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## THE HERMES LATINUS SUB-SERIES RENEWED

*Abstract:* This note intends to announce that the *Hermes Latinus* sub-series of the *Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis* series published by Brepols and founded by the late Professor Paolo Lucentini (†2011) is renewing its publication plan. The Editorial Board of the series has been re-constituted, and is now comprised of David Porreca, Bruno Rochette, and Antonella Sannino.

In addition, this note will offer a brief history and update on the Brepols book series, a brief description of upcoming volumes in the series, and then focus more closely on the issues that are particular to the criteria of Hermetic classification of the texts.

*Keywords:* Hermes Trismegistus – Critical Editions – Medieval Magic – Medieval Alchemy – Medieval Astrology – Medieval Botanics

1.

The sub-series *Hermes Latinus* includes works written not only in Latin, but also in other languages, such as Arabic, Hebrew. As in previous volumes, it is indeed possible to sporadically include materials in languages

<sup>1</sup> David Porreca is the author of the abstract, paragraphs 2, 3A, 3H, 4, and of the English revision. Antonella Sannino is the author of paragraphs 1, 3B, 3C, 3D, 3E, 3F, 3G. Antonella Sannino has conducted this research as a part of the PRIN 2022 project: University of Naples L’Orientale, “From Harran to Cologne: Albertinism and Hermetism”, responsible A. Sannino, P.I. Amos Bertolacci, *Itineraries of Philosophy and Science from Baghdad to Florence: Albert the Great, his Sources and his Legacies*.

other than Latin if there is a strong thematic connection. For longer-term editorial plans with Hermetic or para-Hermetic works in languages other than Latin (i.e. Greek, National Languages, Arabic and so on), we should perhaps rather consider a (current or new) Brepols series outside of the *Corpus Christianorum* imprint. In addition, as recent research has shown, it is necessary to introduce new criteria for classifying Hermetic texts. According to Paolo Lucentini, if a work has an attribution or references to Hermes as the first author, it is considered Hermetic. This perspective excluded from the original plan those writings in which Hermes does not appear as the first author, such as the pseudo-Aristotelian texts *Liber de quatuor confectionibus ad Aristoas* or *Liber praestigiorum Thebidis secundum Prolemeum et Hermetem*, or the pseudo-Platonic texts (e.g., *Liber Anequemis*), but in which Hermes appears as an interlocutor or, as is more often the case, his doctrines inform a unified conception of the cosmos. The publishing plan we present below now includes such writings as those mentioned above even though Hermes is not their primary writer.

David Pingree, in his essay *From Hermes to Jābir*<sup>2</sup>, has shown that three different cultural traditions – symbolically represented in the legend of the ‘three Hermes’ (Egyptian, Harranian, and Mesopotamian) – contributed to the variety of Hermetic techniques for creating artificial life. Particularly, according to Pingree, the first and second tradition are intermingled. The renewed series will deal with the first and second of these traditions only. The first cultural tradition contributing to Hermetic magic has roots in the Egyptian art of vivifying statues, Proclus’s telestic art, and the rituals of the Sabians. The *Asclepius* and assorted magical texts belong in both categories as they are described here since they include statue-vivification (= Egyptian) by means of summoning spirits (= Sabian) and describe how to induce planetary spirits to enter talismans made of metal, stone, or wood at astrologically appropriate times. The magical texts associated with the names Hermes, Belenus, and Toz Graecus have been identified by modern scholars as a distinctive group, with a common origin among the Sabians<sup>3</sup>. The Hermetic image magic texts

<sup>2</sup> D. PINGREE, «From Hermes to Jabir and the *Book of the Cow*», in *Magic and the Classical Tradition*, London, The Warburg Institute, 2006, 19-28.

<sup>3</sup> V. PERRONE COMPAGNI, «I testi magici di Ermete», in P. LUCENTINI – I. PARRI – V. PERRONE COMPAGNI (EDS.) *Hermetism from Late Antiquity to Humanism. La tradizione ermetica dal mondo tardo antico all’Umanesimo*, Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi, Napoli, 20-24 novembre 2001, Turnhout, Brepols, 2004, 505-533.

deal with instructions for the drawing down of spiritual power or celestial virtue into objects to transform them into instruments of magical action.

The second tradition of Hermetic magic comes from Sabians and is based on works attributed to Jabir and Plato, including works such as the *Book of the Cow*. This book refers to the preparation and preliminary study of the plants, stones, animals, and tools required for magical operations. In the recipes, the virtues of plants and stones, and the power of organs and parts of animals are used as tools that enable the operator to walk all over the globe, speak with demons, create rational animals, or change his own appearance or that of the targets of his operations. The first four operations described in the book are aimed at generating a rational animal, bees, and oxen without mating, using in the first case an animal as an artificial incubator.

From another perspective, this kind of magic appears to be more closely related to the alchemical theories of transformation and illusion. In fact, the second tradition includes recipes for changing the shape of a man into that of an elephant or horse using lamps; producing the illusions of specific shapes; getting visions during sleep; making men invisible; inducing flooding in the house; and so on.

David Pingree was the first scholar to observe that the notion of artificial generation is based on the relationship between the original Arabic texts and their Latin versions. In other words, the topic of artificial generation of minerals, plants, and animals comes from the Arabic texts inspired by and related to the Greco-Egyptian and Hermetic practice of animating statues.

These texts display some differences between them, but they tend to have more in common than what separates them in terms of content. We (or, the series) is/are separating them out of practical necessity due to the large number of texts rather than any sharp divisions between them.

