

A New Source for Piccolomini's *De educatione liberorum*: Filelfo's Translation of Plutarch's *Regum et imperatorum apophthegmata*

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This article argues that Francesco Filelfo's Latin translation of Plutarch's *Regum et imperatorum apophthegmata* (1437) is a previously undiscovered source for Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini's Latin treatise *De liberorum educatione* (1450). Delving into this untold chapter of Plutarch's reception in the Humanist tradition sheds light on the dissemination of Latin translations of this Plutarchan essay and adds a new element to the reconstruction of the intricate relationship between Piccolomini, an eminent Humanist who later ascended to the papacy (Pius II, 1458–1464), and Filelfo, a key figure in the dissemination of Greek culture in fifteenth-century Italy.

Piccolomini's five quotations of the *Regum et imperatorum apophthegmata* bear a striking resemblance in phrasing to the corresponding passages in Filelfo's translation. The fact that Piccolomini did not quote them verbatim does not imply that he did not use them. While it is possible that he consulted another translation, the adjustments he made to his quotations align with his pattern of modifying Latin renditions of other Greek texts that have long been recognized as his sources. In addition to the points of contact between the two texts, further elements support the thesis that he employed this version in particular. Firstly, Piccolomini and Filelfo were certainly aware of each other's existence, as evidenced by explicit references in their respective works. Moreover, although two of the five quotations contain

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anecdotes also found in Plutarch's *Life of Timoleon* and *Life of Artaxerxes*,¹ the Latin translations of these biographies circulating in the first half of the fifteenth century do not share much similarity with Piccolomini's phrasing. Lastly, excerpts from Plutarch's treatise rendered into Latin and found in works composed before 1450 do not match the quotations occurring in the *De liberorum educatione*. A comparison with the only other integral—and much less popular—translation of the *Apophthegmata* available at the time, Antonio Cassarino's, reveals that Piccolomini's phrasing in those five quotations bears a much closer resemblance to Filelfo's version.

Plutarch's essay (known also as *Apophthegmata ad Traianum*) consists of numerous anecdotes dedicated to Emperor Trajan featuring illustrious leaders in the history of ancient Greece, Rome, and the Near East. Whether this work is spurious, as some have argued, is irrelevant to this paper.² It was likely in circulation in the Greek world when Stobaeus quoted from it in the fifth century. The episodic nature of these stories made this essay a suitable source for Piccolomini. His treatise, an example of educational humanistic literature, was intended to serve as a manual for acquiring the necessary skills to lead a good life and succeed in society. Aeneas Silvius composed it while he was bishop of Trieste in northern Italy. In 1450, eight years before his election as pope, he sent it to the young king of Austria, Bohemia, and Hungary, Ladislaus Posthumus (1439–1457), who was then under the tutelage of Frederick III of Germany.

Fundamentally, Piccolomini's treatise is a compilation of principles and phrases drawn from previous authors. This *modus operandi* was common practice in fifteenth-century Italy, where

¹ For the relationship between these biographies and the *Apophthegmata* see C. B. R. Pelling, *Plutarch and History: Eighteen Studies* (Swansea 2002) 65–90.

² M. A. Beck, "Plutarch to Trajan: The Dedicatory Letter and the Apophthegmata Collection," in P. A. Stadter et al. (eds.), *Sage and Emperor: Plutarch, Greek Intellectuals, and Roman Power in the Time of Trajan* (Leuven 2002) 163–173, at 171 n.9, offers a useful review of the debate about the authenticity of Plutarch's treatise.

displaying familiarity with one's predecessors by extrapolating ideas and even entire sentences without hesitation was customary. In the prefatory letter, Piccolomini himself acknowledges drawing on classical sources, although he does not always specify the original authors of his quotations. Throughout the treatise, he re-elaborates passages from many classical writers that had been part of medieval *curricula* such as Virgil, Cicero, Horace, Sallust, Quintilian (the main model), Juvenal, Statius, Macrobius, and Boethius. Since the reading of pagan works posed a serious concern for a Christian educator, Piccolomini recommends and borrows from the writings of the Church Fathers too (St. Augustine, St. Jerome, and St. Basil). As the presence of St. Basil demonstrates, the literary canon at the basis of this treatise reflects the influence of the cultural climate of the era. In the course of the fifteenth century, ancient Greek literature became more and more available in the West. It is no surprise, then, that we find Greek sources in Piccolomini's work.

