on Plato's *Laws*.⁵⁶ Eight further witnesses can be added to the twenty-six already noted by Post.⁵⁷ All of these are *excerpta* or collections of *excerpta* that have nothing to do with Trebizond's translation. Since Post, however, did not distinguish between complete and fragmentary witnesses, I provide below a brief report of these *excerpta*, which document a fragmentary circulation of the text, occurring mostly during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.⁵⁸

A London, British Library, Royal 16 C.XXV. Sec. XVI. *Excerpta brevia*; ff. 59v-61v (*Lg.* 1.640d4-7, 1.641c2-7, 1.643a3-4, 2.660c6-7, 3.687e5-6, 3.688d5-7, 3.691c1-4, 3.701a8-b3, 4.716d6-717a3, 4.722a8-b1, 5.727a3-4, 5.728a4-5, 5.730c1-2, 5.731b3-c1, 5.731d7-732b4, 5.738e2-5, 5.747b1-6, 6.762e1-7, 6.765e3-766a4, 6.776a3-7, 6.776d6-e1, 6.780d5-8, 7.803b3-5, 7.808b3-c2, 7.808d2-5, 7.808d5-e2, 7.819a3-6, 8.829a1-5, 8.832c5-6, 8.836a1-2, 8.843c4-6, 8.846d7-8, 8.846d8-e2, 9.854d5-e1, 9.870b7-c1, 11.929c5-7, 12.950b4-c8, 12.951a7-c5, 12.957c3-5, 12.963e5-6, 12.963e6-8). See G.F. Warner, J.P. Gilson, *Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Old Royal and King's Collection*, vol. 2, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1921, 187. The catalogue entry, which speaks in general terms of "Extracts of Plato" without mentioning which portions of the text have been excerpted, is now completely insufficient.

B Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, Gr. 4573. Sec. XVI ex. *Excerpta* at ff. 149-57 (*Lg.* 1, 3-9, 11-12). See G. De Andrés, *Catálogo de los códices griegos de la Biblioteca Nacional*, Madrid, Ministerio de Cultura, 1987, 52-4.

C Città del Vaticano, Barb. Gr. 4. Sec. XIV. *Excerptum*; f. 18 (*Lg.* 7). See *Codices Barberiniani Graeci*, tomus I (codices 1-263), recensuit V. Capocci, in *Bibliotheca Vaticana, typis poliglottis Vaticanis*, 1958, 2-6, esp. 3.

D Roma, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, Gr. 22. Sec. XVI, ff. 151r. See *Catalogo di manoscritti greci esistenti nelle Biblioteche Italiane (Riproduzione Anastatica)*, a cura di E. Martini, vol. 2, Milano, Hoepli, 1967, 36-40.

Regarding some of the witnesses mentioned only in passing by Post, I provide below more precise information about their content.

A Leyden, Voss. Gr. Q. 54. Sec. XV-XVI. *Excerpta selecta*; ff. 451v-458r. See *Codices Manuscripti VI. Codices Vossiani Graeci et miscellanei*, descripsit K.A. De Meyier, in *Bibliotheca Universitatis, Lugduni Batavorum*, 1955, 163-72.

B Leyden, Voss. Gr. Q. 51. Sec. XV. *Excerptum*; cc. 158rv (*Lg.* 715e7-716e5). See *Codices Manuscripti VI. Codices Vossiani Graeci et miscellanei*, descripsit K.A. De Meyier, in *Bibliotheca Universitatis, Lugduni Batavorum*, 1955, 159-61.

C Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana. Ambr. Gr. 329 (F 19 Sup). XV sec. *Excerpta*; ff. 129v-130r, 201v, 202r-202v, 203v-207r, 208r-209v (*Lg.* 715e7-716b5, 642d5-e5, 888a7-c3, 895e10-896a4, 896c5-d8, 903b4-905c4, 927a1-b4, 865d5-e6, 959a4-c7, 906a2-d6). See *Catalogus codicum graecorum Bibliothecae Ambrosianae*, digesserunt E. Martini, D. Bassi, vol. 1, Mediolani, Impensis U. Hoepli, 1906 (repr. [2 Bände in 1 Band], Hildesheim, New York, Georg Olms Verlag, 1978), 375-8.

D Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana. Ambr. Gr. 778 (& 146 Sup.). XVI sec. *Excerpta*; ff. 1r-1v, 2r (721a3-d6, condensed and paraphrased; 772c7-773e4, 774 e9-775c2, condensed and paraphrased 771e1-772a2). See E. Martini, D. Bassi, *Catalogus codicum graecorum*, 875.

Appendix II

George of Trebizond's Translations: 1440-59

Chronology	Author	Text	Client & dedicatees	Greek source(s)	Criticisms & varia
1440-Jan. 1442	Basil	<i>Adversus Eunomium</i>	Client: Cardinal Bessarion	Marc. Gr. Z. 58 + Laur. IV.27	
1443-45	Aristotle	<i>Rhetorica</i>			In the <i>Scholia</i> George says that he has only one manuscript in front of himself. The analysis of the readings places his source in the family of codex Cambr. 1298 (see Monfasani 1984, 698). Research on the basis of the <i>stemma codicum</i> of the <i>Rhetorica</i> has not yet been done. If it is ever done, it will have to start from an analysis of the exemplars of the text in the Marciana or the Vatican Library.
1443-46	Aristotle	<i>Physica</i>	Dedicated to Antonius de Pago, papal <i>credenarius</i> , who pressed George to translate Aristotle (see Monfasani 1984, 141-4). Antonius repeatedly urged George to translate Aristotle's <i>Physica</i> , but even when it was translated, he found it obscure.		In the <i>Scholium</i> to Aristot. <i>Phys.</i> 2.197a6 George says that he used 3 manuscripts as a source, one of which is called <i>antiquitate antiquior</i> (see Monfasani 1984, 702).
	Aristotle	<i>De coelo et mundo</i>			No information (see Monfasani 1984, 704).
1446	Aristotle	<i>De generatione et corruptione</i>			Codex Par. Gr. 2032 + codex e (see "Introduction" by Rashed to Aristot., GC, 75-8).
Winter 1446-47	Gregory of Nyssa	<i>Vita Moysis</i>	Translation made by his own choice. Preface to Cardinal Ludovico Trevisan (see Monfasani 1984, 278-81).		Family of Vat. Gr. 1433. Note affinities with readings found only in papyri. Free translation.
1446-47	Aristotle	<i>De anima</i>	Preface to the reader. Preface to Cardinal Domenico Capranica (see Monfasani 1984, 189-92).		Close but not identical to Vat. Gr. 260 + a second exemplar + Moerbeke (see Monfasani 1984, 705).

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Chronology	Author	Text	Client & dedicatees	Greek source(s)	Criticisms & varia
1444-46	Demosthenes	<i>De Corona</i>	Preface to Vittorino da Feltre (see Monfasani 1984, 93-7). Dedication to King Alfonso of Aragon, 1452-53 (Monfasani 1984, 93-7).	No information.	
1447-Spring 1448	John Chrysostom	<i>Homiliae XC in Matthaemum</i>	Client: Nicholas V (Dedication: Monfasani 1984, 289-91). In this case (see Monfasani 1984, 735) it is known that Traversari already wanted to translate the homilies of Chrysostom but was not able to complete the project.	No certain information is currently available. The lack of the last two homilies (88-90) seems to imply codices lacking those texts, such as Marc. Gr. II, 25. But no data can be taken for granted.	George sent a copy of the translation to Francesco Barbaro.
March 1448-?	Eusebius	<i>Praeparatio Evangelica</i>	Client: Nicholas V (Dedication: see Monfasani 1984, 291-3).	Monfasani's conclusions: a) George had only one manuscript in front of him; b) the manuscript arrived by chance in the city (there is no mention of Bessarion): <i>preparationem que in urbe forte reperta, primum agressi traduximus</i> ; c) stemmatically good codex and close to Marc. Gr. Z. 341.	Andreas Contrarius attacked the translation (see Monfasani 1976, 127). Edition of the text in preparation by Monfasani.
Second half of 1448-end 1449	Cyril	<i>Commentarium in Iohannem</i>	Client: Nicholas V (see Monfasani 1984, 293-8).	Vat. Gr. 593 (or perhaps his apograph Marc. Gr. Z. 121 owned by Bessarion). In par. 14 of the dedication, he says George had only one manuscript.	
1449-50	Aristotle	<i>De generatione animalium</i>	Client: Nicholas V (Dedication: see Monfasani 1984, 298-30).	No information.	
1449-50	Aristotle	<i>Historia animalium</i>	Client: Nicholas V (Dedication: see Monfasani 1984, 298-300).	Marc. Gr. Z. 208 + Vat. Gr. 262 + Moerbeke	Praised by Poliziano as much better than Gaza's version.
1449-50	Aristotle	<i>De partibus animalium</i>	Client: Nicholas V. (Dedication: see Monfasani 1984, 298-300).	No information.	
April 1450-March 1451	Plato	<i>Leges and Epinomis</i>	Client: Nicholas V. (Dedication: see Monfasani 1976, 360-4).	Laur. 80.17 + Marc. Gr. Z. 187	Bessarion attacked the translation (<i>ICP</i> book 5). Edition of the text by F. Pagani.

