

NOCTES NEOLATINAE  
NEO-LATIN TEXTS AND STUDIES

Band 22

Jeroen De Keyser

Francesco Filelfo and  
Francesco Sforza

Critical Edition of Filelfo's *Sphortias*,  
*De Genuensium deditioe*, *Oratio parentalis*,  
and his Polemical Exchange with Galeotto Marzio

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Neo-Latin Texts and Studies

Herausgegeben von  
Marc Laureys und Karl August Neuhausen

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## PREFACE

Francesco Filelfo's *Sphortias*, of which this volume offers the *editio princeps*, is the first full-blown (albeit unfinished) Neo-Latin epic staging a contemporary hero. Devoted to Filelfo's patron, Francesco Sforza, Duke of Milan, the poem was not destined for an auspicious career. Its misfortunes began almost immediately, as the text met its fiercest critic in Filelfo's contemporary Galeotto Marzio, who wrote two polemical letters denouncing the *Sphortias*' literary and metrical flaws. Modern scholarship has hardly been kinder. Yet, while most twentieth-century students of the poem have criticised it as an excessively encomiastic and inconsistent piece of versified propaganda for Francesco Sforza, it has of late been viewed in radically different ways. In a number of recent publications, the *Sphortias* is in fact described as insufficiently laudatory (at least for Filelfo's own good), and as an inefficient panegyric, composed by an author who was lured by second voices resounding from Virgil's *Aeneid*. This approach has led some scholars to the conclusion that Filelfo in the *Sphortias* criticized and even mocked its eponymous hero under the guise of praising and flattering him. At any rate, one constant remained throughout this wavering reception history: the critics' conclusion that the *Sphortias* was a failure, be it exceedingly or inadequately encomiastic.

Faced with such lukewarm or downright negative assessments of the *Sphortias*, one cannot help but think that the poem's primary and most decisive shortcoming has been its failure to appear in print. As a result, a thorough analysis of the entire poem is still a desideratum. Many discussions of the *Sphortias* are primarily rehearsals of previous evaluations and rely on a partial examination of the text. Various somewhat bold interpretations of specific verses ought to be balanced against other passages that put the first into perspective. Also due is a contextualization of the *Sphortias* as a whole within the framework of Filelfo's entire oeuvre. As a composition driven by patronage, the *Sphortias* should indeed be read in the light of Filelfo's many other writings originating in a similar setting, and scholarly interpretation should also consider the author's correspondence with and statements about these other possible patrons.

In this context it must be recognized, however, that scholars have not been served particularly well in their endeavours, since until quite recently most of Filelfo's numerous writings were simply unavailable in a reliable, or indeed any, edition – a necessary tool for undertaking the required comprehensive analysis. The present volume aims to remedy this stalemate by offering the *editio princeps* of the *Sphortias*, accompanied by critical editions of Filelfo's other major Sforza-centred writings, all of them equally understudied: the *Oratio*

*parentalis*, the poem *De Genuensium deditione*, and finally the polemical epistolary exchange with Galeotto Marzio. It is my hope that this critical edition of all four works will finally pave the way for the studies that they deserve.

The *Oratio parentalis de divi Francisci Sphortiae Mediolanensium ducis felicitate*, a eulogy written by Filelfo on the occasion of the first anniversary of Sforza's demise, was undeniably his most ambitious oration. Read at a ceremony in the Duomo in Milan in March 1467, it combines an elaborate biography of the Duke with a description of his exemplary life, as well as an exposition on the immortality of the soul. In fact, the *Oratio parentalis* contains so much material that it compresses almost the entire narrative of the eight finished books of the *Sphortias* into barely one paragraph. Thus the dense *Oratio parentalis* calls for much more scrutiny from both a historical and a literary viewpoint than it has hitherto received. In fact, it has hardly been granted any attention at all, despite having gone through seven incunabula editions.

A related composition presented here as a part of this Sforza-centred corpus is a laudatory poem written by Filelfo in 1464 on the occasion of Genoa's submission to the Duke of Milan's rule. This unedited *De Genuensium deditione* has never been studied, even though, besides mirroring various themes and thoughts that feature prominently in the *Sphortias*, the poem also displays an interesting attempt to lend the house of Sforza a dynastic aura, presenting the Duke's sons as worthy successors to their father.

As already noted, Filelfo's contemporary Galeotto Marzio first pointed out the various literary and metrical flaws that he perceived in the *Sphortias*. His initial letter was quite poised; however, upon receiving Filelfo's ferocious reply, Marzio wrote an all-out invective that, apart from its appraisal of the *Sphortias*, is also of great interest as an early example of humanist literary criticism. It contains, for instance, an assessment of the value of Greek literature and its study in a Latin environment, a debate very much alive in fifteenth-century Italy. The stinging exchange was later published in manuscript form by Marzio himself. Almost a century ago, Marzio's two letters were printed by László Juhász, who however omitted the Filelfian link between them and based his text on only one of the two manuscripts transmitting Marzio's letters. I am therefore presenting here for the first time the complete exchange in a critical edition, along with more complete source references, and with cross-references both to the other parts of the polemical exchange and to the *Sphortias* itself.

Francesco Sforza is of course also prominently present in Filelfo's huge epistolarium. However, only one letter is directed to Sforza himself, which moreover dates from long before the condottiere became the ruler of Milan. I have not reproduced here the numerous letters mentioning either Sforza or

the *Sphortias*, since these will shortly be available in my critical edition of Filelfo's *Collected Letters* (Edizioni dell'Orso, Alessandria 2015).

I have also refrained from adding to these critical editions an elaborate exposition of my own interpretation, or another rehearsal of the summary assessments produced in the last two centuries. I intend to publish my analysis in the forthcoming proceedings of a conference on humanist depictions of rulers in historiographical and biographical texts held at the Humboldt-Universität, Berlin in November last year, which offered me a stimulating occasion to present my ongoing research on the texts contained in the present collection. In the meantime, I hope that making this textual corpus available to scholars from different backgrounds without at once imposing an inevitably biased key for its interpretation will inspire new independent research. In order to unlock these understudied texts as efficiently as possible, I have equipped them with synopses and extensive indices, providing tools to further enhance such research.

This publication has its – remote – origins in a partial transcription of the *Sphortias* for the sake of a paper about Filelfo's handling of the epic storm topos that I presented at the IANLS conference in Uppsala in 2009. I was able to continue my research for the present collection thanks to a post-doctoral fellowship that I received in Leuven (2009-2013) for the preparation of my critical edition of Filelfo's letters. Remembering with pleasure those years and the opportunities they offered me, I am much obliged to Jan Papy and Dirk Sacré, who secured the KU Leuven research project that provided the *otium* for preparing these editions. I am also grateful to Marc Laureys and Karl August Neuhausen, who as the general editors of the *Noctes Neolatinae* enthusiastically welcomed my proposition to publish this volume in their series and patiently awaited its long-promised completion. I owe a special debt of gratitude to Rhoda Schnur and the Pegasus Foundation for their financial support. I wish to extend my warmest thanks to Guy Claessens, who during our sojourn at the Warburg Institute in the autumn of 2013 indulged in pleasantly protracted discussions about the philosophical passages in the *Oratio parentalis*; to Hester Schadee, who proofread my English prose and saved me from numerous infelicities; and to Tom Deneire, for his attentive reading of a first draft of my *Sphortias* text and his willingness to scrutinize in joint effort some of Filelfo's more opaque phrasings.