The relevant Arabic works are:

\* *Kitāb al-Nawāmīs*;

\* *Kitāb al-tajmī* (*The Book of Assembling*) attributed to Jābir ibn Hayyān;

\* *Ghāyat al-hakīm* (*The Goal of the Sage*) by Maslama b. Qāsim al Qurtubī (?);

\* *Kitāb al-sumūm* (*The Book of Poisons*) by Ibn Wahshiyya;

\* *al-Filāha al-nabatiyya* (*The Nabatean Agriculture*) by Ibn Wahshiyya.

The relevant Latin texts are:

\* The Hermetic *Asclepius*;

- \* *The Book of the Cow (Liber Anequemis, Liber institutionis activarum, or Liber vaccae)*;
- \* *The Book of the Marvels of the World (De mirabilis mundi)*;
- \* *On the Powers of Plants, Stones, and Animals (De virtutibus herbarum, lapidum et animalium)*.

In her essay *The Cows and Bees: Arabic Sources and Parallels for Pseudo-Plato's Liber vaccae*, Liana Saif shares Pingree's thesis about the links between Hermetic magic and Harranian magic. She elaborates on it, suggesting that:

in both *Kitāb al-sumūm* and *al-Filāha al-nabatiyya*, Ibn Wahshiyya makes it abundantly clear that understanding methods of fermentation, spontaneous generation, astral influxes and occult properties is essential to performing artificial generation. In these works, then we find a theory and operations which fit into a magical tradition that also includes the *Ghāya, Liber vaccae* / *Kitāb al-Nawāmīs*, and *'Uyūn al-haqāiq*. Understanding the theory of occult properties reaffirms that the *Liber vaccae* and the *Ghāya* are part of the same tradition, or at least conceived by al-Qurtubbī to be so; but, rather than 'Neoplatonic' and 'psychic', that tradition should be described as natural/astral<sup>4</sup> (emphasis added).

In conclusion, according to Pingree and Saif, downstream from the practices described in the ninth-century *Liber vaccae* / *Kitāb al-Nawāmīs*, there are three texts dealing with natural/astral magic written in the following century—Maslama al-Qurtubbī's *Ghāyat al-hakīm*, and Ibn Wahshiyya's *Kitāb al-sumūm* and *al-Filāha al-nabatiyya*—that contain operations for the artificial generation of animals that appear to derive from the same tradition as the *Liber vaccae*. In these texts, magic is understood as a human imitation of nature, by the use of which the operator enforms and ensouls an object whose material components have been selected according to their occult properties, which in turn are determined by the stars. An examination of these texts reveals that the distinctions separating astral, natural, and organic magic are unhelpful, even arbitrary interpretative constructs.

The distinctions separating astral, natural and organic magic are also arbitrary in the Latin tradition. For example, the Hermetic texts

<sup>4</sup> L. SAIF, «The Cows and Bees: Arabic Sources and Parallels for Pseudo-Plato's *Liber vaccae* (*Kitāb al-Nawāmīs*)», in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 79 (2016), 1-47: 17.

*Kyranides*, *De quindecim stellis*, *De mirabilibus mundi*, and *De virtutibus herbarum* elude an unambiguous categorization, as we'll show below. These Latin Hermetic texts deal with sympathetic, amuletic and talismanic magic, so Hermetic magic can be divided into natural magic (for example, the *Kyranides* and the *Liber de quattuor confectionibus ad omnia genera animalium capienda*, discussed below) and ceremonial magic. Almost all the Hermetic texts on ceremonial magic are as yet unpublished, and they can be classified according to their manuscripts' attributions to Hermes, Belenus, Toz Graecus, and Toz Graecus – Germa Babilonensis.

## 2.

According to Lucentini's original plan, "The collection *Hermes Latinus* (*Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis* 141-148) aims to provide the tools and editions for the study of the Hermetic tradition between Late Antiquity and the Renaissance". To pursue this goal, the original program proposed the following volumes:

vol. I: inventory of Hermetic manuscripts and early printed books. This was published in 2001 by P. Lucentini – V. Perrone Compagni, *I testi e i codici di Ermete nel Medioevo*, Firenze, Polistampa, 2001 (*Hermetica Mediaevalia* 1);

vol. II: general introduction, with systematic bibliography and inventory of Latin, Greek, Arabic, and Hebrew manuscripts; a preliminary bibliography was published in P. Lucentini – I. Parri – V. Perrone Compagni (eds.), *Hermetism from Late Antiquity to Humanism. La tradizione ermetica dal mondo tardo-antico all'Umanesimo*. Atti del Convegno internazionale di studi, (Napoli, 20-24 novembre 2001), Turnhout, Brepols, 2003, 747-760;

vols. III-VII: critical edition of Latin Hermetic texts (up to 1450 for philosophical texts, up to 1500 for technical texts). The following volumes have appeared, and are listed here in chronological order of appearance: *De triginta sex decanis*, ed. S. Feraboli, Turnhout, Brepols, 1984 (CCCM 144); *Liber viginti quattuor philosophorum (with Commentary 1 and 2)* ed. F. Hudry, Turnhout, Brepols, 1987

(CCCM 143A); *Astrologica et divinatoria (De stellis beibenis, De accidentibus, Antimaquis [Liber spiritualium operum Aristotelis], De spatula, Lectura geomantiae, Liber runarum)*, ed. G. Bos – C. Burnett – T. Charmasson – P. Kunitzsch – F. Lelli – P. Lucentini, Turnhout, Brepols, 2004 (CCCM 144C); *Liber de sex rerum principiis*, ed. P. Lucentini – M. D. Delp, Turnhout, Brepols, 2006 (CCCM 142) The latest item published in the sub-series (*Tomus III, Pars II*) was a new critical edition of the *Asclepius* dialogue prepared by Matteo Stefani which was published in 2019; vol. VIII: collection of iconographic sources.

Thus, the volumes that remain to be published concern alchemical, botanical and astrological, medical, and some of the magical texts, in addition to the collection of iconographic sources and an update of the manuscript inventory and bibliography.

