Perì toû idíou daímonos

by

Lucia Bellizia

Angels are bright still,
though the brightest fell.

William Shakespeare, ***Machbeth***
(Act IV, Scene III)

"Ἀβάμμωνος διδάσκαλου πρὸς τὴν Πορφυρίου πρὸς Ἀνεβὼ ἐπιστολὴν ἀπόκρισης καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ ἀπορεμάτων λύσεις" (*Abámmonos didáskalou pròs tèn Porfuríou pròs Anebò epistolèn apókrisis kai ton en autè aporématon lúseis*), "*Reply of Abamon to the Letter from Porphyry to Anebo and solutions to its questions*" is a treatise composed around 310 (1). Despite what the title suggests, this treatise is usually attributed to Iamblichus, a Greek Neoplatonist philosopher, and is called by a whole other name: "*De Mysteriis Aegyptorium"* (The Mysteries of Egyptians). The change of both authorship (2) and title has a curious history. The humanist Cardinal Bishop Basilios Bessarion (1408-1472) was in possession of one of the first manuscripts in which the treatise had been copied. He himself wrote a note on the top of the first page: "From the great Iamblichus to the Letter of Porphyry". Not only was the manuscript in question part of the extensive collection of books that the Cardinal donated to the city of Venice in 1468 – a collection that constituted the first nucleus of the Biblioteca Marciana –, but was also the source from which many copies of the treatise were copied: the attribution of authorship made by the Cardinal was faithfully reported on all the codes descending from it. In 1497, in Venice, the humanist philosopher Marsilio Ficino (1433 – 1499) edited a Latin translation of the treatise titled (3) "*On the mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans and Assyrians"* [..]. In 1556, the Augustinian friar Nicola Scutellio published a second Latin translation (4) called "*Iamblichus on the Egyptian mysteries"* (even though the Egyptians do not have a determining role in the treatise, as they are only mentioned in books VII and VIII) [..]. Therefore, during the Renaissance humanists believed Iamblichus to be the original author of the treatise, and adopted Scutellio's Latin translation "*De mysteriis Aegyptorium*" as the final title. The philologist Sodano thinks that this choice was made so as *to go against a certain Renaissance trend that involved a concrete revaluation of Egyptian mysticism, which was rendered even more fascinating by the hieroglyphic symbols (5).*

Let us now leave behind the *vexata quaestio* of how Cardinal Bessarion and others became convinced that the treatise was written by Iamblichus and who the real author is (6). What we really want the reader to focus on is the fact that the treatise was a reply to the letter from Porphyry to Anebo. In the manuscripts containing the *De Mysteriis* there is always an anonymous *scholium* informing the reader that the author was replying to the previous letter: the scribe had clearly put together into a unique *corpus* the two treatises, but there is no trace left of the first one. Luckily, we have many testimonies from other ancient writers (Eusebius, Saint Augustine, Saint Cyril), which allowed Sodano (7) to make a general reconstruction.

Porphyry: the *Letter to Anebo*

Porphyry (Pic. 1) was an Hellenic philosopher of Phoenician origins: he was born in Tyre in 234 but was educated in Athens. His real name was Malchos ("king"). Cassius Longinus, his rhetoric teacher, was the one who gave him the name he is known by: Porphyry means dressed in *porphyra* (*purple*), an

exterior sign of regality (8). In 263, Porphyry went to Rome to attend the classes of the Neoplatonic scholarch Plotinus (203/205 – 270). Plotinus held him in such consideration that he asked him to reorganize and publish his works (*The Enneads*) and write his biography. Philosopher and rhetorician, he also studied religion, mathematics and astrology. Between 268 and 270 he wrote the "Εἰσαγωγή" (*Eisagoghé - Introduction*) in Greek, which was later translated into Latin by the Roman philosopher Boetius (475 - 525) and was the standard textbook on logic until the end of the Middle Ages. During the same period he wrote the treatise "Κατὰ Χριστιανῶν" (*Katá Kristianón* - Against the Christians) which has survived as a fragmentary text, for the book was publicly sent to the stake in 448 by order of the emperors Valentinian III and Theodosius II. At Plotinus's death in 270, Porphyry took his place as scholarch. He probably had Iamblichus as a pupil around 275. He allegedly died in Rome in 305.

Pic. 1: Conversation between the Islamic philosopher Averroes (down on the left) and Porphyry. Illustration taken by the *Liber de herbis et plantis* by Manfredus de Monte Imperiali (1330 /1340 approx.), Bibliothéque Nationale de France, Paris

The "*Πορφυρίου ἡ πρὸς Ἀνεβὼ ἐπιστολή", Letter to Anebo* (a real person – one of the many priests of the Egyptian cult (9) – or a fictitious one, who shadowed the author's intention of integrating into a greater cause the exponents of the mystery-theurgic address of said cult?) was written by Porphyry during his first stay in Rome (263 – 268) and was probably divided into two books (10). The questions asked to the *ierogrammateus* dealt with two philosophical problems: theology – the essence and peculiarity of divine hypostasis – and theurgy – the relationship between man and deity. Porphyry addresses himself to Anebo and promises to clear some of his doubts, then proceeds with asking questions in return. In particular, he examines the means through which men can achieve foreknowledge of the future: dreams (a form of fortune-telling while asleep); a state of divine frenzy that allows divination while awake (ἐνθουσιασμός) – the state can be induced perhaps by listening to flutes, cymbals, kettledrums or even a specific melody (like in the case of corybantic ecstasy (11)); the prophetic inspiration of the oracles; drinking a particular water, like the priest of [Apollo] Clarius in Colophon; sitting by the opening of caves, like the priestesses of Delphi; inhaling the vapours of a sacred spring, like the Branchidae priestesses; keeping your feet on