Jeroen De Keyser



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## INTRODUCTION

### 1. TRANSMISSION

#### 1.1. *Sphortias*

It is well known that Francesco Filelfo conceived the idea of writing his *Sphortias* fairly soon after Francesco Sforza became the ruler of Milan in 1450.<sup>1</sup> Filelfo wanted to sing the praises of the successor of his previous patron, Filippo Maria Visconti, and originally planned to write both a prose biography and an epic poem. The first trace of such an undertaking in Filelfo's letters (PhE·09.34),<sup>2</sup> dated 12 June 1451, is a telling one:

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<sup>1</sup> The best overview of Filelfo's life and work is the *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (DBI) entry by Paolo Viti (1997): [www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/francesco-filelfo\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/francesco-filelfo_(Dizionario-Biografico)) (last consulted 28 February 2015). Fundamental introductions are the collection of articles in R. Avesani et al. (ed.), *Francesco Filelfo nel Quinto Centenario della Morte. Atti del XVII Convegno di Studi Maceratesi (Tolentino, 27-30 settembre 1981)*, Padova 1986; and D. Robin, *Filelfo in Milan. Writings 1451-1477*, Princeton, NJ 1991. In the last two decades, several of Filelfo's works have been published in critical editions: F. Filelfo, *De psychagogia. Editio princeps dal Laurenziano 58,15*, ed. G. Cortassa, E.V. Maltese, Alessandria 1997; F. Filelfo, *Satyrae I (Decadi I-V)*, ed. S. Fiaschi, Roma 2005; F. Filelfo, *Dione Crisostomo, Captivitatem Ilii non fuisse. Traduzione latina di Francesco Filelfo*, ed. S. Leotta, Messina 2008; F. Filelfo, *Odes*, ed. and trans. D. Robin, Cambridge, MA 2009; *Platonis Euthyphron Francisco Filelfo interprete, Lysis Petro Candido Decembrio interprete*, ed. S. Martinelli Tempesta, Firenze 2009; J. De Keyser, "Solitari ma non soli. Traduzioni umanistiche della lettera *De vita solitaria* di Basilio di Cesarea," *Medioevo greco. Rivista di storia e filologia bizantina*, 9, 2009, p. 53-83; F. Filelfo, *Traduzioni da Senofonte e Plutarco. Respublica Lacedaemoniorum, Agesilaus, Lycurgus, Numa, Cyri Paedia*, ed. J. De Keyser, Alessandria 2012; F. Filelfo, *On Exile (Commentationes Florentinae de exilio)*, ed. J. De Keyser, trans. W.S. Blanchard, Cambridge, MA 2013; J. De Keyser, "Early Modern Latin Translations of the Apocryphal *De Sacerdotio Christi*," *Lias. Journal of Early Modern Intellectual Culture and Its Sources*, 40(1), 2013, p. 29-82; F. Filelfo, *Collected Letters (Epistolarum Libri XLV/III)*, ed. J. De Keyser, Alessandria 2015. Recent studies of the *Sphortias* are G. Bottari, "La Sphortias," in Avesani, *Quinto Centenario*, p. 459-493; G. Ianziti, *Humanistic Historiography under the Sforzas: Politics and Propaganda in Fifteenth-century Milan*, Oxford 1988 (esp. p. 61-80); D. Robin, *Filelfo in Milan*, p. 56-81; C. Kallendorf, *The Other Virgil. 'Pessimistic' Readings of the Aeneid in Early Modern Culture*, Oxford 2007, p. 17-66; Th. Burkard, "Kannte der Humanismus „den anderen Vergil“? Zur two voices-Theorie in der lateinischen Literatur der frühen Neuzeit," in: *Vestigia Vergiliana. Festschrift für Werner Suerbaum*, Berlin 2010, p. 31-50.

<sup>2</sup> All references to Filelfo's epistolarium are to my edition of Filelfo's *Collected Letters*, first to the book and then to the sequence of the letters within that book. As such PhE·9.34 is to be understood as letter 34 of Book 9, etc.

Ego res Italicas versu heroico sum aggressus, praesertim eas quae Sphortianae laudis intersunt. Itaque poeseos huius inscriptio est *Sphortias*. In libros viginti quattuor universa materia distributa est. Ita enim mihi scribendum occurrit, ni dies sententiam mutarit. Primum librum absolvimus. Nunc secundum elucubramus. Quaeram ex te aliqua ad veritatis argumentum, si tibi id facere licuerit. Nolim enim errore duci; quod faciat oportet, qui rumoribus credit.

Initially, therefore, Filelfo planned a poem of twenty-four books (bespeaking Homeric ambitions), and at once stressed his intention to present a historically correct account of Sforza's rise to power after the demise of his father-in-law. In a letter of 9 October 1452, Filelfo informed his son Senofonte that he was engaged in the composition of two works: the *Sphortias* and a history *De vita et rebus gestis Francisci Sphortiae*. The latter seems never to have materialised: while Filelfo proceeded steadily with the epic poem, he apparently gave up on the prose biography – perhaps recuperating, in the end, the gathered materials in the *Oratio parentalis*.

The *Sphortias* was supposed to cover the period from 13 August 1447 to 25 March 1450, but the developments described in the eight completed books only bring us to the end of 1448. Filelfo gradually downsized his epic ambitions: from twenty-four books to sixteen books by 1456, as we can see in a letter from that year to Antonio Beccadelli (il Panormita), where he mentions “Libri futuri sunt sexdecim.” When Filelfo revised his epistolarium twenty years later, he edited the sentence into an even more modest “Libri futuri sunt quattuordecim, ut spero.” (PhE·13.32)

After a first set of four books had been finished by 1456 and another set of four in 1460, hardly any progress seems to have been made after Sforza's demise in March 1466. Filelfo's efforts on the *Sphortias* saw a last recovery in 1473, when he finished book 9. Of book 10 we have only a tiny fragment, and book 11, whose composition Filelfo had anticipated in 1460, remained unfinished as well. Since the eponymous hero had passed away, it may seem remarkable that Filelfo continued the composition at all. However, the addressee of the *Sphortias* was not Sforza himself, or at least not Sforza alone: handsomely produced copies of the poem were sent out to rulers all over Italy, as an almost overt application for a better position at another court.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The *Sphortias* is mentioned in numerous letters (for which I refer to my critical edition of Filelfo's *Collected Letters*, as in n. 1): PhE·09.34, 10.31, 10.40, 10.47, 11.01, 11.19, 11.31, (13.13), 12.60, 13.32, 15.31, 15.42, 15.47, 16.11, 16.34, 18.46, 18.47, 18.49, 18.51, 18.53, 18.57, 19.02, 19.06, 19.07, 19.10, 19.12, 19.14, 20.06, (20.10), 20.18, 20.22, 24.01, 25.20, 26.01, 27.03, 27.29, 27.34, 27.36, 27.38, 28.13, 30.08, 36.30, 36.35, 38.05, 38.16, 40.14.

Filelfo's unfinished *Sphortias* has never been printed before, with the exception of book 3, which was published as an appendix to Diana Robin's Filelfo monograph in 1991. We have two manuscripts containing the first four books:<sup>4</sup>

- F** Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 33.33, ff. 1r-90v  
**V** Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 2921, ff. 31r-97v

Furthermore, five manuscripts contain books 1 through 8:

- A** Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, H 97 sup., ff. 1r-129v  
**B** Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, R 12 sup., ff. 12v-101v  
**T** Milano, Biblioteca Trivulziana, 731, pp. 1-312  
**N** Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 8125, ff. 1r-148v  
**P** Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 8126, ff. 1r-211v<sup>5</sup>

These are all carefully produced manuscripts that contain the *Sphortias* alone and originate as dedication copies, except for the Vatican manuscript and the second Ambrosiana copy (**B**), a miscellanea codex that turns out to be a straightforward apograph of the Trivulziana witness **T**, faithfully seconding the latter's particular readings:<sup>6</sup>

- (v. 2.294) ulla **cet.** illa **T B**  
(v. 2.490) crediderant **cet.** crediderat **T B**  
(v. 3.287) circumsepta **cet.** circumspecta **T B**  
(v. 5.338) terrasque **cet.** caelosque **T B**  
(v. 8.771) hostes **cet.** omnes **T B**

Only in very few instances did the copyist realise the error present in his model and intervene, restoring the correct reading or not:

- (v. 1.776) detur **B<sup>pc</sup>** **cet.** detior **T B<sup>ac</sup>**  
(v. 5.786) nullique **B<sup>pc</sup>** **cet.** nulloque **T B<sup>ac</sup>**  
(v. 6.375) nec **cet.** ac **T** vel **B**

<sup>4</sup> Manuscripts of the *Sphortias* with references in Kallendorf, *Other Virgil* (as in n. 1), p. 228-230.

