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Giorgio Valla's Dioscorides (Mutin. A.P.5.17, GR. 115)



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ABSTRACT

Giorgio Valla owned a Greek manuscript of Dioscorides (*Mutin. α.P.5.17*), partly autograph and dated 1487. The article demonstrates that it was copied from a manuscript then belonging to Ermolao Barbaro (*Ambros. L 119 sup.*), with whom Valla held discussions on Dioscorides. Shortly afterwards, it was used as a model for *Paris. gr. 2185*, commissioned by Nicolò Leonicensi and subsequently annotated by Alessandro Bondino using *Laur. 74.23*, on loan from Angelo Poliziano in 1489. A little later, *Mutin. α.P.5.17* was completed by Michael Souliardos, who was probably Giorgio Valla's librarian, using as a model a manuscript that may have belonged to him, *Ambros. A 95 sup.* Giorgio Valla carefully read *Mutin. α.P.5.17*, and annotated it in Latin, but he does not seem to have used it directly for the section on simples of his encyclopaedia *De expetendis et fugiendis rebus*.

Keywords: Dioscorides - Giorgio Valla - Manuscripts - Humanism - Pharmacology - Natural History

Introduction

Giorgio Valla owned a Greek manuscript of Dioscorides' *De Materia Medica*, a reference work in the field of pharmacology for simple medicines. Today kept at the Biblioteca Estense Universitaria in Modena with the shelf mark *α.P.5.17*, it is partly autograph and bears a subscription dated 1487. Representative of the earliest studies on the Greek text of Dioscorides in Humanist Italy, this manuscript is of particular interest in many respects, not least because of the conditions under which it was produced and the achievements it led to. This article will therefore

consider both the production and usage contexts of the manuscript, which place Giorgio Valla at the centre of a network of humanists interested in compiling and interpreting Dioscorides' text (Ermolao Barbaro, Angelo Poliziano, Nicolò Leonicensio and Alessandro Bondino), as well as the concrete evidence of how Valla could read and use the treatise.

The original block

Mutinensis α.P.5.17 is a medium-sized manuscript (280 × 203 mm), consisting of 190 sheets of paper¹. A distinction should be made between the original block (ff. 19-190) and slightly later additions (ff. 2-18 and texts written on sheets initially left blank in the original block: 186-187), while f. 1 is a former flyleaf.

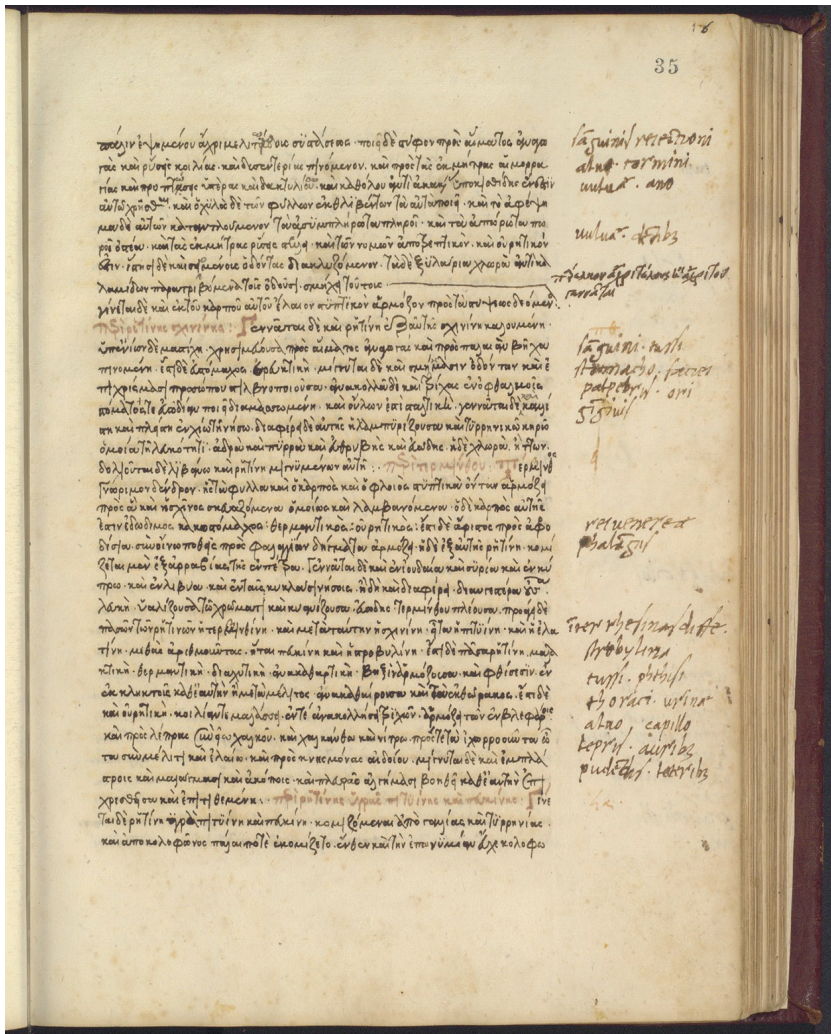


Fig. 1.

First, we shall omit the folios at the beginning and end of the manuscript and focus on the original block. This consists of three quaternions (ff. 19-42), followed by 14 quinions (ff. 43-182)² and a final quaternion (ff. 183-190, only partly written). Several watermarks are present³. Three scribes shared the task according to the quires. The first scribe (Fig. 1) wrote two quaternions and the first half of a third (ff. 19r-38v): he remains anonymous, but his handwriting suggests a Greek graphic education, which may explain why he used quaternions while the subsequent scribes used quinions. He interrupted his copying in the middle of a quaternion (f. 38v), and a second scribe took over, copying the end of this quire and then four quinions (ff. 39r-82v): Vittorio Puntoni has identified him as Giorgio Valla (Fig. 2). A third scribe (Fig. 3) took over

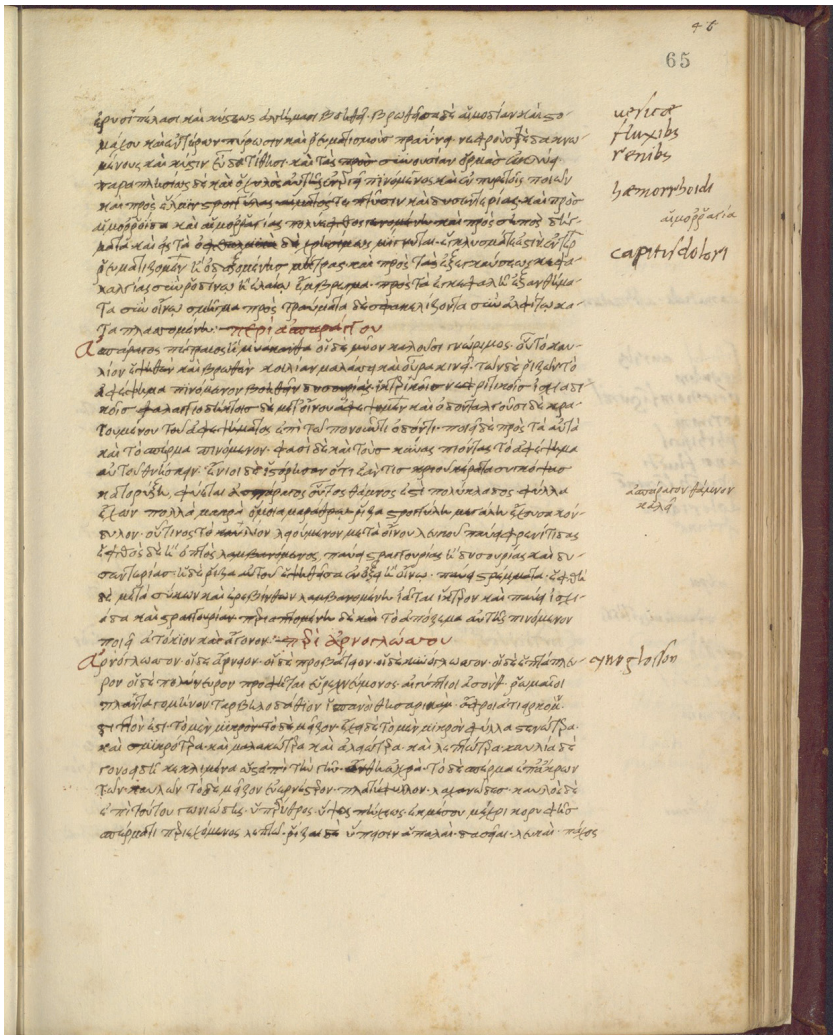


Fig. 2.

at the beginning of a new quire, copying the entire final part of the manuscript (ff. 83r-185v). He completed his work with a subscription in which he provided both his name, Nikolaos Vlastos, and a date, November 25, 1487 (f. 185v): Νικ<ό>λ<α>ο<ς> ὁ Βλαστός κε' νοευρίου ,αυπζ'. Giorgio Valla was certainly the commissioner of the manuscript, which belonged to him, as stated in a note on the last folio (f. 190v): Γεωργίου τοῦ Βάλλα ἔστι τὸ βιβλίον, “This book belongs to Giorgio Valla”. As for the content, in its original form, the manuscript comprised only the five books of Dioscorides’ *De Materia Medica* (ff. 19r-167v), along with two apocryphal treatises on toxicology: *Alexipharmaca* (ff. 167v-175r), erroneously presented as Book VII⁴, and *Theriaca* (ff. 175r-184v), also presented as Book VII. Finally, there is an anonymous paraphrase of a *Poem on Plants*, but without the poem itself (ff. 184v-185v)⁵.

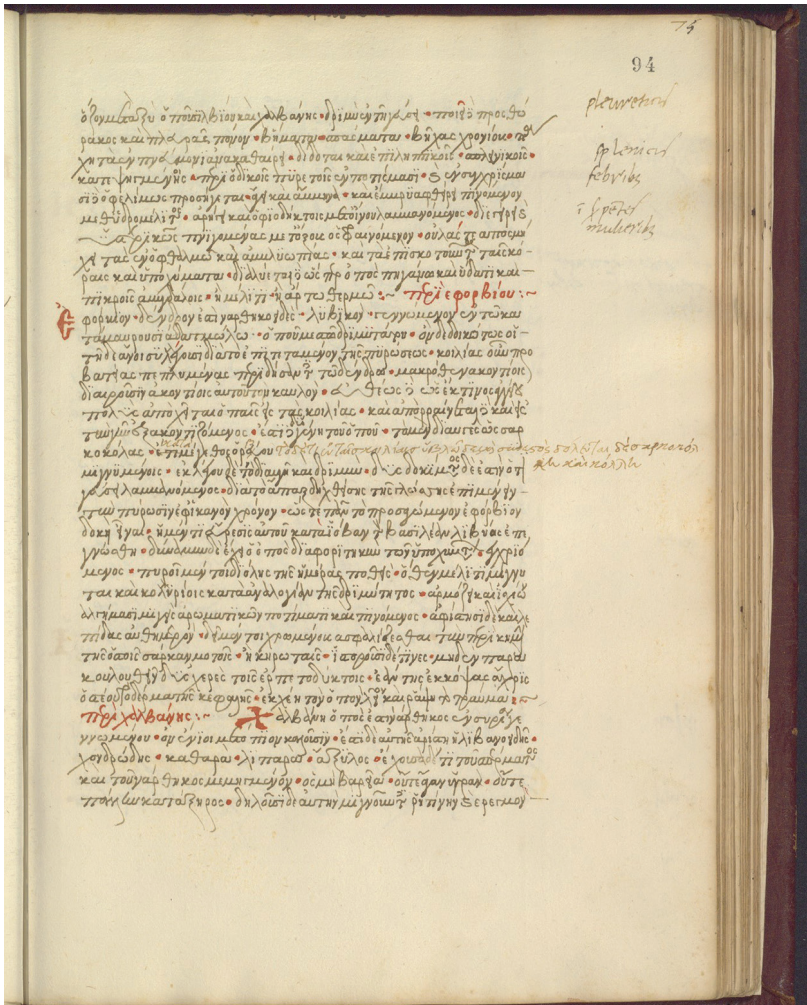


Fig. 3.

