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with Catalan Glosses:
Notes on Tarragona,
Biblioteca Pública, MS 13

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A Prosified *Alexandreis* with Catalan Glosses: Notes on Tarragona, Biblioteca Pública, MS 13

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Abstract: Tarragona, Biblioteca Pública, MS 13 deserves special attention among the codices of Catalan origin that contain Gautier de Châtillon's *Alexandreis* because it transmits a prosified version of the poem in which syntax is rearranged to conform to grammatical order and because some of its dense interlineal glosses are in Catalan. This article offers a description of the manuscript, examines its prosifications and glosses as pedagogical tools, and suggests links between the codex and the vernacular culture of the first half of the fifteenth century.

Keywords: Walter of Châtillon, medieval grammar, medieval Latin, vernacular glosses, medieval grammar teaching.

1. *The Alexandreis and the Medieval Catalan Alexander*

The Alexander legend was not unknown to medieval Catalan lay readers. Apart from recurrent mention of the Macedonian hero in romance, history, and morality books, two Catalan translations of the life of Alexander have survived: an anonymous fourteenth-century

version of Leo of Naples's *Historia de preliis*, and a fifteenth-century translation of Curtius Rufus, through Pier Candido Decembrio's Italian version, by Lluís de Fenollet, printed in Barcelona in 1481.¹ By contrast, there is no extant translation of Walter of Châtillon's *Alexandreis*, nor is there any clear evidence that it ever existed. In this respect, Ulrich Mölk (2002: 8) rightly stressed that, paradoxically, the pedagogical popularity of the *Alexandreis* and the number of surviving manuscripts of Catalan origin, most of which feature glosses in Catalan, are not matched by the existence of a Catalan version of the Alexander *epos*.²

Pedagogical popularity is a key issue, as greater attention was devoted in Catalan schools to the neo-classical twelfth-century *Alexandreis* than to any other classical or medieval poet. According to published documents, the *Alexandreis* was the school text *par excellence* after the basic works of the so-called *Liber Catonianus*. Over seventy occurrences in book inventories, chiefly from Barcelona and Majorca, testify to its popularity in the grammar curriculum, as shown by the book being very often listed alongside other grammar books. Five mentions of an *Alexander* explicitly “en pla” or “en romans” (i.e., in Catalan) in fifteenth-century book inventories might refer to an hypothetical lost Catalan *Alexandreis*, but it is much more likely that they refer to the translation of Leo of Na-

¹This article is part of research project PID2019-103874GB-I00 (Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación). I am grateful to the anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments and their contribution to enlarging the list of manuscripts in Appendix 1. For both translations, as well as for other Alexander material in Catalan, see Cabré *et al.* 2018: 161–163, 174–175, and 217–218. Despite the large amount of Alexander material in medieval Catalan letters and education, the Catalan Alexander does not deserve the slightest mention in Gaullier-Bougassas 2014.

²In the Iberian area, Castile offers a rather different situation: documents and surviving manuscripts are scarce, but several Castilian versions or adaptations of the *Alexandreis* have survived (see Valero 2016 and 2017). The manuscript now at El Escorial (MS S.III.24) is of French origin (Antolín 1916: 75). I have not been able to ascertain whether Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, MS 3986 contains vernacular glosses (*Inventario*, 233–234); two Castilian- or Aragonese-glossed manuscripts held in the Archivo Catedralicio of Pamplona have been described by Arizaleta & Martínez 1994.

ples's work.³ Several documents explicitly link the text with grammar instruction, as when in 1371 a fourteen-year-old student inherited from his father “duos libros pergameneos parvi valoris de grammatica, scilicet Ebrardum et Alexandreidem, in quibus possim adiscere in scolis” (Hernando 1993: 176–177, doc. 28); or when in 1341 a payment was made to a grammar master of four books for the education of prince John of Aragon (“dotrinal, gracisme, Alaxandri, Cato, conceptus [i.e. *Contemptus*] e Tobies en ·i· volum” (Rubió 1909–1921: II, 121, doc. xcci). We need not insist on the prominent role played by the *Alexandreis* in school and university grammar *curricula*, alongside Alexander of Villedieu's *Doctrinale*, Eberhard the German's *Grecismus*, and Priscian. On a contract drafted in 1425, a master was hired to lecture on “Tobies e lo Doctrinal e lo Alexandre e farà lo Proverbi major” in the major schools of Barcelona (Torre & Rubió 1971: 192, doc. 125bis). In fourteenth-century Valencia the *Alexandreis* and the *Grecismus* were part of the grammar curriculum for the instruction of would-be notaries (Cabanes 1998: 517). As to universities, its role in Toulouse or Perpignan is also well documented (Grondeux 2005: 827–830).

Up to sixteen manuscripts of the *Alexandreis* copied in the Catalan-speaking lands or used in Catalan schools have been preserved. As shown in Appendix 1, they all have traces of pedagogical use, and most of them feature lexical glosses in Catalan that deserve more attention than they have received so far.⁴

2. Description of Tarragona, Biblioteca Pública, MS 13

Whilst most of these manuscripts have been described in some detail, the manuscript now in Tarragona (Biblioteca Pública, MS 13) has received only a passing mention by Killermann (2002: 242, n. 3). Yet it is one of

³ References to the *Alexandreis* and other Alexander texts in Catalan book inventories will be studied in a forthcoming article.