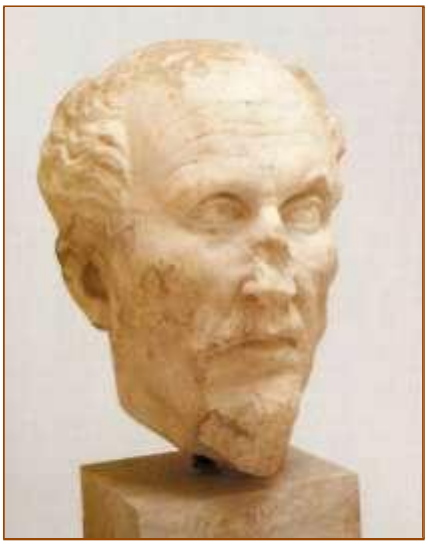
characteres (12); using the aid of darkness or certain beverages or spells and prayers in order to have visions on a wall or on water; fortune-telling through human science, as in the case of the observation of the insides of dead animals, the flight of birds, and stars. All these forms of fortune-telling (except for the last one) imply the mediation of deities, daemons, angels or other superior beings, which are in some cases forced to help depending on the strength of the invocation (a fact Porphyry is skeptical about and disagrees with). Another cause of divination might be the mere imaginative abilities of an individual: divination would then be the result of the passions of the soul, awakened by small sparks (ἐκ μικρῶν αἰθυγμάτον). Finally, a third cause could be a combination of the previous two causes resulting in revelations: a sort of hypostasis composed by our soul and the inspiration stemming from the deity. Porphyry concludes by saying that, among all the possible explanations, the ones that imply that divination is something human must be rejected: it is caused by divine intervention, and no superior being can be forced to appear and perform unjust actions, not even if threatened [ἀνάγκαι (13)] . It is also illogical to try and evoke them with names in foreign languages, as if the deity understood or used one language in particular. The point 2,12 of the letter (as reconstructed by Sodano) touches a very interesting issue: the author asks himself what the Egyptians consider the First Cause of all things – is it corporeal or incorporeal? Is it a whole or not? *Chaeremon* (14) *and all the others (..) think that Egyptian deities are nothing but the so-called planets, the constellations that form the Zodiac and the stars near them, the sections called decans, the horoscopes and the so called κραταιοὶ ἡγεμόνες* (15)*, whose names are quoted in the Salmeschianicà (16) together with the risings and settings and predictions of the future and instructions on how to heal from evil. He could indeed see that those who believed the Sun to be the Creator [of the universe] put into practice not only the mysteries of Osiris and Isis, but also all the sacred myths to the stars when they rise and set, or to the Lunar phases or the Sun path, the diurnal or nocturnal hemisphere, the river [the Nile]. So, they referred everything to natural cause and nothing to incorporeal and animated spirits. The majority of them also attributed the determination of our free will to the movements of the stars, binding everything – I don't know how – to the indissoluble knots of necessity, and all relating to these deities which they venerate in sacred rites, statues and other means as the only liberators from the εἱμαρμένη* (17). After this preamble, he proceeds to talk about the issue of the personal daemon (τὴν ἀπορίαν περὶ του ἰδίου δαίμονος). That would be the daemon that is given to each and every one of us as a guardian spirit; Porphyry underlines the fact that Anebo not only does not ask himself what the essence of the daemon is, but also prefers to operate according to nature and resort to genethliacal astrology; neither does he serve himself of all the elements of judgment of the latter [decans, liturgists (18), Zodiac signs, stars, the Sun, the Moon, etc.], but only of the oikodespótês planet, interrogating himself as to how it assigns the personal daemon. In fact he affirms that happy would be the man who, knowing the daemon that rules his nativity, tried to alienate his fate with sacrifices. There is only one of these daemons, says Porphyry, and he alone presides over the body in all its parts: real happiness comes from searching through gnosis the union with the deity in order to spiritually elevate, and certainly not to gain material favors.

As we were saying, the text was reconstructed thanks to later authors who quoted from his works (the "*De Mysteriis*" in primis). When the Great Father of the Church Saint Augustine (354 - 430) read it, he saw in it merely an attempt to prove how erroneous pagan rituals were. He had a deep knowledge of the works on religion and theology by Porphyry, and sensed a difference between them and this one letter, as if it was some sort of afterthought. Other Fathers of the Church thought the same: in a time of religious-dogmatic clashes between the Christian faith and paganism, Porphyry was used as a weapon again his own coreligionists. The work and inner struggle of a man who, after meeting Plotinus and witnessing his transparency and teachings which led him to look for a path through his doubts, were not understood.

As a matter of fact, the *Letter* is a lot different from the "Περὶ τῆς ἐκ λογίων φιλοσοφίας" (*Philosophy from Oracles),* another early work by the Hellenic philosopher. There is no trace in them of the Plotinian doctrine: the names of deities are written according to the common ritual and oracles are not explained by philosophy, but vice versa (19). Recalling one of Apollo's oracles, Porphyry makes a complex theological system of his own: deities divide themselves into those who live underground and on earth, aerial and marine, celestial and of ethereal nature, and to each category belongs a specific sacrifice. They appear to

men and teach them which rituals they want to be honored with, but a theurgist can force them to obey his will through formulas (ἀνάγκαι). Angels and daemons also exist, they are divine hypostases that have different tasks. Magic, divination, astrology (the gods themselves predict the future with oracles that use the position of the stars) are not presented here as disconnected from theology, as Porphyry considers them as a means of spiritual elevation. The "*Letter to Anebo"* lacks of all these certainties.

In the lapse of time between the writing of the letter and the philosophy from oracles, Porphyry went to Rome and attended the classes of Plotinus (Pic. 2), one of the major philosophers of the ancient world, Plato's heir and father of Neoplatonism. With his grave and austere kindness, the elevation of his ideas, his strict morality, the fire of his word, the disinterest and keen disposition for understanding human nature, he had a mainly psychological influence on Porphyry (20).



Pic. 2 - Philosopher (Plotinus?), end of the 3rd century AC, Ostia, Museo Ostiense

The circle he was head of was formed of initiates who, meditating on philosophy books and leading a life of renunciation, waited for death to reunite their souls with the eternal Being. Nonetheless, even Plotinus was surrounded by magicians and theurgists, if the Iseion episode narrated by Porphyry is to be believed (21). According to the story, an Egyptian priest offered to make visible to Plotinus the daemon guarding him. The philosopher agreed; the evocation took place in the temple of Isis, the only pure place in Rome, but, instead of a daemon, a god appeared, an even superior entity. Porphyry ends the tale by saying that Plotinus took inspiration from this episode to write a treatise *"The daemon fate gave us"* in which he explains the differences between the various daemons that assist mankind. At the time, this issue was greatly discussed by magicians, philosophers, theurgists and astrologists alike. With the light of his spirit, Plotinus induced his student to ponder, meditate and somehow distance himself from the eastern beliefs that were the nucleus of his education before he arrived in Rome. The concept of a personal daemon that Porphyry inherited from his teacher is the one of a pure ego that elevates itself in a sphere of absolute rationality above the forces that operate in our life (22).

Iamblichus: the reply of Abamon

We already hinted at the controversy concerning the author of the De Mysteriis. Was it really Abammon or rather Iamblichus (245-325) signing as the Egyptian priest?

Iamblichus was a Syrian philosopher born in Calchis. He had Porphyry as a teacher and directed the neoplatonic school in Rome after his death; he then drifted away from the teachings of his master: he abandoned Plotinus's purely intellectual neoplatonism for a religious philosophy that included myths, rituals and magic spells. In 303 he founded his own school in Apamea (Pic. 3), with the intent of incorporating Plato's and Pythagoras's ideas, Hermeticism, and magic literature into a unique and coherent system. However, Prof. Sodano does not attribute to him the paternity of the "De Mysteriis" and states that it was the product of a desperate intelligentsia trying with every possible means to save the motions of paganism, an équipe of defenders of the old Hellenic ideals that was destined to fall into superstition and theurgic mysticism (23).