Its model: Ambros. L 119 sup.

In his study of the two apocryphal treatises on toxicology, Alain Touwaide established that the model for *Mutin. α.P.5.17* is manuscript L 119 sup. in the Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan⁶. We can come to the same conclusions regarding Dioscorides' five authentic books, and this is most likely also the case for the *Paraphrase to the Poem on Plants*. In the case of *De Materia Medica*, for example, we note the following errors and peculiarities: the insertion of an apocryphal chapter on *myrobalanon* (μυροβάλανον) between chapters 29 and 30 of Book I⁷, and the addition at the end of Book I of two equally apocryphal chapters, devoted respectively to *iberis* (ἰβερίς) and *halikakkabos* (ἁλικάκκαβος). These three chapters originate in the model of *Ambros. L 119 sup*, manuscript grec 2183 in the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris. In this manuscript, *myrobalanon* is a first-hand text copied onto a leaf now artificially inserted between chapters 17 and 18 of Book I (f. 7) but originally placed before the beginning of Book I (f. 1): the apographs (direct copies) of *Paris. gr. 2183* inserted this chapter in various places. Of these, only *Ambros. L 119 sup.* places it between chapters 29 and 30 of Book I. As for *iberis* and *halikakkabos*, these are additions by a later hand in *Paris. gr. 2183* (ff. 33v-34r, bottom margin) also copied here in the Milan manuscript, the only one among the direct copies of the Paris manuscript. A decisive point is found on f. 149v of *Mutin. α.P.5.17*, concerning the chapter *περὶ κεστρίτου <οἴνου>* ("wine made from betony"), where there is a syntactical break corresponding to the omission of about fifteen chapters: in fact, Nikolaos Vlastos inadvertently turned two leaves at a time in *Ambros. L 119 sup.*, moving from the last words of f. 156r, *βάλλειν εἰς οἴνου*, to the first words of f. 157v, *ἠπατικοῖς, δυσουροῦσι*⁸.

In short, the original block of *Mutinensis* was initially a complete copy of *Ambros. L 119 sup.*, with the same content⁹. The latter is a paper manuscript, almost identical in format to the Modena manuscript (285 × 205 mm), consisting of 198 leaves. It was written by a single scribe whom we can identify as Demetrios Moschos (Δημήτριος Μόσχος)¹⁰, and its watermarks indicate a date around 1480¹¹. As we have just seen, a philological analysis shows that the model for the *Ambrosianus* is *Paris. gr. 2183*¹². The latter was then in Corfu, within the circle of the Eparchos and Moschos families (related to each other): another copy of *Paris. gr. 2183* was made, *Paris. gr. 2182*, whose subscription attests that it was made in Corfu by Demetrios Trivolis (Δημήτριος Τριβώλης), dated 4 April 6989, 14th indiction, i.e. 1481¹³. Now, as we have just seen, the watermarks on the paper of *Paris. gr. 2182 (two arrows)*¹⁴ also occur in *Ambros. L 119 sup.* which was therefore certainly produced in the same environment and at the same time. *Ambros. L 119 sup.* has been extensively annotated in Greek (sometimes also, but more rarely, in Latin) by a hand that can be identified as that of the well-known Venetian humanist Ermolao Barbaro (1454-1493)¹⁵. Barbaro certainly commissioned the work, which – incidentally – suggests that he was in contact with the Eparchos and Moschos

families in Corfu, from whom he could obtain manuscripts. In fact, during his all-too-brief lifetime, Ermolao Barbaro worked extensively on the text of Dioscorides' *De Materia Medica*. First, in the early 1480s, he produced a Latin translation (the first in the humanistic era), which remained manuscript during his lifetime and was only published in 1516 by his heirs¹⁶. More precisely, this translation can be dated around 1481-1482, with Barbaro claiming to have translated Dioscorides "in [his] 28th year" (he was born on 21 May 1454)¹⁷. To do this, Ermolao Barbaro certainly drew from the *Ambrosianus*, since his translation reproduces all its peculiarities, such as the two chapters he titles *iberis* and *alicacabus* at the end of Book I. We also find in his translation of chapter I, 19 (βάλσαμον, *balsamon*, "balsam") a long omission that derives from an omission in *Ambros.* L 119 sup. skipping from same to same (f. 8r)¹⁸.

Nevertheless, Ermolao later maintained an interest in Dioscorides' Greek text and in establishing it. In fact, he came into possession of a second copy, whose variants he noted in the margin of *Ambros.* L 119 sup. We can establish that this second copy is the manuscript Vaticano greco 2182 kept at the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana¹⁹. In fact, in addition to numerous detailed correspondences, there is a particularly significant point: within the chapter devoted to ἀλθαία, *althaia* "Marsh mallow", Barbaro reports in *Ambros.* L 119 sup. (f. 107v) a sentence that is not found in his second copy, by placing a mark before the words μετ'ὄξελαίου and stating in the margin: παρέλκον μέχρι μέχρι (*sic*) τοῦ Ποιεῖ δὲ καὶ πρὸς δυσ., "This is an addition up to 'It also acts against dys-...'" (these are the words from which the texts return to being identical). However, it is precisely *Vatic. gr.* 2182 (and only it to my knowledge) that omits the words pointed out by Barbaro, namely: μετ'ὄξελαίου δὲ σύγγραμμα προφυλακτικὸν ἰοβόλων (f. 75v l. 7)²⁰. *Vatic. gr.* 2182 is a composite manuscript, now much mutilated, which includes on ff. 58r-80v fragments of the *De Materia Medica* copied by the monk Athanasios, who operated in Constantinople in the first half of the 15th century²¹. We can establish that his model, for Dioscorides, was ms. greco 271 (coll. 727) preserved at the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana in Venice, which also served as a model for *Paris. gr.* 2183 (see appendix 2). If Ermolao Barbaro used *Vatic. gr.* 2182, it would be possible to identify it as the second of the two Dioscorides manuscripts listed in his library²². In Barbaro's time, this manuscript was much more complete than it is today, and the humanist carried out a very meticulous and exhaustive comparison of all Dioscorides' books. To no avail, however, that these variants left no trace in his Latin translation, which, as we have seen, can be dated around 1481-1482, constituting a *terminus post quem* for the time when Barbaro acquired the second manuscript of Dioscorides (*Vatic. gr.* 2182).

Ermolao Barbaro's main concern – and he seems to have been the first to do so – was to establish the botanical identifications of the simples mentioned by Dioscorides, and to do so, he needed a text as reliable as possible. This is the main topic of his *Corollarium*, also published posthumously in 1516²³, but to which Barbaro was

working at that time, having completed his translation. Indeed, Barbaro was very cautious in translating most of simples' names, contenting himself with transcribing the Greek words into Latin alphabet, without attempting any botanical identification. In his *Corollarium*, however, Barbaro suggests identifications, often based on additional physical descriptions by other authors (mainly Theophrastus and Pliny), but usually without drawing on his own experience (although there are several references to his stay in Milan from March 1488 to August 1489). Occasionally, he offers conjectures on the texts (not only on Dioscorides, but also and more often on Theophrastus). Overall, this is a highly erudite commentary, whose fundamental methodology is the direct recourse to Greek and Latin sources, most of which were undoubtedly in manuscript form.

Giorgio Valla and Ermolao Barbaro's circle

It is noteworthy that the annotations made by Barbaro in *Ambros.* L 119 sup. are to be found in the Modena manuscript²⁴, albeit with significant differences between scribes. The first of these scribes adopted a cautious approach, at least at the beginning of his work: he left blank spaces (a few letters to a few lines) in the main text where Ermolao Barbaro had inserted references for notes. Subsequently, Giorgio Valla stepped in to fill these blanks in *Mutin.* α.P.5.17, either with a line (indicating that nothing was missing) or by transcribing Barbaro's notes – confirming, if necessary, that Valla was the manuscript's supervisor (Fig. 1). However, more and more often, this first scribe directly integrated Barbaro's notes into his own text, privileging them over the main text. Giorgio Valla then proceeded in the same way for the part he personally copied in the *Mutinensis*, in which he reproduces Barbaro's words very faithfully (Fig. 2). Nikolaos Vlastos, on the other hand, pays much less attention to Barbaro's annotations, sometimes reproducing them, sometimes simply omitting them (sometimes he seems to struggle to decipher them because he fails to copy Barbaro's less readable words). Overall, the Modena Dioscorides is a good example of how Valla drew on Ermolao Barbaro's library to build his own manuscript library, but more significantly, it provides an account of the two humanists' joint scholarly activity. Its completion in November 1487 came shortly after Valla's arrival in Venice in early 1485, where he had been appointed to succeed Giorgio Merula as professor of humanities at the Scuola Grande di San Marco, precisely at the behest of Ermolao Barbaro²⁵. For his part, Barbaro left Venice from May to November 1486 for an ambassadorial mission in Bruges, to Maximilian, the newly elected "King of the Romans". Shortly thereafter, he was appointed resident ambassador to Milan (March 1488-August 1489)²⁶. Meanwhile, and thus at the time the *Mutin.* α.P.5.17 was made, he was certainly residing in Venice. There is no doubt, therefore, that the *Mutinensis* was the result of exchanges between the two scholars in natural history and botany, particularly with regard to Dioscorides' *De Materia Medica*.

In fact, there is evidence that Barbaro and Valla discussed the interpretation of Dioscorides together. In particular, there is a letter from Barbaro to Valla, in which the sender tells his correspondent that he recently learned about the *Cornucopiae*, a work dealing – among other things – with plant names. Here, Barbaro discusses several of them and explains why he believes these interpretations to be erroneous, as he was about to publish Dioscorides²⁷. The work in question is the *Cornucopiae siue commentaria linguae latinae* by the humanist Niccolò Perotti (1429-1480), a vast and erudite grammatical commentary on Martial that was completed in 1478 but remained unpublished until its posthumous publication in 1489, precisely in Venice. It was probably on the occasion of this publication that Ermolao Barbaro became acquainted with this text. The letter in question is dated the 8th day before the calends of January 1489 *more veneto*, which corresponds to December 25, 1489. Although this is not the place to delve into it, it illustrates the discussions that the two humanists probably had together even after the *Mutinensis* was completed.