In difesa di Platone

Chronology	Author	Text	Client & dedicatees	Greek source(s)	Criticisms & varia
March 1451-December 1451	Ptolemy	<i>Almagestus</i>	Client: Nicholas V (No dedication). In the 1460s George rededicated the translation and commentary to the Venetian patrician Iacopo Antonio Marcello.	His son Andrea (see Monfasani 1976, "Appendix" 4.7) says he used a codex from Bessarion's library. But Bessarion's codex was not necessarily the only one. In Bessarion's estate, there were 6 codices of Ptolemy.	Harsh criticism from Iacopo da San Cassiano of Cremona. The break between Nicholas V and George did not occur over this translation, but instead over the commentary on the <i>Almagestus</i> .
December 1451-April 1452	Gregory Nazianzenus	<i>Oratio de laudibus Sancti Basilii</i>	Client: Nicholas V. (Dedication: see Monfasani 1984, 300-1).	No information.	
December 1451-April 1452	Gregory Nazianzenus	<i>Oratio de laudibus Sancti Athanasii</i>	Client: Nicholas V. (Dedication: see Monfasani 1984, 300-1).	No information.	
1452 (first half of the year)	Aristotle	<i>Problemata per species collata</i>		Marc. Gr. Z. 216.	Bessarion says that this translation was the result of two months of work (see Trap., <i>adv. Gazam</i> , ed. Mohler 293.26). Trebizond published it in 1455 from Naples, as soon as he knew Gaza had made a translation of his own. Trebizond defends his translation and attacks Gaza in <i>adv. Gazam</i> (1456).
1453-beginning 1454	Ps.Ptolemy	<i>Centiloquium</i>	Client: Alfonso of Aragon.		
1453-54	Cyril	<i>Thesaurus</i>	Client: Alfonso of Aragon.	No certain information. No doubt it was a good exemplar, without the <i>lacunae</i> one would expect. The hypothesis that even here he used more than one source cannot be ruled out.	Criticised by Bonaventura Vulcanius in the sixteenth century.
1458-59	Plato	<i>Parmenides</i>	Client: Cardinal Cusano.	Ruocco does not identify a precise Greek source.	

Notes

This chapter is the third of a trilogy of articles devoted to the philological study of the controversy between George of Trebizond and Cardinal Bessarion over the text of Plato’s *Laws*. In the first paper (Pagani 2020), I presented the historical background to Trebizond’s translation, along with a discussion of selected passages illustrating both George’s and Bessarion’s working methodology. In the second article (Pagani 2021), I provided the philological demonstration for the *stemma codicum* of the Latin manuscripts of Trebizond’s translation. In this article, I offer a study of the Greek manuscripts of Plato’s *Laws* used by Trebizond. For revising and improving this chapter, I am indebted to the kindness of Em. Prof. Jill Kraye, Prof. John Petruccione, Mr. Luke Maschue, Mr. Casey Knott. For the collation of Marc. Gr. Z. 187, I thank Mr. Luca Quaglierini (*Laws*, books 1-4), Mr. Luke Maschue (selected passage from book 6), and Mr. Casey Knott (selected passages from books 8, 10, and 12).