It is widely acknowledged that Aeneas Silvius was not proficient in ancient Greek and that he relied on Guarino Veronese's and Leonardo Bruni's respective Latin translations of Ps.-Plutarch's *De educatione liberorum* and St. Basil's *De legendis gentilium libris*.³ However, no one has yet identified the Latin version of the *Apophthegmata* that underlies his quotations of that essay. At the time he composed his *De liberorum educatione*, certain sentences from the *Apophthegmata* had been quoted in Latin by Francesco Barbaro in his *De re uxoria* and by Guarino Veronese in his *Commentarioli*. However, these excerpts do not coincide with Piccolomini's quotations from Plutarch's treatise.⁴

³ See, for instance, J. S. Nelson, *Aeneae Silvii De liberorum educatione. A Translation with an Introduction* (Washington 1940) 28, and C. Kallendorf, "Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini's *De liberorum educatione*: An Educational Classic," *Pan. Rivista di Filologia Latina* 7 (2018) 123–132, at 126.

⁴ To the best of my knowledge, there is no modern edition of Guarino's *Commentarioli*. I consulted this work in the Bodleian Library MS. *Bywater* 38, Oxford, which was probably collected by Francesco Barbaro himself. On the

We know of two complete Latin translations of the *Apophthegmata* that predate the composition and publication of the *De liberorum educatione*.⁵ They have come down to us but have not been published in a modern edition. The oldest one was authored by Francesco Filelfo (1398–1481) in 1437.⁶ He dedicated it to Filippo Maria Visconti, the Duke of Milan.

As previously stated, Piccolomini and Filelfo were cognizant of each other. In the *De Europa* (1458),⁷ Aeneas Silvius acknowledges Filelfo as the author of the *Sphortias* and the *Satires*. In turn, Filelfo dedicated a carmen to Piccolomini and a copy of the *Sphortias*,⁸ in which Aeneas Silvius is likely depicted as a char-

presence of Plutarch's *Apophthegmata* in Guarino's *Commentarioli* see R. Sabaddini, *La scuola e gli studi di Guarino Guarini Veronese* (Catania 1896) 150. The text of the *De re uxoria* is now available in C. Griggio and C. Kravina, *Francesco Barbaro. De re uxoria* (Florence 2021).

⁵ C. Bevegni, "Appunti sulle traduzioni latine dei *Moralia* di Plutarco nel Quattrocento," *StudUmanistPiceni* 14 (1994) 71–84, at 79; F. Stock "Le traduzioni latine dei *Moralia* di Plutarco," *Fonte* 1 (1998) 117–136, at 123; F. Becchi, "Le traduzioni latine dei *Moralia* di Plutarco tra XIII e XVI secolo," in P. Volpe Cacciatore (ed.), *Plutarco nelle traduzioni latine di età umanistica* (Naples 2009) 11–52, at 35, and "Humanist Latin Translations of the *Moralia*," in S. Xenophontos et al. (eds.), *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Plutarch* (Leiden 2019) 458–478, at 471.

⁶ N. Wilson, *From Byzantium to Italy. Greek Studies in the Renaissance* (London 1992) 48. For an edition of some of Filelfo's other Latin translations of Greek authors see J. De Keyser, *Francesco Filelfo. Traduzioni da Senofonte e Plutarco* (Alessandria 2013).

⁷ Section 49.

⁸ They can be found in *Reg. Vat. lat.* 1981 2^v (https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Reg.lat.1981). Another codex, *Urb. lat.* 368 173^r (<https://digi.vatlib.it/mss/detail/Urb.lat.368>), attributes to Filelfo what is usually known as Francesco de Patrizi's *Ecloga de Christi natali*, which is dedicated to Piccolomini. See L. Bertalot, "Il primo libro di Fano," *La Bibliofilia* 30 (1928) 56–61, at 58–59, and, for example, Florence, *Biblioteca Riccardiana* 636 (L.IV.14) 17^v (http://teca.riccardiana.firenze.sbn.it/index.php/it/?option=com_tecaviewer&view=showing&myId=fcb74b22-f8a3-45df-a53d-7d5011dfdb0d&search=).

acter.⁹ In a letter dated 1 November 1458, Filelfo expressed gratitude to Aeneas Silvius for giving him a codex of Plutarch,¹⁰ but would direct a parodic epitaph at him after his death.¹¹ According to Filelfo's letters, the two of them had a turbulent master-disciple relationship that commenced when Aeneas Silvius attended Filelfo's Greek lectures in Florence from 1429 to 1431.¹² Modern scholars question the accuracy of this specific information, suggesting that Piccolomini may have seldom attended these lectures. The primary reason for this assumption is the difficulty in accepting that a remarkable young man like Aeneas Silvius would study ancient Greek for two years without acquiring any proficiency.¹³ While the nature of their relationship remains an open question, it does not significantly impact the hypothesis presented in this article. If anything, a comparison of the texts suggests that Piccolomini likely drew from Filelfo's translation of the *Apophthegmata* while writing his *De*

⁹ G. Albanese, "Le raccolte poetiche latine del Filelfo," in *Francesco Filelfo nel quinto centenario della morte* (Padua 1986) 389–458, at 396–397 n.16.

