

The translations from Greek into Latin in the Middle Age

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Resumo: O trabalho dos tradutores medievais do grego para o latim foi um fator importante na recuperação do pensamento científico medieval e de sua prática. A redescoberta das raízes comuns da cultura e da religião gerou grande entusiasmo na Itália e escolas de tradução foram sucessivamente abertas em Roma, Nápoles, Salerno, Pisa e Sicília. Seus membros resgataram para o Ocidente textos dos Padres da Igreja e textos técnicos e científicos da ciência grega.

Palavras Chave: tradutores do grego para o latim. Textos religiosos e científicos. recuperação do conhecimento. Silvia Gasparian Colello. Faculdade de Educação da USP.

Abstract: The work of the medieval translators from Greek to Latin was one of the important factors in the recovery of the medieval scientific thought and their practice. The rediscovery of the shared roots of culture and religion aroused great enthusiasm in Italy, and schools of translations were successively opened in Rome, Naples, Salerno, Pisa and Sicily. Its members recovered for the West lost Greek texts of the fathers of the Church and scientific-technical texts of Greek science.

Keywords: Greek-Latin translators, religious and scientific texts, recovery of knowledge.

The awareness of the widespread backwardness of the Latin West gradually took root among the scholars of the Early Middle Ages. In its different forms it pervaded cultural and scientific environments and even the sphere of religion. Gradually the Christians came to realize that they had lost the treasures of Greek patristic and hagiography and the works of Greek philosophy and science, and by the Early Middle Ages they saw the urgent need for Latin translations of the works of Greek philosophy and for the development of translations from Arabic .

From the ninth to eleventh centuries it was the cities of southern Italy, with their mercantile, cultural and religious connections with Byzantium: travellers passed, from the one to the other, and commercial relations were maintained and which took on the task of translating the hagiographic and patristic texts from Greek into Latin. And in the twelfth century became in the most important seat of translating activity. In fact Constantinople had both a Venetian and a Pisan quarter. The rediscovery of the shared roots of culture and religion aroused great enthusiasm in Italy, and schools of translations were successively opened in Rome, Naples, Salerno, Pisa and Sicily. The royal patronage played an important role in supporting translations, or at least translators.²

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² *Science in the Middle Age* s. Edited by Avid C. Lindberg. Chicago 1978, pp. 70-75.

The work of these translators was one of the important influences in the recuperation of the medieval scientific thought and their practice. For all these translators the translations from Greek to Latin in a wide range of areas were the cornerstone of the gradual enlightenment of the West and its advance towards the mastery of scientific and cultural knowledge. In their prefaces, the translators frequently mention the awareness of their vital role in redressing the intellectual poverty of the Christian West by borrowing from the treasures of the Greeks and Arabs.

1. *Historia Barlaam et Iosaphat* (1048/49)

In Constantinople, an anonymous translator, probably from Salerno, was residing temporarily at court and awaiting imperial commands. A stranger encouraged him to translate from Greek into Latin a treasure unknown to the Western Christians, the *Historia Barlaam et Iosaphat*. In this new version this edifying story, as it was described, spread throughout Christendom and was translated into all the modern European languages. The translator notes the urgency with which his co-religionists entreated him to translate the work. He also invokes «the authority of the Ancients», to justify the method he uses in the translation, *antiquorum more transferre*, in which he says that he has permitted himself the occasional licence, simplifying the vocabulary or changing the order of the narration.

Prologus. Cum in undosis menibus Domine ciuitatum in sexto anno sanctissimi et triumphatoris domini Constantini Monomachi Augusti augustalibus irretiret curis. [...] Quamobrem cum in talibus incitamentis sollicitudinum uentilaret animus in diuersa, optulit mihi quidam libellum nomine Leo, omni cum prece postulans, quatenus, Dei pro uoto et sancti Barlae memoria, de Eolico textu ad Latinitatis usum plano transferrem eloquio, intemptatum et inusitatum opus ab antiquis et usque ad me obliuioni per omnia funditis traditum. Tandem itaque labor et fraterna caritas incitauit ut quod inertia litterarum renuebat attirare, deuotio actionis aggredi urgeret opus. Et fretus precibus fratrum accinxi uerbum ex uerbo ac pensum ex sensu antiquorum more transferre Et in opportunis locis coequare sermonem aut ex parte transmutare aggressus sum, ut diligentibus assidua sit legendi dilectio et detrahentibus perpetua oris oppilatio³.