1 See e.g. the presentation in Reynolds, Wilson 1968, 150-3, a book familiar to all students of classical philology. For essential and up-to-date literature on Cardinal Bessarion, I refer the reader to the extensive bibliography contained in Bess., *Or. Dogm.* pp. 62-8 and 119-24 (up to 2001) to be supplemented with the more recent bibliographies in Bess., *Nat.*, 283-95 and Pagani 2020, 125, esp. fn. 1. For the inventories of the manuscripts that Bessarion bequeathed to the Biblioteca Marciana, see Labowski 1979. On the history of the Marciana library, see Zorzi 1987 and 1988 (on Petrarch’s idea of establishing a public library in Venice, see Vianello 1976).

2 Among the most significant works are the studies by David Speranzi: see Speranzi 2009 and 2011 (on Alexios Celadenus), 2013 (on the scribe called Nicola) and 2018 (on Athanasius Chalcheopoulos). On Theodore Gaza, see the references given in Pagani 2020, 147 fn. 50. These studies, along with works by other scholars, have substantially expanded and modified the image of Bessarion’s circle drawn by Mioni 1976.

3 I use this name in the sense given to it by Perotti: a circle of scholars working around Bessarion, without any institutional implications. On Bessarion’s *Academia*, see Monfasani 2011, 61-76, esp. 65.

4 See Monfasani 1981 and 1983.

5 The standard work on George’s biography remains Monfasani 1976. On George’s youth in Crete, see also Ganchou 2008.

6 I am preparing an edition of this text.

7 Long available only in unreliable editions, this treatise has been recently edited by Monfasani.

8 On the historical context of the translations produced by George of Trebizond and his relationship with Pope Nicholas V, see Pagani 2020, 125-36. For a list of Trebizond’s translations, see “Appendix II”.

9 The exceptions are his translations of Plato’s *Parmenides* (Trap., *Plat. Parm.*) and Basil’s *In Eunomium* (Trap., *Bas. Eun.*), for which we have the editions produced by Ruocco in 2003 and Abenstein in 2015.

10 For all Trebizond’s translations that have not yet been edited, the starting point remains Monfasani 1984.

11 On this, see at least the incisive discussion by Berti 2004-05, esp. 198-205.

12 See Pagani 2020, 131 and 161.

13 See Pagani 2020, esp. 160-1.

14 Such a preliminary study is generally not available for humanistic translations.

15 As Ernesto Berti’s declares, “Quale greco sia stato effettivamente tradotto è la prima domanda che deve porsi l’editore critico di una traduzione” (see Berti 2007, 11). Very often the investigation only leads to identify a specific branch of the manuscript tradition that is reflected in the translated text. Since we cannot take for granted that the manuscript(s) have survived, I preferred to use the word ‘text’ rather than ‘manuscript’.

16 As a result of this, it has been impossible to go beyond a more or less biased assessment of the quality of his work and his scholarly accomplishment.

17 See Trap., *adv. Gazam*, 326: *nihil praetermisimus, nihil addidimus, ordinemque ipsum graecorum verborum ubique conati sumus inviolatum reddere*.

18 See Trap., *adv. Gazam*, 326-7. In a nutshell, this is the golden rule for a translator according to Trebizond: *Hanc igitur regulam in traducendo tenendam studiosis putamus, ut graviora difficilioraque ad verbum de verbo paene reddant, historica et facilia latius angustiusve, sicuti indicabunt, complectantur*. The entire Latin passage is also quoted in Pagani 2020, 133-4.

19 See Post 1934, 5. I follow the established *sigla*:

A	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Gr. 1807	Laur. c	Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 85.9
O	Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vat. Gr. 1	K	Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Gr. Z. 188
Laur. a	Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 59.1	L	Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 80.17
R	Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vat. Gr. 1029	Pal.	Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica, Pal. Gr. 177
Vat. 230	Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vat. Gr. 230	Borg.	Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica, Borg. Gr. 22
Vind. 56	Vienna, Staatsbibliothek, Phil. Suppl. Gr. 20	Ang. x	Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, Gr. 80 (C.1.11)
Ven. a.c.11,3	Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, App. Cl. XI.3	N	Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Gr. Z. 187
J	Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vat. Gr. 1031	Est.	Modena, Biblioteca Estense Universitaria, α.P.5.7 (Gr. 114)
Laur. o	Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Conv. Sopp. 180	Voss.	Leiden, University Library, Gr. F 74
Ang. v	Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, Gr. 101 (C.1.7)		

For all the other abbreviations, see Post 1934, 1-4. Superscript Arabic numerals refer to the hands.