⁴ For French and Middle English glosses to the *Alexandreis*, see De Cesare 1951 and Hunt 1971: I, 28–32. Most of the Catalan manuscripts have been described in some detail by Bohigas 1926, De Cesare 1951, and Killermann 2002.

the most remarkable copies, as it bears witness to an essential step in the process of reading Latin verse at school, the turning of its artificial syntactical order into the “natural” order of prose. The *Alexandreis* and other texts of the grammar curriculum that are copied in this manuscript have been wholly rewritten in prose according to the *ordo naturalis* of grammar. To the best of my knowledge, these pedagogical prosifications have practically gone unnoticed. Furthermore, the poem is completed with a noteworthy—albeit partial—freestanding commentary, and glosses in Latin and Catalan, mostly lexical, are spread throughout the text. Annotations and proverbs written by a hand which also completed the copy of the *Alexandreis* can shed some light on the context in which the manuscript was produced and used.

The manuscript is only briefly described by Domínguez Bordona (1952: 34–35), who left aside or misunderstood some of its contents. It may, therefore, be useful to offer a detailed description of it to highlight its main features and significance.

Paper, fifteenth century (1419), Catalonia. 205 x 135 mm. 169 folia, plus two modern guard leaves at each end. No trace of old foliation has remained. The modern foliation, in pencil with Arabic numerals (probably by Domínguez Bordona), leaves out four blank folia at the end of quires 9 (2) and 10 (2). As a result, the modern foliation runs from 1 to 165. Quires have five, six (mostly), and seven leaves, as shown in the collation:

$$1 + 1-9^{12} + 10^{14} + 11-12^{10} + 13^{14} + 14^{14-1} + 1$$

There are catchwords at ff. 24v, 36v, 48v, 60v, 72v, 84v, 96v, 120v, and traces of a cut catchword at the bottom of ff. 12v and 138. Quire 9 ended with three blank folia, but only f. 106, filled as it is with writing, was taken into consideration in the modern numbering of the MS, which omitted the remaining blank leaves and resumed foliation at the beginning of the following quire (f. 107).

Text on a single column. Two kinds of rulings were used, in lead (*Alexandreis*) and hardpoint (*Ecloga Theodoli*); the other texts have no ruling. Text frame: *Alexandreis* 129 x 83mm (f. 45r), sometimes a bit wider (e.g.,

f. 105, 139 x 90 mm.); commentary on the *Alexandreis* 165 x 110 (no right margin left); *Ecloga Theodoli* 165 x 100 (but the writing often goes over the right margin); in the *Disticha Catonis* and *De contemptu mundi* the writing leaves hardly any margin at all.

Except for the hands that fill in blank folia (one of which is responsible for the copy of the last sixty lines of the *Alexandreis*), the manuscript has been written by a single scribe. The scribe identifies himself as Stephanus at the ends of the *Alexandreis* (f. 104v), the *Ecloga Theodoli* (f. 152r), and the *Disticha Catonis* (f. 157r). According to the colophon to the *Ecloga*, he completed the copy of this work on 11 June 1419 (see below). Differences in the layout and in the color and quality of the ink, as well as the interruption of the copy of the *Alexandreis* at f. 104v, suggest that the texts were copied in several stages. A new quire was used to undertake the copy of each work, even if there were blank leaves left at the end of the previous quire.

Stephanus's writing is a Catalan cursive Gothic script. It is more accurate in the copy of the *Alexandreis* than in the other texts. The top of every recto of the *Alexandreis* has the number of the current book of the poem in Arabics.

A second hand, a more rounded and formal Gothic, is responsible for the completion of the copy of the *Alexandreis* (ff. 104v–105r), the addition of proverbs in blank spaces (ff. 105v–106r), and possibly the short sermon copied in f. 152v. This second hand also contributed editorial tasks to the copy of the *Alexandreis*, such as emendations, interlinear and marginal glosses, distinctions between the introductory summaries and the text of each book, and the marginal marks “fabula” or “ystoria” wherever a mythological or biblical reference had been glossed in the commentary —or had been considered worth glossing. A third hand copied two love songs in Catalan in f. 106v. Additional hands left sparse glosses and brief annotations around the *Alexandreis*. The *Alexandreis* and the commentary on the *Ecloga* have been numbered on the top right margin as 1 and 3, respectively, by a later hand (from the seventeenth or the eighteenth century) in darker ink. The absence of number 2 at the beginning of the commentary on the *Alexandreis* may be due to the loss of some folia, or even a whole quire.

Decoration is restricted to red capital letters and paragraph marks. The more elaborate initial of the first book of the *Alexandreis* (f. 1r) has been drawn in red and black. In the copy of the *Ecloge*, decoration is interrupted at f. 134v, and some initials are missing throughout the manuscript.

The binding is in white parchment on cardboard. The title is on a red leather band pasted on the spine (“ALEXANDRI / MAG. HISTORIA / MITOLOGIC”). Number 29 is also written on the spine. The current binding was made in the monastery of Santes Creus in the late eighteenth- or early nineteenth century (Domínguez Bordona 1952: 12) (see below). In f. IIv, an eighteenth-century hand wrote: “Tom. 138 29 | N° 1. Historia Alexandri Magni | de bello persico | N° 2. Mythologica continentur.” These lines seem written before the manuscript was rebound, when it must have been renumbered as 29. The fact that no mention is made of the rest of the works contained in the volume and that the commentary is numbered 2, might be due to different parts of the manuscript being then bound together or kept separate (at a time when the second work had not yet lost its first leaves).

Contents:

I. Walter of Châtillon, *Alexandreis* (f. 1r–105v), in prose.

Inc.: “Primus scribit alexandrum imbutum sacro nectare aristotilis.”

Expl.: “Gloria guillermi viuet superestes cum vate per nullum eum moritura.”

Colophon: «finito et cetera. Gratias tibi christe quia opus explicit iste. Amen.”

The copy omits the author’s prologue and begins with the summary of book I. At least two different hands added lexical glosses in Latin and Catalan and a handful of marginal Latin scholia.