Their circle also included other collaborators, starting with Nikolaos Vlastos, to whom most of the manuscript (over 100 folios) is attributed. Hailing from a prominent family in Rethymno and a wealthy merchant, Nikolaos Vlastos is best known for his collaboration with Zacharias Kalliergis (Ζαχαρίας Καλλιέργης) in a printing business in Venice, financed by Vlastos: their first publications date back to 1499-1500, but their work is generally believed to have begun around 1493-1494²⁸. *Mutin.* α.P.5.17 testifies to Vlastos' presence in Venice as early as 1487, in the entourage of Giorgio Valla and Ermolao Barbaro. We know Vlastos only from another dated manuscript (in 1484): part of *Paris. gr.* 2939, owned by Ermolao Barbaro and later corrected by Zacharias Kalliergis before passing to Aldo Manuzio. In fact, the manuscripts copied by Vlastos all belonged to Ermolao Barbaro (Napoli, Biblioteca Nazionale Vittorio Emanuele III, III.D.35²⁹, *Paris. gr.* 1862³⁰, and *Paris. gr.* 2939³¹). The latter appears to have been one of Vlastos's first acquaintances in Venice and was undoubtedly the person who introduced the Cretan merchant to humanistic circles. Being a wealthy aristocrat, it is evident that he received no remuneration for this work. Perhaps his involvement in copying the manuscript reflects his willingness to participate in the philological work of the Venetian intellectual elite, as well as a desire to offer his friends the benefit of his beautiful handwriting: Vlastos' handwriting is indeed quite elegant and even calligraphic, and far more pleasant to read than that of Giorgio Valla or even that of the first copyist of the *Mutinensis* – anonymous but undoubtedly Greek, as we have seen. Nevertheless, it should be reiterated that Vlastos is a much less careful and committed copyist than Valla.

An early copy: Paris. gr. 2185

To take this a step further, it is worth mentioning that Giorgio Valla's Dioscorides, subscribed in November 1487, soon gave rise to a copy: this is the present-day manuscript grec 2185 held at the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris³². Of medium

format (292 × 215 mm), it consists of 194 folios of watermarked paper³³. Although the manuscript does not have a subscription, the paper has a watermark (an *anchor*) also found in *Mutin.* α.P.5.17, allowing us to establish that the volume was produced in the same time and environment. Its content is identical to that of the model's original block: the five books of Dioscorides' *De Materia Medica* (ff. 1r-175r) without *pinax* or alphabetical index, followed by two apocryphal treatises (*Alexipharmaca*, ff. 175r-184r, and *Theriaca*, ff. 184r-194v) and lastly the *Paraphrase to the Poem on Plants* (ff. 194v-195v).

Paris. gr. 2185 is the work of a single copyist, who also remained anonymous, but whose handwriting, similar to the style of the Moschos family (particularly the two brothers George and Demetrios, although their handwriting is much more elegant) suggests that he was a Greek, probably a Corfiot, who lived in northern Italy – presumably in Venice – and worked as a manuscript copyist. The fact that *Paris. gr.* 2185 depends on *Mutin.* α.P.5.17 is ensured by the same long omission in book V, which occurred when Nikolaos Vlastos mistakenly turned two folios at a time in *Ambros.* L 119 sup. In general, a philological analysis shows that the text of *Paris. gr.* 2185 is extremely accurate and copies its model very faithfully, especially with regard to Barbaro's annotations: when the copyist of *Mutin.* α.P.5.17 inserted them into the text, we find them in *Paris. gr.* 2185, but when he left them in the margin, they are absent from the Paris manuscript.

The earliest documented owner of *Paris. gr.* 2185 has been identified as Nicolò Leoniceno (1428-1524), a doctor and professor in Ferrara³⁴. In all likelihood, it was Leoniceno himself who commissioned it. In fact, there is evidence that Leoniceno had Valla's manuscripts copied at his own expense. This is evidenced by a letter from Leoniceno to Valla, dated Ferrara 19 July <1491>³⁵:

(...) Tibi, ut debeo, gratias habeo, quod libros tuos, quoscumque meo nomine Aldus expetit, tam liberaliter exscribendos tradas. *I thank you, as I should, for so generously making available to be copied all those of your books that Aldo asked you for on my behalf.*

More precisely, we find that Valla did not send his books to Ferrara, but entrusted them to Aldo (Manuzio) – who had moved to Venice the previous year, in 1490, and is noteworthy for his role as an intermediary – who took on the task of finding scribes to transcribe them. It is likely that *Paris. gr.* 2185 came about in this way, with Valla lending his manuscript at the request of Leoniceno, who funded a professional scribe. However, it is likely that this occurred somewhat earlier than this date. On the one hand – as already seen – one of its watermarks occurs in its model, *Mutin.* α.P.5.17, dated November 1487; on the other hand, as we shall now see, *Paris. gr.* 2185 received annotations between September 1489 and May 1490.

In fact, it is worth dwelling on a later episode in the history of *Paris. gr.* 2185, which represents a further milestone in the study of Dioscorides' text in northern

Italy at the time, bringing us back to Ermolao Barbaro – certainly a key figure in this field. As Philippe Hoffmann has shown, *Paris. gr.* 2185 contains annotations by the “Anonymus Harvardianus”³⁶, a person whom Luigi Orlandi recently identified as Alessandro Bondino, a doctor and humanist who belonged to Nicolò Leonicensis’s circle in Ferrara, but about whom we know very little³⁷.

These annotations appear to date from a fairly short period after the original copy: in many cases they were written in the inner margin, in a place inaccessible once the manuscript was bound. These are essentially Greek words, representing occasional variants from the main text. It is evident that this is a collation work, in preparation for the edition of the Greek text. It is possible to identify the model for this annotation: it is *plut.* 74.23 of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence, as evidenced, for example, by the fifteen or more chapters added by the annotator in the margin of ff. 154v-155r, corresponding to the aforementioned long omission that occurred in *Mutin. a.*P.5.17: those chapters are present in *Laur.* 74.23 (f. 169r-v) with exactly the same text. Specifically, the chapter numbers are the same, and many very specific features of *Laur.* 74.23 were reproduced identically, a sign that Alessandro Bondino was unsure of their interpretation (e.g. the unresolved abbreviations, the very flattened *beta*, the double apostrophe for ordinals, and the abbreviation of οὐγγία).

Laur. 74.23 is a manuscript on Oriental paper, dating from the late 13th century or early 14th century, of Eastern origin. It reached Florence quite early, probably at the beginning of the 15th century, as evidenced by the restoration of the last folio (f. 205r) on watermarked paper by a scribe whose handwriting resembles that of Manuel Chrysoloras’s disciples³⁸. How was it known in humanistic circles in northern Italy? Ermolao Barbaro’s correspondence provides a clue. In a letter dated January 26, 1489, from Milan³⁹, Ermolao Barbaro informs Angelo Poliziano (1454-1494) that he has received the book of Dioscorides that Poliziano had sent him and thanks him. We also have a letter (undated) from Poliziano to Barbaro, probably sent along with the book, in which Poliziano states that Francesco Gaddi (the prince’s confidant) informed Lorenzo dei’ Medici that Ermolao Barbaro was looking for a good version of Dioscorides, and therefore the prince immediately sent him one of his own manuscripts⁴⁰. In another letter to Francesco Gaddi, dated Milan, 1488 [1489] but without specifying the day, Barbaro thanks him warmly for the work and promises to return it promptly. Actually, Dioscorides’ name does not appear in the inventory of Lorenzo dei’ Medici’s library drawn up by Ianos Laskaris (Ἰανὸς Λάσκαρις, ca. 1445-1535) before his departure in search of manuscripts (in July 1490)⁴¹, but it is among the desiderata. This suggests that Ermolao Barbaro returned the volume late. However, *Laur.* 74.23 actually returned to Florence at a later time, probably before Barbaro’s death (June 1493): it can be traced back to the Dioscorides found in Poliziano’s house (who died in September 1494) during the inventory drawn up in October 1495 by Ianos Laskaris for the heirs of Lorenzo dei’ Medici (who died in April 1492)⁴². This identification is certain, as there is no other Dioscorides in the Medici li-

brary⁴³. We can also assume that Barbaro returned the manuscript to Poliziano, but that Poliziano kept it instead of passing it on to the Medici library.

The annotation found in *Paris. gr.* 2185 from *Laur.* 74.23 is interesting for more than one reason. As we have just seen, it must have been made no earlier than February 1489, during Ermolao Barbaro's stay in Milan, at a time when he was repeatedly declaring that he was dedicating much time to the study of Dioscorides, which he promised to publish soon⁴⁴. The work Barbaro refers to is certainly the *Corollarium*, his commentary on Dioscorides, since – as we have seen – he had already completed his Latin translation in 1482, and since the process of textual comparison between *Ambros.* L 119 sup. and *Vatic. gr.* 2182 dates to November 1487 at the latest (the date when *Mutin. α.P.5.17* was completed).

It is by no means certain that this annotation originated precisely in Milan. In fact, Ermolao Barbaro had returned to Venice in the late summer of 1489 and may have brought *Laur.* 74.23 with him on loan from Poliziano (as we have seen, it took Barbaro several years to return it) and, in turn, lent it to Bondino. This second loan should therefore date from before Barbaro's final departure for Rome in April-May 1490. In fact, as far as we know (although future research will undoubtedly clarify the matter), Alessandro Bondino was mainly active in the entourage of Nicolò Leoniceno in Ferrara⁴⁵. Based on current knowledge, the annotation on *Paris. gr.* 2185 would therefore seem datable between the summer of 1489 (Barbaro's return to Venice) and the spring of 1490 (his departure for Rome). Be that as it may, Alessandro Bondino's textual criticism work on *Paris. gr.* 2185 would have led, a decade later, while using also a different manuscript, to the publication of the first Aldine edition of Dioscorides (1499),⁴⁶ which is not surprising given his influence on the text preparation of several Aldine editions.⁴⁷ As for Leoniceno, he certainly used *Paris. gr.* 2185 for personal research: his opusculum *De erroribus Plinii et aliorum recentiorum medicorum*, published in 1491, bears witness to his direct knowledge of the Greek text of Dioscorides, which Leoniceno used extensively to highlight and refute the "errors" in the *Naturalis Historia* concerning various names of medicinal plants⁴⁸.