### 3.

In this section, we provide a list of upcoming volumes planned in the renewed publication sub-series. Note that the division of texts into categories by topic as they appear below involves difficult choices, since these categorizations are driven by the practical necessity of assembling physical volumes for a modern audience of scholars, rather than any awareness of such distinctions in the minds of the texts' authors.

A) One (or more) volume(s) on alchemical treatises attributed to Hermes Trismegistus and authors linked to him, *Opera alchimica*. These will include material written in Arabic, Hebrew, and Latin, and will be edited by Marion Dapsens, Jean-Marc Mandosio, Sébastien Moureau, and Gabriele Ferrario. They are working on a complete inventory of the alchemical texts attributed to Hermes. The previous corpus included the following titles: *Alchimia, Allegoriae philosophicae, Carmina inuenta in sepulcro Hermetis, Gemma salutaris, Liber artis alchimiae, Liber de lapide philosophico, Liber gratiae, Medicina reperta, Secreta de salibus et corporibus*, and additional *Textus alchemici minores*.

The completeness of this list, and the inclusion of any given item in it, remains to be verified (e.g., is the *Medicina reperta* a better fit for this volume or in the volume of medical treatises listed below). The unambiguous inclu-

sions here are the *Tabula Smargadina* and its Commentaries<sup>5</sup> and, of course, as well as the *Septem tractatus*<sup>6</sup>.

B) A volume on medical treatises attributed to Hermes Trismegistus and authors linked to him, *Opera medica*. Tentatively, the medical treatises are:

*Iatromathematica*. The original text of the *Iatromathematica* consists of two slightly different Greek versions. The second one is the basis of the two extant Latin versions<sup>7</sup>, the first of which was written by David Hoeschelius (Parisiis 1555)<sup>8</sup>, the second by an anonymous author, but it is edited by Johannes Stadius under his own name (Coloniae Agrippinae 1556)<sup>9</sup>. It is a book about astrological medicine where the author writes about the position of the Moon that, connected with the zodiacal signs and other planets, establishes the state of a person's health. It also analyses remedies to treat various pathologies.

*Tractatus de iudicio urinae*, also titled *Liber de iudiciis urinae sine visu eiusdem urinae* and studied by Danielle Jacquart<sup>10</sup>.

C) One (or more) volumes on *Opera magica*. Because the Latin Hermetic texts deal with sympathetic, amuletic, and talismanic magic, Hermetic magic can be divided into natural magic (e.g., the *Kyranides*

<sup>5</sup> J.-M. MANDOSIO, «La *Tabula smaragdina* e i suoi commentari medievali», in P. LUCENTINI – I. PARRI – V. PERRONE COMPAGNI (eds.), *Hermetism from late Antiquity to Humanism* cit., 681-696. For a brief and incomplete list manuscripts, see <http://www.bphv.eu/content/tabula-smaragdina>. Based on work done for a recent conference paper dedicated to Hermetic alchemical texts, Porreca has estimated that the total number of manuscripts containing the *Tabula smaragdina* and/or commentaries on it is certain to run into the hundreds.

<sup>6</sup> M. PEREIRA, «I *Septem Tractatus Hermetis*. Note per una ricerca», in P. LUCENTINI – I. PARRI – V. PERRONE COMPAGNI (eds.), *Hermetism from late Antiquity to Humanism* cit., 651-680.

<sup>7</sup> G. BRINKHUS – D. JUSTE – H. LENGENFELDER, *Iatromathematisches Kalenderbuch / Die Kunst der Astronomie und Geomantie. Farbmikrofiche-Edition der Handschrift Tübingen, Universitätsbibliothek, Md 2, 123 pp. + microfiches*, München, Edition Helga Lengenfelder, 2005 [Codices Illuminati Medii Aevi, 63].

<sup>8</sup> T. BODERIUS, *De ratione et usu dierum criticorum*, Parisi 1555, apud Andream Wechelum, 8°: ff. 52r-56v “Hermetis Trismegisti ratio iudicandi de morbis et infirmorum decubitu ex mathematica scientia ad Ammonem Aegyptium”. For an inventory of this edition, see <http://www.bphv.eu/content/iatromathematica>.

<sup>9</sup> HERMES TRISMEGISTUS, *Iatromathematica ad Ammonem Aegyptium, a Davide Hoeschelio Aug. Graece et Latina edita*, Augusta Vindelicorum 1597, typis Michaëlis Mangeri, 8°: 3-37 (Greek and Latin). See <http://www.bphv.eu/content/iatromathematica>.

<sup>10</sup> D. JACQUART, «L'opuscule sur le judgment des urines attribué a Hermès», in P. LUCENTINI – I. PARRI – V. PERRONE COMPAGNI (eds.), *Hermetism from late Antiquity to Hu-*

and the *Liber de quattuor confectionibus ad omnia genera animalium capi-enda*, discussed below), and ceremonial magic. Almost all the Hermetic texts on ceremonial magic are as yet unpublished and they can be classified according to the manuscripts' attributions to Hermes, Belenus, Toz Graecus, and Toz Graecus – Germa Babilonensis (see C2 below).

C1) volume on natural magic and botanical astrological treatises attributed to Hermes Trismegistus and authors linked to him, *Opera astrologica, botanica et magica*. It includes:

*Kyranides* (attributed to Hermes/Harpocraton);

*Liber de septem herbis* (also attributed to Alexander);

*De uirtutibus herbarum* (also attributed to Thessalus);

*Compendium aureum* (also attributed to Flaccus Africanus);

*Capitulum de arbore borissa*;

*Hermes Abhaidimon, Liber de quindecim stellis, quindecim lapidibus, quindecim herbis et quindecim imaginibus*;

*Enoch, tractatus de quindecim stellis*;

*Tractatus eximij philosophi Thebit, de proprietatibus quarundam stellarum*.

