II. THE ‘ANONYMUS AURELIANENSIS III’ AND ROBERT KILWARDBY ON THE PRIOR ANALYTICS

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The ‘Anonymus Aurelianensis III’

There can be no doubt that Sten Ebbesen’s discovery of a large fragment of a Latin commentary on Aristotle’s Prior Analytics in MS Orléans Bibliothèque Municipale 283 (twelfth century) is one of the most important findings for the study of the reception of Aristotelian syllogistic theory. Not only is the Orléans commentary, together with the series of Florentine scholia on the Prior Analytics identified by Lorenzo Minio-Paluello in the early 1960s, the only evidence we have that the Analytics were studied by the westerners between late antiquity and the time of Abelard, it is also the earliest known Latin commentary on the Prior Analytics. The Orléans commentary has been dated to 1160–1180 by Ebbesen.

The ‘Anonymus Aurelianensis III’ (so named tentatively by Ebbesen) is a literal commentary on Prior Analytics 24a10–46a34. The text runs to ca. 53,000 words on 26 folia. The last sentence is cut off at the break of f. 203, and, while the text is left incomplete, it may not be a coincidence that the break occurs so close to the division between the second and third main section of the first book of the Prior Analytics, that is, between

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the account of the discovery of arguments in chapters 27–31 and the resolution of arguments in chapters 32ff.

In addition to some minor works on medicine and a fragment of Augustine’s *De fide et operibus*, the manuscript contains several other anonymous works on logic, e.g., a literal commentary on the *Sophistici elenchi* and a certain *De paralogismis* edited by Ebbesen under the titles ‘Anonymus Aurelianensis primus’⁴ and ‘secundus’⁵ respectively. In a series of studies,⁶ Ebbesen has demonstrated (1) a close affinity between the three anonymi and an anonymous commentary on the *Sophistici elenchi* in MS Cambridge St. John’s D.12;⁷ (2) similarities between the Florentine scholia and ‘Anonymus Aurelianensis III’ (henceforth: Anon. III), suggesting that both works drew on a common source tentatively named ‘Commentum Graecum’ by Ebbesen: a Latin translation of a Greek commentary on the *Prior Analytics* by a contemporary of Philoponus or possibly a Byzantine compilation of material dating from the same period; (3) a clear dependence of Anon. I and Anon. II on James of Venice’s translations of commentaries on the *Sophistici elenchi* and the *Posterior Analytics*, which taken together with (1) suggests that the ‘Commentum Graecum’ may also have been translated by James.

Ebbesen’s preliminary analysis of the work rested on some sample passages.⁸ A later comparison⁹ of the whole text to the commentaries on the *Prior Analytics* by Alexander of Aphrodisias, Ammonius Hermiae, Philoponus, and the Florentine scholia has corroborated Ebbesen’s preliminary analysis on several points and provides additional evidence of the anonymous commentary being dependent on the ancient tradition, that is, ample further evidence of a connection between Anon. III and the Florentine scholia and many additional parallels between Anon. III, the scholia, and Philoponus, but also instances where Anon. III deviates from Philoponus but agrees with Alexander, as well as several instances

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⁷ The Anonymus Aurelianensis I and II have both been dated to the second half of the twelfth century by Ebbesen; see ‘Anonymi Aurelianensis I’, xxviii.; ‘Anonymus Aurelianensis II, 2’. For the date of the Anonymus Cantabrigiensis, see S. Ebbesen, ‘Context-sensitive Argumentation: Dirty tricks in the Sophistical Refutations and a perceptive medieval interpretation of the text’, *Vivarium* 49 (2011), 79.