Pic. 3 - The ruins of Apameia (Syria)

In the treatise there is a copy of the *"Letter to Anebo".* The literary genre is the one of *zetema* (aporias and solutions). Abamon, master and prophet, is called to answer to the doubts expressed in the letter: he is therefore a priest of a higher rank than Anebo, as to emphasize the veracity of his statements. The treatise is formed by ten books in which (very briefly speaking) is declared:

- 1st book: that the answers will be given with the aid of the theological doctrines of the Chaldeans and the Egyptian prophets, or with the teachings of Hermes Trismegistus, that Plato and Pythagora had already studied and made use of in the nucleus of their philosophy; that, aside from deities, among the superior and incorporeal beings there are, in decreasing order of perfection, daemons, heroes and pure souls; that deities fill the whole universe with themselves, are not subject to passions and are all good;
- 2nd book: which are the signs that indicate the presence of gods, archangels, daemons, heroes, souls (form, aspect, beauty, splendor, etc.) and what are the gifts that they bear; how to recognize fake apparitions;
- 3rd book: that divine is the origin of divination in all its forms: dreams, divine possessions, *trances*, ecstasy, oracles; that divine is also the origin of some forms of fortune-telling like the observation of celestial bodies, the insides of sacrificed animals and the flight of birds (signs sent from the gods); that gods, angels and daemons are present to divination; that the divination through *characteres is* to be considered illegitimate and the fabrication of images useless and factitious;

- 4th book: that deities cannot be given orders, but there are spirits that have no reason or judgment that can be tamed through divine symbols; that deities cannot commit unjust actions nor have illicit desires;
- 5th book: that the pleasures of the body affect the souls of men, not the gods; that sacrifices to deities are necessary, because without them plagues and famines would not cease, we would not have rain and, most importantly, there would be the catharsis of the soul and its liberation from becoming; that praying reinforces the action of sacrifices and comes closer to the divine;
- 6th book: that the animals to sacrifice can be either profane or consecrated; divination through sacred animals concerns daemons and is imperfect; threats do not touch deities in any way;
- 7th book: what the Egyptian symbols are: the deity sitting on a lotus above mud, the sun god on the solar barge, the Zodiac; that deities appreciate being called by their Egyptian names;
- 8th book: what the Egyptians believe to be the First Cause of the universe and how Chaeremon's theories are but a part of this doctrine; that not everything is bound to fatality, as every man has two souls: one of them is divine and can elevate to the divine through theurgy;
- 9th book: what a personal daemon is and doctrines on the issue;
- 10th book: that the way to happiness consists in theurgic union with the deity.

The chapters we are interested in are, of course, the last ones, though a few clarifications are needed: the ninth chapter deals with the issue of the personal daemon, which is defined as a complex and widely discussed argument. Two are the doctrines concerning daemons: one considers them as object of theurgy, the other of natal astrology. While theurgy deals with supernal causes, natal astrology concerns the observation of celestial objects. Employing the latter – says the author of the "De Mysteriis" – would be useless, because the daemon is not related to one's nativity, and even if it was there would not be a sacrifice big enough to please it, since it represents fate. This doesn't mean that astrological science has no validity, for only those who do not know it oppose it. As for the *oikodespótês*, specific methods to unravel it have been passed on for centuries: astrologers claim that there are five elements (some say more, others less) to find it precisely. It does not have anything to do with the personal daemon, which can be known with the aid of sacred divination or theurgy. These entities exist even before the descending of the souls into this world. When a soul has picked one as a guide, it immediately ties with the body and starts administrating the life of the newborn (as is told in the Myth of Er, as we will see later): this happens until we designate through ieratic theurgy a deity, that will watch over the soul and be its master. Only then will the daemon either surrender to the deity or be subjugated to it and cooperate. The treatise ends with a final statement: the union with the deity creates happiness; in deities there is only goodness, and they reveal the future mainly to guard mankind against the dangers of nature; they free men from the chains of fate and, by doing so, free them. Thus ends the "De Mysteriis".

The daemon

If we ask ourselves what are the origins of this singular and ancient belief of a superior being that, since birth, rules the destiny of men, we will find them lying in archaic religion. The word δαίμων derives from the verb δαίομαι, *to give everyone his share (at a banquet),* and therefore means *he who assigns*. In the 7th century BC Hesiod, in his "*Work and days" (*24*),* narrates that the first men lived in the so-called Golden Age (at the time of Cronus). When they died they became noble *daemons* and guardians of the mortals (*φύλακες θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων*). The men of the Silver Age (a time much worse than the Golden one) became chthonic blessed mortals; the men of the Bronze Age extinguished because of their evilness. In the following Age of Heroes, many, after dying, were transported to the Isles of the Blessed by Zeus as a reward for their courage. The last age described is the Iron one, its people living in suffering and injustice. As we can see, the daemonic class (the spirits of the dead become guardians of the living) makes his appearance in a very ancient time. In Hesiod's

works the word δαίμων is used with the meaning of *fate.*
As a matter of fact, thus the poet expresses himself:

δαίμονι δ᾽ οἷος ἔησθα, τὸ ἐργάζεσθαι ἄμεινον
And whatever be your fate, work is best for you
(Works and days, v. 314)

Thales of Miletus (640/625 – c. 547 BC, one of the Seven Sages) is generally considered the first philosopher of western history. He believed in the existence of a god, daemons and heroes: god is the mind (νοῦς) of the universe, the daemons its essences (οὐσίαι, purely spiritual beings) and heroes the souls of men (they can be good or evil). At least, this is what is reported by Athenagoras of Athens (Greek apologist, 133 – c. 190) in his Apology aimed to the defense of the Christians against the accusations of atheism, incest and cannibalism. He claims that, according to those who had a deep knowledge of his doctrine, Thales was the first to make this distinction (25). In the eighth book of "*Lives of Eminent Philosophers"* by Diogenes Laertius (Greek historian, 180 – 240) is said that, according to Pythagoras (570 – 495 BC approx.), *all the air is filled with souls that are called heroes and daemons, and they send dreams and omens of sickness and wealth, not only to men but also to flocks and animals; to them are directed acts of purification, atonement, invocations, all the forms of fortune-telling et similia. The greatest privilege a man can have is the power of deciding whether to incline his soul to good or to evil. Happy are the men to whom was assigned a good soul* (26) *that is congenital and not introduced from the outside".* The great Plato (428 – 348 BC) in his "*Laws"* (27) says that a wise man will honor, in order of importance: the Olympus deities, the city gods, Chthonic deities, daemons, heroes, the gods of his ancestors, and, finally, his own parents (be them dead or alive). In the *Symposium* he presents the daemon Eros (pic. 5): at a banquet (hereby the tile Συμπόσιον, drinking party) organized by the tragedian Agathon to celebrate his victory at a poetry competition in 416 BC, each guest is asked to deliver a speech in praise of the daemon (Pic. 4).