All these texts propose the thesis that the occult properties of things are virtues influenced by the stars. For example, the *Kyranides* describes, in alphabetical order, the magical healing powers of plants, animals, stones, and their occult relationships. The sequence of the planets and herbs, which have therapeutic properties and sometimes magical powers, is also found in the *Liber de septem herbis*.

Similarly to the *Iatromathematica*, the original Greek version of the *Liber de septem herbis* survives in two versions: one is anonymous or attributed to Hermes, the other is attributed to Alexander the Great. The Latin version based on the second was written by Paschalis Romanus (who also translated the *Kyranides*), but the manuscript tradition links it either to Aristotle, his student Alexander, or the Dominican philosopher/theologian Albert the Great.

*De uirtutibus herbarum* (also attributed to Thessalus) and *Compendium aureum* describe the medical and magical properties of the herbs influenced by planets.

*Capitulum de arbore borissa*. The *Essay on Lunaria* (*Capitulum de ar-*

*manism* cit., 461-476. See also for the manuscripts: <http://www.bphv.eu/content/tractatus-de-iudicio-urinae>.

*bore borissa*) is a text from the early Hermetic tradition, attributed to Hermes Trismegistus and originally composed in the Hellenic era. It was translated from Greek into Latin in the thirteenth century. The Latin text elaborates on the Greek original by exploring magical practices within a natural philosophical context, touching on alchemical and magical transmutation, and on artificial life. It discusses astrology, botany, magic, and alchemy, focusing on the properties of the tree known as 'borissa'. Vera Segre Rutz has analyzed this text and highlighted its magical and alchemical aspects, specifically related to the moon plant<sup>11</sup>. My (Sannino's) own research has argued that the version in MS 1 – held in the Donald F. and Mildred Topp Othmer Library of Chemical History, Philadelphia, PA – of the short text *The Essay on Lunaria (Capitulum De borissa)*, attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, is not a fragment. The manuscript does not contain an incomplete version of the text, as some scholars assume, but simply a shorter one. Another short version with many variations is found in MS Bethlehem (PA), Lehigh University, Codex 10. A collation of the two versions provided an opportunity to discuss the alchemical-magical content of this text about the artificial production of life. A comparative edition of the two versions is provided<sup>12</sup>.

*Liber de quindecim stellis, quindecim lapidibus, quindecim herbis et quindecim imaginibus*, attributed to *Hermes Abhaidimon*, relates the characters of fifteen fixed stars, each one exerting occult virtues that influence an associated gem, plant, and magic image. The items' arrangement – in order: stars, stones, plants, and images – structure the text in four parts, justifying the title of *Quadripartitum Hermetis* that is found in some manuscripts. We do not have either the Greek original, nor its Latin translation. The only extant codex is the Latin translation of a kind of synthesis with annotations attributed to Masha'allah. The different chapters' contents reveal a loss of information from the original, in addition to evident interpolations and several internal contradictions<sup>13</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> V. SEGRE RUTZ, «Gli erbari di Ermete», in P. LUCENTINI – I. PARRI – V. PERRONE COMPAGNI (eds.), *Hermetism from Late Antiquity to Humanism* cit., 479-490; and V. SEGRE RUTZ, «Le piante della luna», in L. GOLAY – PH. LÜSCHER – P.-A. MARIAU (a cura di), *Florilegium. Scritti di storia dell'arte in onore di Carlo Bertelli*, Milano, Electa, 1985, 124-29.

<sup>12</sup> A. SANNINO, «Hermetic Artificial Productions of Life: The Example of the Lunatic Herb», in *Studi filosofici*, 45 (2022), 29-40.

<sup>13</sup> A.-J. FESTUGIÈRE, *La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1983, I, 160-186.

*Enoch, tractatus de quindecim stellis*, written in the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> century, is an Arabic text that is a reworked and synthesized version of the *Liber de quindecim stellis*. Stones, herbs, plants, and talismans – in the form of *annuli* – as well as some *figurae*, connected to the *virtutes* coming from fifteen main fixed stars, are organized in as many chapters, in order to present to the reader with a kind of easily consultable compendium.

*Tractatus eximij philosophi Thebit, de proprietatibus quarundam stellarum*. Lucia Bellizia edited a beautiful Italian translation of these last three writings, relying on L. Delatte's edition for the first two and establishing the Latin text of the third<sup>14</sup>.

C2) A volume on talismanic (or, image magic) texts attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, Belenus, Toz Graecus, and Toz Graecus – Germa Babilonensis, *Opera magica talismanica*. Recent research, such as essays by Sebastian Giral<sup>15</sup>, Lauri Ockenström and Vajra Regan<sup>16</sup>, suggest that Paolo Lucentini and Vittoria Perrone Compagni's previous classification needs to be expanded upon:

Hermes, *De imaginibus sive annulis septem planetarum*<sup>17</sup>;

*Liber de imaginibus septem planetarum ex scientia Abel* or *Opus Abel*, edited partially;

<sup>14</sup> L. BELLIZIA, Ἀστειρεῖς, *Antologia di testi sulle stelle fisse*, Agenzia Dedalo, 2023, 245-319.

<sup>15</sup> S. GIRALT, «The *Liber Lune* and the *Liber Solis* attributed to Hermes in the MS Vatican, B.A.V., Barb. lat. 3589», in *Cahiers de recherches medievales et humanistes* [Online], 33 (2017), Online since 16 August 2020, connection on 15 December 2022. URL:<http://journals.openedition.org/crmh/14703> DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/crm.14703>. Concerning the *Liber De imaginibus septem planetarum ex scientia Abel*, Giral<sup>15</sup> notes that the two oldest sources of Version *R* of the *Liber de imaginibus Abel*, *V* and *B*, are not listed in the catalog of manuscripts of medieval Hermetic texts compiled by Paolo Lucentini and Vittoria Perrone Compagni. He suggests a different hypothesis compared to that of Vittoria Perrone Compagni. According to him, it may seem more logical to presume that Robert of Chester was the first translator and Adelard the adaptor. She had argued that Version *A* of the *Liber Lune* and the *Liber Solis* were by Adelard of Bath based on stylistic similarities with his version of Thābit ibn Qurra's *De imaginibus* known as *Liber prestigiorum*.