¹⁰ Albanese, in *Francesco Filelfo nel quinto centenario* 396–397.

¹¹ Published in C. De' Rosmini, *Vita di Francesco Filelfo da Tolentino II* (Milan 1808) 320–321.

¹² See for instance Piccolomini's letter to Niccolò Arciboldo dated 9 November 1431: "qui meas tibi literas reddidit iuuenis est Senensis Eneas Sylvius nomine, honesta natus familia mihi que charissimus, non solum quod annos duos meus auditor fuit, sed etiam quod ad ingenii acrimoniam dicendique leporem attinet moribus est et urbanis et cultis." The quotation is taken from I. Calabresi, "Una lettera sul Filelfo del Benvoglianti," in *Francesco Filelfo nel quinto centenario* 577–595. On Filelfo's bitterness toward Aeneas Silvius see C. Bianca, "Filelfo tra Platonici e Aristotelici," in *Francesco Filelfo nel quinto centenario* 207–247, at 235–236; D. Marsh, "Francesco Filelfo as Writer of Invective," in J. De Keyser (ed.), *Francesco Filelfo, Man of Letters* (Leiden 2019) 174–187, at 183–184.

¹³ E.g. G. Paparelli, *Enea Silvio Piccolomini: l'umanesimo sul soglio pontificio* (Ravenna 1978) 26, and A. I. Pini, "Non tam studiorum mater quam seditio-num alrix: Pio II e Bologna. Pio II a Bologna," in A. Calzona et al. (eds.), *Il sogno di Pio II e il viaggio da Roma a Mantova* (Florence 2003) 179–201, at 190.

liberorum educatione many years after he supposedly attended Filelfo's lectures.

Antonio Cassarino (end of the fourteenth century–1447) was the author of the second translation, which is hard to date. The *terminus post quem* is, in all likelihood, 1437, the year when Filelfo produced his version; the *terminus ante quem* is 1447, the year of Cassarino's death. In the preface of his translation, Cassarino acknowledges that someone had previously translated Plutarch's treatise into Latin. However, he expresses dissatisfaction with the work of his unnamed predecessor and decides to replace it with his translation. Based on the available information, it is highly probable that he is referring to Filelfo.¹⁴

Cassarino was critical of unprepared translators who prioritized word-for-word meaning over the overall sense of a sentence and lacked sufficient knowledge of Greek.¹⁵ This attitude aligns with the criticism directed at Filelfo's Latin renditions of ancient Greek during the same period.¹⁶ Yet, even though Cassarino's translation is thought to be more accurate, Filelfo's version gained more popularity, as testified by the numerous manuscripts and printed editions that include it.¹⁷ Future translators of the *Apophthegmata* such as Raffaele Regio and Erasmus would mention Filelfo as their predecessor. In contrast, only two manuscripts are known to contain Cassarino's.

It is unclear whether Piccolomini was aware of Cassarino's version, even though he seems to have requested his translation of Plato's *Republic* and owned it in a manuscript still at our

¹⁴ G. Resta, "Antonio Cassarino e le sue traduzioni da Plutarco e Platone," *IMU* 2 (1959) 207–283, at 247.

¹⁵ Resta, *IMU* 2 (1959) 224.

¹⁶ According to R. Sabadini, however, Filelfo was the most rigorous among those who translated literally: "Del tradurre i classici antichi in Italia," *A&R* 3 (1900) 201–217 at 210.

¹⁷ S. Fiaschi, "Filelfo e i 'diritti' del traduttore. L'*auctoritas* dell'interprete e il problema delle attribuzioni," in M. Cortesi (ed.), *Tradurre dal greco in età umanistica. Metodi e strumenti* (Florence 2007) 79–138, at 110–112, lists 35 manuscripts.

disposal. Likewise, it is difficult to establish if there was an ideological or intellectual agenda that led him to prefer Filelfo's. Of course, we cannot exclude that Piccolomini contaminated Filelfo's version with Cassarino's in his quotations, or that the changes he made were based on his possibly rudimentary knowledge of ancient Greek. Unfortunately, there seems to be no evidence that could provide a conclusive answer to these questions. Similarly, the reasons for the differing circulation of the two translations cannot be determined with certainty. Some believe that the fame of the author played a crucial role.¹⁸ According to Resta, for instance, Cassarino's reserved character hindered the spreading of his works, which were mainly dedicated to his students and friends rather than to politically or culturally prominent individuals. Even Antonio Panormita, who was close to Cassarino, presented Filelfo's version as a preferable alternative to his friend's work.