De erroribus Plinii fully reflects the intellectual ferment generated in the late 1480s and early 1490s by the edition and interpretation of the text of Dioscorides – but also of Pliny and, to a lesser extent, of Theophrastus – since this opusculum was written by Nicolò Leoniceno in response to Angelo Poliziano and subsequently responded to by Ermolao Barbaro with his *Castigationes plinianaе* (published in two volumes, November 1492, and February 1493). This intellectual ferment, attested by the letters exchanged between these scholars and by their published works, is also reflected in the manuscripts, which allow us to place Valla at the centre of this network: it was Ermolao Barbaro who provided him with his own manuscript (*Ambros.* L 119 sup.) so that Valla could make a copy (*Mutin. α.P.5.17*). In turn, Valla lent his copy to Nicolò Leoniceno, who had it copied (*Paris. gr.* 2185). And, through Ermolao Barbaro,

Angelo Poliziano provided Leonicens and Bondino with another copy of Dioscorides (Laur. 74.23), enabling them to improve the text.

The additions at the beginning and end of Mutin. α.P.5.17

It is time to return to Giorgio Valla's Dioscorides, *Mutin. α.P.5.17*. Shortly after the main copy, two other scribes contributed to the manuscript: this testifies that at the time a reader – most likely Giorgio Valla – wanted to navigate the *De Materia Medica* more efficiently and, in particular, to find a specific chapter more easily.

For this purpose, a first (anonymous) scribe compiled, on a different sheet (ff. 17-18)⁴⁹ a “pinax” of the chapters of Book I (Fig. 4): he listed all the titles (in the form

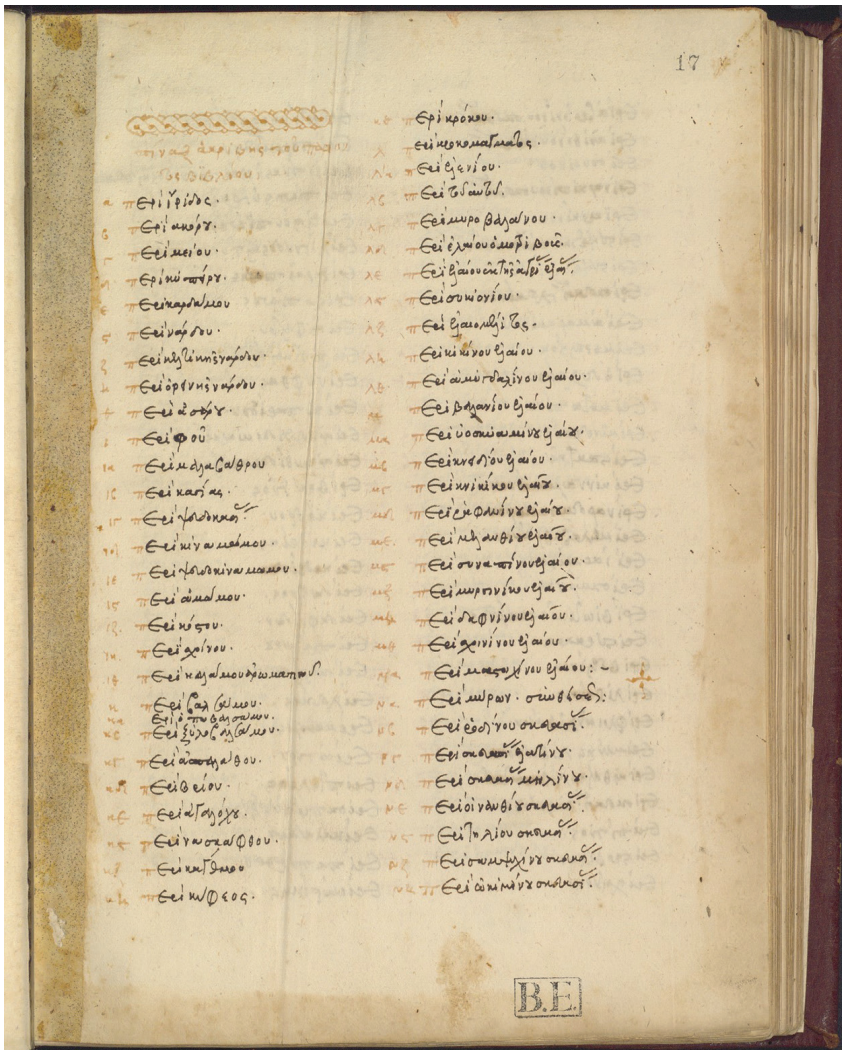


Fig. 4.

consisting of 15 folios of a different type of paper (ff. 2-16: Fig. 5).⁵¹ Furthermore, he wrote short texts on some of the last folios of the original block, initially left blank (ff. 186r and 187r: Fig. 6)⁵². Let's take a closer look at the work he carried out.

In a first quire, Souliardos created an alphabetical index of the entire *De Materia Medica* (ff. 2r-8v)⁵³, referring to the folio numbers (but in Greek alphanumeric characters, whereas no Greek foliation is visible in the manuscript today). This system differs from that of ff. 17r-18v in that, on the one hand, it applies to the entire treatise (not just to Book I), on the other hand, it lists the chapters in alphabetical order (limited to the first letter) and, finally, each chapter number does not correspond to the order in which it occurs in the text, but to the page on which it is found. Thus, for each letter of the alphabet, Souliardos listed the simples whose names begin with that

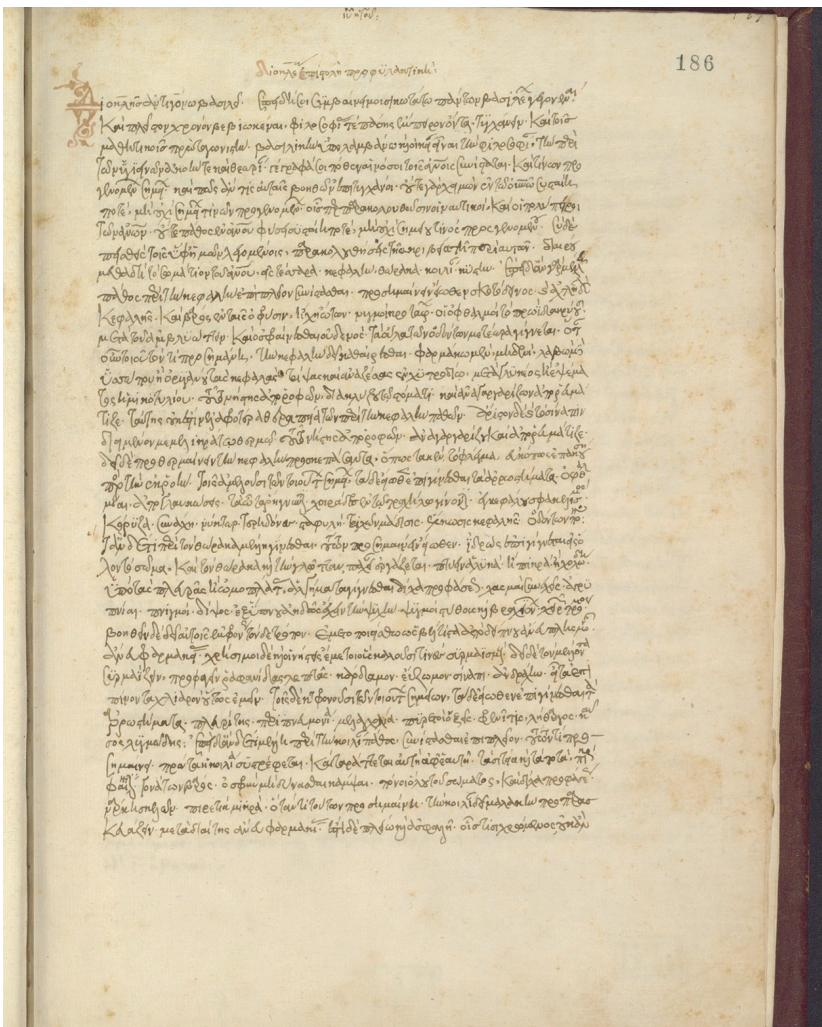


Fig. 6.

letter, in order of appearance: first for Book I, then for Book II and so on. It seems that Souliardos compiled this index by noting the names as he read the manuscript; he did not therefore restore a strict alphabetical order within each series. This is an innovation specific to this manuscript, probably intended to facilitate its use. We can therefore assume that Giorgio Valla was its instigator (incidentally, he made corrections to this index: Fig. 5).

As for Souliardos's other additions, these consist of medical opuscles that are not found in the model of the original nucleus, *Ambros.* L 119 sup., and therefore come from another source (see Appendix 1: Opuscles A-F). Some of these treatises are quite common (A, D, E) but others are less so: in particular, the anonymous opuscle *On Urines* (B) and the collection of prognoses based on Galen's treatise *On Crises* (C) are found – to my knowledge – only in three manuscripts of Dioscorides (which have nothing in common with *Mutin.* α.P.5.17 for the *De Materia Medica*): *Ambros.* A 95 sup., manuscript *gr.* XI.21 (coll. 453) from the Biblioteca Marciana in Venice (with a lacuna for B) and *Paris.* *gr.* 2294. More precisely, all three contain (or contained, before mutilation) opuscles A, B, C, D and F. The abrupt conclusion of A is also a distinctive feature of these three manuscripts and their descendants. On the other hand, opuscle E, which benefits from an extensive manuscript tradition, must come from another, as yet unidentified source.

This indicates that Souliardos had access to one of these three manuscripts, for which the following line of descent can be traced: created in Constantinople in the first half of the 14th century, *Ambros.* A 95 sup. soon crossed Asia Minor before reaching Cyprus, where it was donated to the monastery of the Theotokos in Kykkos. Probably there, around the middle of the same century, it served as a model for *Marc.* *gr.* XI.21, which in turn was copied into *Paris.* *gr.* 2294 (2nd half of the 14th c.), still in the same place⁵⁴. *Paris.* *gr.* 2294 was in Crete from the second half of the 15th century, where it belonged to Lauro Quirini (ca. 1420 – ca. 1479), who made extensive annotations on it in the margin⁵⁵. It is unknown what happened to it after Quirini's death, when his library was scattered, but, at the end of the 16th century, it entered the collection of Jacques-Auguste de Thou (1553-1617), whose *ex-libris* is on it (f. Ar). *Marc.* *gr.* XI.21 reached Venice at the latest in the 1540s, where its ff. 5-10v were copied into *Vatic. Barb.* *gr.* 118⁵⁶. Lastly, *Ambros.* A 95 sup. appears in the second half of the 16th century in the collections of the Paduan humanist Gian Vincenzo Pinelli (1535-1601). Which of these three manuscripts could have been copied by Souliardos in the supplements to *Mutin.* α.P.5.17? Pseudo-Dioscorides' treatise *On Measures and Weights* (F) provides at least two examples suggesting that it is *Ambros.* A 95 sup. rather than *Marc.* *gr.* XI.21 (*Paris.* *gr.* 2294 is missing here, but it is known to be descended from *Marc.* *gr.* XI.21):

- ed. Hultsch, p. 240, l. 8: ὀβολοὺς ζ´ ed.] ὀβολοὺς ξ´ *Ambros.* ιη´ manu altera in marg., ὀβολοὺς ιη´ *Marc.*, ὀβολοὺς ξ´ *Mut.*

- ed. Hultsch, p. 240, 12-1: κατὰ δὲ τὴν Ἰταλικὴν [μνᾶ] οὐγγίας ιη' ed.] κατὰ δὲ τὴν Ἰταλικὴν μνᾶν οὐγγίας ιη' *Ambros. Mut.*, om. *Marc.*

In opusculum **D** (*Letter to Ptolemy*, not found in *Paris. gr.* 2294), other lessons point in the same direction:

- ed. Ermerins, p. 285, l. 8: τουτέστι τὸ νόστιμον ed. *Ambros. Mut.*] τουτέστι νόστιμον *Marc.*
- ed. Ermerins, p. 285, l. 21-22: τουτέστι τὴν φούσκαν, εἰσέρχεται εἰς τὴν κύστιν ed.] τουτέστιν εἰς τὴν φούσκαν, εἰσέρχεται εἰς τὴν κύστιν *Ambros. Mut.*, om. *Marc.*

Thus, *Mutin.* α.P.5.17 cannot be descended in this case from *Marc. gr.* XI.21. Consequently, it is likely that Michael Souliardos took *Ambros. A 95 sup.* as a model for the complements. However, the latter manuscript provides no evidence for such use, and therefore this point would need further support (we cannot exclude that he made use of a similar manuscript now lost). If this were the case, the question remains whether *Ambros. A 95 sup.* belonged personally to Souliardos (which is very likely), or whether someone else lent it to him.