<sup>5</sup> The folia numeration erroneously jumps from f. 189 to f. 200.

<sup>6</sup> All verse and line numbers cited in this chapter are to the editions of the respective works in this volume. Abbreviations used both here and in the edition are: *ac* = *ante correctionem* (before correction); *add.* = *addidit* / *addiderunt* (text added); *cet.* = *ceteri* (all other witnesses); *marg.* = *in margine* (marginal note); *om.* = *omittit* / *omittunt* (text missing in one of more witnesses); *pc* = *post correctionem* (after correction); *ras* = *in rasura* (text written over an erased original); *s.l.* = *supra lineam* (interlinear addition); *scripsi* (my emendation).

Furthermore, we can read Filelfo's fragmentary autograph copy, which is the only one to transmit parts of books 9 to 11, in a Casanatense codex, and part of book 4 (4.62-338) in a Marciana miscellanea manuscript:

**C** Roma, Biblioteca Casanatense, 415, ff. 1r-108r

**M** Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Lat. XIV.262 (4719), ff. 103r-106r

The Casanatense autograph has been examined in a specific study by Giacomo Giri, to whose exemplary descriptions and analysis I refer for more details concerning the material status of this valuable witness.<sup>7</sup>

In the Marciana manuscript, the verses "ex quarto *Sfortiados*" (4.62-338) are dedicated to "Karolum de Gonzaga, marchionem Mantuae", who happens to be the protagonist of this very passage, which describes Gonzaga's love affair with a certain Lyda. They are followed by a dedicatory letter to the same (f. 108v) and by a *Heroides*-style poem (f. 109r-111r), allegedly written by the same Lyda to her absent lover, that is also transmitted as *carmen* 5.4 in Filelfo's *Odes* collection.<sup>8</sup> Both verse compositions seem to be (rather corrupt) transcripts from a dedication copy that Filelfo sent to Gonzaga in July 1454 (as the subscription of the ode reads "Ex Mediolano XI Kalendas Augustas MCCCCLIII"). Interestingly, they show us both texts in a more primitive redaction than we find in all major witnesses. It is certainly no coincidence that the first of the following major omissions in **M** was inserted only in a second instance in the autograph Casanatense manuscript: probably these verses were added to corroborate the argument or, in the second and third of these examples, to help attain the precise number of 800 verses that each book of the *Sphortias* comprises.

(v. 4.142-144) Sola quidem ... deosque *om.* **M** *add. marg.* **C**<sup>pc</sup>

(v. 4.272-282) Quem non ... cathaenae *om.* **M**

(v. 4.300-305) Maeonis Alciden ... amanti *om.* **M**

The two witnesses containing books 1-4 share various variants:

(v. 2.136) fremibundi **cet.** fremebundi **F V**

(v. 2.418) quicumque **cet.** qui stipe **F V**

(v. 4.275) nimio **cet.** undanti **F V**

(v. 4.465) ut **cet.** *om.* **F V**

(v. 4.637) Foscarus **cet.** Foscaris **F V**

<sup>7</sup> G. Giri, "Il codice autografo della *Sforziade* di Francesco Filelfo," in *Atti e memorie della R. Deputazione di storia patria per le Marche*, 5, 1901, p. 421-457.

<sup>8</sup> Edition and translation of this poem in Robin, *Odes* (as in n. 1), p. 302-311.

However, a series of particular errors proves that one cannot be the other's source:

- (v. 1.655) devicto **V cet.** devictos **F**
- (v. 2.40) nostrique **V cet.** nostri **F**
- (v. 2.110) cui **V cet.** qui **F**
- (v. 2.316) ducit **V cet.** dicit **F**
- (v. 2.545) ampla **V cet.** alta **F**
- (v. 4.374) quis **V cet.** quid **F**
  
- (v. 2.70) quancunque **F cet.** quantumque **V**
- (v. 2.78) furentis **cet.** furentes **F T P** feroces **V**
- (v. 2.300) vir magne **F cet.** Francisce **V**
- (v. 2.380) horrendum **F cet.** horribilem **V**
- (v. 3.620) sperantque **F cet.** superantque **V**
- (v. 4.73) sentit **F cet.** sentis **V**
- (v. 4.370) sperare **F cet.** superare **V**
- (v. 4.393) Ticini **F cet.** Ticinius **V**
- (v. 4.451) Lari **F cet.** Larius **V**
- (v. 4.731) revocatve **F cet.** revocatque **V**

The variants shared by both these twin manuscripts might in part be due to Filelfo's original text itself. Although **F** is a neat dedication copy and the Vatican miscellanea does not accord with Filelfo's orthographical preferences, **V** is probably the more relevant witness of both, since it arguably contains books 1-4 in their most primitive version: indeed, **V**'s *feroces* versus *furentes*, its *Francisce* versus *vir magne* and *horribilem* versus *horrendum* may be not copyist's errors but authorized variants, that is, readings that were changed by Filelfo in his author's copy after the production of (the source of) **V** and before **F** was copied.

The manuscripts **T** and **P** occupy a middle position between the more primitive four-book redaction, as transmitted by **F** and **V** alone on one hand, and the more recent witnesses **A** and **N** on the other:

- (v. 2.110) auris **cet.** aures **F V T P**
- (v. 3.235) subeuntis **cet.** subeuntes **F V T<sup>ac</sup> P<sup>ac</sup>**
- (v. 3.247) superbus **cet.** tremendus **F V T<sup>ac</sup> P<sup>ac</sup>**

In numerous cases the original reading of **T** and **P** must have been identical to the one displayed by **F** and **V**, while **A** and **N** have the corrected text as their first and unaltered reading. Quite often, the corrections present in **T** and **P** are present in the Casanatense autograph as well:

- (v. 1.581) Tanarus **cet.** Tanager **F V T P<sup>ac</sup> A<sup>ac</sup> C<sup>ac</sup>**
- (v. 1.716) iam **cet.** nunc **F V T<sup>ac</sup> P<sup>ac</sup> C<sup>ac</sup>**

(v. 1.739) fiunto **cet.** fiant **F V N<sup>ac</sup> C<sup>ac</sup>**

The same pattern can be seen in books 5-8, where **F** and **V** are absent. In various passages, **T** and **P** have a correction in rasura, and so has **C**:

(v. 5.15) tribuens sua **T<sup>ras</sup> P<sup>ras</sup> C<sup>ras</sup>**

(v. 6.151) omnis credo equidem **T<sup>ras</sup> P<sup>ras</sup> C<sup>ras</sup>**

(v. 6.472) Brixiades **T<sup>ras</sup> P<sup>ras</sup> C<sup>ras</sup>**

(v. 6.723) vaesana **T<sup>ras</sup> P<sup>ras</sup> C<sup>ras</sup>**

(v. 8.676) Geryonis tremula sub **T<sup>ras</sup> P<sup>ras</sup> C<sup>ras</sup>**

In some cases, the original reading is still present in **T**, although it is possible that Filelfo while correcting both **P** and **T** – which most probably originated as a pair – accidentally skipped a correction that he intended to make in **T** as well:

(v. 6.99) ita **T<sup>ras</sup> P<sup>ras</sup> sic T<sup>ac</sup>**

(v. 6.368) mihi vendico **P<sup>ras</sup> C<sup>ras</sup> occupavero T**

In book 7, both **T** and **P** systematically have the spelling *Tachynus*, while **A N** have *Tachinus* (**C** is lacking here). Only in one passage do **T** and **P** display an unaltered variant that was subsequently altered in rasura in the three other witnesses:

(v. 6.746) loquendi **A<sup>ras</sup> N<sup>ras</sup> C<sup>ras</sup> tacendi T P**