Be that as it may, it can reasonably be assumed that Filelfo's Latin rendition of the *Regum et imperatorum apophthegmata* was likely a source for Piccolomini rather than Cassarino's version. In what follows, I compare the five passages of Piccolomini's *De liberorum educatione* that were based on Plutarch's treatise with Cassarino's and Filelfo's works. Translations of the same text necessarily have a lot in common. Yet, these two renditions of Plutarch's treatise differ to such a degree that it is possible to identify one of them as the source for Piccolomini.

In the passage where Aeneas Silvius first quotes from Plutarch's treatise, the matter at hand is the appropriate movements of the body. Young noblemen, especially future sovereigns like Ladislaus, are not supposed to assume ridiculous postures, gesticulate too much, or make indecorous expressions. A short anecdote extrapolated from Plutarch illustrates this point. Once upon a time, Philip of Macedon manumitted a man who told him to assume a more decorous stance.

¹⁸ This is how Beveggi explains Filelfo's success over Cassarino: *StudUmanistPiceni* 14 (1994) 79–81.

Plut. *Mor.* 178C–D: Αηφθέντων δὲ πολλῶν αἰχμαλώτων, ἐπίπρασκεν αὐτοὺς ἀνεσταλμένῳ τῷ χιτῶνι καθήμενος οὐκ εὐπρεπῶς· εἷς οὖν τῶν πωλουμένων ἀνεβόησε, “φεῖσαί μου, Φίλιππε, πατρικὸς γάρ εἰμί σου φίλος· ἐρωτήσαντος δὲ τοῦ Φιλίππου, “πόθεν, ὦ ἄνθρωπε, γενόμενος καὶ πῶς;” “ἐγγύς,” ἔφη, “φράσαι σοι βούλομαι προσελθῶν·” ὡς οὖν προσήχθη, “μικρόν,” ἔφη, “κατωτέρω τὴν χλαμύδα ποίησον, ἀσχημονεῖς γὰρ οὕτω καθήμενος·” καὶ ὁ Φίλιππος, “ἄφετε αὐτόν,” εἶπεν, “ἀληθῶς γὰρ εὖνους ὢν καὶ φίλος ἐλάνθανεν.”

On a time when many prisoners had been taken, Philip was overseeing their sale, sitting with his tunic pulled up in an unseemly way. So one of the men who were being sold cried out, “Spare me, Philip, for I am a friend of your father’s.” And when Philip asked, “Where, sirrah, and how came you to be such?” the man said, “I wish to tell you privately, if I may come near you.” And when he was brought forward, he said, “Put your cloak a little lower, for you are exposing too much of yourself as you are sitting now.” And Philip said, “Let him go free, for it had escaped me that he is a truly loyal friend.¹⁹

Cassarino’s translation:²⁰

Cum autem captivorum ingens numerus captus esset ipse contracta tunica haud decore sedens vendebat. Unus igitur ex his qui venundarentur eum adiens exclamavit. Ignosce mihi philippe patrius tibi sum amicus. Interrogante autem philippo unde aut quonam modo esset. Volo tibi inquit proprius accedens dicere. Ut autem accessit clamydem inquit paulo inferius dimittito. Inscit? Nam atque ineptus ita sedens videret. Et Philippus dimittite eum inquit hunc nam amicum vere et benivolentem nesciebam.

¹⁹ Translations of the *Apophthegmata* are by F. C. Babbitt *Plutarch. Moralia* III (Cambridge [Mass.] 1931)

²⁰ *Vat. lat.* 3349 109^v–110^r (https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.3349). According to Resta, *IMU* 2 (1959) 227, we owe the existence of this manuscript to Antonio Panormita. I could not consult the only other known manuscript which contains his translation, *Casanat.* 665; see Bevegni, *Stud UmanistPiceni* 14 (1994) 82. However, based on A. Saitta Ravignas, *Catalogo dei manoscritti della Biblioteca Casanatense* VI (Rome 1978) 174, a catalogue of the manuscripts of the Casanatense Library, the dedication seems to start and end with the same words as the other codex, with the name of the dedicatee being the only difference (Giacomo Curlo in the *Vat. lat.* 3349, a certain Balbo in the other one).