At f. 104 v., the copy was interrupted at the end of X, 409, and a blank space for four lines of text was left. Stephanus completed his task by writing his name, framed by a rectangular box—later redrawn in red by the decorator—at the bottom of the page. Copy was resumed by the second hand, which completed the *Alexandreis* in ff. 104v–105v and wrote a commonplace colophon. He also wrote an invocation at the top of f. 105r (“jhesus christus”) and added the number of the book (“10^{us}”) mirroring the format of the first copyist. The

text copied by the second scribe remains undecorated, while the part of the main copyist is decorated throughout. There does not appear to be any defining feature of the text copied by the second scribe (other than the lack of decorations); it is likely that he worked from the same antigraph as Stephanus. Only the writing of final *-c* as *-ch* in *tunch* and *donech* reveals a Catalan hand.

II. Proverbs and grammatical annotations by the second hand (f. 105v–106r) (see below).

III. Two unknown love songs in Catalan, by a late fifteenth-century hand (f. 106v).

Inc.: «Vag men bena^{ena} morat.»

Expl.: «per que saviessam par.»

IV. Commentary on the *Alexandreis*, referred to in the colophon as *Storie Alexandrini* (f. 107r–128r).

Inc.: «Satrapes dicitur de satis. Bene nota fabulam. Tu debes scire quod aguonunon [sc. Agenor] habuit quadam filiam que vocabatur europam.»

Explicit: “nunc autem obseruat auctor nomine antiquorum(?) inuocatur diis(?) ·s· musas.”⁵

Colophon: “Expliciunt storie alexandrini.”

The text begins abruptly with a gloss on I, 297. It consists of glosses on selected mythological fables from books I and II and the biblical episodes depicted on the tomb of Darius’s wife (IV, 176–284), which constitute the bulk of the commentary. It does not seem to be related either to the selected glosses edited by Colker (1978: 275–514) or the biblical section edited by Townsend (2008). In f. 126v–127v some apocalyptic prophecies have been inserted, perhaps because of Daniel’s prophecy at V, 8–10. Glosses in ff. 127v–128r refer again to the beginning of book I, the last one commenting on the invocation of the Muse at I, 1–5.

V. Double commentary on the *Ecloga Theodoli*, with an *accessus* (f. 129r–152r).

Inc. *accessus*: «Ethiopum terras iam fervida torruit estas / Theodolus dicitur a

⁵ The text is corrupted by scribal errors: besides “nomine” for “more” or “morem”, “inuocatur” does not agree with “diis” nor with “musas.”

theos quod est deus et delus...»

Expl. accessus: «Vnde debemus scire quod hic liber fuit inceptus in tempore statis et tunc erat estas magna.»

Inc.: «iam estas torruerat terras ethiopum ·i· illorum populorum.»

Expl.: «nec desperato non ledat ·i· no naffre / et dicta sufficiant deo gracias.»

Colophon: «Et h̄j libro finito laus et gloria sit christo / Stephanus laumin^{cccc} anno M^o cccc^o x^oix^o menseque junii in die sancti barnabe ego perfecti.»

For each stanza of the text, a historical and a literal commentary is provided. The literal commentary is a *catena* commentary in which 87 of its *lemmata* are glossed in Occitan. This feature obviously points to a text originally used in school in an Occitan-speaking town, whose vicinity to Catalonia is referred to in a gloss on the story of Phillis and Demofont. The gloss compares the land of Phillis's father with 'the land of the King of Aragon' ("ac si esset terra regis Aragoni", f. 135v).

The historical commentary deals with allegory, mythography, and biblical history, and includes several quotations from the *Alexandreis*. I have not been able to relate this commentary to any of the texts described by Quinn (1971).

VI. Sermon on "Speciossam fecit eam Dominus" (f. 152v).

Inc.: "Speciossam fecit eam dominus. hijs verborum eloquijs que prescripto ordine perleguntur originaliter Exechiele 31°."

Expl. "Et regnum celeste nobis ipse dominus gloriosus concedere dignetur qui recnat trinus et vnus per infinita secula seculorum Amen."

Apparently by the second hand. The *thema* is a variation of Ez 31.9. The sermon comments on several sentences from the *Disticha Catonis*, which may explain why it was copied in the manuscript.

VII. *Disticha Catonis*, in prose (f. 153r–157r).

Inc.: "Cum animaduerterem vidi supra quam plurimos homines errare graviter in vja morum."

Expl.: "Miraris me scribere versus vidis [sic] uerbis h̄j breuitas fecit coniungere binos."

Colophon: Finito libro sit laus et gloria christo / Stephanus."

VIII. *De contemptu mundi*, or *Cartula*, in prose (f. 157r–165v).

Inc.: "[C]artula nostra / o dilecte nostra cartula portat salutes tibi".

Expl.: “Pete caue praua uiuere praue sit graue o dulcis amice ualle illud quod agis sit ueniale”.

The manuscript belongs to the holdings of the Cistercian monastery of Santes Creus, near Tarragona, from which it was transferred to the newly created Public Library of Tarragona in 1846, following the 1835–1836 confiscations of properties from the religious orders by the Spanish government. No possession notes are found nor is there any indication as to when the manuscript entered Santes Creus. An annotation on the left margin of f. 106v, written from bottom to top by a late fifteenth-century hand, may be related to the monastery of Santes Creus. Only the words “dimissit abbas fratres minores” are now legible.