When his turn is up, Socrates (28) reports the speech he had once listened from Diotima, a priestess from Mantinea and a woman so wise she counseled the Athenians the sacrifices that delayed the plague for ten years (29). Diotima said that Eros is a great daemon, and as such he stands between what is mortal and what is divine. He *interprets and transmits to deities what comes from mankind and vice versa: the prayers and sacrifices on one hand, orders and awards on the other. Being halfway between deities and mankind, he helps shorten the distance that divides them, so that Everything is united and in order within itself. The art of divination comes from him, as well as the knowledge of priests about sacrifices, initiations, spells and everything that is divination and magic. The divine doesn't blend with what is human, but, thanks to daemons, deities can somehow get in touch with humans, talk to them when they are awake or in their sleep. The man who knows these things (σοφός) is close to the power of daemons (*δαιμόνιος ἀνήρ*), while a man who knows other things – like an art or a manual profession – is just an ordinary artisan or worker. These daemons are many and of various types: one of them is Eros* (30). Therefore a σοφός is a man who knows, a philosopher expert in divine things: he is a daemonic man and can elevate himself to reach the divine – and that is what real happiness is.
In the definition of daemon, Plato adopts the scheme *essence – powers – activity* that we can find faithfully reported in the passage (31) of the "*De Mysteriis"* that explains how to describe the characteristics of superior beings. Once clarified the nature of daemons, it proceeds with illustrating their function: being the bridge of communication and continuity between the celestial and the terrestrial spheres, that would otherwise be too distant and different to have the slightest connection. With the evolving of philosophical speculation through time, the two spheres have had a tendency to drift apart more and more, therefore the number of intermediaries has increased: according to Iamblichus, to daemons and heroes are to be added entities from the gnostic and Hebrew schools, like angels, archangels and cosmic and material archons (32).

Pic. 4 – Eros Stringing His Bow
Ancient marble copy of a sculpture attributed to Lysippos
Rome, Capitoline Museum

Only two things are left unchanged throughout the years: the link between daemons and fortune-telling and the fact that the daemon is the channel of communication for oracles and other forms of divination. Daemons are also mentioned by stoic philosophers: M. Tullius Cicero (106 – 43 BC) in the *De Divinatione* (33) reports that Posidonius of Apameia (II – I century BC) thought that dreams are caused by divine impulse in three ways: 1 – the soul has prediction abilities because it is actually related to the gods; 2 – the air is filled with immortal souls (daemonic beings) on which signs of the truth appear as if they were impressed on them; 3 – deities themselves speak to us when we are asleep. The spirit of Plato himself is said to have inspired the middle Platonist philosopher Julian the Theurgist to write the Chaldean Oracles (170), a collection of wisdom revelations written in dactylic hexameters that has survived as a fragmentary text. The Suda (an encyclopedic lexicon) (34) claims that the author was the son of Julian the Chaldean [author of four books about daemons], and that he also wrote the "Θeourgiká, Telestiká, Logía di'ἐpῶn" (*Theurghikà, Telestikà, Logía di'epôn – Divine activities, mistery rites and oracles in epic verses*).

He was called "the Theurgist" because it seems that it was him to create the very word (*θευργία*, theurghía) to indicate a religious practice aimed to achieve mystical union with the divine: through a series of rituals (telestiké) that availed themselves of gestures, symbols, formulas and nouns often pronounced in *barbaric languages* was evoked a deity that possessed an inanimate object (e.g. a statue) or a human being (the *docheus*) and then gave responses or performed miraculous actions (Pic.5). His work was of major importance for Neoplatonism e authors like Porphyry, Plotinus and Iamblichus.

Pic. 5 – The Theurgy is *un système religieux qui nous fait entrer en contact avec les dieux, non pas seulement par la pure élévation de notre intellect vers le Noûs divin, mais au moyen de rites concrets et d'objets matériels.*

André-Jean Festugière, La révélation d'Hermès Trismégiste, V. III, 1953, p.48.

The personal daemon (ὁ ἴδιος δαίμων)

From what we have seen so far, it is clear that in the Greek collective imaginary daemons had the task of protecting the living. At first, they were believed to be aiding the general community, but then the idea that every single man has his own daemon started to take root. A fragment by the composer and philosopher Aristoxenus of Tarentum (360 – 300 c. BC) titled *Pythagorean Maxims* and reported by Joannes Stobaeus (Byzantine writer who lived in the fifth century) says (translation by me): "[*He said that*] t*hey said these things about luck (*τύχη *): some part of it is daemonic, therefore there will be men that have an inspiration (ἐπιπνοία) that comes from the daemon directed towards better or worse things, and that is why there are lucky and unlucky people. That the lucky ones succeed even if they act randomly and without thinking is particularly evident, as it is evident that the unlucky ones tend to fail even if they think correctly and ponder before acting. There is then another kind of destiny that gives good qualities and sagacity to some, and an opposite nature to others. The ones that belong to the first category achieve the goals they devote themselves to, while all the others, never using their intellect with sagacity but instead with confusion, fail in what they attempt. This lack of luck is congenital and not introduced by external factors"* (35). In other words, Pythagoras and his school clarify that everyone has a daemon, and that this daemon can direct you towards good as well as evil, and that luck is innate. The fragment n. 119 of Heraclitus reads (36):

['Ηράκλεος ἔφη ὡς] ἦθος ἀνθρώπῳ δαίμων
A man's character is his own daemon

Xenophon (approx. 430/425 – 355 BC) and the already mentioned Plato were students of Socrates, and thanks to them we know about the concept of personal daemon of their mentor . Xenophon (37) claims that Socrates talked with an entity that gave him the same divination abilities of Pythia: he used to receive warnings and signs under the form of *clairaudient* words that addressed his choices not only

from a moral point of view, but also in everyday life matters. Without a doubt he thought that the Socratic daemon was a superior being, and his contemporaries actually agreed with him and visited him to ask the daemon for advice (38).

Plato narrates that, when Socrates (Pic. 6) was accused of impiety, he delivered a speech in which he attributed to the advice of this entity the decision of not taking part in the political life. It was something *divine* and *daemonic* (theîon ti kai daimónion), a sort of voice that held him from doing something every time it spoke (39). The term he used was not *δαίμων* but δαιμόνιον, which implies the term *sign*. And then again, after being sentenced to death by the judges, the philosopher reiterates his trust in the daemon by saying that the usual oracle voice – the voice of something daemonic - did not once held him from doing something that was right: it was always present and it opposed him all the time, even for trivial things, but it did not stop him when he woke up earlier that morning, nor when he got out of his house to go to court or while he was delivering his speech. And yet, it had interrupted him many times before while he was talking in public. That day it had not contested a single thing he had said or done. He concludes his speech saying that what had happened that day really looked like it was the right thing, and that it's not possible to be afraid of dying, as death is not evil. He had great proof of that: if what he was about to do wasn't right, the usual sign would have stopped him (40). Therefore, for Plato the daemon is an unidentifiable superior being that *prewarns* Socrates of a danger, and even its non appearing is a σημείων, *sign*.