Filelfo's translation:²¹

multos autem quos bello ceperat eos venundans sublata impeditaque tunica sedebat nequaquam decore. Itaque unus ex his qui venundabantur clamavit ignosce mihi philippe nam a patre amicitia tecum est. Interrogante autem philippo Unde homo amicus es? et quomodo? Aut proprius accedens tibi eloquar. Ut autem proprius factus est parumper inquit inferius clamidem dimittito. Ita enim ineptus sedes ac philippus istum ait dimitte nam qui benivolus atque amicus esset latebat me.

Piccolomini *De lib. ed.* 12:

Nihil potest placeret quod non decet. Novit hoc Philippus, Alexandri pater, qui cum multos quos bello ceperat vaenundans sublata impeditaque tunica sederet nequaquam decore, et unus ex his qui vaenundabantur clamaret, 'ignosce mihi, Philippe, nam a patre mihi amicitia tecum est', unde sibi amicus esset homo, interrogavit, et illo proprius accedente atque submissa voce dicente, 'parumper inferius clamidem dimittito, ita enim ineptus sedes'. 'Istum', ait Philippus, 'dimittite; nam qui benivolus atque amicus esset, latebat me.'

Nothing unbecoming can be pleasing. Philip, the father of Alexander, knew this. Once, when selling a number of men he had captured in war, he laid aside his cumbersome tunic and was sitting in an indecorous attitude. One of those being sold shouted out: "Spare me, Philip; I claim friendship with you through my father." Asked about the source of this friendship, the man drew closer and said in a low voice, "Pull your cloak down a little; you look silly that way," Philip said, "Release him, I overlooked this person who was my friend and well-wisher."²²

²¹ *BnF.lat.* 6142 7^r (https://www.europeana.eu/en/item/9200519/ark__12148_btv1b84901850). A complete collation of all the manuscripts scattered around the world is a *desideratum*. I could not detect significant differences between the passages analysed in this article in the codices I found online: *Vat.lat.* 2087 30^v (<https://digi.vatlib.it/mss/detail/Vat.lat.2087>); *Vat.lat.* 4495 51^v (https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.4495).

²² Text and translation of Piccolomini's text are based on C. Kallendorf, *Humanist Educational Treatises* (Cambridge [Mass.] 2002).

A comparison between the two Latin translations shows that Piccolomini's version has much more in common with Filelfo than with Cassarino, although the three texts share some elements (e.g. "Ignosce mihi, philippe"). But after all, this is normal. Piccolomini replicates Filelfo's word choice, word order, and morphology (e.g. "multos quos bello ceperat vaenundans sublata impeditaque tunica sederet nequaquam decore" in Piccolomini is taken almost verbatim from Filelfo, against Cassarino's "Cum autem captivorum ingens numerus captus esset ipse contracta tunica haud decore sedens vendebat"). There are actual differences even between Piccolomini and Filelfo (for instance, "Itaque" in Filelfo, "et" in Piccolomini). The way Aeneas Silvius wove the sources, however, can account for some of these discrepancies. He usually adds details by inserting new words, entire expressions and sentences, and adjusts the syntax accordingly. Based on this first example, it is clear that his phrasing owes much more to Filelfo.

The other case studies do nothing but confirm this conclusion. Before analysing them, it is worth comparing this result with that of Piccolomini's use of a Latin translation of another Greek text, usually acknowledged as a source, Guarino Veronese's rendition of Ps.-Plutarch's *De liberorum educatione*. Aeneas Silvius draws a simile from this work.

Plut. *Mor.* 4C: καὶ καθάπερ τὰς χάρακας οἱ γεωργοὶ τοῖς φυτοῖς παρατιθέασιν, οὕτως οἱ νόμιμοι τῶν διδασκάλων ἐμμελεῖς τὰς ὑποθήκας καὶ παραινέσεις παραπηγνύουσι τοῖς νέοις.

As husbandmen place stakes beside the young plants, so do competent teachers with all care set their precepts and exhortations beside the young).²³

Guarino's translation:

ac veluti coloni sepes arbusculis circumponunt: ita et equissimi preceptores consona pueris instituta et admonitiones inferunt.²⁴

²³ Transl. F. C. Babbitt, *Plutarch. Moralia* I (Cambridge [Mass.] 1927).

²⁴ The text is taken from R. Cassi, *Il De liberis educandis di Guarino Guarini: Testo latino, traduzione e commento storico-filologico* (diss. Boston College 2016) 23.

Piccolomini *De lib. ed.* 10:

Horum officium est, ut sicut coloni suis arbusculis circumponunt saepes, sic tibi consona laudabilis vitae instituta admonitionesque circumferant.

Just as farmers place fences around their young trees, so it is the duty of your instructors to encircle you with teachings in keeping with a praiseworthy life and with admonitions.