An interesting case is the altering of *diuturni* to *diu tracti* in 4.50:

(v. 1.50) diu tracti **P<sup>pc</sup> A<sup>pc</sup> N diuturni F V T P<sup>ac</sup> A<sup>ac</sup>**

This is indeed one of the passages that were challenged by Galeotto Marzio, who objected to Filelfo's prosody of *diuturnus*. It may therefore be assumed that all full copies of books 1-8 were copied before 31 October 1464, when Filelfo replied to Marzio's objections, except for **N**, which has *diu tracti* without any traces of correction (once again, **C** is lacking here). This thesis is confirmed by the fact that **N** alone has the marginal note "amphimacer (pes)" in all five instances where the word *impedimenta* is used, which reflects Filelfo's reply "nec a me correpta est tertia syllaba, cum *impedimenta* meminim, sed amphimacro sum usus" to Marzio's criticism about his prosody of *impedimenta*. It is further corroborated by the extended marginal note, in **N** alone, concerning the use of *Asty* in 1.494, which was another point of criticism by Marzio.<sup>9</sup>

It would therefore seem reasonable to base a critical edition of the *Sphortias* mainly on **N**, a codex that was copied by Fabrizio Elfiteo, a trusted scribe of

<sup>9</sup> See *infra*, p. 308, 321-322 and 347 for the discussion about *impedimenta*; and p. 309, 328, 346 and 361 for *Asty*.

Filelfo's, who identified himself at the end of **N**.<sup>10</sup> Wherever the readings of **N** confirm those displayed by (the consensus of) **T P A C**, this is of course the obvious course of action. There is a double problem, however. Because **C** is incomplete, it is at times impossible to assess whether a variant presented by **N** alone reflects a deliberate intervention by the author (since we cannot see it confirmed in the one autograph copy, which in all other instances is flawless). That first problem is enhanced by the fact that, generally speaking, **N** is the least faithful of all complete copies of books 1-8. It is the only witness repeatedly skipping single verses and it has numerous unique readings that without any doubt are errors introduced by its scribe, not variants authorized by Filelfo.

A second issue is the fact that the autograph **C** further blurs the picture by being orthographically inconsistent. While on the one hand it has in many instances been meticulously corrected, mirroring the orthographical and other authorized corrections that we see displayed by **T** and **P** as well, it also bears some traces of Filelfo's changing orthographical preferences. For example, in **C** Filelfo a few times changed *somnus* into *sopnus*, the spelling he advocated and used from 1473 on, yet he left untouched many other instances, and did not change *sagitta* into *sagitta* either, while he usually applied both spellings in manuscripts that he had his scribes produce from 1473 on.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, the fragments of books 9 and 11, which are transmitted by **C** alone, unlike the previous books in the same codex seem not to have been thoroughly revised and corrected, as in these fragmentary three last books we find the spellings *Cencrius* and *Abdua*, which in books 1-8 were systematically changed to *Cencrius* and *Addua*, not only in **C**, but also in **T** and **P**. In other words, we are faced with an autograph witness that, although flawless in its textual readings, clearly does not always respect Filelfo's final orthographical preferences.

The autograph copy is also severely mutilated: out of the full 800 verses of each book, **C** in its current, botched composition contains only 387 verses of book 1, 333 of book 2, 312 of book 3, 470 of book 4, 497 of book 5, 681 of

<sup>10</sup> See the *DBI* entry by N. Covini (1993): [www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/fabrizio-elfiteo\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/fabrizio-elfiteo_(Dizionario-Biografico)); and for his activity as copyist for Filelfo M. Zaggia, "Codici milanesi del Quattrocento all'Ambrosiana: per il periodo dal 1450 al 1476," in *Nuove ricerche su codici in scrittura latina dell'Ambrosiana. Atti del convegno (Milano, 6-7 ottobre 2005)*, ed. M. Ferrari, M. Navoni, Milano 2007, p. 331-384: p. 374-378. It seems to have escaped notice that Elfiteo's *Elegiarum libellus* (Universitat de València, Biblioteca Històrica, ms. 447) is an autograph as well. The entire codex can be consulted online: <http://trobes.uv.es/record=b1936995>.

<sup>11</sup> See Filelfo, *Traduzioni da Senofonte* (as in n. 1), p. xxxix; and the discussion in PhE:36.31 of 10 April 1473.

book 6, 419 of book 7, and 716 of book 8. On the other hand we have in **N** a manuscript that arguably reflects a subsequent stage in the revision of the text, yet it is unfortunately the most corrupt of our witnesses.

Given this complex and somewhat blurred situation, the most sensible editorial option seemed to me not to do what one would normally deem inevitable, that is to respect *ad litteram* the autograph copy's readings, since in almost half of the text of books 1-8 this approach is unfeasible on account of the mutilated character of this autograph. Using **C** as the ultimate guide would necessarily mean producing a text based to a large extent on extrapolation and speculation. Since **N**'s particular readings are not entirely reliable, I have preferred the safer option of following the consensus of **T**, **P** and **A**. All particular readings that separate **N** from the other witnesses are recorded in the critical apparatus. Even when in theory they might reflect a deliberate intervention, I rejected them because it is impossible to know whether such an intervention was Filelfo's or Elfiteo's, a scribe who allowed himself – as we will see *infra*, concerning the *Oratio parentalis* – quite a few liberties. However, in order to print a text orthographically as consistent as possible, I have made some minor corrections regarding spelling in books 9-11, where **C** apparently did not go through the same careful orthographical revision process as was the case in the preceding, and completed, eight books.

Fabrizio Elfiteo's close connection with Filelfo finds another confirmation in the Casanatense manuscript. Giri already drew attention to the fact that the folia 8r-10v have been written by another hand, and surmises that this part of the text (4.494-719) was added during Filelfo's lifetime. In fact, the scribe who wrote this insert is no other than Fabrizio Elfiteo. The copyists of the other manuscripts that were commissioned and corrected by Filelfo himself can be identified as well. Pagano da Rho, another of Filelfo's trusted scribes, copied **F**, **P** and **A**.<sup>12</sup> As I have argued elsewhere, **T** is in a hand that can be recog-

<sup>12</sup> For an overview of Pagano's activity for Filelfo see A.C. de la Mare, "Script and Manuscripts in Milan under the Sforzas," in *Milano nell'età di Ludovico il Moro, Atti del convegno internazionale (Milano, 28 febbraio-4 marzo 1983)*, Milano 1983, 397-408: p. 402, n. 24; and Zaggia, "Codici milanesi" (as in n. 10), p. 358-371. Zaggia lists as copies of Filelfo's works transcribed by Pagano: Paris, BnF, lat. 8126 (*Sphortias*), Par. lat. 8127 (*Carmina*), Par. lat. 8129 (*Satyrae*), Par. lat. 7023 (Hippocrates translations); Florence, BNC, II.II.70 (*Commentationes Florentinae de exilio*), Brussels, KBR 15584 (*Apophthegmata Laconica*); Vatican, Urb. lat. 1181 (*Consolatio de obitu Valerii*); part of Seville, Columbina, 7.1.13 (Varia); Laur. Plut. 33.33 (*Sphortias*), Plut. 53.6 (*Convivia Mediolanensia*); Cesena, Malatestiana S.33.4 (*De iocis et seriis*) and S.33.5 (*Carmina*); Ambr. H 97 sup. (*Sphortias*). I can add myself: Reg. lat. 1594 (*Apophthegmata Laconica*), Vat. lat. 11518 (*Carmina*); Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Hamilton 511 (*Carmina*); and Paris, Arsenal 741 (*Commentationes florentinae de exilio*), for which see J. De Keyser, "The Transmission of Francesco

nized in numerous other manuscripts produced under Filelfo's supervision and that, thanks to archival information about a dedication copy of his *Cyri Paedia* translation, can be identified as Filelfo's nephew Francesco da Tolentino.<sup>13</sup>

In the present edition, I have also included Filelfo's marginal notes to the text. The longer ones mostly concern justifications of metrical oddities, while in other cases these annotations are quite helpful for the identification of some of the poem's characters.