3. *The Tarragona Alexandreis and Its Glosses: From Prosification to Vernacular Culture*

Although only the interlinear and marginal glosses of the *Alexandreis* section show traces of its use at school, the entire manuscript was obviously conceived as a pedagogical tool. Its two parts (the *Alexandreis* with a commentary, and the series *Ecloga–Disticha–Cartula*) belong to two different learning levels, yet have in common the fact that the poems had been prosified to facilitate student reading. It is as if *construe* glosses had been extended over full texts, which would have been systematically rearranged in prose from the first to the last line. To the best of my knowledge, no other such prosification—especially, that of the *Alexandreis*—in a medieval manuscript has been noted.⁶ Prosification was of course an essential step in the reading of classical and medieval poetry. This kind of translation from an artificial to a natural grammatical order is usually preserved in two forms: syntactical glosses to specific sentences (*construe* glosses and the like) and *catena* commentaries, in which a combination of syntactical order and literal gloss of selected *lemmata* extends over full

⁶ I have not been able to trace any mention of such prosifications in studies on the reception of the *Alexandreis* (see Tilliette 2015) nor in works on medieval education and commentary practices, such as Hunt 1991, Black 2001, or Reynolds 1996.

texts. In this manuscript, the literal commentary on the *Ecloga* testifies to the survival of *catena* commentaries in late medieval schools.⁷

Prose rendering of the *Alexandreis* is not as easy a task as the prosification of the more elementary *Disticha* or *Cartula*, which can be safely reduced to a series of proverbial *dicta*. Whoever undertook the prose rendering of the *Alexandreis* must have conceived it as a guide for teachers and students to successfully deal with the school reading of Walter's poem. The author of the prosification strictly focused on the words in the text, and only used a small number of commentary devices, such as the addition of particles and the explanation of conjunctions through lexical glosses. Thus, as can be seen in the sample transcribed in Appendix 2, the postponed conjunction *que* is systematically glossed as "et" ("pro" is usually added as an interlinear gloss). *Enim* and *at* are glossed as "pro quia" and "pro sed" respectively, and the negative particle *ne* is regularly glossed as "nunquam." We also find *licet* glossed as "quamvis". As with literal commentaries, vocatives have been made explicit by adding *O* or the name of the addressed person, and, if needed to clarify the syntax, verbs are repeated when governing a series of sentences--as with "refer" in the invocation to the Muse in the opening lines of book I (I, 1–5) or "licebit" several lines below (I, 33–39).

The *Alexandreis* is glossed throughout. Although most lexical glosses are in Latin, there are about 1,500 interlinear glosses in Catalan, mostly by the same hand as the Latin ones (in fact, both languages are often used in a single gloss). The number of glosses (Latin as well as Catalan) differs from book to book: books I–III and V–VII are more heavily glossed than the rest (for instance, book X includes only 35 glosses in Catalan, whereas book II features a total of 130).

Most Catalan glosses were probably written as an aid for beginners. They translate rather common Latin words, as with "somnus: sopni" (VII, 302) or "auras: vents" (VII, 305). In addition, the gloss very often clarifies the syntactical function of a given word, by adding articles and prepositions to nouns, and even names and pronouns to some verbs (e.g. "uexil-

⁷ For syntactical glosses, see Reynolds 1996: 110–120, and, for *catena* commentaries, Coulson 2010 and Gura 2010.

lo: per bandera”, I, 38; “corona iuuenum: sí que la flor del jovent”, I, 286; “sceleri: a traïció”, I, 299). The elementary pedagogical character can be easily seen in those glosses in which synonyms in Latin and Catalan, or only in Catalan, are given, as if to ensure that the full meaning of the word is covered (eg. “armos: musclos ho spalles”, I, 51; “inpetus: embarquament, abrivament”, I, 248; “per saltus: per les vals ho boschs”, II, 464; “clangorem: sonitum, brogit, resplandiment”, III, 2). The duplication, or even triplication, of lexical equivalents of a single Latin word is particularly interesting, because vernacular translators would often provide such equivalences in their translations, having mechanically drawn on the Latin and vernacular glosses of their source texts.

Unsurprisingly, glosses also clarify names of persons, gods, peoples, cities, mountains, and stars, generally referring to the common vernacular designations, as in “Lucifer: lo stel del auba” and “plaustra Boete: los Carros de la Tremuntana” (I, 11). Mythological characters are sometimes glossed in rather peculiar ways: the description of Megeira as “aquella diablessa” (II, 342) is somehow to be expected, as well as the confusion of gods and goddesses (as when Neptunus is called “la deessa de la mar”, III, 383);⁸ on the other hand, the description of Nereidae as frogs (“Nereidum: de les granotes”, IV, 319) and the transformation of seals into dolphins (“phocas: los dalfins que signant tempestatem”, III, 321) are rather surprising. In the most striking cases, the glossator offers an implausible translation of proper names based on false etymologies, such as those of Alexander’s generals Nichanor, Amyntas, Perdicas or Craterus: from I, 426–428 on, Nichanor is “En Nas de ca, ille miles” (‘dog nose’), Amyntas (written “Amictas”), “N’Ameller, miles” (‘almond tree’), Perdicas, “alter miles, En Peu de perdiu” (‘partridge foot’), and at V, 265, Craterus is “En Vernigat, ille miles” (‘vase’, ‘plate’). The phonetic resemblance of those proper nouns to *canis*, *amygdala*, *perdix* and *crateris* or *cratera* must have prompted the glossator’s interpretation.

Names of places and peoples can either be identified in vague terms (e.g. “Corintum: de aquelles ciutats”, I, 4) or be located more precisely (e.g. “Ebractana: Ebractana és ·i· partida en Pèrsia”, VII, 93), but they

⁸ On this confusion, see Pujol 2018: 176–179.

are usually identified by reference to modern-day nations and peoples, as in “Cartago: la ciutat de Marrochs” (X, 268). *Gallicus* is, of course, “francès” (III, 457), *Hesperius* “espanyol” (VI, 1), *Partus* “turch” (III 33, VII, 477), and *Ligurum* is glossed as “dels lombars” (VII, 378). Yet there are a couple of perplexing identifications, such as *Yrcanos* as those “de Lombardia o de la terra de Yrcània” (VII, 207)) and the Scites as “los scocis” or “scotenuques” (VIII, 50, 370, 478, 495, 500). As with Latin glosses, vernacular glosses decode metaphors (e.g., “domus quinque pedum: ço és, la fossa”, X, 450) and other figures of speech (e.g., “cornipedem: caval”, I, 36). This includes mythological metaphors, as in “Marte: batalla” (VII, P4) or in “Vulcano: ab foch gresch” (I, 348).