2. Nicholas of Otranto (*fl.* 1090)

As one of the translators residing in Constantinople, in 1206 Nicholas of Otranto took part in the theological debates between Greeks and Western Christians. At the request of the Archbishop William of Otranto, he translated the liturgy of the mass of St Basil, based on Leo Tuscus' translation of the mass of St John Chrysostom, from which he retained the parts common to the two texts.

Prologus Nicolai Ydrontini ad sanctam missam Magistri Basilii ab eo Latinis uerbis diuulgatam ad magistrum Guillelmum Ydrontinum archiepiscopum.

³ *Historia Barlae et Iosaphat* (National Library of Naples VIII. B.10). Study and edition by J. Martínez Gázquez, Madrid 1997, *Prologus*, 3.

Qui notum nobis facit, quod euangelium suum non est sibi ab homine neque ab angelo sed a Filio Dei, Paulus apostolus «obedite, ait, prepositis uestris et subiacete eis». Idcirco, pater et domine magister Guillerme, uenerabilis Ydrontine archiepiscopo, cum paratus tibi tamquam patri sim obedire, precepisti michi ut beati magni Basilii missam a Greca lingua uerbis diulgarem Latinis, et quia attuleras sancti Iohannis Crysostomi missam a Leone Tusco translata, peroptimo quidem interprete Manuelis imperatoris Constantinopoleos, desiderio desiderasti et beati magni Basilii missam Latina lingua pariter intendere; ecce siquidem tuo mandato obediens secundum posse meum, confidens etiam de tuis sanctis orationibus, ad opus iam uenio, incipiens a quo et magister Leo incepit. Omnia uero apolitikya, scilicet absolutoria, dimittens et quidem que ab illo in missa Crisostomi sunt diulgata, cum etiam et in missa sancti Basilii similiter dicantur, tamen incipiam unde et predictus Leo incepit. Supplico quidem ut non sim ad reprehendendum ab aliquo, quia que transtulit ille uideor et ego transferre necessitatis enim modo ita me oportet incipere. Incipit diuinum mysterium eucharistiae diuinae, quae est edita a sancto patre nostro magno Basilio et a Nicolao Ydronto uerbis diulgata latinis⁴.

3. Alfano, Archbishop of Salerno (+1085)

Archbishop Alfano of Salerno laments the «*Latinorum cogente penuria*» that oppressed the Christians in the West, the result of their ignorance of the origins of the Church and of the biographies of the saints they shared with the Eastern churches, and of ecclesiastical culture in general. They also lacked the knowledge necessary for the health of men which Greek science could provide.

Doctor of the Pope Leo IX, in the field of medicine he translated Nemesius' *Premnon Physicon* from the Greek (*De Natura Hominis*), wrongly attributed to Gregory of Nissa⁵ the text was not translated by Gregory since it was already in Greek! and are attributed some theoretical treatises of medicine⁶: *De pulsibus*, *Tractatus de quibusdam medicinalibus*, and *De quattuor humoribus corporis humanis*⁷.

Prologus 9, 20-28. [...]Ego** tuis quoque prosperis succedens ad doctrinam huiusmodi copiosius a per pluribus dicta auctoribus, et praecipue ab his, quos mater educauit Graecia, Latinorum cogente penuria, in hac editiuncula transferendo conferam, nec non et a proprii scintillula comperta ingenioli abiectissima in parte tamquam uilem leuemque stipulam fimbriis adhaerendam importune subiciam.⁸

⁴ F. J. Mone, *Lateinische und griechische Messen aus dem zweiten bis sechsten Jahrhundert*. Frankfurt am Main 1850, p. 140.

⁵ W. Berschin, *Medievo greco latino, Da Gerolamo a Niccolò Cusano*. Napoli 1989, pp. 270-71; E. Montero, «La recepción de los textos médicos en la Edad Media: de Salerno a Toledo», in *Actas del XI Congreso de la Sociedad Española de Estudios Clásicos*, III, Madrid 2006, p. 179.

⁶ E. Montero, "Alfano y Constantino el Africano: la formación de la lengua médica", *Revista de Estudios Latinos (RELat)* 16, 2016, 119-129.

⁷ F. Bertini, «Alfano di Salerno: poesia e medicina», en A. Paravicini Bagliani (ed.), *Terapie e guarigione*, Florencia, 2011, 72-77.