Pic. 6 - Socrates (on the right)
Raffaello Sanzio - *The School of Athens*
(1509 -1511)
Rome, Apostolic Palace - Stanza della Segnatura

Socrates's last hours of life are depicted by Plato in one of his greater dialogues, the Phaedo (Φαίδων). The central theme of the dialogue is the immortality of the soul (41): when a man dies, the daemon that had him in custody has the task of bringing him to an established place, where all the souls gather to be judged. From here, they are taken by their former guardian to their place in Hades. Once they have completed their sentence, they are brought back to earth – but this happens after a huge amount of time. Before starting a new life cycle, they have to choose a new personal daemon: this is the theme of another of Plato's works, the *myth of Er*. The myth concludes Plato's *Republic* (Πολιτεία) (42) and has Socrates as narrating voice. The protagonist is Er, son of a man named Armenius, Pamphylian by birth. Ten days after being slain in battle, as he is lying on the funeral pire, Er comes back to life and tells others what he has seen in the afterlife. After leaving his body, his soul had started a journey with many others, until they came across a jury, sitting in the middle of four openings: two directed towards heaven, two directed towards earth. The just were sent towards heaven, the others were cast down. When it was his turn, Er was told to observe everything that happened, so that he could report it to men. From the heavenly opening on the right and the earthly

one on the left, souls kept on coming out after their thousand-year journey in heaven or underground. The first ones looked pure, while the others were dirty and haggard. The journey below was a temporary form of atonement, during which every sin committed was repaid with a pain ten times the one the soul had caused. Just actions were compensated with a similar system. The only exception to this rule are tyrants, whose pain lasts forever. After seven days in that place, the souls proceeded with their journey. After walking for four days, they came to a place where they could see a light similar to a rainbow that held together the whole circumference of the sky. At its ends was suspended the spindle of Ananke, the deity that represents necessity and inescapable fate. The whorl was formed by eight smaller whorls put one inside the other and moving in opposite directions on the spindle axe. On each circle there was a Siren chanting a note, and all eight Sirens together formed one single harmony (the one of celestial spheres). The eight whorls represent the eight concentric skies of ancient cosmology. They are, in Pythagoric order: fixed stars, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the Sun, Venus, Mercury and the Moon. The spindle turned on the knees of Ananke. The three Parcae (Pic. 7) sat in a circle on three equidistant thrones. They are the daughters of Ananke: Clotho, the spinner, sings of the present; Lachesis, the distributor, sings of the past; Atropos, she who cannot be dissuaded, sings of the future. An herald of Lachesis put all the souls in a row, gave each a lottery token and told them that it would not be a daemon to choose them, but vice versa. Every soul would have to choose a new daemon and a new life, and would be responsible for its choice. Various life samples were presented to them: animals, men, women, tyrants, successful or ruinous, obscure or illustrious (being able to choose a just life and reject an unjust one is, to Socrates, of vital importance to achieve maximum *eudaimonia*).

After considering the experiences of previous lives and choosing a personal daemon, each soul presented itself to Lachesis, who assigned it to them as a guardian. The daemon then led the soul to Clotho, that bounded them together irrevocably. Finally, Atropos made destiny irreversible. At night, they all camped by river Lethe, whose water cannot be contained in any vase. Each soul had to drink a certain amount of its waters in order to forget everything, and fell asleep. In the middle of the night there were an earthquake and a thunderstorm, and suddenly all souls lifted and flew to their birthplaces as fast as shooting stars. But Er was kept from drinking the water of the river: he didn't know how he came back into his body, he just opened his eyes and found himself lying on the funeral pire.

With this myth, Plato conciliates the notion of free will with the religious value of destiny, that - even if we don't remember - we chose ourselves.

Pic. 7 - *The Three Parcae*
Bernardo Strozzi (beginning of the 17th century) – Oil on canvas.
Chiavari (Genoa), Galleria Civica, Palazzo Rocca

The *oikodespótês*

Destiny and *soul* are two themes that have always been objects of debate. In the Greek world first and in the Hellenic one after, this debate was engaged with different approaches: philosophical, mystic-theurgical, magical and, last but not least, astrological.

As we have seen, Neoplatonic philosophers were skeptical about the possibility of characterizing the *ídios daímon* with different methods from their own. Nonetheless, Greek astrologers had elaborated whole new techniques for this task. In the ninth book of the "*De Mysteriis",* we can read about their specific methods to discover the *oikodespótês* as well as the existence of five (or more) elements to recognize it.

Let's start from the etymological aspect. Οἰκοδεσπότης is formed from the words *οἶκος (oikos,* house), and *δεσπότης* (*despotes*, master), so it literally means *master of the house*. Nevertheless, as a technical term *oikodespoteia* does not indicate a *potestas* limited to the *oikos* or the planet's domicile. The astronomer and astrologist Paul of Alexandria, a cultured Egyptian raised in Greece whose *floruit* can be located in the second half of the 4th century, never uses this term to indicate the planet that has rulership over a zodiac sign (like Mars over Aries and Scorpio or Venus over Taurus and Libra). In fact, he uses the term *oikodektôr* to designate the domicile's ruler, *hypsokratôr* to designate the elevation one, *horiokratôr* to designate terms's, and *trigonokratôr* the triangle's (43). O*ikodespoteia* indicates a *potestas* that is formed by more factors. *Oikodespotês* can be translated with "*ruler*" and *oikodespoteia* with "*rulership*".

In Ptolemy's work, *oikodespótês* had this exact meaning. In the part of the *Tetrabiblos* concerning the partition of natal astrology (44), he recommends to look for the *significator* in the natal chart (the point in the zodiac that matches the issue we're investigating on [e.g. Midheaven for professional activities, the Sun for the father, etc.]), and then the planets that have a rulership relation with it according to *"the already-listed five criteria".* We can find the criteria in the previous chapter, "*The degree ascending*" (45), where it is explained how said degree *is ruled* by the planet that has all five requirements: trigon (triplicity), domicile, exaltation, terms, and figure (aspect or configuration). The terms *oikodespoteía, oikodespótein and oidespotikós* are also mentioned to indicate rulership.
Not so different were the beliefs of Rethorius, the last major classical astrologer (he probably lived in the sixth/seventh century). In the 33th chapter of his "*Interpretation and explanation of all the astronomical art of Antiochus's Thesaurus"*, he says: " (a planet) is called *oikodespótês* when it has the majority of rulership rights in one of the signs: domicile, exaltation, triplicity, terms, phase or configuration " (46).

The *oikodespótês* is therefore *the planet that has the predominant influence* and that, with its accidental and essential nature (47), presides over the events we want to foresee. It can identify with Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, but not the luminaries (even if they still have impact on almost every response for their great importance). This is the general meaning of *oikodespótês*; when used in the most important section of natal astrology, the *duration of life*, it gains a meaning far more specific: it designates the planet that has rulership over the *apheta*.