20 In my list, I have quoted first the Latin translation by Trebizond and then the corresponding Greek word(s) of Plato’s *Laws* between round brackets. To avoid obscuring the cases of alignment of George’s version with the other witnesses (direct or indirect), I also report in full the apparatus of Plat., *Lg.* by Edouard Des Places. I have changed Des Places’ apparatus only in the following cases: a) I replaced the round brackets used by Des Places with square brackets; b) I have sometimes copied a larger portion of the text than that provided by Des Places, in order to make more evident where Trebizond’s translation positions itself. For the convenience of the reader, I add here a brief legend of the abbreviations used by Des Places in the cases cited above: p.n. = *puncto (vel punctis) notavit*; i.m. = *in margine*; i.r. = *in rasura*; s.v. = *supra versum*; á. = ἀλλαχοῦ; γρ. = γράφεται. As regards the *sigla* of the witnesses conversely: O^c = corrections of the scribe of O; O⁴ = *recensio saec. XI-XII*; Πι.m.O⁴ = a group of readings that the hand O⁴ explicitly indicates in the margins as coming from the so-called “Book of the Patriarch”; a³ = *manus saec. XV*. For Post’s understanding of O², O³, O⁴, see Post 1934, 9-14.

21 One could object that the case of 635b4 does not provide a compelling example that George is following the text of O rather than the text of A, as the reading μόνους assumed in Trebizond’s translation appeared not only in O but also in a². But, as I have demonstrated in Pagani 2012, 1027-52, this note (and others) is due to the scholar Janus Lascharis who imported it from the O family, and more precisely from MS L. Since the birth of Lascharis is dated to be around 1445, it can be safely ruled out that these notes were present in codex A at the time when Trebizond was making his translation. The same consideration applies also to Plat. *Lg.* 4.708d6, where Lascharis transcribed the two readings, namely ὁμως and οὔτως, which Des Places attributed to a³. In Pagani 2012, I have also shown that Des Places’ distinction between a² and a³ is often misleading.

22 See above [fig. 1].

23 Post could count twenty-nine manuscripts of the text of the *Laws* (thirty if one wants to include the codex Urb. Gr. 30, of the seventeenth century and perhaps copied from a printed edition; see Post 1934, 4). If from this number we subtract the three codices of the A family and the eleven that transmit an incomplete text of the *Laws* – namely: Ven. a.c.11,3; Mon. (M^o in Müller 1979); Matrit. Ψ.l.1 (E^o in Müller 1979); Ric.; Barb.; Dep. 101; Ambr. 329 [F 19 Sup.]; Ambr. 778; Voss. Gr. 51, Voss. Gr. 54 and P – we end with fifteen.

Probably for the sake of brevity Post did not include the following codices in his *stemma*: Ambr. 329, Ambr. 778, Voss. Gr. 51 and Voss. Gr. 54. Because he had no collations, Post excluded Dep. 101 and Matrit. Ψ.I.1. The place of this last codex in the *stemma* has, however, been clarified by Müller, who shows that it is a twin of *Mon.* (see Müller 1979, 237-51), thus confirming what for Post was only a suspicion (see Post 1934, 22). Conversely, the *stemma* traced by Post includes some codices containing only the *Epinomis*, namely: Borg., Ric. 84, Ang. x, Z.

24 There are also manuscripts that carry only portions of the *Laws*. For more information and a supplement to Post, see “Appendix I”.

25 These are: O, Laur. a, Laur. o, Ang. v, Laur. c, Pal., R, Vat. 230, N, E, K, Vind. 56, J, L, Ox. An overview of their genealogical relationships can be obtained by looking at the *stemma* drawn by Post [fig. 1].

26 See Plat. *Scripta*.

27 See Plat. *Opera*.

28 In one case it is the direct tradition of Eusebius; in another, the tradition of some not better defined ‘apographs’; and in the third case, it is from codex L.

29 There are no other surviving codices in which the three variants appear altogether, save of course the copies of L itself. In particular, a close examination of J, copy of O and source of L, allowed me to confirm that J agrees with O against L.