Even in this case, the phrasing is not completely identical. There are a few differences: for example, Aeneas Silvius opted for “ut sicut...sic” rather than “ac veluti...ita” or “consona laudabilis vitae instituta” rather than “consona pueris instituta.” Having now verified that adjustments do not exclude use, we can move on to the next example.

In Piccolomini's educational programme, the training of the body includes getting accustomed to a proper diet and assuming a moderate attitude towards alcohol. Drinking a lot just to become desensitised to the effects of alcohol, as Cyrus the Younger did according to the second passage taken from Plutarch's treatise (*Mor.* 173E), is a failing strategy from Piccolomini's perspective.

Plut. *Mor.* 173E: Κῦρος ὁ νεώτερος τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους συμμαχεῖν αὐτῷ παρακαλῶν ἔλεγε τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ καρδίαν ἔχειν βαρυτέραν καὶ πλείονα πίνειν ἄκρατον αὐτοῦ καὶ φέρειν βέλτιον·

Cyrus the younger, in urging the Spartans to ally themselves with him, said that he had a stouter heart than his brother, and that he could drink more strong wine than his brother could and carry it better.

Cassarino's translation:²⁵

Cyrus minor Lacedemonios ad societatem belli cohortans dicebat cor sibi atque animum longe firmiorem quam fratri seque plus vini meri biberet et melius ferret.

Filelfo's translation:²⁶

Cyrus iunior cum Lacedemonios ut secum societatem facerent

²⁵ *Vat.lat.* 3349 104v.

²⁶ *BnF. Lat.* 6142 3v; *Vat.lat.* 2087 26v; *Vat.lat.* 4495 48r.

hortaretur dicebat cor sibi longe gravius esse quam fratri quod et plus meri quam ille biberet et melius ferret.

Piccolomini *De lib. ed.* 19:

Sic fortasse nutritus fuerat Cyrus iunior, qui cum Lacedaemonios, ut secum societatem inirent, hortaretur, cor sibi, dicebat, longe gravius esse quam fratri, nam et plus meri quam ille biberet et melius ferret.

Perhaps Cyrus the Younger was reared this way: once, when urging the Spartans to form an alliance with him, he said that his heart was steadier than his brother's, for he himself drank more wine and held it better.

Aeneas Silvius' text is closer to Filefo's translation than to Cassarino's, which employs more words: it renders *συμμαχεῖν* with "ad societatem belli," *καρδίαν* with "cor atque animum," *πίνειν* with "vini meri," whereas Filefo and Piccolomini use "societatem," "cor," and "meri" respectively.

This is one of the two cases in which Piccolomini mentions an anecdote that is reported in two passages of Plutarch's *corpus*. For the same anecdote occurs in Plutarch's *Life of Artaxerxes*, a biography that Lapo da Castiglionchio the Younger had translated into Latin by the time Piccolomini composed his treatise:

Plut. *Artax.* 6: *μεγαληγορῶν δὲ περὶ αὐτοῦ πολλὰ καὶ καρδίαν ἔφη τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ φορεῖν βαρύτεραν καὶ φιλοσοφεῖν μᾶλλον καὶ μαγεῦ- ειν βέλτιον, οἶνον δὲ πλείονα πίνειν καὶ φέρειν.*

Moreover, along with much high-sounding talk about himself, he said he carried a sturdier heart than his brother, was more of a philosopher, better versed in the wisdom of the Magi, and could drink and carry more wine than he.²⁷

Lapo da Castiglionchio the Younger's translation (1437):

bis se aliisque pluribus magnifice efferebat addebat gravius se cor quam fratrem gerere: philosopharique magis ac potius magicam exercere. Vini autem plus bibere ac melius ferre.²⁸

The passage of the *De liberorum educatione* closely resembles the anecdote as reported in the *Apophthegmata* rather than in the *Life*

²⁷ Transl. B. Perrin, *Plutarch. Lives XI* (Cambridge [Mass.] 1926).

²⁸ Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale, *Magl.* XXIII 26 5r.

of *Timoleon*. The two Latin translations of this biography quoted here further support this observation, reinforcing the idea that Filelfo is the likeliest source.

With the third passage, we move on to the education of the mind and the role that virtue plays in a man's existence. Philosophy is the best path that one can take to lead a virtuous life and withstand the blows of fortune. Aeneas Silvius recalls a short anecdote reported by Plutarch in the *Apophthegmata* and in the *Life of Timoleon* to communicate this idea in an iconic manner.

Plut. *Mor.* 176D: Ἐκπεσὼν δὲ τῆς ἀρχῆς, πρὸς μὲν τὸν εἰπόντα, “τί σε Πλάτων καὶ φιλοσοφία ὠφέλησε;” “τὸ τηλικαύτην,” ἔφη, “τύχης μεταβολὴν ῥαδίως ὑπομένειν.”