In book 9, I have indicated the lacuna that has rightly been noted by Giri after v. 245, yet in the absence of precise knowledge of the length of the lacuna, I have pragmatically continued the verse numeration. I have done the same after v. 256 of book 11. In book 3, I have included in the apparatus the readings adopted by Diana Robin. I should note that because of several errors in her verse numbering, from v. 95 on my numbering diverges from hers.

The paragraphing of the text is Filelfo's and reflects the consensus of all prime witnesses, which is in this respect unproblematic.

## 1.2. *De Genuensium deditioe*

An all but ignored Sforza-related composition by Filelfo is this unpublished poem of 550 verses written in 1464. Scholarship has only paid attention to one of the three manuscripts transmitting it, namely the dedication copy (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 8128, a codex further containing Antonio Cornazzano's *Carmen de viri militis institutione*).<sup>14</sup>

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Filelfo's *Commentationes Florentinae de exilio*," *Interpres. Rivista di studi quattrocenteschi*, 30, 2011, p. 7-29). Finally also Paris, BnF, lat. 16684 (*Consolatio de obitu Valerii*), for which see I. François, "Towards a Critical Edition of Francesco Filelfo's *Consolatio ad Iacobum Antonium Marcellum de obitu Valerii filii*," *Aevum: Rassegna di Scienze Storiche Linguistiche e Filologiche* (forthcoming).

<sup>13</sup> J. De Keyser, "I codici filelfiani della Biblioteca Trivulziana," *Libri & Documenti*, 39, 2013, p. 91-109; p. 103-105. Copies of Filelfo's writings copied by this scribe are in my opinion Triv. 797 (*Apophthegmata Laconica*); Triv. 800 (*Oratio parentalis*), Laur. Plut. 53.10 (*Oratio parentalis*), Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Lat. qu. 563 (*Oratio parentalis*); Ambr. A 209 inf. (*Cyri Paedia*), Urb. lat. 410 (*Cyri Paedia*), Urb. lat. 701 (*Carmina*); Urb. lat. 1182 (*Consolatio de obitu Valerii*), part of Vat. lat. 1790 (*Consolatio de obitu Valerii*); Bodleian, Lat. misc. e. 81 (Letter to Pope Paul II, PhE:23.01).

<sup>14</sup> A.C. de la Mare, "Script and Manuscripts" (as in n. 12), p. 407 wrongly identified the poem in Par. lat. 8128 as the *Sphortias*.

In the Paris copy this poem in elegiac distichs bears no real title, but its dedication to “Divis principibus Francisco Sphortiae et Blancae Mariae Vicecomitibus” is followed by a motto stating that “Res humanas administrari divina providentia et recte iusteque viventibus felicia esse omnia atque fortunata.” No other witnesses of the poem have been studied. However, Filelfo included the poem in book 8 of his collection of epigrams and other occasional poetry *De iocis et seriis*, which is transmitted in the autograph manuscript that is now Biblioteca Ambrosiana, G 93 inf. and contains almost the entire collection. There, the poem is preceded by the “Res humanas...” motto alone.<sup>15</sup> A third copy, omitting both title and motto, can be read in a miscellanea codex of the Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea in Ferrara, where it is preceded by a copy, in the same hand, of a letter written by Filelfo on 15 September 1464 to the then newly elected Pope Paul II (PhE·23.01).<sup>16</sup>

Filelfo’s letter collection yields some further information about this poem. A letter sent to Ludovico Casella on 31 July 1464 (PhE·22.24) ends with the notice that Filelfo is sending his correspondent a copy of his “Carmen quo Genuensium in hunc principem nova deditio continetur.” Furthermore, in the long letter of 30 October 1464 (PhE·24.01) to Alberto Parisi that is Filelfo’s reply to Galeotto Marzio’s criticism of the alleged metrical and poetical flaws of the *Sphortias*, Filelfo, when expounding on the correct prosody of the word *diuturnus*, cites his own use of the word in v. 354 of this very poem as a case in point:<sup>17</sup>

Quod autem ad diuturnum spectat, quid ego et de prima et de secunda syllaba servandum existimem, potuisti ex illo carmine liquido assequi quod ad proximum mensem Iunium *De Genuensium deditio* in hunc principem nostrum scripsimus. Ita enim scriptum est:

Et servate fidem, quae sola tuetur et urbis  
munus et imperii. Res diuturna fides.

This passage permits us not only to identify the poem’s title as *De Genuensium deditio* (which we can see paraphrased in PhE·22.24), but also to put a date on its creation: June 1464. In the spring of that year Genoa indeed surrendered to Francesco Sforza. Filelfo describes the transition of rule and mentions the embassy that arrived on 1 June 1464 with the purpose of

<sup>15</sup> See for *De iocis et seriis* and this witness in particular M. Zaggia, “Indice del *De iocis et seriis* Filelfiano con l’incipitario delle raccolte latine,” *Rinascimento* (Second series), 34, 1994, p. 157-235.

<sup>16</sup> A full description of the Ferrara manuscript is available online: [http://manus.iccu.sbn.it//opac\\_SchedaScheda.php?ID=51419](http://manus.iccu.sbn.it//opac_SchedaScheda.php?ID=51419).

<sup>17</sup> See p. 323 in this volume.

solemnly vowing loyalty to Sforza in yet another letter (PhE·22.20, 13 June 1464):

Id quod Kalendis Iuniis factum est, circiter quintam noctis horam, cum Pandulphus in sopnum altiolem solutus esset; quo ipso die legati publice a Genuensibus missi Mediolanum vigintiquattuor (duodecim ex ordine optimatum et duodecim plebei) de fide perpetuo servanda in manibus nostrorum principum, Francisci Sphortiae et Blancae Mariae, sollemniter et magna cum omnium laetitia atque celebritate iurati sunt.

The description of this vow-taking ceremony is indeed the core and culmination of *De Genuensium deditioe*. Interestingly, quite a few parallels can be drawn to the *Sphortias*, starting with an echo of the epic poem's opening verse ("Prisca vocent alios") in v. 35 ("Prisca quid in mediam referam monimenta?"). The major difference is that, while the *Sphortias* only offers an unfinished description of Sforza's conquering power in Milan, in this poem we see the Duke depicted and lavishly praised as the uncontested and triumphant ruler of the city. In describing the role of Sforza's family, and of his sons as worthy successors to their father, Filelfo also seems to attempt to endow the house of Sforza with a dynastic aura.

However, the entente between Genoa and Francesco Sforza was short-lived, as Filelfo himself describes much later in a letter to Pope Sixtus IV (PhE·48.16, 21 April 1477), where he chides the defecting Genoese for being capricious and unreliable:

Videbantur igitur et indubitato erant pacata omnia, cum Genuenses, ut sunt semper, vel in secundissimis rebus suis, immutandae fortunae cupidissimi, quam paulo ante fidem et publice et quamsanctissime sunt iurati, persistendi in eodem statu, quo se humanissimo principi Francisco Sphortiae sponte ultroque obstrinxerant, eam mox nulla vel iusticiae vel simulatae saltem honestatis ullius causa profanantes, a Sphortiano hoc imperio nefarrie defecerunt, secuti ii scilicet patritum avitumque ingenium ac morem, utpote qui diutius quiescere nunquam nec didicerunt nec pati possunt. Magnus profecto terror ex tam repentina tantae tamque potentis urbis immutatione cunctos invaserat. Trepidabant, tumultuabantur omnia, cum ne caeteri quoque populi, Genuensium secuti insaniam, in libertatem se vendicarent, non ab re timeretur.