The *aphétês* is the significator of life. According to Ptolomy, during its diurnal motion it has favorable as well as unfavorable encounters, and the ultimate limit of its motion is the natural completion of human life. It is possible for a particularly bad encounter to end life before its natural course. The length of life does not depend on the condition of the *apheta* in the nativity, but on the following encounters (with the *anareta* in particular). Ptolomy himself, while introducing the subject (48), states that the method he used was the one he thought was the most suitable, though recognizing that the doctrine on the length of life doesn't have a *simple nor absolute ordination*. In fact, according to other authors, the *oikodespótês*, being the planetary ruler of the apheta, signifies, by its own nature and its accidental condition in the nativity, the potential quantity of life. The years a man will live depend on it. For example, the astrological poet Antiochus of Athens, whose *floruit* can be located in the second half of the second century (49) and whose work was vastly paraphrased, in the 3rd chapter

of the second book of the Εἰσαγωγικά (*Eisagôgiká)* he discussed – if the testimony of a Byzantine epitomator can be believed (50) – *the ruler (oikodespótês) and lord (κύριος) of nativity, stating that, according to the doctrine of King Nechepso with whom Petosiris agrees, to the oikodespotes is bound the length of the life of a man (τὸν ζωτικὸν χρόνον), to the kyrios the kind of life he'll lead and what will happen in it* (51). The already mentioned Paul of Alexandria makes a clarification in the 36th chapter of his "*Εἰσαγοωγὴ ἀστρολογίας"* (*Eisagoghè astrologhias, Introduction to Astrology)*: how long a man who has a certain nativity will live is shown by the planet called ruler (*oikodespótês*). This planet can be deduced by the Sun (by day) and the Moon (by night) if the first one is located in the horoscope, the MC, the descendent, the eleventh or eighth house, while the second one has to be located in the four angles or in the fifth, eleventh, second or eighth house. If the Luminaries are in another position, the oikodespotes can be deduced by the horoscope or the previous sygyzy. The election criteria is double: having a planet superior dignity for being the ruler of the sign, terms, triplicity and exaltation, and having strength for your own accidental condition in the figure - even better if it makes aspect with the chosen vital significator.

The *oikodespótês* assigns the years of life according to this scheme:

Planet	Well positioned (years)	Badly positioned (years, months, days, hours)
Saturn	57	30
Jupiter	79	12
Mars	76	15
Venus	82	8
Mercury	76	20

Years are to be eventually added or subtracted to the years of the planet that observes the ruler: if it is well positioned it adds years, otherwise it subtracts them (52).
In the Middle Ages the *oikodespótês* was called *alcochoden*: this is the planet that observes and has rulership over the *hylech* (the Arab *apheta*). Even if the criteria to designate the *hylech* and the *alcochoden* are very different from the ones we have mentioned so far to designate the *apheta* and the *oikodespótês,* in the Arab doctrine remains the idea that is the *alchocoden* to assign the years of life.

In Greek terminology there's a further astrological term, *κύριος* "*kyrios"*, which means "lord". Κύριος τῆς γενέσεως (*Kyrios tes gheneseos)* is the *nativity ruler*. Rulership can essentially express itself in two ways:

- *vital dominion*: when the planet prevails on the others as it has right for dignity and figure on one of the five Ptolemaic vital significations, the *hylegialia loca*, that Ptolemy lists when talking about the duration of life: the Sun, the Moon, the horoscope, Part of Fortune and the sygyzy preceding nativity (53);
- *strength*: when the planet, thanks to its accidental condition in nativity, has more strength than the others.

To become the nativity ruler (and therefore signify the kind and conduct of life) is not enough for a planet to be the ruler of the *apheta* or even of all the others vital significators; other factors have to be considered. Since it's once again a matter of predominance, like before with the *oikodespótês*, we can ask ourselves: which is more important, domicile or exaltation, the ascending or the culminating?

Both kinds of dominion are important, so it is necessary to somehow quantify the major or minor impact of each dignity or accidental situation.

Greek astrologers haven't left us nothing certain on the subject. The first testimony of an attribution of mathematical coefficients is to be found in the works of the Arab astronomer and philosopher Al-Kindi (in the 11th century). He assigned 5 points to domicile, 4 to exaltation, 3 to triplicity, 2 to terms and 1 to the decan (dignity that substituted the Greek *figure*) (54)

Only in the *Liber Nativitatum et revolutionum earum* by the Hebrew astrologer and philosopher Abraham Ibn Ezra (approx. 1092 - 1167) we can find the complete method for the calculation of the *almuten nativitatis*, the medieval equivalent of the Greek *κύριος τῆς γενέσεως (55)*. We have to consider:

- the rulership based on the 5 essential dignities [depending on the longitude observed is noted the rulership for domicile (5 points), exaltation (4 points), triplicity (3 points), terms (2 points) and decan (1 point)];
- the dignity that each planet has in the sign/degree that it occupies in the nativity [points system same as before];
- the position of the planets in the houses [first house = 12; second= 6; third = 3; fourth= 9; fifth= 7; sixth= 1; seventh= 10; eight= 5; ninth= 4; tenth= 11; eleventh= 8; twelfth= 2];
- the ruler of the day and hour in which you are born, to which are attributed respectively 6 and 7 points; by hour is intended the temporal or unequal hour. Therefore, to know in what hour the Sun is, is to be considered its distance from the referential meridian. In the Middle Ages, astrologers used to attribute a ruler to both day and hour, while Ptolemy didn't consider this because he thought this procedure lacked of natural causes, as it follows changeable concepts different for every population with a different calendar and, in general, tracking of time (56).

With this system, each of the five planets gets a different result, and the winner is, of course, the one with more points. Besides the elements that we have seen so far for the calculation of the *oikodespotes*, Ibn Ezra adds other *fortitudines*, such as dignities, the position in the houses and the rulership over day and hour (never inserted before) to get to the *almuten nativitatis*, the *kyrios*, the planet that holds within itself the destiny of every single man. This method was completely welcomed and reported by Francesco Giuntini (1522 – 1590) and can be read in his *Tetrabiblos commentary* (Book III, Ch.1, "*Regula ad Dominum geniturae extrahendum*") (57).

If the *almuten* is the more general acceptation of the planet that wins on others and has rulership over a certain issue, the *almuten nativitatis* is the one that shapes on itself the whole figure: in its hands is the destiny of man. Like a sort of *personal daemon*, it forms the newborn according to its nature, its particular condition in the nativity and its own force compared with the ones of the other planets. Who ends up with a benevolent *almuten nativitatis* will have an easier and prosperous life; who ends up with a maleficent one will have a more complicated and impoverished life, but if he is strong he will be more resilient towards the maleficent aspects, otherwise he will be overcome.

***

Here ends our brief essay on *ídios daímon*. Well knowing how vast this topic is, we nevertheless enjoyed taking a brief look at it as *classical* astrologers and scholars of our discipline. Between heaven and earth, human and divine, there is, undoubtedly, a bridge: humanity has always struggled to cross it and still does.