<sup>16</sup> L. OCKENSTRÖM – V. REGAN, «The Hermetic Origins of the *Liber Sigillorum* of Thechel», in *The Journal of Medieval Latin*, 33 (2023), 173-266. They demonstrated that the *Liber Thechel* has “its roots in the Arabic Literature, specifically a work of astrological image known as *Liber planetarum* or *Liber Saturni* which is preserved in a unique manuscript in the National Library of Firenze” (175).

<sup>17</sup> V. PERRONE COMPAGNI, «Una fonte ermetica: il *Liber orationum planetarum*», in *Bruniana & Campanelliana*, 7 (2001), 189-197, which provides an edition of the manuscript Darmstadt 1410.

*Liber Saturni*, containing fifteen chapters that correspond with those from the *Liber Techel*, edited by Lauri Ockenström and Vajra Regan;  
*Liber Lune* and *Liber Solis*, edited by Sébastien Giralt;  
 Belenus, *Liber imaginum lunae*;  
 Belenus, *De viginti quattuor horis*, edited by P. Lucentini<sup>18</sup>;  
 Belenus, *De imaginibus diei et noctis*;  
 Belenus, *De quattuor imagines magnis*;  
 Belenus, *De discretione operis differentia ex iudiciis Hermetis*;  
 Belenus, *De imaginibus septem planetarum*;  
 Toz, *De lapidibus veneris*;  
*De stationibus ad cultum Veneris*<sup>19</sup>.

Also included will be the Latin version, short commentary, and Hebrew version of the *Liber imaginum signorum*, which Nicolas Weill-Parot plans to edit. The *Liber imaginum signorum* is a significant treatise on astrological medicine that delves into the realm of therapeutic imagery associated with the zodiacal signs. Found in the Latin translation of *Picatrix* as *De imaginibus ad calculum* and in Jerome Torrella's *Opus de praeclarum imaginibus astrologicis* as *Glossa super imagines duodecim signorum*, this text had gained particular renown among the Jewish physicians of Montpellier, France. Within this text, readers encounter twelve therapeutic images intricately linked to the zodiacal signs, and at times, their decans. These images serve as focal points for healing practices and were believed to hold potent astrological significance<sup>20</sup>.

#### D) Cosmology.

The *Liber de secretis naturae*, translated by Hugo de Santalla from the Arabic work *Kitab sirr al-haliqa* (*The Book of the Secret of Creation*), was written in the first half of the 11th century. Since this text has received a full critical edition by F. Hudry<sup>21</sup>, it will not be necessary to re-pu-

<sup>18</sup> P. LUCENTINI, «L'ermetismo magico nel secolo XIII», in Id., *Platonismo, ermetismo, eresia, nel Medioevo*, Louvain-La-Neuve, F.I.D.E.M., 2007, 264-310.

<sup>19</sup> P. LUCENTINI – V. PERRONE COMPAGNI, *I testi e i codici di Ermete nel Medioevo*, Firenze, Polistampa, 2001 (*Hermetica Mediaevalia* 1), n. 25-41, 59-93.

<sup>20</sup> N. WEILL-PAROT, «Antonio da Montolmo et la magie hermétique», in P. LUCENTINI – I. PARRI – V. PERRONE COMPAGNI (eds.), *Hermetism from late Antiquity to Humanism* cit., 545-568. See <http://www.bphv.eu/content/liber-imaginum-signorum> and N. WEILL-PAROT (ed.), *Hieronymus Torrella, Opus praeclarum de imaginibus astrologicis*, Firenze, SISMEL Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2008.

<sup>21</sup> F. HUDRY, «Le *De secretis nature* du ps.-Apollonius de Tyane, traduction latine par Hugues de Santalla du *Kitab sirr al-haliqa*», in *Chrysopoeia*, 6 (1997-1999), 1-154; P.

blish it as part of the renewed sub-series. We include it here in this list for the sake of completeness.

E) Regarding commentaries, there is the *Glossulae super imaginum Lune* studied by Sophie Page<sup>22</sup>. We intend to add to these writings other texts that are not properly Hermetic (in the sense of formal attribution) but that convey ideas and doctrines characteristic of Hermeticism. These works are Adelard of Bath's *Liber praestigiorum Thebidis secundum Ptolemaeum et Hermetem* edited by C. Burnett. It accompanies a large fragment of the Judaeo-Arabic version of Thabit *On Talismans*, and John of Seville's literal translation of this version<sup>23</sup>.

F) A volume of texts attributed to Aristotle. L. Saif states: "We can identify the following constituent treatises within the PsAH cluster: *al-Istimākhtīs*, *al-Istimātīs*, *al-Hādhitūs*, and *al-Ustuwattās*. Together, they seemed to have formed a single work entitled *Kitāb 'Ilal al-ruhāniyyāt*. To these we can add *al-Madītīs* (which is an abridgment of *Kitāb 'Ilal al-rūhāniyyahāt*), *Kitāb al-Shu'ra al-yamāniyya*, and *Dhakhīrat Iskandar*"<sup>24</sup>.

G) Texts linked to the Jabirian-Hermetic tradition, such as *Picatrix*, *Liber Aneguemis*, *De mirabilibus mundi: Opera* <sup>25</sup> As with the *Liber de secretis naturae* mentioned above, the *Picatrix* has received a critical edition by David Pingree and is being included in this list for the sake of completeness, but will not be re-published in this sub-series.

