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Translated from the Italian by Federico Poole



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INTRODUCTION

1. *Historical background*

Étienne Chauvin (1640-1675), the son of a Huguenot tradesman from Nîmes, was a pastor in southern France until the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, then in the Walloon church of Rotterdam, and finally in the Walloon French Church in Berlin. He was a professor of philosophy, a journalist, and a member of the Berlin Society of Sciences since its foundation, and corresponded with Leibniz and other personalities of the “République des lettres.” He is best known in philosophical historiography as the author of the first “modern” philosophical dictionary.

The two editions of his *Lexicon philosophicum* (1692 and 1713)¹ list terms and theories from the domains of philosophy and the natural sciences, principally introduced by Cartesians, but also by Gassendists and other modern authors. Alongside the terminology and doctrines of the new philosophy, Chauvin presents all the terminology of scholastic philosophy, which could hardly have been granted less than ample space in a work destined “reipublicae litterariae atque juventutis studiis.”² The *Lexicon* thus showcases the “state of the art” of philosophy at the turn of the seventeenth century, and is thus an extremely useful source for studies on the influence of the scholastic legacy in modern

¹ É. Chauvin, *Lexicon rationale sive Thesaurus philosophicus ordine alphabetico digestus, in quo vocabula omnia philosophica, variasque illorum acceptiones, juxta cum Veterum, tum Recentiorum placita, explicare; et universe quae lumine naturali sciri possunt, non tam concludere, quam recludere conatur Stephanus Chauvin, Nemausensis, ab aliquot jam retro annis Rotterodami degens*, Rotterodami, P. van der Slaart, 1692; Id., *Lexicon philosophicum secundis curis Stephani Chauvini, Philosophiae Professoris, et Regiae Scientiarum Societatis apud Bero-linenses socii, ita tum recognitum et castigatum; tum varie variis in locis illustratum, tum passim quammultis ac-cessionibus auctum et locupletatum, ut denuo quasi novum opus in lucem prodeat*, Leeuwardiae, F. Halma, 1713. Today, besides the anastatic reprint of the *Lexicon* with an introduction by Lutz Geldsetzer (Düsseldorf, Stern-Verlag Janssen and Co., 1967, pp. XI-XIV) and the microfiches of the series “Archiv der europäische Lexikographie” (Fischer, Erlangen, 1998), many digital reproductions are available on the Internet, the best of which can be consulted on the website of the Istituto per il Lessico Intellettuale Europeo e Storia delle Idee in Rome (ILIESI-CNR), which allows word searches: <http://www.iliesi.cnr.it/Lessici/frame_chauvinp.html> (1692 edition) and <http://www.iliesi.cnr.it/Lessici/frame_chauvin.html> (1713 edition). Étienne Gilson published a selection of definitions from Chauvin’s *Lexicon* in the appendix to his *Index scolastico-cartésien* (Paris, F. Alcan, 1913).

² É. Chauvin, *Lexicon rationale*, dedicatory letter, p. *6.

thought, and for the tracing of the evolution of philosophical and scientific terminology in a long-term historical perspective.

Another good reason to study Chauvin's dictionary is the wide circulation it enjoyed. All the major historical libraries in Europe have either the first or the second edition, or both. The work was especially popular between the last decade of the seventeenth century and the first thirty years of the eighteenth. It was cited by scholars and reviewed with interest in the most important journals of the time, such as the *Journal des sçavans* and the *Philosophical Transactions*, as well as in Jean Le Clerc's *Bibliothèque choisie*, Henry Basnage de Beauval's *Histoire des ouvrages des savants*, and Pieter Rabus' *De boekzaal van Europe*.³

But Chauvin's dictionary also owns its popularity to the fact that some of its definitions were later reproduced in better-known lexica and encyclopedias, such as Ephraim Chambers' *Cyclopaedia*, Diderot and d'Alembert's *Encyclopédie*, the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, and Noah Webster's *American Dictionary of the English Language*. By tracing specific groups of definitions in these works, genealogies and common origins can be reconstructed. This kind of investigation shows that modern European philosophical and encyclopedic lexica belong to just a few families, or possibly even to a *single* great family, at least from the late seventeenth century to the whole nineteenth century.