Souliardos and Valla

We must now consider the context in which Souliardos worked on *Mutin.* α.P.5.17. This certainly took place after the completion of *Paris. gr.* 2185, which does not include any of the additions, not even the initial index (ff. 2r-8v) or the pinax of Book I added by an anonymous copyist on ff. 17r-18v. But, as we have seen, *Paris. gr.* 2185 is only slightly later than its model.

As for Souliardos, his biography is still shrouded in uncertainty. He was a highly itinerant copyist, whose movements we can partly retrace, although often hypothetically, through the subscriptions he left in manuscripts⁵⁷. In the years in question, Souliardos was first in the Peloponnese: in Nauplia in January 1488 and in Methone in October 1489. In the following years – although the dating is uncertain – he seems to have stayed in Corfu, where he collaborated with John Moschos (Ἰωάννης Μόσχος)⁵⁸. Moreover, there is evidence of his presence in Florence in Ianos Laskaris' entourage: David Speranzi has hypothesised that Laskaris met Souliardos in Corfu during his stay in 1491 and then brought him to Florence, probably as early as 1492⁵⁹. Nevertheless, only one manuscript signed by Souliardos mentions both his presence in Florence and a year, 1496 (Toledo, Archivio y Biblioteca Capitulare, 45.30)⁶⁰. Souliardos then stayed in Bologna, at an uncertain time. Finally, in 1508-1509, he was found in the house of a certain Manuel Poullomatis, in an unspecified region (probably in mainland Greece).

Therefore, in none of his subscriptions does Michael Souliardos mention a stay in Venice. However, the latter is certain: for example, Luigi Orlandi has recently pointed out that Souliardos made numerous copies of manuscripts that were then in Giorgio Valla's library, particularly books that had previously belonged to Andronikos Kallistos (Ἀνδρόνικος Κάλλιςτος, ca. 1400-1476). The scholar speculates that Souliardos acted at the request of Ianos Laskaris, who in the summer of 1490 had visited Valla's library, from which he noted the most interesting titles⁶¹. Nevertheless, Souliardos' activity within Valla's library took on many other aspects besides making copies of the owner's books. In particular, it is likely that Souliardos also worked to enrich Valla's own collection, as Souliardos created several manuscripts that belonged to Valla. First of all, Souliardos is the copyist of *Mutin. α.T.9.6*, which Giorgio Valla used to write his Latin translation of the anonymous *Commentary* on Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos*⁶². However, the subscription states that it was completed in Methone on October 20, 6998 (1489)⁶³, before Souliardos arrived in Italy. This would suggest that Souliardos left some of his books to Giorgio Valla. As for *Mutin. α.Q.5.21*, this is a similar case to that of Dioscorides *Mutin. α.P.5.17*: in this manuscript, copied by Andronikos Kallistos and later acquired by Giorgio Valla, Michael Souliardos added the end of Musaeus' poem *Hero and Leander*, which was originally missing (vv. 246-343: first at the bottom of the page, originally left blank, f. 68v l. 12-15, then on an additional bifolio, ff. 69r-70v); he also made occasional corrections to the poem and, finally, used *Mutin. α.Q.5.21* as a model for the transcription of *Paris. gr. 2600*⁶⁴. It is crucial that Souliardos also left his name in the subscription of *Mutin. α.W.9.6* (Theognis) with the year 1492 (the fact that the year is indicated according to the incarnation of Christ, ωβ', and not according to the year of the world, in accordance with Byzantine usage, confirms that Souliardos was no longer in a strictly Greek environment at that time). Actually, Luigi Ferreri has shown that for copying *Mutin. α.W.9.6* Souliardos took as a model *Ambros. D 15 sup.*, a manuscript from his personal collection, also written by him but earlier (partly in Crete in 1481, partly in Corfu, presumably shortly before 1491)⁶⁵. There is no doubt that Giorgio Valla commissioned *Mutin. α.W.9.6*. A very similar case is that of *Mutin. α.Q.5.16* (astronomy and geography), in whose subscription Souliardos gives his name without indicating either date or place. However, as Claudio Schiano has shown, even in this case Souliardos took as his model a manuscript from his personal collection, *cod. graec. 287*, preserved at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in München, which he had completed during his stay in Crete between 1477 and 1488. Giorgio Valla later used *Mutin. α.Q.5.16* in compiling his *De expetendis et fugiendis rebus* – an encyclopaedia to which we will return shortly – particularly in Book XIX⁶⁶. Now, we know that Book XIX was completed in 1491, which means that *Mutin. α.Q.5.16* was written no later than that date, certainly on Giorgio Valla's commission⁶⁷. Consequently, these two manuscripts written by Souliardos for Valla, taking books from his personal collection as models, allow us

to place Souliardos's stay in Venice in 1491 and 1492 (between Corfu and Florence), and therefore probably his involvement in the Dioscorides manuscript as well.

Mutin. α.P.5.17 reveals Souliardos's deep involvement in this book, which at the time belonged to Giorgio Valla (creating an index, adding several quires – which implies the making of a new binding – and copying additional texts) suggesting that Souliardos acted as a sort of librarian. The manuscripts we have just examined are also evidence of this – to which undoubtedly many other examples could be added. At this time, in the early 1490s, Souliardos was actively involved in Valla's library: he corrected and completed the books there, made copies (for as yet unknown patrons, including perhaps Ianos Laskaris, but probably also for himself) and, conversely, he enriched the library by copying new manuscripts himself or by leaving books from his own collection in the library.

Giorgio Valla's use of the manuscript

At this point, we can move on to consider Giorgio Valla's interest in his manuscript of Dioscorides. In fact, *Mutin. α.P.5.17* has extensive marginal annotations in his own hand, mostly in Latin, less frequently in Greek (pl. 1-3): these refer to the five authentic books of the *De Materia Medica* as well as to Book VI, the *Alexipharmaca*. Martin Lowry, who was, to my knowledge, the first to notice them, has suggested that they might be a trace of Valla's use of the manuscript for didactic purposes, the annotations being glosses intended to clarify obscure terms⁶⁸. Although this explanation could certainly apply to the other authors listed at the time by M. Lowry, I do not believe it is appropriate for Dioscorides. In fact, in his case, there are indeed Latin translations of Greek terms, but not of difficult ones; indeed, very often the same terms are monotonously repeated. It is, in the dative, the part of the body or the disease for which Dioscorides recommends using the simple, e.g. *auribus* (ὠταλγία), *podagris* (ποδάγρα), *furfuribus* (πίτυρα), *sanguini* (αἱμορραγία), *fluxui muliebri* (for ῥοῦν γυναικεῖον), *inflammationibus* (φλεγμοναί) and so on. Giorgio Valla's annotations on his Dioscorides' manuscript thus emerge as a kind of aide-memoire, aimed at highlighting those passages considered interesting. It is worth noting that the annotations focus strictly on therapeutic aspects and rarely deal with the physical description of the simples (the only exceptions are the Latin translations of the titles of some rare chapters). Here, therefore, Giorgio Valla's approach is that of a physician, not a botanist – a fundamental difference between Valla and Ermolao Barbaro.

There is no doubt that Dioscorides played a role in Giorgio Valla's major work, *De expendis et fugiendis rebus*. Published posthumously by Aldo Manuzio in 1501⁶⁹, this extensive encyclopaedia in 49 books devotes a large part to medical science: Books XXIV-XXX and XLVII-XLVIII⁷⁰. For our purposes, we will retain in Book XXIV the lengthy Chapter 23, which forms an alphabetical catalogue of simples of plant origin, then Chapters 24-105, which deal with metals and minerals and, finally, Book XXV, which

deals with simples of animal origin⁷¹. Although this structure clearly recalls that of Books VI-XI of Galen's *On Simple Medicines*, Valla did not actually draw directly from Galen⁷². The direct source of these extracts is the *Tetrabiblos* of Aetios of Amida, which relies heavily on the Galenic treatise, which in turn owes much to Dioscorides⁷³. It is certain that Valla himself translated the Byzantine compilation, whose Greek text was not printed until 1534 (long after Valla's death), by Aldo Manuzio's heirs⁷⁴. However, there is currently no evidence as to which Greek manuscript he based his work on. When Valla explicitly mentions "Dioscurides" in his catalogue of simples, it is because Aetios has already referred to this author. However, it is worth noting that on several occasions, Valla's text includes excerpts, more or less lengthy, from Dioscorides without his name being mentioned (even outside the catalogue of simple plants): Patrizia Landucci Ruffo pointed out some of these excerpts⁷⁵; following her, Iolanda Ventura noted that these sections are actually quite numerous⁷⁶. To find them, however, one must systematically compare Valla's Latin with Aetios' Greek, since nothing allows a formal distinction between the two. In addition to the chapter on *agnos* discussed by I. Ventura, we can give the example of *bunium*. It is basically derived from Aetios (I, 70)⁷⁷:

"Bounion", others call it "arktion". It is one of the warming medicines, so much so that it is diuretic and induces menstruation. "Pseudo-bounion", like "bounion", is also hot.

However, the Latin text is slightly longer⁷⁸:

"Bunium", others call it "arctium". It is one of those warming (simples), so much so that it causes urine and brings on menstruation, and expels the placenta from the uterus. It is good for the spleen, kidneys, and bladder. It can be used wet or dry, diluted or infused with its roots, stems and leaves, along with melicratum. As for "pseudobunium", it is itself warming in the same way."

The italicised text is actually a translation of part of the same chapter by Dioscorides⁷⁹:

(...) it draws out the afterbirth, and it is suitable for the spleen, kidneys, and bladder. It is used both moist and dry as well as with hydromel converted into juice with its roots, stems, and leaves.