A study of the sources of *De mirabilibus mundi* showed the links in terms of content between this work and the sympathetic magic of the

TRAVAGLIA, *Una cosmologia ermetica. Il Kitab sirr al-haliqa / De secretis naturae*, Napoli, Liguori, 2001, texts translated 157-257.

<sup>22</sup> S. PAGE, *Magic in the Cloister: Pious Motives, Illicit Interests, and Occult Approaches to the Medieval Universe*, University Park (PA), Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013, 77-91; EAD., «Medieval Magic Figures: Between Image and Text», in S. PAGE – C. RIDER (eds.), *Routledge History of Medieval Magic*, Abingdon and New York, Routledge, 2019, 432-457.

<sup>23</sup> THĀBIT IBN QURRA, "On Talismans" and Ps.-Ptolemy "On Images 1-9" together with the "Liber Prestigiorum Thebidis" of Adelard of Bath, G. BOHAK – C. BURNET (eds.), Firenze, SISMEL-Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2021 (Micrologus Library, 106).

<sup>24</sup> L. SAIF, «A Preliminary Study of the Pseudo-Aristotelian Hermetica: Texts, Context, and Doctrines», in *Al-'Usur'al-Wustā*, 29 (2021), 20-80: 21.

<sup>25</sup> D. PINGREE (ed.), *Picatrix: the Latin Version of the Ghāyat al-akīm*, London, Warburg Institute, 1986; *Liber Aneguemis. Un antico testo ermetico tra alchimia pratica, esoterismo e magia nera*, (a cura di) P. SCOPELLITI – A. CHAQUECH, Milano, Mimesis Edizioni, 2006; A. SANNINO (a cura di), *Il De mirabilibus mundi tra tradizione magica e filosofia naturale*, Firenze, SISMEL-Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2011 (Micrologus Library, 41).

*Kyranides* and the *Liber de quattuor confectionibus*. In particular, MS Montpellier, École de médecine, H 277 is very useful for understanding the precise links between the different magical traditions that are found in *De mirabilibus mundi* and in the *Liber de virtutibus herbarum lapidum et animalium*<sup>26</sup>.

As Isabelle Drealants has shown, the author of *De virtutibus* claims to be inspired by the *Kyranides*, as we read in the Prologue: “*Immo etiam egomet Albertus ut in pluribus veritatem inveni et veritatem suppono quo ad aliqua ex libro Kiranidis, et libro alchorach*”<sup>27</sup>. This statement is not followed by literal quotations, but the content parallels between the *Kyranides* and *De virtutibus* are indisputable, especially concerning animals; in *De virtutibus*, medical properties are preferred over magical properties. Concerning herbs, the link is also established by textual tradition: Alexander’s *De septem herbis* is found in some manuscripts after the *De virtutibus* and deals with seven herbs absent in the *Dv*, almost as a complement. Moreover, the reference to Alchorat in this passage and elsewhere explicitly refers to a title reserved for the *Kyranides*. In the Marican manuscript *Lat. Vi. 201*, one reads: “*liber de proprietatibus rerum alchirani, liber phisicalium virtutum compassionum et curationum, collectus ex libris duobus*”.<sup>28</sup> Still, a 1685 edition of the *Kyranides* cites the *Liber aggregationis* to associate Albertus with the *Kyranides*: “*qui Albertum, nostri Kirani aemulum*”<sup>29</sup>.

H) Additionally, a new volume of translations into English of the Latin philosophical works attributed to Hermes Trismegistus is being prepared for the *Corpus Christianorum in Translation* series, also published by Brepols. This volume is nearing completion and is being prepared by Dan Attrell, Brett Bartlett, David Porreca, and Matteo Stefani. It will include annotated translations of the *Asclepius* (based on Matteo

<sup>26</sup> A. SANNINO, «From Hermetic Magic to the Magic of the Marvels», in S. PAGE – C. RIDER (eds.), *The Routledge History of Medieval Magic* cit., 151-168; C. BURNETT – L. SAIF, «The Aping of Culinary Recipes in Magical Texts: The Case of the *Flos Naturarum* and the *Kitab Al-Istijlab (Liber de quattuor confectionibus)*», in B. LAURIoux – A. PARAVICINI BAGLIANI (eds.), *The Recipe from the XIIth to the XVIIth Centuries. Europe, Islam Far East*, Firenze, SISMEL-Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2023, 117-147.

<sup>27</sup> I. DRAELANTS (ed.), *Le Liber de virtutibus herbarum, lapidum et animalium (Liber aggregationis)*. *Un texte à succès attribué à Albert Le Grand*, Firenze, SISMEL-Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2007 (Micrologus Library, 22), 259.16-17.

<sup>28</sup> Ivi, 62.

<sup>29</sup> Ivi, 62, n. 172.

Stefani's 2019 critical edition mentioned above), the *Glosae super Trismegistum* (based on Paolo Lucentini's critical edition which appeared as "*Glosae super Trismegistum. Un commento medievale all'Asclepius ermetico*", in *Archives d'Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Âge*, 62 [1995], 189-293 and re-published in Lucentini's volume of collected works, *Platonismo, Ermetismo, eresia nel medioevo*, 2007, 107-222), *De sex rerum principiis* (based on Mark Delp and Paolo Lucentini's 2006 critical edition which appeared as *Tomus II* of the *Hermes Latinus* series), and the *Liber de XXIV philosophorum* along with its two scholastic commentaries (based on Françoise Hudry's 1997 critical edition which appeared as *Tomus III, Pars I* of the *Hermes Latinus* series). Each of the texts will appear with its own introduction, notes, and separate bibliography.