Genoa, June 16th 2012
lucia.bellizia@tin.it

Notes

1) For dates, see: "*Giamblico, I misteri egiziani – Abammone, lettera a Porfirio*", introduction, translation, critical appendixes and indexes by Sodano, A.R., Milan, Rusconi Editore, 1984, pp. 40-41
2) "Abamon" is a typical Egyptian name and a variant of *Ab-Amun* (literally: heart of the god Amun). In the De Mysteriis (Book I, 1) Abamon is called the προφήτες [c.g. the Greek text at page 3 in Gustav Parthey, *Jamblichi De Mysteriis Liber*, Berolini, Prostat in Libraria Friderici Nicolai, 1857]. In the Egyptian priestly class, a prophet was the high priest, the supreme leader of the temple, he who knew the ten ieratic books, summa of the divine laws and the priestly culture.
3) *Iamblichus de mysteriis Aegyptiorum,, Assyriorum. Proclus In Platonicum Alcibiadem de anima atque daemone. De sacrificio et magia / Proclus. Porphyrius De divinis atque daemonibus [omnia M. Ficino interprete]*. Venetiis, Aldus Manutius 1497.
4) *Iamblicus De mysteriis Aegyptiorum, nunc primum ad uerbum de Graeco expressus. Nicolao Scutellio ordinis eremitarum sancti Augustini doctore theologo interprete. Adiecti de uita et secta Pythagorae Flosculi, ab eodem Scutellio ex ipso Iamblicho collecti*. Romae: apud Antonium Bladum, 1556.
5) Sodano, *op. cit.*, note 1, p. 9.
6) See Sodano, one of the major experts on the argument, op. cit., note 1, p.10 and ff.
7) *Porfirio: Lettera ad Anebo*, edited by Sodano A.R., Naples, L'Arte Tipografica, 1958.
8) As the philosopher and historian Eunapius of Sardis narrates in his work *Βίοι σοφιστῶν (Bíoi sofistòn*, 405*)* cf. Stéphane de Rouville, *Eunape, Vies des Philosophes et de Sophistes*, Paris, 1878, Ch. III.
9) Anebo is an Egyptian name that stands for *Anpu (*Anubis, jackal-headed god of the dead). He was a ἱερογραμματεύς (sacred scribe): he ran the temple, drew up decrees and handled the relationship with the royal government. He also was the depository of all the knowledge, he knew hieroglyphics, the geography of Egypt, and all that was necessary for sacred rites.
10) For dates, see Sodano, *op. cit.*, note 7, Introduction, p. XXXII; for the division of the Letter into two books, Introduction, p. XVII.
11) Originally, Korybanthes were the Phrygian deities of nature. Then, they were associated with the cult of Cybele and the name was passed to the priests of that cult. They used to arm themselves and dance until they fell in a sort of trance. Their music and their dance had ecstatic as well as theurapetic powers. The initiates, once in ecstasy, did not feel pain; they were struck by some sort of μανία, *possession*, and were healed by the Corybanthic ritual.
12) The χαρακτῆρες were mystic-symbolic signs on which the prophet kept his feet in order to get divine inspiration. They were a part of the chaldean theurgic rite, but traces of it can be found also in the egyptian one. c.f. Sodano, *op. cit.*, note 1, p. 52.
13) The ἀνάγκαι (*ánánkai*) are coercive formulas, typical of Egyptian magic, that the theugist used to recite to force a deity to obey his will. We can find some examples in the *Letter to Anebo*: the threat to shatter the firmament, reveal the mysteries of Isis, divulge the archans of Abydos, stop the Sun's barge, scatter the remains of Osiris [for a deeper analysis see Sodano, *op. cit*., note 7, Appendix I, pp. 60-64].
14) Chaeremon of Alexandria lived in the first century A.C. He was a member of the highest ranks of the Egyptian priesthood. In 49 he was called to Rome to become the tutor of Nero. His works (on the history of Egypt, comets, and Egyptian astrology) have survived as fragments quoted by other authors. In the *Letter*, Porphyry attributes to him a theological interpretation that considers only physical elements and leaves out incorporeal and animated essences.
15) The Κραταιοί ἡγεμόνες ("*ruling powers"*) are planets or astral deities similar to decans that rule over weeks of 5 days each. We can find them also in Iamblichus's *De Mysteriis*, VIII, 4, where the two words appear separated by a καί ("and") [cfr. p. 266 il testo greco citato nella nota 2].
16) The Σαλμεσχιανικιά (*Salmeschianicá*) are not a book per se as much as a collection of ephemerides or astrological calendars.
17) Translation by Sodano, *op. cit*. note 7, p. 42.
18) The Λειτουργοί, *liturgists* or decan servants, were first of all fixed stars associated to decans. The most of them had an influence mostly on animals (to destroy them or produce the insects that destroyed fields).
19) Gustav Georg Wolff, *Porphyrii De philosophia ex oraculis haurienda librorum reliquiae*, Berolini, Impensis Iulii Springeri, 1856, Cap. III, pag. 38 e segg.
20) Porphyry recalls these peculiarities of his teacher in his Περί Πλοτίνου βίου (*De vita Plotini*), the biography of Plotinus that was used as an introduction in the Ἐννεάδες (*Enneades*, a collection of works by Plotinus edited

by Porphyry). For the text in Greek, see: R. Volkmann, *Plotini Enneades praemisso Porphirii de vita Plotini deque ordine librorum eius libello*, Vol. I, Lipsiae, in aedibus B.G. Teubneri, 1883, or, in alternative, Cfr. Sodano, op. cit. note 1, p. XXI.