⁸ *Nemesii Episcopi Premnon Physicon sive Περι φύσεως ανθρώπων* liber a N. Alfano Archiepiscopo Salerni in Latinum translatus. Recognovit Carolus Burkhard. Lipsiae in aedibus B. G. Teubneri MCMXVII.

4. Hugh Etherianus (1115-1182)

During its period of splendour, and thanks to its excellent relations with the Byzantine Empire, the city of Pisa also played an important part in the movement to promote the translation of Greek patristics into Latin. Hugh Etherianus, his brother Leo Tuscus, and his friend Hugh of Honau were members of the circle of translators which also included James of Venice, Moses of Bergamo and Burgundio of Pisa⁹.

Etherianus, Pisan by birth and a cardinal, was the leader of the group. This great Hellenist was particularly interested in the recovery of Greek patristics, and in his works *De differentia naturae et personae* and *De sancto et immortalis Deo* he compiled numerous writings by the Greek Fathers, Byzantine theologians, and even the Syrian Theodore abu Qurrah¹⁰:

Quapropter hortatu beniuolentiae uestre, quam ne iniurius uidear preterire nequeo, non in luxum sed in tentaculum, ad formidolosum depereraui bidental. Excussi quoque inter personam naturamque diuidendi rationem ex Graecorum copiis, ut illam sumptam habeat transmittatque in aures publicas, si dignum uideatur, animi uestri docta sententia.

5. Leo Tuscus († 1182)

Leo Tuscus, brother of Hugh Etherianus, was described as *inuicti principis egregius interpres* in 1166 and later *imperialium epistolarum interpres* in 1182. He helped Hugh with his theological works and translated two studies from Greek into Latin: one liturgical work by St John Chrysostom for the noble Raynaldus of Monte Catano and a work on dreams, *Oneirocriticon*, by Achmet ben Seirin which he must have translated around 1176. In the preface, addressed to Hugh Etherianus, he praises his brother's knowledge and his devotion to the theological debates at the court of Emperor Manuel¹¹:

Ad Hugonem Eterianum doctorem suum et utraque origine fratrem Leo Tuscus imperatoriarum epistolarum interpres de sompniis et oraculis.
... Ex eo igitur tempore pectus sollicitudine percussi, sub corde ignitos uersaui carbones, cogitando uti lene esset annon si onirocriti Graecorum philosophis ariolanti loqui Latine persuaderem enucleatim atque inoffensam perspicuitatem figmenti sompnialis tuo fauore nostrorum Tuscorum desiderio breuiter reserarem. ... Quamobrem loquelam imperatoriorum interpretationibus apicum obsequentem per excubias interdum huic translationi non irrita spe addixi, totum opus sapientie tue dicaturus iudicio, mei quidem auctoris, tui uero probatoris equilibre pensans incertum ... Ego autem tui solius utrarumque linguarum peritissimo examini uolumen hoc subpono, ut in eo que arescunt ac caligant per te illustrata orbi demum succincta professione uulgentur. ...

⁹ W. Berschin, *Medieuo greco latino*, p. 287; A. Dondaine, "Hugues Éthérien et Léon Toscan", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age*, 19 (1952), pp. 67-134.

¹⁰ M. Th. d'Alverny, «Translations and Translators», in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, R. L. Benson-G. Constable- C.D. Lanham (eds.) Cambridge (MA), 1982, p. 431.

¹¹ L. Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science*, II, New York-London 1923, p.292.

Explicit liber sompniorum Latine doctus loqui a Leone imperialium
epistolarum interprete temporibus magni imperatoris Manuel¹².

6. Hugh of Honau (1125-1180)

Hugh of Honau lived in Constantinople as the legate of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick I, Barbarossa. In this city he became friends with Hugh Etherianus, whom he urged to translate the works mentioned above in order to defend the doctrine of the person and nature of Christ.

Epistolae

Epistola Hugonis Honaugiensis scolastici missa Hugoni Etheriano Constantinopoli (a. 1179).

Sed quia a Graecis sapientiae totius fons emanavit teque Deus non tam Latine quam Graece eloquentie titulis florentissimum hiis temporibus exhibuit, rogo ut has Latinorum periculosas dubitationes etiam in Sabellianum dogma personam et naturam confundentes, deducentes, Graecorum doctorum auctoritatibus qui de his expressius quam nostri locuti sunt, amputes et huic liti sententiis illorum fines imponas¹³.