Apart from what glosses reveal about their pedagogical function, they are also witnesses to words and meanings not documented to date. A remarkable example of this is the gloss “crepuscula: entre ca e lop” (III, 466). Such an expression can be found in seventh-century Latin documents, as well as in thirteenth-century French texts, but no occurrence in Catalan had been registered so far. On the other hand, some Catalan words are remarkable in that they are used to translate a wide range of Latin words. For instance, the word *capdal* renders the terms *tirannus*, *satrapa*, *dux* and *prefectus*. Catalan glosses also show the way in which lexical or morphological Latinisms are created. To explain the Latin verb *novercari* (from *noverca*), the glossator invented the verb *madastrejar* from the noun *mad(r)astra* (‘stepmother’, II, 181). The Latin adjective *cereali* led him to create *bladad*, from *blat* (‘wheat’, I, 436). This kind of glosses can help explain the process by which vernacular translators enriched their languages through imitation of Latin word formation.

The scattering of proverbs in the margins of the *Alexandreis* and ff. 105v–106r reveals a wide range of sources, from the Bible and patristics to widely spread versified proverbs and the *Liber Catonianus*. The Catalan school context in which the manuscript was copied and used can be also seen in some haphazard grammatical annotations by the same hand, in which the vernacular is used to clarify the sense, conjugation or grammatical gender of Latin nouns and verbs, as in “Ustulo, as, aui, per ablimar [i.e. soblimar] perdius, o per socarrar, o per sojornar, et est uerbum actiuum,” or in “Hoc cribrum, per guarbel: Haurit aquam cribris clericus

absque libris” (a well-attested proverb). The pedagogical origin of these notes is particularly clear in an annotation in which a grammatical example taken from a commentary on Alexander of Villedieu’s *Doctrinale*—anything but difficult—is given a word-by-word translation: “Versus: Vidi ^{per viu} tris ^{per tres} canis ^{per cans} comedentis ^{per menjants} tris ^{per tres} panis ^{per pans}.”

All this is common knowledge and would not reveal much about this copyist and annotator if it weren’t for a single proverb that builds a bridge between Latin school culture and vernacular culture. The first proverb written after the colophon to the copy of the *Alexandreis* is “Ille scit de librilla qui percussus est ab illa. Ceruerii”. Cerverí is the literary nom de plume of the thirteenth-century Catalan troubadour Guillem de Cervera. He was much appreciated at the Catalan royal court as a prolific and versatile troubadour as well as the author of a book of verse proverbs (the so called *Verses proverbials*), and there is much evidence of the impact of the latter on the literary culture of notaries, scribes, merchants, and church canons. However, in this instance, the Latin quotation is not an original proverb from that book but the Latin translation of the proverbial distich with which Cerverí’s *Maldit bendit*, a debate poem on women, opens:

Escout qui vol ausir:
soven ay ausit dir,
dins mayso e en plaça,
que çell sab de la maça
qui n’es estat ferits.
(vv. 1–5, ed. Riquer 1947: 323)

[May whoever wants to hear listen: I often hear say, at home and in the public square, that he who best knows the hammer is he whom was hurt by it.]

The Latin version of Cerverí’s lines adopts the standard form of a proverb—including the leonine rhyme, which can explain the substitution of “librilla” (‘sling’) for “maça” (‘club, hammer’)—just as one would find it in some bilingual collections of proverbs copied in grammar

schoolbooks.⁹ This proverb shows that a Catalan copyist and user of the manuscript (perhaps a schoolmaster) writing in, or shortly after, 1419 had in mind some lines of a vernacular poet whose education and works were not far from the *Disticha Catonis*, proverbial wisdom, and scholastic devices.¹⁰ The intertwining of Latin and vernacular culture among scribes and school masters in fifteenth-century Catalonia helps explain the role of the vernacular within Latin teaching. More importantly, the prosification of the *Alexandreis* and the rest of verse school texts included in Tarragona, Biblioteca Pública, MS 13 makes this unique manuscript very relevant for the study of medieval grammar teaching.

⁹ For Latin translations of vernacular proverbs, see Taylor 2010: 119–21 and 126–27. I am grateful to Barry Taylor for drawing my attention to this reference and for his help with proverb collections. The *Maldit bendit* was a very popular poem (Cabré 1999: 45–46). Its first lines were widely known in the fifteenth century; they are quoted in Francesc Ferrer’s *Lo conhort* (‘Consolation’) (vv. 711–712, ed. Auferil 1989: 236) and in Jaume Roig’s *Espill* (‘Mirror’) (vv. 382–383, ed. Carré 2014: 128). Both are poems on women.

¹⁰ For Cerverí, see Cabré 1999, and, for the reception of his *Verses proverbials* (often listed alongside the *Disticha* and other pedagogical texts), Cabré 2019 (esp. 71–77). In the glosses he appended to his Catalan translation of Ovid’s *Heroides*, the royal chaplain and former scribe Guillem Nicolau replaced Latin *dicta* with Cerverí’s Catalan proverbs (Pujol 2018: 39–40).