There is no doubt that Valla himself carried out the Latin translation. The corresponding section is found on ff. 126v-127r of *Mutin.* α.P.5.17, but it is a very brief sample and does not provide significant variants that could demonstrate that Valla was using his own manuscript of Dioscorides. In fact, this seems rather doubtful because, even without a comprehensive collation, I can assert that these interpolations from Dioscorides are still very specific, and that most chapters do not have them. This suggests that it was not Valla who interpolated phrases from Dioscorides into Aetios (in fact, one would expect him to have done so more extensively), but rather that this was already the case in the (unidentified) manuscript of Aetios he used.

Conclusion

Giorgio Valla's Dioscorides, now preserved at the Biblioteca Estense Universitaria in Modena with the shelf mark *α.P.5.17*, is a key record of how Venetian and Ferrarese humanists studied ancient Greek pharmacological and botanical texts in the late 1480s and early 1490s. It allows us to place its commissioner, Giorgio Valla, at the centre of a network in which manuscripts and scholarly discussions on issues of textual criticism and botanical identification were shared among Ermolao Barbaro, Angelo Politiano, Nicolò Leonicensio, and Alessandro Bondino. This lively intellectual climate surrounding the so-called "Plinian controversy" arose from the direct recourse to manuscripts, at a time when none of these Greek works were in print, but when the foundations were being laid for the editions that would appear a decade later at the Venetian publishing house of Aldo Manuzio, who entered Venice in 1490 precisely within this scholarly milieu.

Appendix 1: Michael Souliardos' additions to Mutin. *α.P.5.17*

A. (ff. 9r-10r) Theophilus Protospatharios, *On urines*, beginning only (Ideler I L (ed.), *Physici et Medici Graeci Minores I*. Berlin: Reimer; 1841. pp. 261-264, l. 20):

Title. Ἰδικῶς (sic) περὶ οὔρων ἐκ τῶν Γαληνοῦ, Μάγνου τοῦ καὶ πρωτοσπαθαρίου Θεοφίλου βασιλέως, περὶ οὔρων.

Inc. Τὴν περὶ τῆς τῶν οὔρων διαφορᾶς πραγματεῖαν πολλοὶ τῶν ἀρχαίων ἰατρῶν ἐπιχειρήσαν γράψαι.

Des. οὐ τοῦ παρόντος λέγειν καιροῦ, προίων γὰρ ὁ λόγος διδάξει.

Parallel crossings: *Ambros.* A 95 sup., ff. 52r-54r l. 8; lac. *Marc. gr.* XI.21; *Paris. gr.* 2294, ff. 68v l. 16-70v l. 15.

B. (f. 10r-v) Anonymous, *on urines*, unedited.

No title.

Inc. Οὔρον τὸ αἰεὶ διαμένον ὁμοιον ἀκμάζειν ἔτι τὸν ἔν τε αἵματι.

Des. τοσοῦτον ἦττον λευκόν ἐστὶ τὸ ἐρυθρὸν τοῦ ξανθοῦ.

Parallel crossings: *Ambros.* A 95 sup., ff. 55r l. 4-55v; lac. *Marc. gr.* XI.21; *Paris. gr.* 2294, ff. 70v l. 16-71v l. 4.

C. (ff. 10v-11r) <Galen, *On crises*> (Alexanderson B (ed.), *De crisisibus. Überlieferung und Text*. Göteborg: Elanders; 1967), excerpts:

Title. Προγνωστικόν.

Inc. Τὰς ἀθρόας ἐν νόσοις μεταβολάς.

Des. καὶ μᾶλλον οἱ πρὸς τὸν χειμῶνα συνάπτοντες.

Parallel crossings: *Ambros.* A 95 sup., ff. 54r l. 8-55r l. 4; *Marc.* XI.21, ff. 9v-10v; *Paris. gr.* 2294, ff. 71v l. 4-72r l. 21.

D. (ff. 12r-13v) ps.-Hippocrates, *Letter to Ptolemy* (Ermerins F Z (ed.), *Anecdota medica Graeca*. Leiden: Luchtmans; 1840. pp. 279-297).

Title. Ἴπποκράτους ἐπιστολὴ πρὸς Πτολομαῖον βασιλέα Περὶ κατασκευῆς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου.
Inc. Συνέστηκεν ὁ κόσμος ἐκ στοιχείων τεσσάρων, οἷον ἐκ πυρὸς, ἀερός, γῆς καὶ ὕδατος.
Des. τότε συναγεται ὁ ἐνιαυτὸς εἰς ἡμέρας τξε' δ'". Τέλος.
 Parallel crossings: *Ambros.* A 95 sup., ff. 95v-99r; *Marc. gr.* XI.21, ff. 76r-79r.

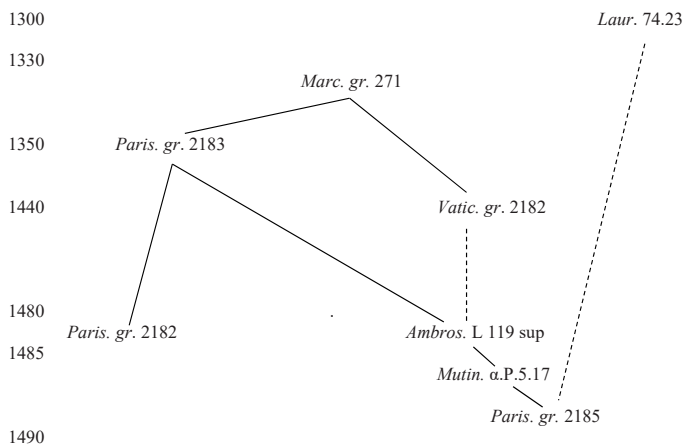
E. (f. 186r-v) *Letter from Diocles of Carystus to King Antigone on the preservation of health*, = Paul of Egina, *Medical Compendium*, I. 100: Heiberg IL (ed.), Paulus Aegineta, Libri I-IV. Leipzig: Teubner; 1921. pp. 68-72; reproduced in Van der Eijk P (ed.), *Diocles of Carystus: a collection of the fragments with translation and commentary*. Leiden-Boston-Köln: Brill; 2000. vol. 1, pp. 310-321 (edition and translation), vol. 2, pp. 352-360 (commentary).

Title. Διοκλέους ἐπιστολὴ προφυλακτικὴ.
Inc. Ἐπειδὴ σοι συμβαίνει μουσικωτάτῳ πάντων βασιλέων γεγονένα.
Des. εἰσὶ δὲ εἰς τροπὰς χειμερινὰς ἡμέραι με'.

F. (f. 187r) ps.-Dioscorides, *On Measures and Weights* (ed. Hultsch F, *Metrologicorum Scriptorum Reliquiae I*. Leipzig: Teubner; 1844. p. 239, l. 17 - p. 244, l. 8: chapters 64-66 from the Galenic collection).

Title. Διοσκουρίδου περὶ μέτρων καὶ σταθμῶν.
Inc. Ἐγὼ φίλτατε περὶ σταθμῶν καὶ μέτρων οὕτως ἠκρίβωσα.
Des. παρ' ἡμῖν δὲ παντὸς σταθμοῦ τὸ ἥμισυ, πλάγιον δὲ ἰ' ὀβολῶν.
 Parallel crossings: *Ambros.* A 95 sup., ff. 18r-19r; *Marc. gr.* XI.21, f. 8r-v (*des. mut.*); *Paris. gr.* 2294, f. 68r (*inc. mut.*).

Appendix 2 : *Stemma codicum*



Dotted lines represent annotations.

Bibliography and notes

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1. A summary description in Puntoni V, Indice dei codici greci della Biblioteca Estense di Modena. Studi italiani di filologia classica 1896;4:379-536, p. 458 (nr. 115). As I was only able to access the manuscript in photographic form, I am relying on the contributions of Alain Touwaide and Dieter Harlfinger for codicological aspects and especially regarding watermarks.
 2. Two quires have been swapped: the quinion of ff. 133-142 was originally located between ff. 152 and 153.
 3. D. Harlfinger lists the following watermarks: (ff. 39-82) *Arbalète* 32 (1494 or slightly earlier); (ff. 83-152) *Fleur* 43 (from this ms.); (ff. 167-187) *Ancre* 13 (from this ms.); references are to Harlfinger D, Harlfinger J, Wasserzeichen aus griechischen Handschriften. Berlin: Mielke; 1974-1980, 2 vols.: vol. 1, *Index III*, p. 10; vol. 2, *Index II*, p. 17 and *Index III*, p. 29. For his part, Touwaide A, Une note sur la thériaque attribuée à Galien. Byzantion 1997;67(2):439-483, p. 451 n. 36, reports: (ff. 19-38) *Scales*, ≈ Harlfinger *Balance* 38 (a. 1491); *Bull's head*, ≈ Briquet 14541 (a. 1480); (ff. 43-82) *Crossbow*, = Harlfinger *Arbalète* 32 (1494 or slightly earlier); (ff. 83-190) *Anchor*, ≈ Piccard VI.iv.258 (a. 1484-1485), *Flower* ≈ Briquet 6599 (a. 1475 and 1481). References are to: Briquet CM, Les filigranes: dictionnaire historique des marques du papier dès leur apparition vers 1282 jusqu'en 1600. Genève: Jullien; 1907. Piccard G, Die Wasserzeichenkartei Piccard im Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart. 15 vols. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer; 1961-1987.
 4. This treatise traditionally appears in manuscripts as Book VI of Dioscorides. On the two apocryphal treatises, see Touwaide A, Les deux traités de toxicologie attribués à Dioscoride: tradition manuscrite, établissement du texte et critique d'authenticité. In: Garzya A (ed.), Tradizione e ecdotica dei testi medici tardoantichi e bizantini. Atti del Convegno Internazionale, Anacapri 20-31 ottobre 1990. Naples: D'Auria; 1992. pp. 291-335.