Epistola Hugonis Honaugiensis scolastici missa Hugoni Etheriano Constantinopoli (a. 1179). Deprecor tuam bonitatem ut in his quaestionibus quas per Ruderegerum prefatum et Constantinopoli tibi porrexi et postea per eundem a Germania in memoriam reduxi de Graecorum opulentia penuriam non tam meam quam omnium Latinorum adiuues¹⁴.

Liber de differentia naturae et personae

On this compilation, Hugh of Honau wrote a personal work in Latin entitled *De diuersitate naturae et personae*. In his letters encouraging Etherianus to carry out these translations he stresses their necessity for the Western Christians and the abundance of Greek texts available to help him in his task¹⁵:

Quia a Graecis sapientiae fons emanavit [...] rogo ut has Latinorum periculosas dubitationes [...] Graecorum doctorum auctoritatibus qui de his expressius quam nostri locuti sunt, amputes et huic liti sententiis illorum fines imponas. Deprecor tuam bonitatem ut in his quaestionibus [...] de Graecorum opulentia penuriam non tam meam quam omnium Latinorum adiuues¹⁶.

¹² Ch. H. Hashins, «Leo Tuscus», *English Historical Review*, 33 (1918), pp. 494-495, Birrer, Larissa. L'exposition des songes selon Daniel : édition critique du manuscrit de la Berliner Staatsbibliothek, Preussischer Kulturbesitz lat. quart. 70 avec introduction, notes, glossaire et index des formes. 2013, University of Zurich, Faculty of Arts., pp. 11-17. ZORA URL: <http://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-92329>

¹³ A. Dondaine, "Hugues Éthérien et ... p. 139.

¹⁴ A. Dondaine, "Hugues Éthérien et ... p. 131.

¹⁵ W. Berschin, *Medievo greco latino*, ... pp. 282-283

¹⁶ N. Haring, "The 'Liber De differentia naturae et personae' by Hugh Etherian and the letters adressed to him by Peter of Vienna and Hugh of Honau", *Medieval Studies* 24, 1962. pp. 1-34.

7. Pascalis Romanus (fl. 1165)

Also at the imperial court in Constantinople between 1160 and 1170 was Pascalis Romanus, of whom relatively little is known. Pascalis was interested in books on natural philosophy; he translated a treatise on dreams and another on medicinal plants and their astrological virtues.

Liber thesauri occulti

In the prologue to *Liber thesauri occulti*, Pascalis mentions Aristotle's *De naturis animalium*, Hippocrates, and Cato. In the work he compiles texts on the science of dreams with considerations based on his experience and his own, taken from the accounts of a range of dreams reported by Catholics, Greeks, Chaldeans and Persians and by the Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar. He states that his work reveals a hidden treasure and provides information that is necessary to philosophers and scholars, if they are not to remain silent or give mistaken responses when consulted on these matters.

Incipit liber thesauri occulti a Pascale Romano editus Constantinopolis anno mundi .ui. .dc. .lxxiiii. anno Christi .m. .c. .lxu.

Thesaurus occultus requiescit in corde sapientis et ideo desiderabilis, set in thesauro occulto et in sapientia abscondita nulla pene utilitas, ergo reuelanda sunt abscondita et patefacienda que sunt occulta. Quare de plurimis ignotis et occultis unius tantummodo elegi tegumentum aptamque reuelationem describere, uidelicet, sompni secundum genus et species eius quo res profunda et fere inscrutabilis ad summum patenti ordine distinguatur. Eius namque doctrina philosophis et doctis uiris ualde necessaria est, ne forte cum exquisiti fuerint muti uel fallaces inueniantur. [...] Collectus autem est liber iste ex diuina et humana scriptura tam ex usu experimenti quam ex ratione rei de Latinis et Grecis et Caldaicis et Persis et Pharaonis et Nabugonosor annalibus in quibus multipharie sompna eorum sunt exposita [...] Non itaque longitudo prohemii nos amplius protrahat nec responsio aliqua impediatur, set omni cura seposita succinte ad thesaurum desiderabilem aperiendum properemus¹⁷.

Liber physicalium uirtutum, compassionum et curationum

Pascalis states that he has been asked to translate this curious Greek work, known as the *Cyranides*, which offers a compendium of medicinal observations on the virtues of animals, plants and stones. He is aware that there are different kinds of translations, and discusses the process of translations from Arabic to Greek. It is a difficult work to translate, but he has translated it to please an erudite master who has asked him to carry out the task and has resolved the difficulties of the translation spurred on by the sense that the work is useful.

