

Notes on the *ORGANON* [PORPHYRY], *Isagoge*; ARISTOTLE, *Praedicamentis* [*Categoriae*]; *Periermenias* [*de Interpretatione*]; ANICIUS MANLIUS SEVERINUS BOETHIUS, *Liber de divisione*; *De topicis differentiis*; ARISTOTLE, *Priora analytica*; *Posteriora analytica*; *Topica*; *De sophisticis elenchis*]; and Notes on ARISTOTLE, *Physica*, *De metaphysica*; *De anima*; and *Ethica nicomachea*

In Latin, manuscript on paper

Italy, Tuscany (Florence?), c. 1420-1440

i (modern paper) + 12 + *i* folios on paper, modern foliation in pencil top outer corner recto, watermark, triple mount with a single line above (possibly a cross?), similar to Briquet 11684, Fano, 1400, and Briquet, 11688, Venice, 1411, Online Piccard 150187, Florence, 1414 (similar mark with cross above, Briquet 11689, Florence, 1411-21), apparently complete (collation, *i*¹²), no catchwords or signatures, horizontal rules in pen, full-length vertical bounding lines in lead, single pricking upper outer margin, and prickings for vertical bounding lines upper margin, (justification, 178-168 x 120-115 mm.), written in a quick cursive bookhand in two columns of forty-one to thirty-nine lines, edges darkened, a few small stains, including wax on ff. 4v and 5v, but in excellent condition. Bound in a nineteenth-century card binding, quarter bound with brown leather-like spine, covers now plain card, back cover stained (or with traces of original covering?), in very good condition. Dimensions 227 x 165 mm.

These notes on twelve works by Aristotle (including the complete logical *Organon*), as well as texts by Porphyry and Boethius, are almost certainly a unique (and unpublished) work by a fifteenth-century Italian student of Aristotle. The brevity of this text should not be allowed to mask its potential interest for those studying the history of Aristotelian thought, medieval and Renaissance philosophy, and the history of the Italian universities.

PROVENANCE

1. Written in Italy, most likely in Tuscany, and possibly in Florence, in the early fifteenth century, c. 1420-1440, based on the evidence of the watermark and script; the contents suggest that this was either copied for the use of a student in the Arts faculty of a University, possibly that of Florence, or perhaps is a fair-copy of notes in the author's own hand.

The University of Florence, founded initially in 1321, was re-established in 1348, and recognized by the Pope in 1349; although it was certainly not the most important, or stable, of the Italian universities, it continued in existence in Florence, with some interruption until 1473 when most of its faculties and students were transferred to Pisa (see Grendler, 2002).

2. Belonged to Joost R. Ritman (b. 1941--), the Dutch businessman and distinguished collector of art and books; acquired from Sotheby's, 29 June 2007, lot 21; Bibliotheca Philosophia Hermetica MS 214 (bookplate, inside front cover).

TEXT

f. 1 [Upper margin, *Yesus, Maria*], *Auctoritates porphirii*, incipit, "Quandocumque aliquid di[vidiutr] de duobus et di[viditur] de uno ut de causa de alio ut de effectu ... Item participatione specie plures ...";

Brief notes on Porphyry, *Isagoge*.

Porphyry of Tyre (232-33 to 304) was the most famous among the immediate disciples of Plotinus, and one of the first neo-Platonic commentators on Aristotle. The *Isagoge* (which means "Introduction"), in Boethius' Latin translation, was one of the standard commentaries on Aristotle's *Categories* read during the Middle Ages, and often the introduction to the logical corpus, or *Organon*. Porphyry wrote two commentaries on the *Categories*, defending them against Plotinus, and probably also a commentary on the *Prior Analytics*. Porphyry's text is edited in *Aristoteles latinus* I.6-7, 1966.

f. 1, *Auctoritates liber predicamentis*, incipit, "Omnis scientia est in anima. Omnis color in corpore est. Item destructis primis substantiis impossibile est aliquid eorum remanere ...";

Notes on Aristotle, *Praedicamenta* (Categories). Aristotle's *Categories* was a foundational text; during much of the Middle Ages it was one of the first philosophical texts students studying logic encountered. According to the count of the texts listed by C. H. Lohr, there are approximately two hundred extant medieval Latin commentaries on the *Categories*. Aristotle's text edited in *Aristoteles Latinus*, I.1-5, 1961, pp. 5-41 (list of extant manuscripts, pp. XXIII-XXXVIII).

f. 1, *Auctoritates liber peryerminias*, incipit, "Voces sunt note passionum [sic] que sunt in anima ...";

Notes on Aristotle, *Periermenias* (On interpretation).

This text introduces proposition and judgment, and the various relations between affirmative, negative, universal, and particular propositions, as well as the problem of future contingents. Aristotle's text edited in *Aristoteles Latinus*, II.1-2, 1965, pp. 5-38. Robertus Kilwardby (1215-1279), *In priorum commentarius*, begins in a similar fashion; cf. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Canon misc. 403 (Mohan, 1952, p. 489; Bursill-Hall, 1981, no. 199.72; and Thomson, 2011, p. 266).

f. 1v, *Auctoritates liber divisionum [in mg: boetii]*, incipit, "Exempla ponenda sunt ut rei notitiam faciant clariorem; Genus non requirit infinitas";

Notes on Boethius, *Liber de divisione*.