He was compelled to abdicate, and when a man said to him, “What help have Plato and philosophy given to you?” his answer was: “The power to submit to so great a change of fortune without repining.

Cassarino's translation:²⁹

Cum a tyrannide esset eiectus dicente quodam quid tibi profuit plato. ut hanc inquit fortunae mutationem modice et tranquille perferrem.

Filelfo's translation:³⁰

Eiectus autem e tyrannide cum interrogaretur quod tibi plato de philosophia profuit respondit ut aequo animo facileque ferrem huiusmodi fortunae mutabilitatem.

Piccolomini *De lib. ed.* 25:

Hinc iunior Dionysius, cum eiectus tyrannide et in exilium actus interrogaretur, quid sibi Plato ac philosophia profuissent, 'ut aequo' respondit, 'animo facileque ferrem huiusmodi fortunae mutabilitatem.'

Hence when the younger Dionysius, expelled from power and driven into exile, was asked what profit to him Plato and philosophy had been, he replied: “That I might bear with a tranquil and easy spirit just such a change of fortune.”

Piccolomini and Filelfo are, as usual, more similar to each other.

²⁹ *Vat.lat.* 3349 107v.

³⁰ *BnF. Lat.* 6142 5v; *Vat.lat.* 2087 29r; *Vat.lat.* 4495 50r.

At times they stick closer to the original text, as in the case of “Plato” and “philosophia,” which render Plutarch’s Πλάτων and φιλοσοφία, while in Cassarino they are reduced to “Plato” only. Again, Aeneas Silvius seems to follow Filelfo even in word choice and word order (“mutabilitatem” vs. “mutationem”; “aequo animo facileque ferrem” against “modice et tranquille perferrem”; “huiusmodi fortunae mutabilitatem” is placed at the end of the sentence, while “fortunae mutationem” in Cassarino precedes the predicate).

Two Latin translations of the *Life of Timoleon* predate 1450, one by Antonio Pacini, the other by Giovanni Aurispa.³¹

Plut. *Tim.* 15: τοῦτο δ' ἐν Κορίνθῳ ξένου τινὸς ἀγροικότερον εἰς τὰς μετὰ τῶν φιλοσόφων διατριβάς, αἷς τυραννῶν ἔχαιρε, χλευάζοντος αὐτόν, καὶ τέλος ἐρωτῶντος τί δὴ τῆς Πλάτωνος ἀπολαύσειε σοφίας, “Οὐδέν,” ἔφη, “σοὶ δοκοῦμεν ὑπὸ Πλάτωνος ὠφελῆσθαι, τύχης μεταβολὴν οὕτω φέροντες;”

And again, in Corinth, when a stranger somewhat rudely derided him about his associations with philosophers, in which he used to take delight when he was a tyrant, and finally asked him what good Plato’s wisdom did him now, “Dost thou think, said he, “that I have had no help from Plato, when I bear my change of fortune as I do?”³²

Antonio Pacini (1434):

Cum etiam Corinthi miles quidam stipendiarius contra phylosophorum familiaritates quibus in tyrannide letabatur acrius ageret, et eum ridiculum haberet: tandemque interrogaret: quid utilitatis ex phylosophia Platonis cepisset? inquit: non tibi nihil adiumenti suscepisse videmur, sic fortunae mutationem tollerantes.³³

Giovanni Aurispa (1437):

quod sequitur apud corinthum. peregrino quodam quum multi ad modum philosophi adessent inter quos duonisius inepte laetabatur deridente illum et tandem interrogante quid platonis

³¹ V. R. Giustiniani, “Sulle traduzioni latine delle *Vite* di Plutarco nel Quattrocento,” *Rinascimento* 1 (1961) 3–62, at 27–28 and 40.

³² Transl. B. Perrin., *Plutarch. Lives* VI (Cambridge [Mass.] 1918).

³³ *Vat. lat.* 1879 126^v (https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.1879).

sapientia sibi profecerit nihil tibi videbimur inquit a platone utilitatis accepisse qui sic vitae mutacionem ferimus.³⁴

The phrasing of the passage from the *Apophthegmata* is more similar to that of the *De liberorum educatione*. Filelfo stands out once again as the likeliest source.

The fourth passage rehearses a very similar argument: philosophy prevents you from doing things you might regret in the future. The author extrapolates another anecdote from Plutarch's treatise to get his point across.

Plut. *Mor.* 178F: ἐκέλευε δ' αὐτὸν Ἀριστοτέλει προσέχειν καὶ φιλοσοφεῖν, “ὅπως,” ἔφη, “μὴ πολλὰ τοιαῦτα πράξις, ἐφ' οἷς ἐγὼ πεπραγμένοις μεταμέλομαι.”