5. This anonymous poem, of uncertain date but undoubtedly from Imperial times, has come down to us in a fragmentary way: the archetype is the “Vienna Dioscorides” (Wien, ÖNB, med. gr. 1, early 6th century), which contains the poem on ff. 388r-392r together with its paraphrase in the margin (in a different handwriting but certainly by a contemporary hand). The beginning and end are missing, due to a lacuna in the model of the Viennese manuscript. Edition of the poem and its paraphrase: Heitsch E, *Die Griechischen Dichterfragmente der römischen Kaiserzeit 2*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht; 1964. pp. 23-38.
6. Touwaide A, *Les deux traités toxicologiques attribués à Dioscoride: La tradition manuscrite grecque: Édition critique du texte grec et traduction* (PhD diss.). Louvain-la-Neuve: Université catholique de Louvain; 1981, pp. 50-54 and 317-318. See also Touwaide A, Ref. 3. p. 451.
7. On this excerpt, see Martínez Manzano T, *Una interpolación bizantina de origen árabe en Dioscórides*. *Estudios Bizantinos* 2015;3:101-121.
8. The omission runs from the end of chapter V.44 to the beginning of chapter V.59. (ed. Wellmann, vol. 3, p. 26 l. 15-p. 59 l. 6).
9. (ff. 1r-177v) Dioscorides, *De Materia medica*; (ff. 177v-186r) pseudo-Dioscorides, *Alexipharmaca*; (ff. 186r-196v) pseudo-Dioscorides, *Theriaca*; (ff. 196v-198r) *Paraphrase to the Poem on Plants*.
10. Touwaide A, Ref. 6. vol. 1, p. 39-41; and Touwaide A, Ref. 3. p. 451 and n. 35, referring to a personal statement by Dieter Harlfinger.
11. There are two watermarks in the body of the manuscript: a *Ship*, with no equivalent in the repertories, and *Two arrows*, ≈ Harlfinger *Flèches* 14 (a. 1481).
12. Touwaide A, Ref. 6. p. 312, for the apocryphal treatises; see also Touwaide A, Ref. 3. p. 451 (for an opusculum on theriacs); for Dioscorides, see Cronier M, *Comment Dioscoride est-il arrivé en Occident? À propos d'un manuscrit byzantin, de Constantinople à Fontainebleau*. *Néa Póμη* Rivista di ricerca bizantinistica 2013;10:185-209, p. 196.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 192-193.
14. Harlfinger *Flèches* 14 (from this ms.).
15. Touwaide A, Ref. 6. vol. 1, p. 39-41, and Touwaide A, Ref. 3. p. 452 and n. 39, with reference to a personal account by Dieter Harlfinger. However, Alain Touwaide considers that Ermolao Barbaro did not possess *Ambros.* L 119 sup. but only had it in his hands when he annotated it.
16. Joannis Baptistae Egnatii Veneti in Dioscoridem ab Hermolao Barbaro translatum annotamenta... Pedacii Dioscoridis Anazarbei de medicinali materia ab eodem Barbaro latinitate primum donati libri quinque. Eiusdem de noxiis uenenis... Eiusdem de uenenatis animalibus.. Hermolai Barbari... Corollarium libris quinque absolutum... Venetiis Aloisius et Franciscus Barbari et Johannes Bartholomaeus Astensis curarunt in Gregorium fratrum officina, 1516.
17. “Aetatis anno (...) interpretati sumus (...) vigesimo octavo Dioscuridem” (We translated Dioscorides in our 28th year), ed. Branca, vol. 1, p. 92, letter LXXII, to Arnaldo di Bost, from Venice, calends of June 1485. For further arguments in favour of this dating, see: Pozzi G, *Appunti sul ‘Corollarium’ del Barbaro*. In: Besomi O (ed.), *Tra Latino e Volgare per Carlo Dionisotti*. Padua: Antenore; 1974. vol. 2, pp. 619-640, p. 624.
18. *Ambros.* L 119 sup. jumps from εὐῶδες, βραχυπνέον ὀποβαλάμου to Φέρεται δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς Πέτρας, by omitting a sentence (τοῦ δὲ καρποῦ – τοῦ ὀποβαλάμου, ed. Wellmann, Book I, chap. 19, vol. 1, p. 25, 11-14); cfr. Barbaro’s Latin translation: *odoratum et modice opobalsamum redolens. Fertur e Petra...* (Ref. 16. p. V, chap. XXVIII).

19. Touwaide A, Ref. 6. p. 316, states that the model for Barbaro's annotations is a descendant of *Marc. gr.* 271, without giving further information. He could not, of course, consider the hypothesis that it was *Vatic. gr.* 2182, as the latter no longer includes the two apocryphal treatises, due to the extensive mutilation it underwent at a later date.
20. Ed. Wellmann, Book III, chap. 146: vol. 2, p. 156 l. 5.
21. Description in Lilla S, *Bibliothecae Apostolicae Vaticanae... Codices Vaticani graeci, Codices 2162-2254 (Codices Columnenses)*. Roma: Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana; 1985. pp. 75-79.
22. Vendruscolo F, Per la biblioteca di Francesco ed Ermolao Barbaro: cinquant'anni dopo. In: Brockmann C, Deckers D, Harlfinger D, Valente S (eds), *Griechisch-byzantinische Handschriftenforschung. Traditionen, Entwicklungen, neue Wege*. Berlin-Munich-Boston: De Gruyter; 2020. pp. 101-128: 117.
23. Together with his Latin translation (Ref. 16).
24. Touwaide A, Ref. 6. p. 41, has already pointed out this phenomenon.
25. Heiberg JL, *Beiträge zur Geschichte Georg Valla's und seiner Bibliothek*. Leipzig: Harrassowitz; 1896. p. 16.
26. Ed. Branca, vol. 1, pp. XLIII- XLV.
27. *Ibid.* vol. 2, pp. 52-57 (letter CXXXV): p. 53: "Cum superioribus diebus incidisset in manus meas, ipsum Perotti Cornucopiae illexit et omen et nomen ad legendum, praesertim qui Dioscoridem editurus essem paulo mox. Proindeque universum percurrere nec ocium nec voluntas fuit : vellicatim et saltuatim legere satis habui. Intra quadriduum absolvi quatenus ad negotium meum spectabat, errata eius nonnulla comperi. Ea tecum ut communicem oportet." (As Perotti's Cornucopia has fallen into my hands over the last few days, its reputation and its name have prompted me to read it, especially as I am about to publish Dioscorides. In the same way, I had neither the time nor the inclination to read it in its entirety: a disjointed and fragmented reading was enough for me. In four days, I finished what concerned my study and I found a few errors. I must tell you about them).
28. See Staikos KS, *The Printing Shop of Nikolaos Vlastos and Zacharias Kallierges. 500 Years from the Establishment of the First Greek Printing Press*. *La Bibliofilia* 2000;102:11-32.
29. Vendruscolo F, Un voluttuoso dessert di Ermolao Barbaro: postille autografe al *Vat. Barb. gr.* 214. In: Di Brazzà F, Caliaro I, Norbedo R, Rabboni R, Venier M (eds), *Le carte e i discepoli. Studi in onore di Claudio Griggio*. Udine: Forum; 2016. pp. 175-187, p. 179.
30. Harlfinger D, *Die Textgeschichte der Pseudo-Aristotelischen Schrift Περὶ ἀτόμων γραμμῶν*. Amsterdam: Hakkert; 1971. p. 409 ; Vendruscolo F, Ref. 22. pp. 111 and 119 n. 58.
31. Sicherl M, *Griechische Erstausgaben des Aldus Manutius: Druckvorlagen, Stellenwert, kultureller Hintergrund*. Paderborn: Schöningh; 1997. p. 351. On this part of *Par. gr.* 2939, see also Samori F, *Gli scoli di Ulpiano a Demostene del Par. gr. 2939 appartenuto a Ermolao Barbaro e la tradizione demostenica*. *Italia medioevale e umanistica* 2018;59:193-216.
32. Touwaide A, Ref. 6. vol. 2: pp. 318-323, has proved the same filiation for the two apocryphal treatises.
33. The foliation runs from 1 to 195 but f. 7 has been lost. Watermarks: 1 several *Scales*, in a circle or in a roundel: ≈ Briquet 2471 (a. 1482-1517), 2476 (a. 1489), 2454 (a. 1476-1495), Harlfinger *Balance* 11 (a. 1489), Piccard V.vii.151 et 152 (a. 1490-1491); 2 *Anchor*, = Harlfinger *Ancre* 13 (from ms. *Mut. a.P.5.17*, ff. 167-187); 3 *Crossbow*, ≈ Harlfinger *arbalète* 36 (a.1491).
34. In fact, we can identify it in the inventory of his books, which mentions two manuscripts of Dioscorides (the second being *Paris. gr.* 2184), see Mugnai Carrara D, *La biblioteca*

- di Nicolò Leoniceno tra Aristotele e Galeno: cultura e libri di un medico umanista. Florence: Olschki; 1991. p. 107, and lastly Fortuna S, Nicolò Leoniceno e le edizioni aldine dei medici greci (con un'appendice sulle sue traduzioni latine). In: Boudon-Millot V, Garzya A, Jouanna J, Roselli A (eds), *Ecdotica e ricezione dei testi medici greci*. Napoli: D'Auria; 2006. pp. 443-464, p. 448 and p. 451.
35. Heiberg JL, Ref. 25. p. 71 (letter 15). We can date the letter back to 1491, since it refers to Angelo Poliziano's (1454-1494) visit to Ferrara, which we also know took place in July 1491, on his return from a stay in Venice in June 1491 in search of manuscripts on behalf of Lorenzo dei' Medici; see Rollo A, *Il perduto Archimede di Giorgio Valla*. In: Fera V, Gionta D, Rollo A (eds), *Archimede e le sue fortune*. Messina: Centro internazionale di studi umanistici; 2012. pp. 99-147, pp. 110-113.
 36. Hoffmann P, *Un mystérieux collaborateur d'Alde Manuce: l'Anonymus Harvardianus*. *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Moyen-Âge, Temps modernes* 1985;97:45-143, p. 121.
 37. Orlandi L, *Al fianco di Aldo, per Galeno e Aristotele. L'identità dell'Anonymus Harvardianus*. *Italia Medioevale e Umanistica* 2022;63: 281-315; see also Maksimczuk J, *The Anonymus Harvardianus, Alessandro Bondino (alias Ἀλέξανδρος Ἀγαθήμερος), and the Role of the Manuscript Napoli III D 37 in Some Editiones Principes of Aristotelian Works*. *Parekbolai* 2023;13:1-28.
 38. Touwaide A, Ref. 6. vol. 1, p. 21 referring to a personal statement by Dieter Harlfinger.
 39. Literally, the 7th day before the calends of February 1488 *more Veneto*. Ed. Branca, vol. 2, letter CXXV, p. 41.
 40. *Omnium Angeli Politiani operum, tomus I. Epistolarum libri XII, Venetiis Joannis Parus, 1512: Book I, nr. 11, p. VI (no date)*. See also Barbaro's letters to Lorenzo dei' Medici dated 13 February 1489 (ides of February 1488 *more veneto*) from Milan, and to Francesco Gaddi (Lorenzo dei' Medici's trusted advisor), dated Milan in 1488 [1489] without specifying the day, in which Barbaro promises to promptly return the Dioscorides: ed. Branca, vol. 2, pp. 42-43, letters CXXVI-CXXVII.
 41. On the chronology of I. Laskaris' travels on behalf of Lorenzo dei' Medici, see Gentile S, *Lorenzo e Giano Lascaris: Il fondo greco della biblioteca medicea privata*. In: Garfagnini GC (ed.), *Lorenzo il Magnifico e il suo mondo*. Firenze: Olschki; 1994. pp. 177-194.
 42. Inventory published in Piccolomini E, *Intorno alle condizioni ed alle vicende della libreria medicea privata*. Florence: Cellini; 1875. pp. 106-108. A Dioscorides appears (p. 107) at no. 1027, with the following description: "Pedacii Dioscoride Anazarbis, in greco liber de materia, in papyro, signatus numero 230." (Pedacius Dioscorides of Anazarba, in Greek, a book on materia, in paper, with shelf mark 230). It is most likely *Laur.* 74.23, not least because of the characteristic error: "Pedacii" (Pedacius), for Πεδακίου (Pedakios), instead of Πεδανίου (Pedanios).
 43. Touwaide A, Ref. 6. vol. 1, pp. 22-23, has already pointed out that *Laur.* 74.23 is likely to be the manuscript from the library of Lorenzo dei Medici which Politiano lent to Barbaro. Independently, Fryde, EB, *Greek manuscripts in the private library of the Medici, 1469-1510*. Aberystwyth: National Library of Wales; 1996. vol. 2, p. 649, came to the same conclusion.
 44. See for example letters XC (Milano, 13 April 1488) and CXV (Milano, 21 October 1488), ed. Branca, vol. 2, pp. 14 and 33.
 45. As an anonymous reviewer so aptly points out, on 11 August 1489 Ermolao Barbaro acquired a Greek manuscript (Plotinus) from a certain "Alexander probus et mansuetus",

whom Thierry Ganchou very plausibly identifies as Alessandro Bondino, nicknamed Agathemerus: Ganchou T, *Les tribulations vénitiennes de la Ca'Notara* (1460/1490). À la recherche du Plutarque d'Anna. In: Binggeli A, Boud'hors A, Cassin M (eds), *Manuscripta Graeca et Orientalia. Mélanges monastiques et patristiques en l'honneur de Paul Géhin*. Leuven: Peeters; 2016. pp. 383-442, p. 426 n. 120. We can therefore speculate that Barbaro stopped off in Ferrara on his way back from Milan and that on this occasion, as well as acquiring the Plotinus, he lent his Dioscorides to Bondino.