Like all of the writings by the Roman philosopher Boethius (c. 480-524), *De divisione* looks both back to Antiquity and ahead to the Middle Ages. It was copied with great frequency for use in the medieval schools (among Boethius' works only *De differentiis topicis* and the *Consolatio* survive in more manuscripts), and the numerous glossed manuscripts suggests it proved of enduring interest to medieval students from the later tenth century on. Boethius's text ed. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 64, 875-892; modern critical edition, Magee, 1998. It survives in some 197 manuscripts (likely more) (see Magee, 1998, pp. lxvi-lxxv).

f. 1v, *Auctoritates liber Thopicorum pr[imi] boetii*, incipit, "Coniunctio disiunctiva inter illa que cadit simul esse non permittit ...";

Notes on Boethius, *In topicis differentiis*.

Boethius's overall purpose in this work is "to show what the Topics are, what their differentiae are, and which are suited for what syllogisms," discussing both types of topical argument,

rhetorical and dialectical. Boethius's text ed. in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, vol 64, 1174-1216; modern edition in Nikitas, 1990, translation in Stump, 1978.

f. 1v, *Auctoritates primi liber priorum*, incipit, "Demonstratio non interogat sed <?> quod demonstrat. Dicitur de omni est quando nichil sumere est ..." *Secuntur auctoritates 2 liber priorum*, incipit, "Ex ueris non sequitur nisi verum. Ex falsis contingit[?] uerum silogizare ...";

Notes on Aristotle's *Analytica priora* (Prior Analytics).

Aristotle's *Prior Analytics* introduces syllogistic reasoning. Aristotle's text ed. in Aristoteles Latinus III.1-4, 1998 (list of manuscripts, pp. XXIII-XXXVII).

f. 2, *Auctoritates primi liber posteriorum*, incipit, "Vnum quaque scire arbitramur cum eius causas ..." ; *Auctoritates secundi posteriorum*, incipit, "Non entis non est scientia. Nichil est in intellectu qui per prius fuerit in sensu ...";

Notes on Aristotle, *Analytica posteriora* (Posterior Analytics).

The *Posterior Analytics* discusses demonstration, definition and scientific knowledge. Aristotle's text edited Aristoteles Latinus IV.1-4, 1968 (list of manuscripts, pp. XV-XXVIII).

ff. 2-3v, *Auctoritates primi libri thopicorum aristotelis*, incipit, "Nos sustinentes[?] disputationes nichil dicemus repugnantes. Non omnem quod uidetur probabile est probabile ..." ; [f. 2v] *Secundi libri thopicorum*, incipit, "Album non accidit esse colorem sed genus ..." ; ... [f. 3] 8 *thopicorum*, incipit, "Exempla enim ponimus non qualia habemus sed que uerisimus. Non sufficit dare instantia in proposito ...";

Notes on Aristotle, *Topica* (Topics).

In the *Topics*, Aristotle discusses issues in constructing valid arguments, and inference that is probable, rather than certain. Aristotle's text edited in Aristoteles latinus V.1-3, 1969 (list of manuscripts, pp. XI-XXIII).

f. 3v, *Incipiunt auctoritates primi libri elenchorum*, incipit, "Non omnia sunt qualia uidetur esse ..." ; *Secunda libri elenchorum*, incipit, "Ambo in omnia in plura significant. Omnis solutio aut est per distinctionem aut per interpretationem ...";

Notes on Aristotle, *De sophisticis Elenchis* (The Sophistical Refutations).

The *Sophistical Refutations* includes Aristotle's discussion of logical fallacies. Aristotle's text edited in Aristoteles latinus VI.1-3, 1975 (list of manuscripts, pp. XV-XXVIII).

ff. 3v-4v, *Secuntur auctoritates primi libri phisicorum*, incipit, "Materia subiecta formalis causa est omnium accidentium questio in ea ..." ; [f. 4v], *Incipiunt auctoritates 8 libri phisicorum*, incipit, "Illud quod est essentia aliorum non potest esse accidentale ...";

Notes on Aristotle's *Physica* (Physics).

The *Physics* is the foundational work of Aristotle's texts on natural philosophy, discussing the general principles of natural or moving things, both living and non-living, and in particular the

principles and causes of change, movement, or motion. Aristotle's text edited in *Aristoteles latinus VII.1-2* (2 ed. alt.), 1990.

f. 4v-5, *Incipiunt auctoritates primi libri metaphisice*, incipit, "Ens et unum conuertuntur. Omnes actum ...";

Notes on Aristotle, *Metaphysica* (Metaphysics).

Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, the foundational text of that philosophical discipline, discusses "being" in itself, causation, forms, and the prime-mover. The text is edited in *Aristoteles latinus XXV.1-1a, 2-3*, 1970, 1976, 1995.

f. 5v, *Incipiunt auctoritates primi libri de anima*, incipit, "Animata dicunt ab inanimatis sensu et motu ...";

Notes on Aristotle, *De Anima*.