#### 4.

The co-authors of this article are also planning, along with Agostino Paravicini Bagliani, an international conference focused on Hermes Trismegistus, the scientific writings associated with him, and their reception over the centuries. This conference is planned in Naples as a colloquium of the *Micrologus* journal in March 2026, marking the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the original conference on these topics organized by Prof. Lucentini and also held in Naples in November 2001, which led to the collected volume of proceedings published by Brepols in 2003, *Hermetism from late Antiquity to Humanism. La tradizione ermetica dal mondo tardo antico all'Umanesimo*. This upcoming conference intends to provide a forum for presentations and discussion that will both honour the work undertaken on Hermetic works by Prof. Lucentini, and also highlight how our understanding of these works has evolved over the past quarter-century.

VALENTINA SERIO

LINGUA, FILOSOFIA E LIBERTÀ DI STAMPA.  
BRUNO E L'EDIZIONE WOLFE  
DEI *RAGIONAMENTI* DELL'ARETINO

*Language, Philosophy, and Freedom of the Press. Bruno and John Wolfe's edition of Pietro Aretino's Ragionamenti*

*Abstract:* In 1587, the English printer John Wolfe released an edition of Aretino's *La prima parte dei Ragionamenti*. The volume is introduced by a "Letter to the Reader", signed by a Barbargria. Though this Barbargria's identity remains unknown, some hints about the ideological leanings of his "Letter" can be gleaned by situating this individual within the circle of Italian exiles living in England and examining their relationship with John Wolfe's printing house. In this paper, I look at the reciprocal philosophical connections between the "Letter to the Reader" and Bruno's "Expulsion of the Triumphant Beast". Ultimately, the paratext of Wolfe's edition reflects a line of thinking shared by morally heterodox authors who were often at odds with secular and religious authorities. Their "outsider" status induced them to advocate free speech and publish books to promote their philosophy.

*Keywords:* Publishing – Heterodoxy – Anglo-Italian cultural exchange – Book history

1.

Seguendo Giordano Bruno nel corso del suo inquieto peregrinare per le grandi città d'Europa, si giunge, nella primavera del 1583, nella Londra elisabettiana. Provenendo da Parigi al seguito dell'ambasciatore francese Michel de Castelnau de la Mauvissière, il Nolano vi rimarrà fino all'estate del 1585. Furono anni intensi, segnati dalle cocenti delusioni derivanti dallo scontro con l'ambiente universitario oxoniense,

ma senz'altro fecondi dal punto di vista della vicenda filosofica bruniana<sup>1</sup>. Nel presente contributo intendo accostare lo *Spaccio de la bestia trionfante* all'edizione wolfiana dei *Ragionamenti* dell'Aretino per analizzare l'intreccio di editoria, filosofia e uso del volgare così come viene delineandosi proprio nel peculiare *milieu* londinese. In tal modo emergerà la preoccupazione, condivisa all'interno della comunità degli esuli italiani, per i limiti imposti alla libertà di stampa e al nesso tra censura e il declino del sapere e della 'civil conversazione', assieme all'impegno a individuare argomenti e strumenti teorici per difendere la libertà di espressione.

Inoltre, data la centralità dell'opzione linguistica adottata da Bruno nel dialogo, cercherò in via preliminare di inserire l'esperienza bruniana nella più ampia cornice dell'intenso scambio anglo-italiano attraverso cui la cultura e la lingua della Penisola penetrano nel mondo inglese, creando le condizioni che hanno reso possibile la pubblicazione dei dialoghi in volgare a Londra.

Angolazione privilegiata da cui osservare tale fenomeno è certamente quella offerta dall'attività degli esuli italiani *religionis causa*, sia teologi ed ecclesiastici, impegnati sul fronte dell'avanzamento della Riforma, sia quegli intellettuali, linguisti, traduttori, precettori e cortigiani che operano più direttamente quali agenti della diffusione della lingua italiana.

## 2.

Una fase decisiva dello scambio culturale anglo-italiano è rappresentata senz'altro dall'età eduardiana. Quando il re fanciullo Edoardo VI ascese al trono, nel 1547, il tribunale dell'Inquisizione romana era stato riorganizzato già da cinque anni, e negli Stati cattolici le inquietudini per

<sup>1</sup> Della copiosa bibliografia sull'esperienza inglese di Bruno si vedano almeno G. AQUILECCHIA, «Giordano Bruno in Inghilterra (1583-1585). Documenti e testimonianze», in *Bruniana & Campanelliana*, II (1995), 21-41; ID., *Schede bruniane* (1950-1991), Manziana, Vecchiarelli, 1993; M. CILIBERTO, *La ruota del tempo. Interpretazione di Giordano Bruno*, Roma, Laterza, 1986; H. GATTI, *The Renaissance Drama of Knowledge. Giordano Bruno in England*, New York, Routledge, 1989; M. FEINGOLD, «Giordano Bruno in England, revisited», in *Huntington Library Quarterly*, LXVII (2004), 329-346; D. PIRILLO, *Filosofia ed eresia nell'Inghilterra del tardo Cinquecento*, Roma, Storia e Letteratura, 2010; G. SACERDOTI, *Giordano Bruno in England. From Rome to London*, in *The Routledge Research Companion to Anglo-Italian Renaissance Literature and Culture*, New York, Routledge, 2019, 192-216.

la penetrazione delle idee riformate andavano traducendosi in una sempre più aspra politica di repressione dell'eresia. A questo momento, pertanto, diversi dissidenti religiosi italiani avevano già intrapreso il cammino che li avrebbe condotti nei principali centri riformati nord-europei: incontriamo Francesco Negri a Chiavenna, Celio Secondo Curione a Basilea, Emanuele Tremellio a Londra, per menzionarne solo alcuni. Quest'ultimo era stato ospite dell'Arcivescovo di Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, infaticabile tessitore di una rete internazionale di teologi protestanti, la cui collaborazione avrebbe dovuto sostenere la neonata Chiesa Anglicana nel processo di definizione dottrinale e liturgica. Si tratta, infatti, di anni decisivi per l'edificazione della chiesa nazionale inglese: mentre Enrico VIII aveva consumato la rottura con Roma proclamandosi «Supreme Head of the Church of England» (*Act of Supremacy*, 1534), abolendo gli ordini monastici e legittimando la Bibbia nel volgare nazionale, la definizione degli aspetti più propriamente teologici e liturgici sarebbe stata compito del suo successore al trono<sup>2</sup>.