Appendices

Appendix I

Manuscripts of the Alexandreis Copied or Used in Catalonia

- Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, MS Ripoll 137. Parchment. 14th c. Marginal and interlinear commentary, with a few Catalan glosses. Killermann 2002: 243–247. <<http://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/2228973?nm>>
- Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, MS Ripoll 174. Parchment. 13th c. Fragment. Sparse glosses, some in Catalan. Killermann 2002: 247–248. <<http://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/2323650?nm>>
- Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, MS Ripoll 188. Parchment. 1332, copied by Ramon de Frigola in Besalú. Commentary by the same hand, with some Catalan glosses. Killermann 2002: 248–253. <<http://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/2323666?nm>>
- Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, MS Ripoll 196. Parchment. 13th c. Acellous. Marginal and interlinear commentary, with some Catalan glosses. Killermann 2002: 253–254. <<http://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/2323675?nm>>
- Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, MS Ripoll 201. Paper. 14th c. Fragment. Sparse glosses, mostly in Catalan. Killermann 2002: 254–256. <<http://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/2323681?nm>>
- Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, MS Ripoll 208. Paper. 14th c. Fragment. Sparse glosses, mostly in Catalan. Killermann 2002: 256–259. <<http://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/2381122?nm>>
- Barcelona, Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, MS Ripoll 212. Parchment. 13th c. Latin and Catalan sparse glosses. Killermann 2002: 260–263. <<http://pares.mcu.es/ParesBusquedas20/catalogo/show/2367546?nm>>
- Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, MS 101. Parchment. Italy, 14th c. The first and last quires are lacking. Latin and Catalan marginal and interlinear glosses.
- Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, MS 633. Parchment. Probably France, 13th c. ex.—14th c. in. Glosses mostly in Catalan. <<https://mdc.csuc.cat/digital/collection/manuscritBC/id/238339/rec/1>>

- London, British Library, MS Harley 5437. Parchment. Northeastern Italy or Catalonia, 14th c. Marginal and interlinear glosses in Latin, and sparse interlinear glosses in Catalan. British Library Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts.¹¹
- Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Lat. 8121. Parchment and paper. 1433, copied at the school of the Cistercian monastery of Valldigna (Kingdom of Valencia) by Bernardus Marquès. Lexical interlinear glosses in Catalan. De Cesare 1951: 124–125.
- Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Lat. 8487. Parchment. 13th c. Interlinear glosses in Catalan. De Cesare 1951: 130.
- Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Lat. 8488. Paper. Valldigna? (Valencia), 1437. De Cesare identifies the Bernardus Marquès of MS Lat. 8121 as the copyist. It features a few Catalan interlinear glosses by the same hand that wrote the Latin ones, as well as *probationes penae* in Catalan on the first and last leaves. De Cesare 1951: 130. <<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b100365440?rk=21459;2>>
- Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, MS 901. Paper. 1415, copied by Arnaldus Raurich. The verse summary of the first book has been systematically glossed in Catalan. Bohigas 1926, De Cesare 1951: 136–137.
- Tarragona, Biblioteca Pública, MS 13 (Santes Creus). Paper. 1419, copied by Stephanus. Contains a prosified *Alexandreis* with Latin and Catalan marginal and interlinear glosses, and a partial commentary. Domínguez Bordona 1952: 34–35. <<https://bvpb.mcu.es/ca/consulta/registro.do?control=BVPB20070004128>>
- Yale University, Beinecke Library, Marston MS 253. Paper. Catalonia, 13th c., last third. It is annotated in Latin and Catalan, and there is evidence of use as a school text. Shailor 1992: 495–96.

¹¹The British Library catalogue states that the manuscript has an Italian origin. However, the writing and decoration in f. 1r (the only presently available in a digitized online copy) suggest a Catalan scriptorium, and two interlinear glosses in Catalan in f. 1r testify to its use in Catalonia. According to a note in f. 1r, the manuscript was purchased in Barcelona in 1529 from the book-dealer and editor Rafael Dauder (information about him can be found in Madurell & Rubió 1955 and Lamarca 2015).

Appendix 2

This appendix contains an edition of lines 1–70 of the first book of the *Alexandreis*, as copied in the manuscript (ff. 1r–3r), including all the interlinear glosses, Latin as well as Catalan. The spelling of the manuscript has been respected, except for capitalization and the regularization of *i* and *j* and *v* and *u*. Catalan glosses have been edited according to modern accentuation and word separation. Abbreviations have been resolved, except for *·i·* (*id est*) in the glosses. Modern punctuation follows Colker’s edition. I use the comma to separate synonyma in the interlinear glosses. Additions to the text (lexical glosses of conjunctions, vocatives, repetition of verbs, etc.) have been printed in italics. Readings not registered in Colker’s text or apparatus are followed by the reading in Colker’s edition in brackets.

O Musa, reffer gesta ducis Macedum ^{dels grechs diulgata} digesta per totum orbem, refer
 quam large dispersit opes, refer ^{quibus militibus regem} quo milite uicerit Porum et Darium,
 refer quo principe Grecia uictrix risit et tributa rediere a Persis

^{de aquelles ciutats dux Macedum. ·i· usque ad inpotens}
 Corinthum, qui si uixisset in nostros annos non factus inhermi senio

^{promissione uictorias pro}
 pollice fatorum, fama nunquam loqueretur triumphos Cesareos que

^{minueretur, uilesceret ·i· magnus ignis, ·i· clibanus}
 et tota gloria gentis Romulee scaleret: enim *pro quia* caminus

^{radiis excederet, preluceret acabada, merescuda / pro / lo stel de l’auba /}
 preradiaret [f. 1v] igniculos fulgore meriti, que *et* Lucifer

^{s’engroguirre, deficeret los Carros de la Tremuntana, illius signi / deficerent, s’enflaquirren}
 palleret in ortu sui solis et Plaustra Boete tardi languerent.