¹⁷ Ch. H. Haskins, *Studies in the history*, p. 218; L. Birrer, *L'exposition des songes selon Daniel: édition critique du manuscrit de la Berliner Staatsbibliothek, Preussischer Kulturbesitz lat. quart. 70 avec introduction, notes, glossaire et index des formes*. 2013, University of Zurich, Faculty of Arts., pp. 10-11. ZORA URL: <http://doi.org/10.5167/uzh-92329>

In Christi nomine, amen. Incipit liber Kirannis Ypocratonis filie. Eruditissimo domino magistro Ka. Pa. infimus clericus. Admiror et commendo sagacitatem tue prudentie que cum docta et experta sit in hiis que super naturam nostri circuli sunt et que iam quasi ultra vii. celos contemplan-do penetrauit, modo etiam infima experimenta terrena conspiciere non dedignatur. Rogasti enim me ut hunc librum medicinalem de Greco eloquio in Latinum sermonem transferrem. Res quidem facilis fuit ad dicendum, sed difficilis ad perficiendum, uerum caritatio amore tuoque beneficio permotus obedire non renui. Et quoniam diuerse sunt translationes de Agarenica lingua in Grecam, ut nosti, librum Grecum quem mihi dedisti studiose et fideliter per omnia emulatus sum, ipsos etiam duos prologos, quamuis asperos uelud de antiquissimis titulis abstractos, preterire nolui, non uerba, que de sterilitate barbarica sunt, sed sensum utilitatis colligendo. ... Transfertur itaque liber iste Constantinopoli Manuele imperante anno mundi ui^m dclxxiii. anno Chriti m. c. lxx. indictione secunda, Liber phisicalium uirtutum, compassionum, et curationum collectus ex libris duobus, ex primo uidelicet Kirannidarum Kiranni regis Persarum et ex libro Apocratonis Alexandri ad propriam filiam. Habebat autem primus liber Kiranni sic sicut et supponemus: Dei donum magnum angelorum accipiens fuit Hermes Trimegistus deus hominibus notus¹⁸.

8. Moses of Bergamo (*fl.* 1136)

Like his two companions, Moses of Bergamo had a profound knowledge of Greek and Latin and, as Anselm of Havelberg's text indicates, he was universally considered as a faithful interpreter. He held a preeminent position in Constantinople and had amassed a great treasure of Greek manuscripts, which he later lost in a fire in the Pisan quarter of the queen of cities. He composed a poem in hexameters, *Pergaminus*, dedicated to his city of Bergamo which bears witness to his fine classical education. A gloss describes him as «Magister Moyses Pergamensis ualens et probus homo in scriptura [...] in curia imperatoris Constantinopolitani».

Moses' prologue to an unidentified theological work provides further proof of his intellectual activity. The work is a compilation of texts of the Holy Scriptures and the Greek Fathers, «cum totum quicquid id est de sacra sit pariter canonicaque scriptura collectum». He takes trouble to discuss philological questions, underlining his eagerness to further his knowledge of translation and thus be able to provide the Western Christians with Eastern texts that are unknown to them.

He presents the themes of an unknown book which he found extremely interesting and which he decided to translate in very adverse circumstances. He knows that he has found a treasure, and now he wants to translate it for the benefit of all Western Christians, applying everything he has learnt in the art of translation.

Moyses Pergameni prologus in presens opusculum quod ipse de Greco transtulit.

Cum sapientis cuiusdam Grece lingue librum necessaria quedam querendo percurrerem, contigit hunc quoque me circa finem repperire libellum. Cuius titulo mox percurso tanto protinus eum quoque legendi sum desiderio tactus ut, iis intermissis quorum mihi fuerat occasione

¹⁸ Ch. H. Haskins, *Studies in the history*, pp. 219-220.

reperitus, ad ipsum me tota mentis auiditate conuerterem. Cum uero diligenter eum finetenus perlegissem, quamuis et frigus ingens uelut circa mensis decembris initium foret et occupationes alie me plurime circumstarent, nocturnis me uigiliis et translationis laboribus tradidi, ne pretiosum repertum thesaurum solus possidens inuidie uel inertie merito ceu piger et nequam seruus arguer, cum presertim Grecas litteras propter id potissimum didicisse me sim sepe testatus, ut ex eis in nostras siquid utile reperirem quod nobis minus ante fuisset debita deuotione transuerterem. [...] Te uero, lector amice, deuote rogo, quisquis hunc labosculum nostrum transcribere forte dignaberis, ne transcriptum cum suo prototipo conferre graueris, nec turbere queso si cum titulum materie legeris auctoris nomen suppositum non inueneris. [...] De me quoque qui transtuli proemio supplicando subiungo quatinus ego Moyses, uidelicet, Pergamenus cum per me tibi tradita legeris orationibus tuis seu uiuus seu luci subtractus interserar¹⁹.