Tra i progetti che l'operoso Cranmer aveva in animo di realizzare vi era anche la convocazione di un concilio protestante da contrapporre ideologicamente al contemporaneo Concilio Trento; in tale occasione, l'arcivescovo rivolse il proprio invito a due esuli italiani, allora rifugiati a Ginevra: Bernardino Ochino e Pietro Martire Vermigli. Benché il concilio ideato da Cranmer non abbia mai avuto luogo, i due italiani si trattennero in Inghilterra per diversi anni, offrendo un contributo decisivo al percorso religioso del regno. Ochino proseguì infatti l'attività di appassionato predicatore che lo aveva reso celebre in tutta Europa, vedendo le proprie prediche e sermoni pubblicati in numerose edizioni e traduzioni. A tal proposito, vale la pena ricordare come l'allora principessa Elisabetta si fosse ella stessa cimentata nella traduzione dall'italiano al latino di uno dei suoi sermoni, versione concepita come dono al fratello Edoardo.

<sup>2</sup> K. GUNTHER, *Reformation Unbound. Protestant Vision of Reform in England 1525-1590*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014; A. OVERELL, *Italian Reform and English Reformations*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2008, in particolare cap. 4, «The Italian Connection at Edward's VI Court», 82-101; D. LOEWENSTEIN – J. MARSHALL, *Heresy, Literature and Politics in Early Modern English Culture*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006, in particolare cap. 2, «Anabaptism and anti-Anabaptism in the early English Reformation: defining Protestant heresy and orthodoxy during the reign of Edward VI», 40-58; D. CANTIMORI, *Eretici Italiani del Cinquecento*, Firenze, Sansoni, 1967; A. ROTONDÒ, *Studi di storia ereticale del Cinquecento*, Firenze, Olschki, 2008; J.A. TEDESCHI, *Intelletuali in esilio: dall'Inquisizione romana al fascismo*, Roma, Storia e Letteratura, 2012, in particolare capp. 10-11.

Altrettanto significativo fu il ruolo svolto da Vermigli, cui non solo venne affidata la regia cattedra di Teologia a Oxford, ma partecipò alla elaborazione del *Book of Common Prayer* nelle due versioni del 1549 e del 1552; si tratta, com'è noto, di un testo fondamentale per l'uniformità del culto anglicano, adottato, con puntuali variazioni, durante il regno elisabettiano. Sia Ochino sia Vermigli, tuttavia, furono costretti a fuggire nuovamente con la restaurazione cattolica di Maria, ascesa al trono nel 1553<sup>3</sup>.

Conclusasi la parentesi del cattolicesimo mariano, la regina Elisabetta ebbe il compito di operare una nuova alterazione nell'assetto religioso del regno, mirando a mantenere un delicato equilibrio tra istanze stabilizzatrici e moderate da un lato, e le spinte dei riformatori più entusiasti e zelanti dall'altro. La regina, come accennato, era stata in diretto contatto con gli esuli italiani *religionis causa*, e nel corso del suo regno le loro opere avevano conosciuto una nuova fortuna editoriale. Cionondimeno, nell'Inghilterra elisabettiana divenne sempre più raro vedere eminenti teologi riformati italiani approdare sulle sponde inglesi: diverse ragioni scoraggiavano adesso la ricezione di tali figure, tra cui l'orientamento conservatore, in materia religiosa, della stessa Elisabetta<sup>4</sup>. Un'eccezione considerevole, che val la pena menzionare, è rappresentata dall'esule Giacomo Aconcio, giunto nel regno non in qualità di riformatore ma di ingegnere militare: era stato infatti invitato da sir William Cecil per progettare la fortificazione di Berwick, al confine con la Scozia. Ciò nonostante, egli fu attivo nella *Ecclesia peregrinorum* italiana, ovvero la chiesa degli stranieri a Londra<sup>5</sup>. Sulla scorta dell'esperienza londinese, Aconcio compose la propria opera più nota, dedicata a Elisabetta ma, significativamente, pubblicata a Basilea: lo *Stratagemata Sata-nae*. Occasionata da una vicenda personale, quest'opera propone una

<sup>3</sup> A. OVERELL, *Italian Reform and English Reformations* cit., 41-60, 103-124.

<sup>4</sup> S. DORAN, *Elizabeth I and Religion. 1558-1603*, New York, Routledge, 1994; N. TYACKE (ed.), *England's Long Reformation*, London, UCL Press, 1994, 117-140. Ancora A. OVERELL, *Italian Reform and English Reformations* cit., in particolare cap. 8 «Elizabethan Aftermath, 1558-1572», 167-188; G. SACERDOTI, *Sacrificio e sovranità. Teologia e politica nell'Europa di Shakespeare e Bruno*, Torino, Einaudi, 2002.

<sup>5</sup> Sulla *Ecclesia peregrinorum* si veda l'ormai classico *Ginevra e l'Italia* a cura di D. CANTIMORI – L. FIRPO – G. SPINI – F. VENTURI – V. VINAY, Firenze, Sansoni, 1959, in particolare il saggio di L. FIRPO: «La chiesa italiana di Londra nel Cinquecento e i suoi rapporti con Ginevra», 309-412.