These subsequent developments might partly explain the very limited circulation that the poem seems to have enjoyed. As already indicated it is preserved in only three manuscripts:

- F** Ferrara, Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea, Cl. II. 135, ff. 125r-133v
- A** Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, G 93 inf., ff. 168r-182r

**P** Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 8128, ff. 1r-18v

Compared to the Paris dedication copy, the Ambrosiana autograph displays a few editorial interventions, some of which clearly occurred when Filelfo was in the process of copying his text, as is illustrated by these two passages:

(v. 122) *alias atque alias* **A** *aliam atque aliam* **P F**

(v. 379) *Illyricos* **A**<sup>pc</sup> *Illyrios* **P F A**<sup>ac</sup>

Along with *Illyricos*, other alterations often also reflect the typical orthographical preferences of the later Filelfo, e.g. *quimpotius* versus *quin potius* in **P F** (vv. 33 and 519), and *Pberdinandus* versus *Ferdinandus* in **P F** (v. 93).

With the lone exception of *nil probitate prius* for *quantus in arma foret* in v. 56, **F** sides with the editorial stage presented by **P**, albeit with quite a few particular errors, making it the most corrupt of the three witnesses. However, the *solum pulchram* (v. 121) metathesis in **P** alone and the *iste* (v. 474) in rasura in **P** suffice as proof that **F** is not an apograph of **P**, making it a relevant independent *tertium comparationis* besides the two prime witnesses.

In two cases I have opted for the reading presented by both **P** and **F**, as in these instances **A** seems to display an error rather than a deliberate editorial intervention. In v. 411, *pendebas in illo* is more attractive than **A**'s *pendebas in illum*, and given the apostrophe in the preceding verses, the second person *sonas* in v. 444 is more logical than the third person *sonat*, which seems based on an implicit misreading of the ablative *lingua* in the same verse as nominative.

The marginal glosses (absent in **F**) are given in a separate apparatus. Unless specified, all entries are present in both **P** and **A**.

### 1.3. *Oratio parentalis*

On 9 March 1467, one year after Francesco Sforza's passing away at the age of sixty-four, a memorial service was held in the Duomo of Milan, for which the Duke's body was exhumed. On this occasion Francesco Filelfo read his *Oratio parentalis de divi Francisci Sphortiae Medialanensis ducis felicitate*. Perhaps he read only a partial draft of the text as we know it, which at almost 18,000 words would have required approximately three hours to recite, but we know for a fact that Filelfo did deliver an oration because we have an eye

witness record.<sup>18</sup> The *Oratio parentalis* combines an elaborate biography of the Duke with a description of his exemplary life, as well as an exposition on the immortality of the soul, demonstrating why celebration of an outstanding, happy life is more fitting than continued mourning for the loss of a great leader.

Filelfo's *Oratio parentalis* is transmitted by fourteen manuscripts:<sup>19</sup>

- U** Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Lat. qu. 563, ff. 1r-115r
- Q** Brescia, Biblioteca Civica Queriniana, B.VI.4,  
ff. 184r-193v, 105r-112v, 97r-104v, 89r-96v, 129r-v
- A** Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Ashb. 1016, ff. 1r-64v
- F** Firenze, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Plut. 53.10, ff. 1r-106v
- H** Holkham Hall, Library of the Earl of Leicester, cod. 490, ff. 105v-123r
- L** London, British Library, Add. 22026, ff. 108r-155v
- C** Milano, Biblioteca Trivulziana, 684, ff. 1r-77r
- D** Milano, Biblioteca Trivulziana, 799, ff. 1r-84v
- E** Milano, Biblioteca Trivulziana, 800, ff. 1r-81v
- Y** New Haven, Yale University, Beinecke Library, Marston 18, ff. 2r-82r
- N** Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 7810, ff. 5r-39v
- T** Regensburg, Fürst Thurn und Taxis Hofbibliothek, 176, ff. 51v-74v
- R** Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 1583, ff. 2r-74r
- M** Venezia, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Marc. lat. XI.88 (3818), ff. 1r-79r

Furthermore, the *Oratio parentalis* was printed seven times in the age of the incunabula:

- P** ed. L. Pachel & U. Scinzenzeler, Milano, 1483/1484  
(ISTC ip00607000), ff. 2v-27r
- ed. J. Britannicus, Brescia, 18 June 1488 (ISTC ip00608000), ff. 2v-23v
- ed. B. de Zanis, Venezia, 28 March 1491 (ISTC ip00609000), ff. 2v-22r
- ed. Ph. Pincius, Venezia, 14 October 1492 (ISTC ip00610000), ff. 2r-11v
- ed. Ph. Pincius, Venezia, 31 May/1 June 1496 (ISTC ip00611000), ff. 2r-11v
- ed. J. Amerbach, Basel, not after 1498 (ISTC ip00612000), ff. 3r-25v

<sup>18</sup> Scholarship on the *Oratio parentalis* is almost non-existent, apart from the seminal study by G. Castellani, "Francesco Filelfo's *Orationes et Opuscula* (1483/1484). The first example of quotation marks in print?" *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch*, 83, 2008, p. 52-80: p. 66-80 (with a reference to Marsilio Andreasi's letter to Ludovico Gonzaga describing the ceremony in n. 63).

<sup>19</sup> Listed by J.M. McManamon, *An Incipitarium of Funeral Orations and a Smattering of Other Panegyric Literature from the Italian Renaissance (ca. 1350-1550)*, Chicago, Loyola University, <http://luc.edu/media/lucedu/history/pdfs/Incipit%20Catalogue.pdf>, p. 853-854.

According to the dedicatory letter, the collection of Filelfo's *Orationes* published posthumously in 1483/84 (**P**) was compiled by Filelfo himself in May 1481, only a few months before his death.<sup>20</sup> In the first sentence of this letter to Duke Ludovico Maria Sforza, Filelfo mentions the *Oratio parentalis*, which he once held for the Duke's father, whose memory he professes to cherish:

Quam *Parentalem* quondam pro nobilissimo illo principe, patre tuo, Francisco Sphortia, *orationem* habuissem, idcirco ad te dedi, quia multa in ea leguntur quae ad illius laudem et immortalitatem pertinent; cuius me studiosissimum esse non ignoras. (**P**, f. 1r)

The manuscripts now in Holkham Hall (**H**) and Paris (**N**) descend from **P** or from one of the subsequent reprints:

- (l. 22) vitam **P H N om. cet.**
- (l. 41) atque acerbissimum **P H N om. cet. add. D<sup>pc</sup>**
- (l. 376) superiore **cet. proximo P H N add. D<sup>pc</sup>**
- (l. 601) quare **cet. qua quidem re P H N quidem add. D<sup>pc</sup>**
- (l. 601) Brixianorumque defectione continuo equites quadringenti  
ex Monte Claro **cet. om. P H N Q**
- (l. 631) munitiones **cet. monitiones P H N**
- (l. 697) secum **cet. cum eo P H N add. D<sup>pc</sup>**
- (l. 900) perhumane **cet. perhumaniter P H N D<sup>pc</sup>**
- (l. 1145) periissent **cet. perissent P H N D<sup>pc</sup>**
- (l. 1293) amitae **cet. materterae P H N D<sup>pc</sup>**
- (l. 1321) Rubiconem **cet. Rubicona P H N D<sup>pc</sup>**

As these examples illustrate, the Trivulziana manuscript **D** has been collated with a printed edition, thus becoming the only manuscript to display, after correction, some of the orthographical and idiomatic preferences that are typical of the 'late' Filelfo, that is, variations that Filelfo introduced systematically in the revision of (for example) his letter collection. In the final redaction of the epistolarium, which we can read in manuscript 873 of the Biblioteca Trivulziana,<sup>21</sup> we find – and this is typical of this stage of Filelfo's development alone – the systematic use of Greek accusatives in *-a* instead of *-em*, the use of a single *i* in forms like *perissent* instead of *periissent*, the substitution of *perhumane* with *perhumaniter* and of *(anno) superiore* with *proximo*, the addition of *vitam* to *agere*, etcetera.

<sup>20</sup> Castellani, "Orationes" (as in n. 18), gives an extensive description of this edition.