Aristotle's text on the soul was widely read and commented on during the Middle Ages; his definition of the soul is philosophical rather than religious, and discusses topics such as the relationship between mind and body and the nature of abstract thought. Aristotle's text will be edited in *Aristoteles latinus, XII.2* (in progress).

ff. 5v-6, *Incipiunt auctoritates primi libri Ethicorum*, incipit, "Falsitas est bonum continuum homini[?] ..."; 7 *heticorum*, incipit, "... Nota entim omnis qui propter delectionem aliqui operator est intemperatus ..."; [ends mid col. b; remainder blank; ff. 6v-12v, ruled, but blank except for brief note from the sixth books of the Ethics on f. 6v, "Illud quod super habundantia ..."].

Notes on Aristotle, *Ethica nicomachea*.

In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle seeks to define the end to which human behavior should be directed. He accepts "happiness" (doing well, making a success of life) as this end, defining it as an "activity of the soul in accordance with virtue," defining "virtue" as both moral (courage, generosity, and justice) and intellectual (knowledge, wisdom, and insight). Aristotle also discusses the nature of practical reasoning, the different forms of friendship, and the relationship between individual virtue and the state. Aristotle's text edited in *Aristoteles latinus XXVI.1-3*, 1972-4.

Works by the Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 B.C.E) constituted the core of the arts curriculum in the Middle Ages from the thirteenth (especially after c. 1250) to the fifteenth century and later. The study of logic, the discipline concerned with judging and evaluating arguments, was basic preparation for the study of all other disciplines. The manuscript described here begins with notes on the corpus of texts on logic, of which the texts by Aristotle (known as the *Organon*) were certainly the most important, beginning with those known as the *logica vetus* (the "old logic"): Porphyry's *Isagoge*, Aristotle's *Categories* and *De interpretatione*, together with Boethius', *Liber de divisione* and *De topicis differentiis*, followed by the texts that were "rediscovered" and translated into Latin in Western Europe in the second half of the twelfth century, known as the *logica novus* (the "new logic"), all by Aristotle: the *Prior* and *Posterior Analytics*, *Topics*, *Sophistical Refutations*.

By the thirteenth century, the arts course also included Aristotle's remaining works (most of the also "rediscovered" and available in Latin translations by the beginning of the thirteenth century), as the set texts for the study of natural philosophy, moral philosophy and metaphysics (studied in the arts faculty, but forming the basis for teaching in all the faculties, especially theology). This manuscript now includes notes on Aristotle's *Physics*, *Metaphysics*, *On the Soul*, and the *Nicomachean Ethics*. It is certainly possible, however, that the author intended to continue his notes, and include more works on ff. 6v-12v that have been left blank.

The first works in the manuscript are treated very briefly (for example the notes on the *Isagoge* consist of the briefest of outlines, encompassing half a column of text), but the notes on the later texts in the manuscript (especially the *Topics*, the *Physics*, and the *Metaphysics*) are much more detailed.

The question of the origin of the texts here is an intriguing one, and certainly open to several possible explanations. Given the importance of these texts to the university curriculum (an importance that certainly continued into the fifteenth century, and would have been true in the Italian universities, including Florence, if that is where this manuscript was copied), it is tempting to see these as notes on university lectures. Further study is needed, and would reveal how closely their content is based on Aristotle, or whether they are in fact notes reflecting commentaries on the Aristotelian texts (the set texts would often be read in class, accompanied by the master's interpretations. But it is also possible that commentaries were read as the basic text, and were themselves the subject of commentary by a master in the classroom). A preliminary comparison of these notes and the Aristotelian texts does show that these are not simply *verbatim* summaries of Aristotle or simple extracts from his texts.

Alternatively, these could be reading notes, based on the study of the texts themselves, or on commentaries. In either case, they are almost certainly unique to this manuscript, and their survival affords us the opportunity for important insight into the study of Aristotle in the fifteenth century in Italy.

LITERATURE

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Aristotle. *Analytica priora....*, Aristoteles Latinus III.1-4, ed. Laurentius Minio-Paluello, Leiden-New York-Cologne, 1998.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

Aristoteles latinus (editions of the Latin translations of Aristotle, with bibliography and lists of editions, both completed and in press)

<http://hiw.kuleuven.be/dwmc/al>

"Corpus Aristotelicum," *Wikipedia* (list of works with links to online English editions)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corpus_Aristotelicum

University of Adelaide, e-books, Aristotle (links to English translations of Aristotle's Works)

<http://hiw.kuleuven.be/dwmc/al>

English translation of Porphyry, *Isagoge*

http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/porphyry_isagogue_02_translation.htm

Maurice De Wulf. *History of Medieval Philosophy*, 1909

<http://maritain.nd.edu/jmc/etext/homp.htm>

History of Medieval Logic after Boethius to Late Scholasticism

<http://www.ontology.co/logic-medieval.htm>

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