At *pro sed* o tu, *Guilherme*, cui maior Britannia gaudet ^{genuisse} reges

Guillermo existente ymo maior vel equalis iungit, coniungit / i: illius ciuitatis, *dels senoniens*
 auos, quo presule non minor honor nupsit urbi Senonum `quam cum

ille miles armis
 Brennius fregit Romam armis¹² Senonensibus adepturus arcem

sic nuncupata uel excitaret les guaytes / Guillermo
 Tarpeiam si anser argenteus non exciret uigiles, quo adempto tandem

illius ciuitatis, de Rems / batallerossa
 regimen cathedre Remensis bellica, tellus amisit nomen duricie,

Guillermum per infantament pro
 quem efusum partu philosophia sucepit alendum suo gremio que et

ministrans aquel munt de saviessa
 propinans totum Elicona patefecit sacram aulam pectoris doctrine,

pro vel sic: causas rerum latentes nube fugata
 que et excoctum diu fornace studii, dedit penetrare latentes causas,

nube rerum fugata. *O Guilherme*, ades huc et decurre mecum pelago

manifestati i: sanctas vel sacres / scientias coronam lauri pro
 patenti funde sacros fontes et imprime laurum crinibus que et paciare

nostrum dictamen i: ad laudem tui la barba tunc incipiens
 nostram camenam ascribi tibi. Lanugo nondum¹³ infructificans

exuerat in planicie pro lanugo portar, proferir, ostendere
 prodierat plana tenellis pilis nature, que et parabat proferre dissimiles

Alexander cupiens
 genas matri, cum puer siciens [f. 2r] arma toto pectore audit

Grecis pro / audit Darium
 Darium dare iura Pelasgis gentibus que et prementem arma patris

dominacio [?] i: quanta sit (?)
 iugo imperii et indignans exprimit iram hiis uocibus: "Heu, quam

i: numquid me
 longa quies est pueris! ne *id est nunquam* licebit dampnare iugum

¹² *armis* corrects a previous word, which was glossed as *armis*.

¹³ *inf* expunctuated after *nondum*.

Persarum inter ^{mortales} funereas ^{osts} acies ^{resplendent} mucrone ^{pro numquid me} corusco, que *et licebit*
 regirar ^{pererós} celeri ^{caval} cursu ^{fugitiui} lentum ^{del capdal numquid me} cornipedem *profugi tiranni, et licebit*
 turbare ^{pro numquid me} duces ^{nobilem} confusos, que *et licebit* ^{per bandera / huius signi Leonis} puerum ^{armat} insignem *uexillo leonis*
 saltem ^{armat} simulare ^{galeato?} ducem ^{ne id est numquid fuit} in bello *uertice*
 uerum ^{Erculem} Alcidem ^[?] puero ^{en los bressols} domuisse *duos dracones in cunis faucibus*
 constripetes ^{espaordisque meos} compressis? ergo nisi *nomen magister [magni] Aristotilis terreat annos*
 infantivols ^{i dubitarem comensar} pueriles, ^{predictis} haut *pro non* dubitem *ordiri fortiter similes actus. adde quod*
 maior ^{de xii anys} uirtus ^{pro} solet ^{verdegable iuuentute} inesse *etati duodeni paruo corpore*¹⁴ que *et ardua*
 uis ^{verdegable iuuentute} solet¹⁵ *suplere moras uiridis iuente. ne id est numquid putabor*
 criat, linyada ^{illius incantatoris / que / yo sia reprès / ésser deslanagable/Déu no u uulle} semper ^{murmurat hec} proles *Neptanabi? ut arguar degener absit !” ait hec et perorat*
 dicente ^{hoc fuit sic} secum *corde dictanti sic taliter qualiter si lleunculus uidet forte ire*
 ceruos ^{ergullats Lombardienses, Ircanis/leunculo} ad pascua [pabula] [f. 2v] *cornibus elatis aruis Yrcanis, cui*
 robur ^{muscos ho spalles} nondum *descendit in totos armos nec firmus adhuc pede nec*
 asper ^{armis} dentibus *aduncis*¹⁶ *et inproba lingua palpitat et ferit uacuum*

¹⁴ *di* expunctuated after *corpore*.

¹⁵ *uiridis iuente* cancelled between *uis* and *solet*.

¹⁶ *palpitat* expunctuated after *aduncis*. The same hand added *palpitat et* between *linga* et *ferit*.

palatum, que ^{pro}et effundit prius cruorem animo quam dente, que ^{pro}et

^{properata}matura uoluntas redimit ^{Alexander / dessenfrenat}pigriciam pedum: sic puer effrenus

^{s' enfelonex ho encén}baccatur totus in arma, que ^{pro}et ^{cor de leó}inualidus manu gerit alto corde leonem

^{ivaçós}et preceps audacia ^{'i· Aristotiles}preuenit annos teneros. magister macer pallens,

^{'i· casu}exierat forte talamis ^{pro et non}apertis crine incompto (nec facies *non*

^{ymo bene}respondere ^{pro postquam / armauerat / l' altre dia}male studio) ^{combatibles / si que}ubi armarat nuper elencos pugiles toto

corpore logices perfecto. O quam difficile est studium non proderere

^{deseolorides / representabant}uultu! Ora ^{pro}liuida sapiebant lucernam nocturnam, que *et* pellis

^{iungebat}maritabat se ^{diferencia vel distincione, departiment / 'i· medio / pro}tenui discrimine ossibus in uultu, que *et* ^{proueniens ex ieiunio}macies ieiuna

effusa per omnes partes ^{interpositio}premebat articulos manuum. Nulla parentesis

repellebat ossa a pelle. Nam *pro quia* uehemens labor studii

^{tremente membra}afficit artus ^{'i· intus}macie et molem carnis, et homo sumit sibi interior hoc

quod cibus [f. 3r] educat extra *scilicet* fomenta laboris.

