SOURCES OF THE INDIRECT TRADITION
AND EDITORIAL APPROACHES

Thanks to the indirect tradition, which in this case is a valuable complement to the extant Greek codices, also other strains of text can be recovered, albeit incompletely. The most important sources of the indirect tradition are:

i. The commentary written by Alexander of Aphrodisias (2nd–3rd cent. AD), which is fragmentarily transmitted in the Arabic translation of Abū Bīṣḥr Mattā ibn-Yūnus. The fragments are preserved in Averroes’ *Great Commentary on the Metaphysics* and have been published in a German translation by J. Freudenthal with the assistance of S. Fränkel already in 1885.

ii. The paraphrase of the philosopher and rhetorician Themistius (4th cent.), wholly extant in the Hebrew translation of Moses ben Samuel ibn Tibbon (13th century) and partly in Arabic.

iii. The commentary of the Neoplatonist philosopher Simplicius (6th cent.) on Aristotle's *De caelo*, containing *inter alia* literal quotations of considerable extension from *Metaph.* A 8, of which H. Bonitz made some use already at the middle of the nineteenth century. As far as Simplicius' commentary

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1 On this translator cf. *infra*, p. 72 (v).
4 The translation was made from the Arabic; it was published in Berlin by Samuel Landauer in the series *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca* together with a rather unreliable Latin version in the year 1903 (*CAG* vol. V. 5).
on Aristotle's *Metaphysics* is concerned, it should be pointed out that parts relating to book Lambda have not yet been identified.\(^7\)

iv. The Arabic version of Ustāth or Astāth (prob. Ἠστάθιος), which was commissioned by the philosopher al-Kindī, who died around the year 875 AD. This translation is extant for almost the whole of Book \(\Lambda.\)

About two thirds of it, viz. 1069 a 18–1071 a 3 and 1071 a 17–1072 b 15, survive in the margin of *cod. Leid. or. 2074*. The greatest part of this section has never yet been translated into any European language, let alone been collated by editors of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*.

v. The Arabic version of Abū Bishr Mattā, which provided what we would call the lemmata (and what the editor M. Bouyges, following the mediaeval tradition, calls the *Textus\(^9\)*) number one to thirty-three and thirty-five to thirty-eight of Averroes' *Great Commentary*. Abū Bishr Mattā ibn-Yūnus was “one of the leading figures in the tenth-century Baghdad Christian-Arabic school of Aristotelian studies”.\(^10\) He is believed to have translated from the Syriac;\(^11\) Abū Bishr Mattā died in 940 AD. His translation is lacunose;\(^12\) apart from this it breaks off at 1072 b 16. This version is related to the lemmata of Alexander's commentary,\(^13\) but is not based exclu-

1958 (*CAG* vol. VII) and Arist. *Metaph.* ed. H. Bonitz, Bonn 1848, XI. According to their editors the commentaries on the *Physics*, the *Categories* and on *De anima* also comprise references to *Metaph.* \(\Lambda\) (cf. *CAG* vol. IX 148.20, 182.31, 250.26, 256.21–22, *CAG* vol. X 1254.13, 1255.30–31, *CAG* vol. VIII 6.11, 77.5–7, 179.6–8 and *CAG* vol. XI 51.3–4, 248.13–17, 249.14), but these sections are only of comparatively little interest for our present purpose.


\(^8\) Certain sections are missing due to mechanical damage. Also this version is transmitted alongside Averroes' comments.


\(^11\) Cf. e.g. Averroes, *op. cit.*, Notice (Bibliotheca Arabica Scholasticorum, sér. arabe V. 1), clxvii–clxxix and R. Walzer, *op. cit.*, 221.

\(^12\) Cf. *ibid.*, vol. III, e.g. 1542.3 n. 29.

\(^13\) One indication of this is that—if we leave aside the fragments 33 and 34 Freuden-thal, which deal mainly with astronomical questions and may have been transmitted