9. James of Venice (fl. 1140)

James of Venice has been described as «the most actiue and successful pioneer of Aristotle in Latin in the twelfth century». He was probably the first Latin translator of uarious works by Aristotle, including the *Physics*, *De anima*, *Parua naturalia*, and *Metaphics*, and he was translated anew, after Boetius, *Prior and Posterior Analytics*, *Topics and Sophistici Elenchi* with some commentaries written and translated by him,

Iacobus clericus de Venetia transtulit de Graeco in Latinum quosdam libros Aristotelis et comentatus est, scilicet, Topica, Analiticos Priores et Posteriores, et Elencos, quamuis antiquior translatio super eosdem libros haberetur²⁰.

In his commentaries many technical terms of philosophical language appear for the first time. James remained in Constantinople for part of his life and had dealings with two fine scholars of Greek, Burgundio of Pisa and Moses of Bergamo. Bishop Anselm of Havelberg met all these scholars in the Pisan quarter of Constantinople in April 1136, when he attended a debate with Nicetas Archbishop of Nicodemia,

Conuenientibus itaque quam plurimis sapientibus in uico qui dicitur Pisanorum, iuxta ecclesiam Agie Irene, quae lingua Latina Sanctae Pacis nuncupatur, mense Aprili, die decimo [...] uniuersa multitudo quae ad audiendum auida conticuit. Aderant quoque non pauci Latini, inter quos fuerunt tres uiri sapientes in utraque lingua periti et litterarum doctissimi, Iacobus nomine Veneticus natione, Burgundio nomine Pisanus natione, tertius inter alios precipuus Grecarum et Latinarum litterarum doctrina apud utramque gentem clarissimus,

¹⁹ Ch. H. Haskins, *Studies in the history*, pp. 201.

²⁰ Minio-Paluello, «Iacobus Veneticus Grecus: Canonist and Translator of Aristotle"», *Traditio* 8, 1952, pp. 265-267.

Moyses nomine Italus, natione ex ciuitate Pergamo; iste ab uniuersis electus est, ut utrimque fidus interpres²¹.

At the Council of Cremona he coincided with John of Salisbury, who considered his translations to be unreliable; John regarded James as eloquent, but deficient in grammar,

Precor etiam iterata supplicatione quatinus in operibus Aristotelis, ubi difficiliora fuerint, notulas faciatis, eo quod interpretem aliquatenus suspectum habeo, quia licet eloquens fuerit alias, ut saepe audiui, minus tamen fuit in grammatica institutus²².

Well versed in canon law, James was able to provide legal advice to Moses, Archbishop of Rauenna (1144-1154). He suggested in 1148 that Moses should adopt solutions of the Byzantine canon law, which he had studied and discussed with the Greeks, and which he considered the Western Christians should know and use, in order to establish his right of "presessio" with historical and legal arguments,

Moisi Rauennati Dei gratia archiepiscopo Iacobus Veneticus Grecus, philosophus. <...> Sicut apud Grecos et cum Grecis in cephaleo sepe loquens legi, sic et apud Latinos et uobiscum in capitulo semel disserere non erubesco. [...] Similis autem in Roma episcopo in Europa sedenti consuetudo est in Rauenna metropolitam post se honorari, et ad ipsius dextram sedenti sedendi priuilegia sicut reliquis ecclesiis seruentur. Hec enim generalia sic generaliter sicut uniuersalia uniuersaliter seruanda esse priuilegia. Et hec igitur et multa alia apud Grecos legens et apud Latinos seruanda esse confiteor²³.

10. Burgundio of Pisa (1110-1190)

Burgundio of Pisa was sent on many occasions to Constantinople as a jurist to take part in the controversies between the Western Christians and Greeks on questions of orthodoxy and the primacy of the Papacy, and indeed wrote the official bilingual records of the debates²⁴. There he coincided with James of Venice and Moses of Bergamo in the Pisan district of the city of Constantinople in April 1136 as Bishop Anselm of Havelberg writes.