He bade Alexander give heed to Aristotle, and study philosophy, “so that,” as he said, “you may not do a great many things of the sort that I am sorry to have done.”

Cassarino's translation:³⁵

Iussit item Aristoteli ac philosophiae operam daret. Inquens ne permulta agas quae poenitet comisisse.

Filelfo's translation:³⁶

eumdemque iubebat ut et Aristotelem observaret philosophiaeque studeret ne inquit multa huiuscemodi agas quae egisse me penitet.

Piccolimini *De lib. ed.* 26:

Philippus autem Macedo cum Alexandrum filium suum commoneret, iubebat eum ut et Aristotelem observaret et philosophiae studeret, et adiecit, ‘ne multa huiuscemodi agas quae me paenitet egisse.’

Moreover when Philip of Macedon was advising his son Alexander, he ordered him to heed Aristotle and devote himself to philosophy, adding, “Do not do many things of the sort I regret having done.”

³⁴ *Pal.lat.* 918 117v (https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Pal.lat.918).

³⁵ *Vat.lat.* 3349 110r.

³⁶ *BnF. Lat.* 6142 7v; *Vat.lat.* 2087 30v; *Vat.lat.* 4495 52r.

Piccolomini replicates the word choice, morphology, and syntax of Filelfo's version rather than Cassarino's.

Together with philosophy, young men should read literature, for it can endow them with the knowledge of good and evil and protect them from flattery. As they can often be exposed to adulation, rulers can benefit from books on subjects such as history, an idea expressed in the fifth and last passage taken from Plutarch's treatise:

Plut. *Mor.* 189D: Δημήτριος ὁ Φαληρεὺς Πτολεμαίῳ τῷ βασιλεῖ παρῆνει τὰ περὶ βασιλείας καὶ ἡγεμονίας βιβλία κτᾶσθαι καὶ ἀναγινώσκειν· “ἂ γὰρ οἱ φίλοι τοῖς βασιλεῦσιν οὐ θαρροῦσι παραινεῖν, ταῦτα ἐν τοῖς βιβλίοις γέγραπται.”

Demetrius of Phalerum recommended to Ptolemy the king to buy and read the books dealing with the office of king and ruler. “For,” as he said, “those things which the kings' friends are not bold enough to recommend to them are written in the books.”

Cassarino's translation:³⁷

Demetrius phalireus regi ptolomeo suadebat ut libros de regis et imperatoris officio compararet ac perlegeret. Quae enim amici reges monere non audent haec in libris scripta reperi.

Filelfo's translation:³⁸

Demetrius Phalereus monebat ptoholomeum regem ut de regno imperioque libros sibi compararet atque perlegeret quae enim amici non audent monere reges, haec enim in libris scripta sunt.

Piccolomini *De lib. ed.* 27:

Demetrius quippe Phalerius Ptolomaeum regem monebat, ut libros de regno imperioque sibi compararet atque perlegeret; quae enim amici non audent monere reges, haec in libris scripta reperiuntur.

Indeed, Demetrius of Phalerum advised king Ptolemy to procure books dealing with kingdoms and empires and to read them thoroughly, for the things their friends do not dare advise them, kings will find written in books.

³⁷ *Vat.lat.* 3349 123^{r-v}.

³⁸ *BnF. Lat.* 6142 16^r; *Vat.lat.* 2087 39^v; *Vat.lat.* 4495 61^r.

As usual, word choice and word order are two key components that Piccolomini shares with Filelfo (e.g. “libros de regno imperioque” vs. Cassarino’s “libros de regis et imperatoris officio” or “quae enim amici non audent monere reges” vs. “Quae enim amici reges monere non audent”).

In the final analysis, through a comparison with Cassarino's translation, it is likely that Filelfo's Latin rendition of Plutarch's *Regum et imperatorum apophthegmata* served as a source for Piccolomini's *De liberorum educatione*. The circulation of Filelfo's text and his personal relationship with Piccolomini provide further support for this conclusion. This research thus represents a neglected example of Plutarch's impact on the Italian Quattrocento and contributes new information about the unclear relations between two remarkable Humanists. The evidence examined here confirms that Cassarino's Latin translations of Plutarch had less influence than the work of other translators. The anecdotes reported in the *Apophthegmata* and the ideas they convey found fertile ground in Piccolomini's educational programme. It appears that by 1450, Aeneas Silvius relied on the version made by Filelfo, his purported master, to incorporate the wisdom of a recently available classical Greek text into his treatise.³⁹

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