At *Lg.* 644a6, Stallbaum mistakenly attributed to Ficino knowledge of the reading of L, whereas Ficino was simply copying Trebizond’s translation. Indeed, Stallbaum writes about *Lg.* 1.644a6 (at p. 14): “ἡμεῖς δὴ μ.ο.] ἡμεῖς δὲ Flor. δ. (= L) quam lectionem etiam Ficinus invenit, qui vertit: *sed nos de verbo quidem non contendamus*”. But in this passage, Ficino’s version is none other than Trebizond’s copied as it is. It is therefore Trebizond (and not Ficino!) who found the reading of the codex L.

30 See Post 1934, 22-8, esp. 27-8.

31 The codex Laur. 80.17 is fully available online at <http://mss.bmlonline.it/>.

32 There is no doubt that the hand is the same throughout the entire manuscript. Even though the ink can vary in colour significantly (cf. e.g. the notes to c. 35r), this hand remains easily recognisable by its thickset and often coarse writing of the letters, in addition to its certain characteristic ligatures (e.g. τ linked at the bottom to the next vowel, group φρ).

33 As a sample of the hand of Trebizond, I have used below the Greek *marginalia* contained in Vat. Lat. 4534, an autograph full of corrections of the Aristotelian translations conducted by the translator in the years 1443-47. This manuscript is best suited as a term of comparison, as George is often constrained to write in a narrow space. Professor John Monfasani, the leading expert on Trebizond’s autographs, has examined for me a selection of reproductions of the marginal notes carried by MS L (e.g. ff. 6r-9r, and then 22v, 42v, e 43v) and positively identified in them the hand of Trebizond (email to me on April 3, 2011).

34 See Monfasani 1984, 746-7.

35 This conclusion sheds light on the otherwise unknown history of the codex before its arrival in the Laurentian library. Currently, all we know is that: a) the manuscript was present in the Medici library when in 1508 the inventory of codices was compiled by Fabio Vigili (see Fryde 1996, 2: 803; 1: 287 and 393-4); b) according to Müller’s identification, MS L is mentioned in Lascares’s inventory of codices in Lorenzo’s library contained in ff. 66r-69r of Vat. Gr. 1412 (see Müller 1884, 333-412). On the use – at times and in ways that I was unable to determine – of L by Lascares for his collation against A, see Pagani 2012, esp. 1030 ff.

36 The inventories of this library do not, however, record a Platonic codex containing specifically the ninth tetralogy and the pseudo-Platonic *opuscula*.

37 The marginal intervention(s) added by Trebizond in the Florentine manuscript favour the second hypothesis – he would hardly have taken such liberties if the manuscript had been loaned to the pope. Nor would this be the only codex belonging to Trebizond that ended up in the Laurenziana, which now holds, for example, the dedicatory manuscript of his translations of Aristotle’s zoological works (the current Laur. Plut. 84.9, with autograph corrections by Trebizond).

38 These two lacunae arose in MS J, model of L [fig. 1].

39 The translation suffers from a resounding error caused by confusion over the quantity of the syllable in χωλήν (634a2: ‘lame’), which led George to translate instead *bilem* (χολήνι). Nevertheless, he must have had in front of him the Greek text he quoted (and not a *lacuna!*): if the translation of κομψά as *iocundis* is rather free and can still leave some uncertainty, there is no doubt that the rather *recherché* translation *assentatiunculis* renders with great precision the rare θωπευτικά. I know of only two attestations of the term, Plaut. *Stich.* 228 and Cic. *fam.* 5.12: it is likely that Trebizond knew the word through the second passage.

40 The reasons for such a lack of information are essentially twofold, namely (a) the absence, for most of the translated Greek texts, of studies about the textual tradition that also describe with adequate precision the situation of the so-called ‘low branches’ (i.e. the most recent manuscripts) of the different textual traditions; and (b) George’s particularly free method of translation that nullifies the attempts to define the antigraph based only on the examination of very limited samples of text.

41 A useful comparison is provided, for example, by Niccolò Perotti’s translation of Polybius. As Pace 1989, 145-54, has shown, Perotti used both Marc. Gr. Z. 371 (a manuscript from Bessarion’s collection) and Vat. Gr. 1005, which he insistently asked Giovanni Tortelli, via letter, to supply.