46. This will be discussed in a separate article.
47. See Hoffmann P, Ref. 36, when the figure was still known as “Anonymus Harvardianus”, and Orlandi L, Ref. 37.
48. On this pamphlet and the controversy it sparked off, see most recently Cristofolini G, The role of plant taxonomy and nomenclature in Leoniceno's break with Plinius. *Webbia. Journal of Plant Taxonomy and Geography* 2019;74(1):1-14.
49. Touwaide A, Ref. 6. vol. 1, p. 52, registers the following watermark: *Bull's head*, = Piccard XI.126 (a. 1484).
50. However, this was done for quite a long time afterwards. Indeed, f. 17r bears the marks of the fillings of an earlier binding, which shows that it must have been placed at the beginning of the volume for some time.
51. Touwaide A, Ref. 6. vol. 1, p. 53, notes the following watermark on ff. 1-16: Harlfinger *Arbalète* 38 (a. 1497).
52. Harlfinger D, Ref. 3. *Ancre* 13 (in vol. I, without pagination) identifies Souliardos' hand on ff. 186r-187r. In my opinion he should also be credited with ff. 2r-11r (ff. 11v-16v are blanks).
53. A quaternion of which the last leaf (after f. 8) has been cut off (probably because it was blank).
54. On these three manuscripts and their relationship, see Cronier M, *Quelques manuscrits médicaux grecs liés à Chypre*. In: Brockmann C, Deckers D, Harlfinger D, Valente S (eds), *Griechisch-byzantinische Handschriftenforschung. Traditionen, Entwicklungen, neue Wege*. Berlin-Boston: De Gruyter; 2020. pp. 131-144, pp. 756-758; more specifically on *Ambros. A* 95 sup. and *Marc. gr.* XI.21, see Cronier M, Gautier Dalché P, *A Map of Cyprus in Two Fourteenth-Century Byzantine Manuscripts*. *Imago Mundi* 2017;69:176-187.
55. Cronier M, Ref. 54. p. 139.
56. See the notice in the exhibition catalogue: Fanelli M (ed.), *Cipro nella Biblioteca Marciana di Venezia: Manoscritti, testi e carte*. Venezia: Ca' Foscari; 2022. pp. 73-75 (M. Cronier).
57. See especially the reconstruction offered by Lobel E, *The Greek manuscripts of Aristotle's Poetics*. Oxford: University Press; 1933. pp. 54-56.
58. Speranzi D, *Giano Lascari e i suoi copisti: Gli oratori attici minori tra l'Athos e Firenze*. *Medioevo e Rinascimento*, 2010;24(21):337-376, pp. 361-364.
59. Speranzi D, *Marco Musuro: Libri e scrittura*. Rome: Accademia dei Lincei; 2013. pp. 60-63 and p. 234.
60. The subscription is published by Graux C, Martin A, *Rapport sur une mission en Espagne et en Portugal: notices sommaires des manuscrits grecs d'Espagne et de Portugal*. *Nouvelles Archives des Missions scientifiques et littéraires* 1892;2:1-322, p. 264.
61. Orlandi L, *Andronikos Kallistos: A Byzantine Scholar and His Manuscripts in Italian Humanism*. Berlin-Boston, De Gruyter; 2023. pp. 138-149. On Laskaris' stay in Venice, see Rollo A, Ref. 35. p. 108 and n. 3 (with previous bibliography).

62. Caballero Sánchez R, Historia del texto del Comentario anónimo al Tetrabiblos de Tolomeo. *MHNH Revista internacional de investigación sobre Magia y Astrología antiguas* 2013;13:77-198, pp. 133-135.
63. Puntoni V, Ref. 1. p. 406 (nr. 40).
64. See the codicological description in Orlandi L, Ref. 61. pp. 279-280; for philological aspects, see Eleuteri P, *Storia della tradizione manoscritta di Museo*. Pisa: Giardini; 1981. pp. 9-10 and pp. 155-156.
65. Ferreri L, La tradition manuscrite du recueil de Théognis de Maxime Planude à l'édition Aldine (1496). Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana; 2021. p. 101.
66. Schiano C, Una rara collezione di astronomia e geografia a Creta. In: D'Agostino M, Pieralli L (eds), *Φιλόδορος εὐμένειας*. Miscellanea di Studi in ricordo di Mons. Paul Canart. Città del Vaticano: Scuola Vaticana di Paleografia, Diplomatica e Archivistica; 2021. pp. 647-660, p. 657. See also Ieraci Bio A, Per lo studio dell'umanesimo medico. L'ippocrate di Giorgio Valla. In: Manetti D, Perilli L, Roselli A (eds), *Ippocrate e gli altri*. Roma: École Française de Rome; 2022. pp. 437-460, p. 445.
67. Schiano C, Ref. 66. p. 658.
68. Lowry M, The world of Aldus Manutius. Business and scholarship in Renaissance Venice. Oxford: Blackwell; 1979. pp. 183-184 and n. 14 p. 208.
69. Georgii Vallae Placentini viri clariss. De expetendis, et fugiendis rebus opus, in quo haec continentur (...), Venetiis in aedibus Aldi Romani, impensa, ac studio Ioannis Petri Vallae filii pietentiss., Mense decembri 1501 (2 volumes without page numbers).
70. On this encyclopaedia, see Gardenal G, Giorgio Valla e le scienze esatte. In: Branca V (ed.), *Giorgio Valla tra scienza e sapienza*. Firenze: Olschki; 1981. pp. 9-54, pp. 17-19. More specifically, on the place of medicine in it: Landucci Ruffo P, Le fonti alla 'Medicina' nell'Enciclopedia di Giorgio Valla. In: Branca V (ed.), *Giorgio Valla tra scienza e sapienza*. Firenze: Olschki; 1981. pp. 55-68; Ventura I, Médecine et encyclopédies entre Renaissance et époque moderne: l'exemple de Giorgio Valla et de Johann Heinrich Alsted. In: Brizay F, Sarrazin V (eds), *Érudition et culture savante de l'Antiquité à l'époque moderne*. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes; 2015. pp. 217-235, pp. 220-226; and lastly Ieraci Bio A M, Ref. 66. pp. 437-439.
71. On this chapter, see Ventura I, Changing Representations of Botany in Encyclopedias from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance. In: Goeing A-S, Grafton A T, Michel P (eds), *Collector's Knowledge: What Is Kept, What Is Discarded. Aufbewahren oder wegwerfen – Wie Sammler entscheiden*. Leiden-Boston: Brill; 2014. pp. 97-144: pp. 116-125.
72. In fact, the manuscript of *On Simple Medicines* that belonged to Giorgio Valla, currently *Mutin*. α.P.5.18, is a very clean book, with almost no traces of use and especially almost no annotations by Giorgio Valla's hand. Moreover, it was probably originally made on behalf of Ermolao Barbaro in the 1980s, taking as its model *Marc. gr.* 286 which had belonged to cardinal Bessarion and was then kept in the Biblioteca Marciana, see Orlandi L, Ref. 61. p. 157 (which refers to works by Ciro Giacomelli).
73. On the sources of the medical part of *De expetendis*, the study by Landucci Ruffo P, Ref. 70, remains essential; see also Ventura I, Ref. 71. pp. 120-121, and Ieraci Bio, Ref. 66 (for Hippocrates).
74. Αετίου Ἀμιδινοῦ βιβλίων ἰατρικῶν τόμος α΄ (...) Aetii Amideni librorum medicinalium tomus primus (...) [Venetiis, in aedibus haeredum Aldi Manutii] 1534.
75. Landucci Ruffo P, Ref. 70. pp. 60 and 66.

76. Ventura I, Ref. 71. p. 121. However, it is inaccurate to state that these excerpts are mentioned in the margin in the separate reprint of the catalogue of simples in Valla's encyclopaedia: *Georgii Vallae Placentini viri clariss. De simplicium natura liber unus*, Argentinae per Henricum Sybold, 1528. The references to Dioscorides that can be found there (names in Greek alphabet, with the numbers of book and chapter) certainly do not go back to Valla and do not always correspond, far from it, to Dioscoridean interpolations: they are rather parallels resulting from a comparison with a printed edition of Dioscorides. In fact, a comparative study of the Greek text of Aetios and Dioscorides shows that the number of Dioscorides' interpolations in *De expetendis* is much lower than the number of references to Dioscorides in the margin of the 1528 partial reprint.
77. Ed. Olivieri, p. 48, l. 4-6: Βούνιον, οἱ δὲ ἄρκτιον, τῶν θερμαινόντων ἐστὶν εἰς τοσοῦτον ὡς οὐρητικόν τε εἶναι καὶ καταμηνίων ἀγωγόν. Καὶ τὸ ψευδοβούνιον δὲ παραπλησίως αὐτῷ θερμόν ἐστιν.
78. Ref. 69, vol. 2, p. [20]: Bunium, alii arctium, inter calefacientia est eousque ut urinam citet, et menstrua ducat, *et secundas ex aluo agat, lienis et renibus et uessicae idoneum, cuius usus humidus, aridus et dilutus ac eliquatus cum radicibus et caulibus et foliis cum mulso*. Ac pseudobunium propemodum ipsum calidum est.
79. Ed. Wellmann IV.123: ἔστι δὲ (...) δευτέρων ἀγωγόν, σπληνί τε καὶ νεφροῖς καὶ κύστει ἐπιτήδειον. χρῆσις δ' αὐτοῦ ὑγροῦ τε καὶ ξηροῦ καὶ χυλισθέντος σὺν ταῖς ῥίζαις καὶ τοῖς καυλοῖς καὶ τοῖς φύλλοις μετὰ μελικράτου. Transl. Beck, p. 297. The chapter is longer and includes a physical description of the plant.

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