21) Porphyry, *De vita Plotini*, XV.
22) Sodano, op. cit., note 7, p. XXX.
23) Sodano, *op. cit.*, note 1, p. 35
24) Verse 109 and ff.
25) The date of composition of the *Embassy* (*Πρεσβεία περί των Χριστιανών*) was located between the end of 176 and the beginning of 177. For the translation, see: *Défense du Christianisme par les Péres des premiers siècles de l'église* traductions publiées par M. De Genoude, Paris, A. Royer Éditeur, 1843 (passage on Thales: p. 310). You can find the text in Greek at this link: http://remacle.org/bloodwolf/eglise/athanagore/apologie.htm
26) Diogenes Laertius, *Φιλοσόφων Βίων καὶ δογμάτων συναγογή*, VIII, I, 32 (Vita di Pitagora). For a translation, see: *Diogène de Laerte, Vies et doctrines des Philosophes de l'Antiquité* traduction nouvelle par M. Ch. Zevort, Paris, Charpentier, Libraire-Éditeur , 1847 vol. II, op.cit., pp. 162-163. You can find the text in Greek at this link: http://remacle.org/bloodwolf/philosophes/laerce/8pythagore1.htm .
27) Νομόι, *The Laws*, is Plato's last work. It was left unfinished and was published posthumously by Philip of Opus, one of his disciples. Philip added the final book, *Epinomis*, and divided the whole work into twelve books. For the Greek text, see: *Platonis Opera, recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instruit* Johannes Burnet, Tomus V, 1905, Oxonii E Typographeo Clarendoniano (*Nomoi*, IV, 717 b and ff.).
28) For the Greek text of the Συμπόσιον, see: *Platonis Opera, recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instruit* Johannes Burnet, Tomus II, 1905, Oxonii E Typographeo Clarendoniano (*Symposion*, II, 201 d and ff.).
29) In 430 BC, the city of Athens was struck by a plague.
30) (*Symposion*, II, 202 e, and ff.); you can read the Italian translation at this link: http://www.ilgiardinodeipensieri.eu/testi/simposio.html
31) *De Mysteriis*, I, 4. See Parthey, op. Cit. At note 2) pp. 11, 9-11.
32) *Il daimon in Giamblico e la demonologia greco-romana*, Francesca Innocenzi, 2011 Eum Edizioni, University of Macerata, p. 16. Please note that the entire first chapter of this book focuses on the daemon as an *intermediary*.
33) Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Divinatione*, Book I, XXX, 64 "*Sed tribus modis (Posidonius) censet deorum adpulsu homines somniare, uno, quod provideat animus ipse per sese, quippe qui deorum cognatione teneatur, altero, quod plenus aēr sit inmortalium animorum, in quibus tamquam insignitas notae veritatis appareant, tertio, quod, ipsi di cum dormientibus conloquantur". See* V. Thoresen, *M. Tulli Ciceronis De Divinatione Libri*, Kobenhavn, 1894, p. 58.
34) Cf. *Suidae lexicon ex recognitione Immanuelis Bekkeri*, Berolini Typis et impensis, Georgii Reineri, A. 1854 p. 534 s. v. Ιουλιανός . For the Greek text with Italian translation cf. *Chaldean Oracles* edited by Angelo Tonelli, BUR, Milan 1995.
35) Giovanni Stobeo, I, 6,18. Kurt Wachsmuth, *Ioannis Stobaei anthologii libri duo priores, qui inscribi solent eclogae physicae et ethicae*. 2 Bände, Weidmann, Berlin 1884, p. 89.
36) The declaration of Eraclitus is reported by the philosopher Plutarch of Chaeronea (46-127), Πλατώνικα Ζητήματα (*Questioni platoniche*), approx. 999. You can read the original text in Greek at this link: ttp://remacle.org/bloodwolf/historiens/Plutarque/questionsplatoniquesgr.htm.
37) Xenophon, *Apology*, 12
38) Xenophon, *Apomnêmoneúmata*, I,1, 2-4; IV, 8,1. The title was translated with *Memorabilia*, though it does not express well the original meaning of *notes*, *memories*. In fact, this collection of Socratic dialogues is halfway between a philosophical treatise and a book of memories.
39) Plato, *Apology*, 31 d
40) Plato, *Apology*, 40 b-c
41) For the Greek version of the Φαίδων, see: *Platonis Opera, recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instruit*, Johannes Burnet, Tomus I, 1900, Oxonii E Typographeo Clarendoniano (*Faidon*, I, 107 d; 113 and ff.).
42) For the Greek version of the Πολιτεία, see: *Platonis Opera, recognovit brevique adnotatione critica instruit*, Johannes Burnet, Tomus IV, 1902, Oxonii E Typographeo Clarendoniano (*Politeia*, IV 614 b and ff.).
43) Paolus of Alexandria, *Introduction to Astrology*, edited by Giuseppe Bezza, Mimesis 2000. Cf. the Glossary of technical terms, p. 189.
44) *Tetrábiblos*, III, 4.

45) *Tetrábiblos*, III, 3.
46) CCAG part I, p. 140. It's the *Excerpta* from the *Laurentianus* XXVIII, 34 pp. 84r – 93v, edited by Franz Boll. [Translation edited by us].
47) *Classical* astrologers well know the meaning of *accidental* condition and what is the force deriving from it. For example, a fast planet has more strength than a retrograde one; an angular one operates better than one that is in succedent houses; etc.
48) *Tetrábiblos*, III, 11.
49) You can read about the disagreement among scholars about the dates concerning Antiochus of Athens in the essay that I presented on the occasion of the third Convention of the Apotélesma Cultural Association that was held in Genoa in 2010, "*I Paranatellonta nella letteratura astrologica antica di lingua greca*" (pp. 18 e 19): http://www.apotelesma.it/upload/I_paranatellonta_nella_letteratura_astrologica_antica_di_lingua_greca. Pdf
50) CCAG VIII/3, p. 119 (*Catalogus Codicum Astrologorum Graecorum*, 1912: *Codicum Parisinorum partem tertiam descripsit P. Boudreaux*, Bruxelles). It's an Appendix (pp. 111-199) edited by Franz Cumont (who also edited the Papers 232-237 of the Codex Parisinus gr. 2425 (manuscript on paper of the 15th century made of 285 pages and part of the Biblioteca di Caterina de' Medici)).
51) Translation edited by us. I owe a special mention to Chris Brennan, thanks to whom I was able to acquire the photocopies of the pages mentioned in the previous note (as the CCAG VIII/3 is not entirely in my possession - thing that I intend to fix as soon as possible).
52) Cr. Paolus of Alexandria, *Introduction to Astrology*, edited by Giuseppe Bezza, 2000, Mimesis Editore, pp. 159-162. Alla traduzione del capitolo segue il commento esplicativo che il filosofo Olimpiodoro tenne nella scuola di Alessandria a metà del 564.
53) *Tetrábiblos*, III, 11.
54) *Morgenländische Forschungen, Festschrift H.L. Fleischer zu seinem funfzigjährigen Doctorjubiläum am 4. März, 1874, gewidmet von seinen Shûlern*, F.A. Brockhaus, 1875 Leipzig (O. Loth, *Al-Kindî als Astrolog*, pp. 190-191, note 3).
55) *Abrahe Avenaris Iudei Astrologi peritissimi in re iudiciali opera: ab excellentissimo Philosopho Petro de Abano post accuratam castigationem in latinum traducta*, Venetiis 1507; [it containes: Liber de consuetudinibus in iudiciis astrorum et est centiloquium Bethen breve admodum, Liber electionum, Eiusdem de horis planetarum, Liber interrogationum, Liber luminarium et est de cognitione diei cretici seu de cognitione cause crisis, Liber coniunctionum planetarum et revolutionum annorum mundi qui dicitur de mundo vel seculo, *Liber nativitatum et revolutionum earum*, Tractatus insuper quidam particulares eiusdem Abrahe, Liber rationum, Introductorium quod dicitur principium sapientie]. In particular *Liber nativitatum et revolutionum earum*, Fo. 46v.
56) For the planetary week and an in-depth analysis on the issue cf. the translations of some texts reported in the book *Arcana Mundi* by Giuseppe Bezza, BUR, 1995, Volume I, pp. 475-517.
57) *Speculum Astrologiae, universam mathematicam scientiam, in certas classes digestam complectens. Autore Francisco Iunctino Florentino S.T.D. Accesserunt etiam Commentaria absolutissima Quadripartiti Ptolemaei libros etc.* Tomus Prior, Lugduni, In Officina Q. Phil. Thinghi Florentini, 1583 (pp. 141-142).