42 See Pagani 2006, 5-20.

43 As already mentioned, neither Bekker nor Stallbaum collated MS N. Post did collate it, but he did not print a systematic breakdown of the readings. Instead, he merely published those readings of N that were useful to support his argument that this manuscript was the model for the Aldine edition. The selected readings he quoted were not enough to clarify the relationship between this manusci and Trebizond’s translation. Not even *Lg.* 867b1 χαλεποί] χαλεπὸν N difficile Trap. is a proof. (I have checked this reading in MS Vat. Lat. 2062 f. 116v l. 34). As a result, it was not possible to formulate a trustworthy argument without a more substantial collation of MS N. For a list of the collated passages, see *supra*, p. 87.

44 I quote the text of Trebizond’s translation (Trap., *Plat. Lg.*) from the edition I am currently preparing.

45 Nor did he translate ἄμα γνόντα.

46 As appears above [fig. 3], this reading in MS N is the result of a scribal correction. MS Laur. Plut. 85.9, the model of MS N according to the *stemma* drawn by Post, carries the reading δεδογμένον. (I have also found the reading δεδομένον in MS K, where it is the result of a correction, likely due to Cardinal Bessarion).

47 Usually, the omissions contained in MS N appear now to have been corrected by Cardinal Bessarion, who collated MS N with MS K, where he found the words omitted by the scribe. Yet, Bessarion’s collation dates to 1458, a few years *after* the translation by George, which was completed by the end of 1451. So, it is critical to remember that George had access to MS N at a time *before* it was collated by Bessarion against MS K.

48 Speranzi 2017, 174 has convincingly argued that a couple of letters by Bessarion, contained in MS Marc. Gr. Z. 527 and published by Mohler as *Ep.* 32-3, are addressed to George of Trebizond. In *Ep.* 33, the cardinal asks George to return the two Greek manuscripts of Ptolemy’s *Almagest* and Aristotle’s *Problemata*, which proves that he used Bessarion’s manuscripts for these translations. While there is still no certainty about the identification of the manuscript of Ptolemy (perhaps Marc. Gr. Z. 310?), the copy of the *Problemata* is certainly Marc. Gr. Z. 216.

49 See Speranzi 2017, 177-80 (for a detailed account of George’s financial difficulties) and 192-4 (for the edition and Italian translation of both letters).

50 I simply sum up here the main steps of the story. For a more detailed account, see Abenstein 2013, esp. 319-25.

51 On this, see Pagani 2020, 147 fn. 50.

52 See Abenstein 2013, 319-20.

53 See Pagani 2021, 158. This may well explain why George’s revisions of his translation do not presuppose any access to the Greek original.

54 On Bessarion’s dissatisfaction for Marc. Gr. Z. 216, expressed in an autograph note of January 22, 1446 on f. 1r of that same manuscript, see Speranzi 2017, 168-9.

55 I refer to K for Plato’s *Laws* and to Marc. Gr. Z. 259 for Aristotle’s *Problemata*.

56 See Wilson 1962, 386.

57 The eight further witnesses have been identified on the basis of data in the following catalogues: Wilson 1962, 386-95; Brumbaugh, Wells 1968, 94-5; Sinkewicz 1990. From the list of codices indicated in Sinkewicz 1990, the entry Ravenna – MS 490 ought to be removed, since the codex of the Biblioteca Classense with this shelfmark does not contain Platonic texts, which can be ascertained by consulting the catalogue card. I can also add that Martin 1884, 553-6 and the catalogue by Silvio Bernicoli (published in Mazzatinti 1894-95, 4: 226) indicate the presence in the Classense of a Platonic codex, MS 381, containing the twelfth book of the *Laws*; however, this information is incorrect, since the text at the end of this manuscript is not the twelfth book of the *Laws*, but rather Aristotle’s *Poetics*. The question about the pseudo-witness of the *Laws* preserved in the Biblioteca Classense has already been dealt with by Des Places in his study of the manuscript tradition of the dialogue (see Des Places 1955, 45-6). As an explanation of the confusion, Des Places hypothesises – and plausibly, all things considered – that the fundamental cataloguing error was due to a misunderstanding of the marginal annotation on the first folio of the text, *Plato in β^ω de Legibus* 215.5: Martin thought that this note gave the title of an acephalous text, while, in reality, it is nothing more than a reference to a parallel passage in Plato.

58 It is worth noting that the integration of the census of Post is limited solely to the medieval codices. An overall update of the fundamental witnesses related to the text of the *Laws* should not ignore the census of papyrus witnesses and the indirect tradition, which are beyond the remit of this chapter.

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