In the epitaph on the tomb of Burgundio his fellow citizens twice mention his merits as a translator from Greek into Latin. The first is a general reference to his ability as a translator, and the second praises his translations of medicine:

Optimus interpres Grecorum fonte reffectus
Plurima Romano contulit eloquio
[...]
Dogma poetarum cui littera Greca Latina
Ars medicinarum patuit sapientia trina²⁵.

²¹ Minio-Paluello, «Jacobus Veneticus Grecus», p. 266; *PL* 188, 1163.

²² Minio-Paluello, «Jacobus Veneticus Grecus», p. 294.

²³ Minio-Paluello, «Jacobus Veneticus Grecus», pp. 273-74.

²⁴ W. Berschin, *Medieuo greco-latino*, ... pp. 287-92.

²⁵ P. Classen, *Burgundio von Pisa*. Heidelberg, 1974, p. 8.

In commentatione Iohannis Crisostomi supra euangelium sancti Iohannis euangeliste

Burgundio also participated in the translations of works of Greek patristics, and was the translator of St John Chrysostom's *Homilies on the Gospels of St Matthew and St John*. In the *Homily on the Gospel of St John*²⁶, translated to beseech God to redeem the soul of his son Hugolinus, who had died in a journey to Constantinople, Burgundio says that he has previously translated the *Homily on the Gospel of St Matthew*, *audissime haberi desideratum*, for Pope Eugenius III, which is extant, noting the paucity of this type of works among the Western Christians and the eagerness with which his co-religionists sought them out and translated them, «quia huius Iohannis euangeliste expositionis penuria apud Latinos maxima erat»²⁷. He adds indications regarding ways in which manuscripts can be found, how they should be selected and studied, and how the definitive text for translation should be established²⁸

Cum Constantinopoli pro negotiis publicis Patriae mese a conciuibus meis ad imperatorem Manuelem missus essem legati munere fungerer [...].

He also describes the efforts he made to obtain copies of the manuscripts of these works and how, given the difficulty of finding them, he employed two copyists to transcribe two manuscripts borrowed from two monasteries. He notes his interest in comparing and amending them to ensure their reliability, and says that he worked on them day and night and during his return journey to Pisa,

<librum> uenalem ut mecum Pisas transferendum referrem nullatenus inuenirem, duobus exemplariis a duobus monasteriis [...].

We see the same eagerness to seek out manuscripts to obtain the best possible texts, and the same constant dedication to his task, in his translation of the *Homily on the Gospel of St Matthew*²⁹.

De natura hominis

In the scientific sphere he translated the Hippocratic *Aphorisms* and ten texts by Galen, applying a literal method but adding a critical introduction to the text which would help the later evaluation of the materials translated. Between 1168 and 1171 Burgundio translates Nemesius of Emesa's treatise *De natura hominis* for Emperor Frederick I with the aim of spreading the fame and glory of his patron; he trusts that it will be of use to all the inhabitants of his kingdom.

Dominatori Federico, inuictissimo Romanorum Imperatori et Caesari semper Augusto, a Burgundione, iudice natione Pisano. translatus incipit liber. ...

²⁶ P. Classen, *Burgundio*, pp. 84-85; Hasse, «The Social Conditions of the Arabic-(Hebrew-) Latin Translation Movements in Medieval Spain and in the Renaissance», in *Wissen über Grenzen: Arabisches Wissen und lateinisches Mittelalter*, A. Speer, L. Wegener (eds), Berlin-New York 2006, pp. 79-80.

²⁷ D. N. Hasse, «The social Conditions», pp. 79-80.

²⁸ J. Hamesse, «La terminologie latine des traducteurs médiévaux, expression de la rencontre des cultures dans l'histoire de la pensée espagnole», in *Pensamiento medieval hispano: Homenaje a Horatio Santiago-Otero*, II, J. M. Soto Rábanos (Coord.), Madrid 1998, p. 1474.

²⁹ J. Hamesse, «La terminologie latine ... pp. 1474-75.

Quia in meis, Serenisime Imperator, uobiscum locutionibus naturas rerum cognoscere et earum causas scire Vestram Maiestatem uelle perpendi, idcirco librum hunc S. Gregorii episcopi Nissae fretri S. Basili de greco in latinum uestro nomine statui transferre sermonem. In quo philosophice de natura hominis pertractat, de corpore, de anima, de unione utrorumque ... Hunc igitur librum fideliter translatum, ut potui, studiose emendatum Vestrae Celsitudine porrigo, me meaque Vestro seruitio offerens, praedicta uero et si qua alia praeceperitis, ad uoluntatem Vestram perficere sum paratus, quia Vobis in omnibus fidelis ac deuotus existo³⁰.