<sup>21</sup> See De Keyser, "I codici filelfiani" (as in n. 13), p. 106-109 for references concerning this most important manuscript.

While **P** has to be considered the reference text for the edition, since it reflects Filelfo's final redaction, it has to be weighed against the other sound witnesses, as in some cases its innovations are certainly due to an error: for instance the *qua quidem re* in l. 600 is untenable in the original text, but seems to originate in an attempt to make the sentence work again after a major omission in the next line had rendered it anacoluthic. That omission was probably caused by the *saut du même au même* from *Brixianorumque* to *Brixiam*, which is present in **Q** as well. While such an error is not unlikely to occur independently, there are some more indications that **P** descends from a copy in Filelfo's library that was the ultimate source of **Q** as well:

- (l. 159) cunctosque **cet.** cunctos **P Q**
- (l. 516) poene **cet.** pone **P Q**
- (l. 380) voluntati **Q**<sup>pc</sup> **cet.** voluntate **P Q**<sup>ac</sup>
- (l. 418) erantque **cet.** erant **P Q**
- (l. 431) locato **cet.** *om.* **P Q**

Apart from the apographs descending from the *editio princeps*, two more manuscripts can be eliminated: the Laurenziana's **A** is a (quite corrupt) apograph of the British Library's **L** (which is far from flawless itself), and the Vatican witness **R** descends from the Marciana's **M**. Besides their numerous particular errors they maintain those typical of their models:

- (l. 8) cunctis **cet.** omnibus **M R**
- (l. 43) lapidei plane **cet.** plane lapidei **M R**
- (l. 61) sempiternum **cet.** summum **M R**
- (l. 252) virum belli gloria insignem **cet.** *om.* **M R**
- (l. 286) retardatus repressusque **cet.** repressus retardatusque **M R**
- (l. 881) apostolique legati **cet.** *om.* **M R**
- (l. 31) sui sibi conscius **cet.** conscius sui sibi **L A**
- (l. 64) cuiuspiam **cet.** *om.* **L A**
- (l. 307) patri **cet.** tibi **L A**
- (l. 340) sublaturus **cet.** sublevaturus **L A**
- (l. 421) iussu **cet.** iussus **L A**
- (l. 421) fuerat **cet.** *om.* **L A**

Furthermore, **L** has a twin in **T**:<sup>22</sup>

- (l. 283) natus annos **cet.** annos natus **L A T**
- (l. 380) Iohannae **cet.** *om.* **L A T**
- (l. 414) adversus **cet.** contra **L A T**

<sup>22</sup> I refer to the critical apparatus for the numerous particular errors of **L** and **T** respectively.

- (l. 556) cum possunt iniuriam **cet.** iniuriam cum possunt **L A T**  
 (l. 558) de Florentinis **cet. om.** **L A T**  
 (l. 646) caeteris mortalibus **cet.** caeteris omnibus mortalibus **L A T**  
 (l. 928) illi fuerint **cet.** fuerint illi **L A T**

Another pair of twins is **F** and **U**:

- (l. 15) nostros cogitatus **cet.** cogitatus nostros **F U**  
 (l. 16) nos decipiunt **cet.** decipimur **F U<sup>ras</sup>**  
 (l. 47) homini cuiquam **cet.** cuiquam homini **F U**  
 (l. 135) potius flumine **cet.** flumine potius **F U**  
 (l. 139) septem illis **cet.** illis septem **F U**  
 (l. 288) erga se omnium Calabrorum **cet.** omnium Calabrorum erga se **F U**  
 (l. 383) robustissimo firmissimoque **cet.** firmissimo robustissimoque **F U**  
 (l. 435) ingeniique dexteritas ac **cet.** ingenii ac dexteritas et **F U**  
 (l. 510) eo **cet.** illo **F U**  
 (l. 847) ordine **cet. om.** **F add. marg. U**

Many more examples could be given, since **F** and **U** share countless variants, mostly transpositions. Furthermore, **F** and **U** have been copied by the same scribe as **E**, that is Filelfo's nephew Francesco da Tolentino;<sup>23</sup> but I will return to these twins once I have addressed two other transmission issues.

After eliminating the apographs, **H**, **N**, **A** and **R**, we appear to be left with the luxury of having at our disposition no less than nine independent witnesses of the *Oratio parentalis*, two pairs of twins and seven more single witnesses: **F+U**, **L+T**, **Q**, **C**, **D**, **E**, **Y**, **M**, **P**. However, numerous common errors contradict such a straightforward assessment:

- (l. 36) et aula **cet.** aulaque **M Y D**  
 (l. 198) commodis **cet.** bonis **L T D**  
 (l. 247) pientissimo probatissimoque **cet.** probatissimo pientissimoque **L T Y**  
 (l. 273) quinam **cet.** quis **F U L T D**  
 (l. 287) atque innocentiam **cet.** innocentiamque **F U M Y**  
 (l. 350) in ea pugna fuissent **cet.** fuissent in ea pugna **F U D**  
 (l. 416) Mariae **cet. om.** **F U D**  
 (l. 557) rapere ad sese **cet.** ad sese rapere **F U Y**  
 (l. 572) ex itinere legatis Florentinorum **cet.**  
     legatis Florentinorum ex itinere **L T M**  
 (l. 581) citro ultroque **cet.** ultro citroque **D Y**  
 (l. 588) Venetorum ac Florentinorum **cet.** Florentinorum ac  
     Venetorum **F U M** Venetorum Florentinorumque **Y**

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<sup>23</sup> See supra, n. 12.

- (l. 702) ac caeteri **cet.** caeterique **L T Y**  
 (l. 831) velis ac remis **cet.** remis ac velis **M Y**  
 (l. 858) oppugnat **cet.** **U<sup>pc</sup>** opprimit **M Y** oppugnant **Q P**  
 (l. 1255) philosophia **cet.** disciplina **L T D<sup>ac</sup>**  
 (l. 1355) cum Venetis forent **cet.** forent cum Venetis **M Y L T D**  
 (l. 1544) eius **cet.** illius **M Y**  
 (l. 1547) commutat **cet.** commutat potius **L T Y**  
 (l. 1549) fortasse **cet.** *om.* **D Y<sup>ac</sup>**  
 (l. 1565) clarissimus ille **cet.** clarissimus **F<sup>ac</sup>** ille clarissimus **U M Y**

We see the twins **F+U** joined by **D** in some instances, by **Y** or by **M** or even by both **Y** and **M** in others. The twins **L+T** join errors now with **D**, then with **M** or with **Y**, while even **M** and **Y** (with or without **D**), or **D** and **Y** have common mistakes. This bewildering picture does not, in my opinion, call for complex reconstructions involving developing archetypes, multiple redactions, contamination or other transversal operations. As I have already discussed elsewhere, **M**, **Y** and **D** have been copied by the same scribe, namely Fabrizio Elfiteo.<sup>24</sup> He may have been one of Filelfo's most trusted copyists, yet very trustworthy he was not. As can be seen in the critical apparatus, Elfiteo committed many more unique errors in all three of these witnesses, showing himself to be quite a sloppy scribe, in particular in his scarce adherence to the original word order in Filelfo's text. Since various errors that unite Elfiteo's copies **M**, **Y** and **D** in turn with each other are also present in either **L+T** or **F+U**, and since these two pairs display multiple transpositions as well, it seems plausible to surmise that the lost sources of each of these two pairs of twins were also copies produced by Elfiteo.

The picture that emerges from this serial production of three, if not five copies of the *Oratio parentalis* by Fabrizio Elfiteo on the one hand and three by Filelfo's nephew Francesco da Tolentino on the other is that Filelfo had two of his trusted amanuenses produce multiple copies of the *Oratio parentalis* in a short span of time. In the case of the **F** and **U** twins, it would seem that a first intermediate copy was then used as a model instead of the original itself, in order to speed up the production.