Chauvin's *Lexicon* is an important link in this genealogy. It is hence worthwhile to study its content and investigate its sources. The text rarely makes explicit mention of the latter, unlike other important Latin philosophical lexica of the seventeenth century, such as those of Goclenius and Micraelius (respectively 1613 and 1653).

Although the figure of Chauvin has received some attention in studies on the periodical press of the 1600s for his role as editor of the *Nouveau journal des sçavans* (1694-1698), so far few studies exist on his lexicographical work.⁴ In

³ On these reviews, see below, IX, 1.

⁴ Besides Lutz Geldsetzer's brief introduction to the reprint of the *Lexicon* in 1967 (see above, n. 1), see E. Canone, "I lessici filosofici latini del Seicento," in: M. Fattori (ed.), *Il vocabolario della République des lettres. Terminologia filosofica e storia della filosofia. Problemi di metodo*, Firenze, L.S. Olschki, 1997, pp. 93-114: 110-114 (on the entry *Anima*), and Id., *Phantasia/Imaginatio come problema terminologico nella lessicografia filosofica tra Sei-Settecento*, in M. Fattori – M.L. Bianchi (eds.), *Phantasia/Imaginatio. Atti del V colloquio internazionale (Roma, 9-11 gennaio 1986)*, Roma, Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1988, pp. 221-257: 251-254; G. Gasparri, "Pierre Cally (1630-1709) comme source du *Lexicon rationale* (1692) d'Étienne Chauvin," in: A. Del Prete (ed.), *Il Seicento e Descartes. Dibattiti cartesiani*, Firenze, Le Monnier, 2004, pp. 255-268; Id., "Étienne Chauvin e il suo *Lexicon philosophicum*," in: E. Canone (ed.), *Lessici filosofici dell'età moderna. Linee di ricerca*, Firenze, L.S. Olschki, 2012, pp. 29-47; Id., "Theories of emotions in Etienne Chauvin's *Lexicon Philosophicum*," in: *Arts of thinking and arts of healing in Early Modern Europe: Philosophy, Medicine and Politics*, special issue of *Society and Politics*, 1 (2012) 6, pp. 39-51. On the question of the sources of Latin philosophical lexica in general, see E. Canone – M. Palumbo, "Latin philosophical Dictionaries in the Early Modern Era," in: G. Tonelli, *A short-title list of subject dictionaries of the Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Cen-*

spite of this, there is already a small historiographical lore pigeonholing Chauvin as a “Cartesian.” An example can be found in Francisque Bouillier’s famous *Histoire de la philosophie cartésienne*:

Un des plus considérables monuments élevés à Descartes en Hollande, fut un essai d’encyclopédie universelle, un grand dictionnaire philosophique, où on donnait l’explication par ordre alphabétique de tous les termes de la philosophie cartésienne. L’auteur, Etienne Chauvin, ne se borne pas à de simples définitions des termes de la métaphysique et de la physique de Descartes, il traite avec étendue des matières qui s’y rapportent, et s’attache à réfuter toutes les instances contre les sentiments des cartésiens.⁵

Bouillier’s opinion that Descartes was “le seul père de la philosophie moderne”⁶ was undoubtedly somewhat extreme, but such oversimplifications can be found even in more recent historiography.

While it is true that Chauvin’s dictionary grants ample space to the new philosophy, it devotes at least as much to notions traceable to the various phases of scholastic tradition. As regards modern philosophy, as I said, the *Lexicon* devotes attention not only to the thought of Descartes and the Cartesians, but also to the empiricist current and to the works of many other modern authors who cannot be classified as Cartesians. As to Chauvin’s personal opinions, sufficient evidence can be found between the lines of the two editions of the *Lexicon* itself, as well as in his other writings and in testimonies of his teaching, that he rejected many important theses of Cartesian philosophy and physics, showing, if anything, a greater affinity for the empiricist and eclectic trends of the early Enlightenment. This open attitude, along with a certain intellectual modesty, is already announced by the title page of the first edition of the *Lexicon*, where Chauvin says he will “try” (“conatur”) to explain the various acceptations of philosophical terms, and not so much to “enclose” as to “disclose” (“non tam concludere, quam recludere”) all knowledge attainable by the light of natural reason.