Appendix 3
Figures

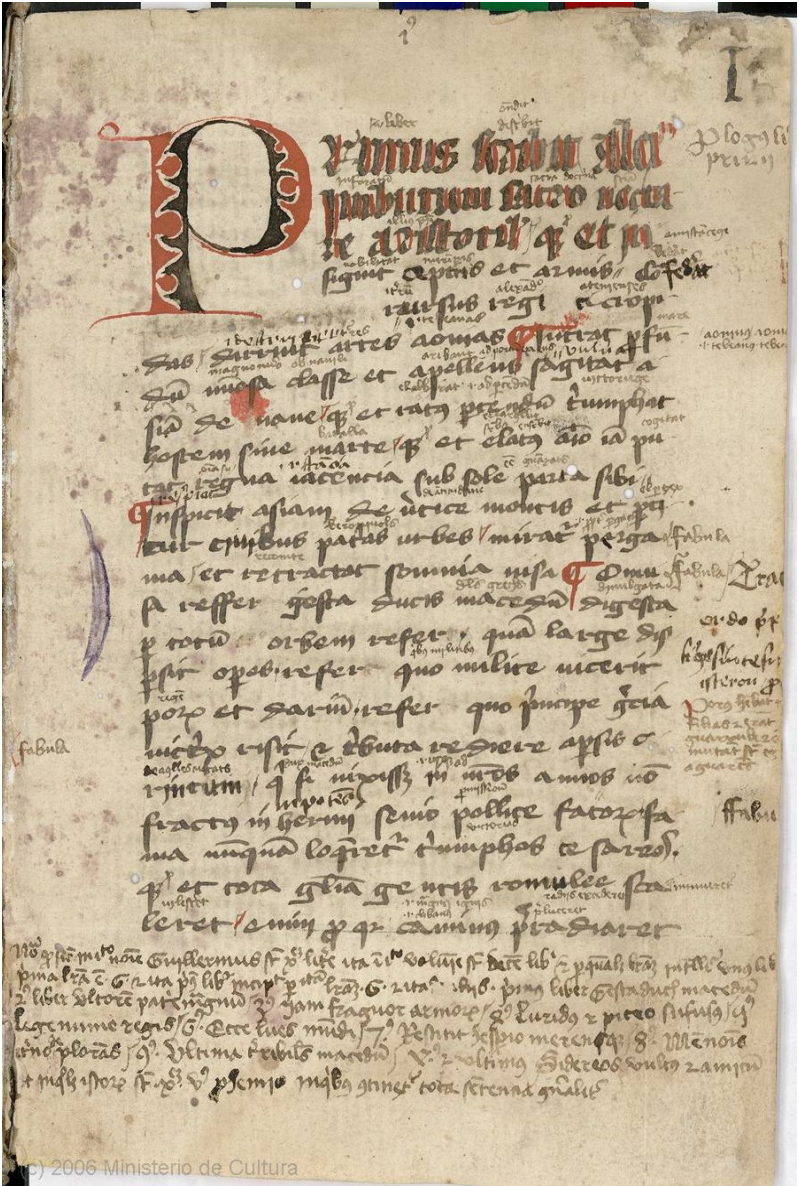


Figure 1: Summary and first lines of Alexandreis, book I (f. 1r).

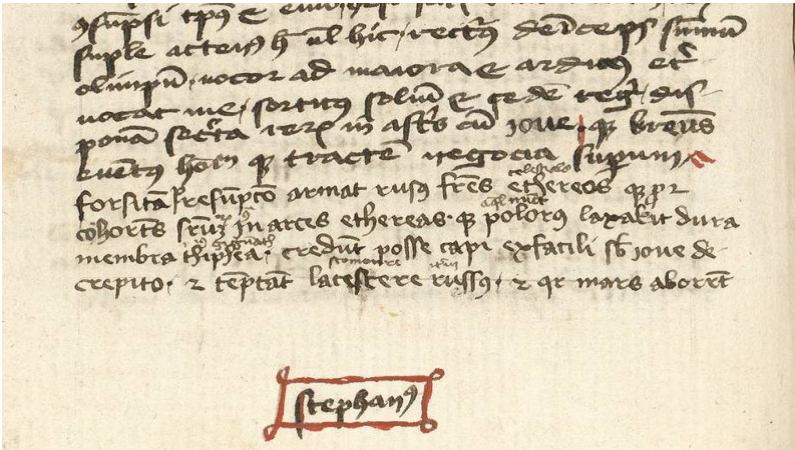


Figure 2: Change of hand and signature of the main copyist (f. 104v).

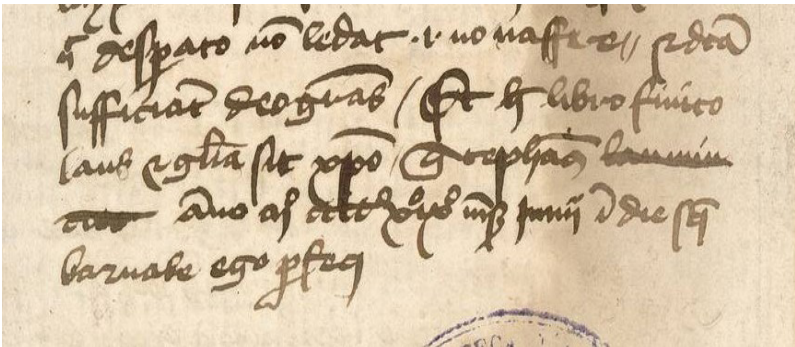


Figure 3: Colophon to the commentary on the *Ecloge Theodoli* (f. 152r).

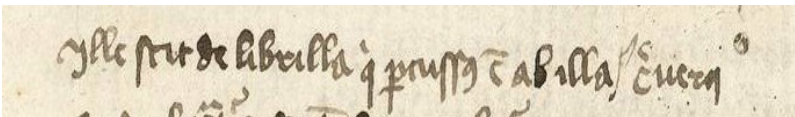


Figure 4: Proverb with reference to Cerverí de Girona (f. 105v).

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