This picture is confirmed by Filelfo's letters. Indeed, all seven mentions of the *Oratio parentalis* in the epistolarium occur in a relatively short time span, between 13 June 1467 (PhE:28.02) and 8 August 1468 (PhE:29.11), and all of them concern the dispatch of a copy of the oration. The first of these letters is a dedicatory letter to Federico da Montefeltro, a copy of which survives as an insert in the Berlin manuscript (**U**), which I therefore take to be the dedica-

<sup>24</sup> See De Keyser, "I codici filelfiani" (as in n. 13), p. 94 and 102-105.

tion copy shipped to Urbino. Less than a week later, Filelfo wrote to Piero de' Medici, providing him with a copy as well (PhE:28.04 of 19 June). This must be, I believe, **U**'s twin **F**, now still in Florence at the Laurenziana.<sup>25</sup> The most surprising aspect of this serial copying effort is perhaps the fact that the usually quite precise Filelfo apparently did not care too much about Elfiteo's disrespect for his original text, even though **F** and **U** were intended for Piero de' Medici and Federico da Montefeltro, two dedicatees whom Filelfo generally treated with special care. Apparently Filelfo's priority was to spread the *Oratio parentalis* as quickly as possible, as soon as he had completed it, probably a few months after he first read in the Duomo.

While it is indisputable that **F** and **U** are twins, and while they share their copyist with **E** – which is one of the three (and by far the soundest) Trivulziana copies of the oration – there is another remarkable transversal issue to be assessed. In the middle of the *Oratio parentalis*, the witnesses are divided into two groups by a major omission:

(l. 938-998) Quis igitur ... redderetur **U M Y E Q P om. F C D L T**

This omission of sixty lines occurs in five manuscripts: the twins **L+T**, but also **C**, **D** and **F**. Since both **C** and **F** display multiple autograph corrections by Filelfo, it seems unlikely that such a major lacuna would have escaped notice. Furthermore, it is quite surprising to see that the lacuna splits the indisputable twins **U** and **F**, as well as the “Elfiteo family”, since **D** contains these lines while **M** and **Y** do not. The explanation is in my opinion not a classical stemmatic bifurcation but a deliberate authorial intervention. The text omitted in almost half of the transmission concerns a page lavishly praising Federico da Montefeltro, depicted as the late Francesco Sforza's one true friend and ally. Naturally Filelfo was happy to include these words of praise in the copy that he had his scribe produce for Federico himself. However, he apparently deemed it advisable to omit them from the copies sent out to Piero de' Medici and other dedicatees. As far as I know, it is unique in Filelfo's oeuvre to see him tailoring one of his works so drastically to the intended audience that he had it produced in two different versions simultaneously.

After the initial serial production of copies, the *Oratio parentalis* seems to have lingered almost untouched until Filelfo revised his text in 1481. In fact, the very rare preceding interventions appear to have occurred early on:

<sup>25</sup> The other letters in Filelfo's epistolarium mentioning the *Oratio parentalis* are PhE:28.03 (26 June 1467), PhE:28.32 (9 February 1468), PhE:29.10 (7 August 1468) and PhE:29.11 (8 August 1468).

(l. 633) egreditur **cet.** evadit **F U**<sup>ac</sup>

(l. 1288) sororis filiae **cet.** neptis **F U C**<sup>ac</sup>

In the present edition, I have included Filelfo's marginal notes to the text, which may be helpful in the identification of some of the narrative's characters. The paragraphing of the text is Filelfo's and reflects the consensus of all prime witnesses, which is in this respect unproblematic.

#### 1.4. *Invectivae*

When Filelfo had completed the first eight books of the *Sphortias*, he not only sent out nicely produced presentation copies to possible patrons, but also circulated the poem among his friends and colleagues, fishing for compliments. Filelfo's good friend Alberto Parisi, who was residing in Bologna, passed the poem to his fellow townsman Galeotto Marzio, who did not return the rave review that Filelfo was expecting.<sup>26</sup> In a first, quite poised, letter, Marzio expressed his respect for Filelfo and his oeuvre, yet also pointed out a few literary and metrical flaws that he perceived in the new epic poem. Filelfo replied resentfully, writing not to Marzio himself but to Parisi, and ferociously rebutted the criticisms, after which Marzio wrote a second letter – or rather, an all-out invective. Filelfo did not bother to reply to Marzio's invective, but from refutations in his letters PhE:24.20 to 24.23, dated from 18 to 21 March 1465, we can deduce that he did read it.

Filelfo's letter is dated 31 October 1464, and from Marzio's sneer that it took Filelfo four months to reply, we can infer that he sent his own in June 1464. All three letters were collected by Marzio himself into one codex and dedicated to Piero Riario, apparently between 1471 and 1474, when the latter was a cardinal. The only witness of the entire dossier is a Vatican manuscript (V). However, a manuscript from Olomouc contains the three letters as well, albeit without the dedicatory letter to Riario.

**V** Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. lat. 3411, ff. 1r-75r

**Z** Olomouc, Zemský Archiv, CO 513, ff. 1r-59v

<sup>26</sup> See the *DBI* entry by G Miggiano (2008): [www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/galeotto-marzio\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/galeotto-marzio_(Dizionario-Biografico)) and for the polemic with Filelfo in particular G. Miggiano, "Galeotto Marzio Narni. Profilo biobibliografico I," *Il Bibliotecario*, 32, 1992, p. 45-96: p. 76-81; and P. Martín Baños, "¿Nebrija alumno de Filelfo? Nuevos datos sobre el bachiller de la Pradilla y la estancia de Antonio de Nebrija en Italia," *Revista de Estudios Latinos*, 7, 2007, p. 153-179.

Filelfo's letter alone is also contained in the witnesses transmitting his epistolarium:<sup>27</sup>

- F** Firenze, Biblioteca Riccardiana, 763, ff. 340v-352r  
**M** Milano, Biblioteca Trivulziana, 733, ff. 145v-160v  
**T** Milano, Biblioteca Trivulziana, 873, ff. 282r-287r  
**A** ed. G. Alamannus, Venezia 1502, ff. 162r-165r

Besides its transcription errors and at times puzzling punctuation, the edition of Marzio's letters published by László Juhász in 1932 (**j**) is unsatisfactory because it is based on the Vatican manuscript only. In fact, in many instances the manuscript from Olomouc (**Z**) alone transmits the correct reading (examples from Marzio's second letter):

- (l. 45) annis **Z** armis **V**  
 (l. 96) Praeneste **Z** penestre **V**  
 (l. 231) ignorantissime **Z** ignoratissime **V j**  
 (l. 330) οὐρανός **Z om. V j**  
 (l. 624) faciam **Z** faciant **V j**  
 (l. 651) poneretur **Z** peneretur **V** penetretur **j**  
 (l. 688) diversitate **Z** adversitate **V j**

Other passages see **Z** in error against **V**'s correct reading:

- (l. 211) omnibus quae **V** ominibus qui **Z**  
 (l. 391) fictum **V** factum **Z**  
 (l. 641) diuturna **V om. Z**  
 (l. 689) caesura **V** censura **Z**  
 (l. 782) vivunt **V** utuntur **Z**

Still, the independent transmission of Filelfo's letter shows that in some passages both twins **V** and **Z** are in error:

- (l. 12) salutare **M F A T om. V Z**  
 (l. 13) de **M F A T om. V Z**  
 (l. 103) Servium **M F A T** Servius **V Z**  
 (l. 277) mihi **M F A T** nihil **V Z**  
 (l. 290) corripiuntur **M F A T** corripiunt **V Z**  
 (l. 417) Pyrrhus loquitur ... apud Ennium **M F A T om. V Z**

In the last passage, the error might have been caused by a *saut du même au même* in the source of **V** and **Z**. It cannot be excluded, though, that Filelfo afterwards inserted an additional example into his text. At any rate, he contin-

<sup>27</sup> I refer to my edition of Filelfo's *Collected Letters* (as in n. 1) for a more comprehensive discussion of the transmission of the epistolarium.