There is news about his translation of a *Liber de anima* by Gregory of Nissa:

Item scripsit librum de anima ualde obscurum qui a Iudice Pisano translatus tempore Federici II Imperatoris.

Through John of Salisbury, we know that Burgundio was considered an authority in Aristotle and was familiar with the *Analytica Posteriora*,

Metalogicus, liber IV, cap. VI, De difficultate Posteriorum Analyticorum et unde contingat. Fuit autem apud Peripateticos tante auctoritatis scientia demonstrandi ut Aristoteles, qui alios fere omnes et fere in omnibus philosophos superabat, hinc commune nomen sibi quodam proprietatis iure uindicarent quod demonstratiuam tradiderat disciplinam. Ideo enim, ut aiunt, in ipso nomen philosophi sedit. Si mihi non creditur, audiatur uel Burgundio Pisanus, a quo istud accepi³¹.

11. Johannes Ignotus (s. XII-XIII?)

An unidentified Latin scholar named Johannes translated the *Analytica Posteriora*, (ms. Toledo, Biblioteca Capitulat 17.14, fols. 1u-11u)³², directly from the Greek at the request of a scholar. This was a work full of science and of great interest to the Christians in the West, who were unfamiliar with it. In the prologue the anonymous translator mentions the previous translations by Boethius and James of Venice, noting that Boethius' text is incomplete and corrupt and that although James' translation is accompanied by commentaries it is unclear and hard to understand or use.

Vallatum multis occupationibus me dilectio uestra compulit ut Posteriores Analyticos Aristotelis de Greco in Latinum transferrem. Quod eo affectuosius aggressus sum quod cognoscebam librum illum multos in se sciencie fructus continere et certum erat notitiam eius nostris temporibus Latinis non patere. Nam translatio Boetii apud nos integre non inuenitur et id ipsum quod de ea reperitur uitio corruptionis obfuscatur. Translationem uero Iacobi obscuritatis tenebris inuolui silentio suo peribent Francie magistri, qui quamuis illam translationem

³⁰ *Némésius d'Émèse. De natura hominis*. Traduction de Burgundio de Pise. Edition critique par G. Verbeke et J. R. Mocho. Leiden 1975, pp. 1-3.

³¹ Ch. H. Haskins, *Studies in the History*, pp. 235-36; *Ioannis Saresberiensis Metalogicus*, PL 199, 920; R. A. Da Costa Nunes, "Platonismo e Aristotelismo no seculo XII". p. 50

³² J. M^a Millás Vallicrosa, *Las traducciones orientales en los manuscritos de la Biblioteca Catedral de Toledo*, Madrid 1942., p. 49; Ch. H. Haskins, *Studies in the History*, p. 229.

et comentarios ab eodem Iacobo translatos habent, tamen notitiam illius libri non audent profiteri. Ea propter si quid utilitatis ex mea traslatione sibi nouerit Latinitas prouenire, postulationi uestre debet imputare. Non enim spe lucri aut inanis glorie ad transferendum accessi, sed ut aliquid conferens Latinitati uestre morem gererem uoluntati. Ceterum si in aliquo uisus fuero rationis tramitem excessisse, uestra uel aliorum doctorum ammonitione non erubescam emendare³³.

These translations provided the West with access to a group of hagiographic and patristic Greek texts which served to fill in the gaps in their religious culture, particularly referring to the lives of the saints and the holy texts. Very often, the prefaces to these translations include acknowledgements of the Christians' intellectual poverty and expressions of their admiration for the texts that they are now reading for the first time.

For all these translators, the translations from Greek in a wide range of areas were the cornerstone of the gradual enlightenment of the West and its advance towards the mastery of scientific and cultural knowledge. In their prefaces, the translators frequently mention the awareness of their vital role in redressing the intellectual poverty of the Christian West by borrowing from the treasures of the Greeks and Arabs³⁴.

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³³ R. A. Da Costa Nunes, "Platonismo e Aristotelismo no seculo XII", p. 49.

³⁴ M. Abattouy, J. Renn, and P. Weinig, "Transmission as transformation: The translation movements in the medieval east and west in a comparative perspective", *Science in context* 14 (1/2), 2001, 1-12, present a concise and probing synthesis of the translation movement from both Greek and Arabic into Latin.