In sum, Chauvin’s work is a good example of the fact that by the turn of the eighteenth century Descartes’ thought had become an indispensable landmark, but one, at the same time, that even many so-called “Cartesians” believed one

turies, extended edition revised and annotated by E. Canone and M. Palumbo, Firenze, Olschki, 2006, pp. xv-xxx: xxvii-xxix.

⁵ F. Bouillier, *Histoire de la philosophie cartésienne*, Paris-Lyon, Durand-Brun, 1854, I, pp. 261- 262.

⁶ The *Histoire de la philosophie cartésienne* is dedicated to Victor Cousin with the following words: “A vous tout entière la gloire de nous avoir ramenés aux idées innées de Descartes, à la Raison de Malebranche, et d’avoir restauré, pour ainsi dire, cet élément divin de l’intelligence contre lequel s’était conjuré tout l’empirisme du dernier siècle” (*ibid.*, p. 261). The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (11th ed., New York 1911, IX, *s.v.* “Encyclopedia,” p. 373) defined Chauvin’s *Lexicon* in the following terms: “This great work may be considered as a dictionary of the Cartesian philosophy.”

needed to go beyond.⁷ It is common historical knowledge today that “Cartesians” were all, in one or the other aspect of their philosophical systems, more or less unfaithful to Descartes. Their “unfaithfulness,” however, can be seen as a paradoxical effect of the very traits they had inherited from their master, namely, a trust in reason alone, independence of judgment, a high regard for originality in thought, and a taste for novelty.

The best approach to a work such as Chauvin’s *Lexicon* is thus to regard it as a testimony that displays, as in a geological section, the character of the philosophy of the time, or rather, the character of the philosophical and scientific *culture* of the time, of which dictionaries and encyclopedias were, at once, the mirror, the storehouse, and the pillar.

The present volume is the first monograph ever written on Étienne Chauvin and his work. Some of the themes I have already addressed in three articles,⁸ but I have added new material and corrected inaccuracies revealed by further study. The book includes a thorough reconstruction of Chauvin’s intellectual biography (Chapter I), an analysis of the most important philosophical entries in the *Lexicon* placing special emphasis on the fundamental theme of their sources (Chapters II-VIII), and an investigation of the influence of the work on later philosophical literature and lexicography (Chapter IX). In the central chapters, I decided to discuss groups of entries with similar subjects, thereby subverting the original alphabetical order of the *Lexicon*. I provide an index at the end of the volume for readers who want to rapidly locate the page where a specific entry is discussed.

To facilitate the reader’s task, I have also included an appendix with the integral text of a series of *Disputationes* which Chauvin presided over between 1696 and 1700 in the context of his philosophy teaching at the Collège Français in Berlin. These theses, kept at the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, are testimonies of Chauvin’s thought in an intermediate phase between the publication of the first and the second edition of the *Lexicon*. I will often be referring to them in the following pages, both because they help to shed light on some passages in the dictionary and because in them Chauvin appears more independent and polemical, and displays more openly empiricist positions than in the *Lexicon philosophicum* itself, his best known work.

⁷ Cf. the following observation by Johann Franz Budde (1667-1729), another author who was close to Chauvin: “Hodie pauci admodum reperiuntur, qui in omnibus Cartesium sequuntur, sicuti et pauci inter eruditos sunt, qui non quaedam eius placita adoptent?” (*Elementa philosophiae instrumentalis seu Institutionum philosophiae eclecticae tomus I*, 1703; Halae-Saxonum, Orphanotrophium Glaucha-Halense, 1722⁸, p. 87).

⁸ See above, note 4.

An evident limit of the present study is that it focuses on the more strictly philosophical entries in the *Lexicon*, disregarding many entries regarding the sciences of nature. In the latter, Chauvin not only defines the concepts themselves, but also describes “res,” including both natural phenomena and the tools and machines used to study them. Compared to earlier philosophical lexicæ, this was an innovation that had already caught the attention of his contemporaries. Although Chauvin possibly grants these disciplines even more importance than philosophy in the overall economy of the work, I have not gone into them, limiting myself to the more general entries about the physics of bodies and motion, and to a few sallies outside of the strictly philosophical domain to broaden my overview of Chauvin’s sources (Chapter VI).

Further research on the sources and reception of the *Lexicon* is hence called for, since this work marks an important stage—if a belated one, but with a lexicon this can hardly be otherwise—in modern scholars’ effort to renew knowledge. It was an undertaking that did not just introduce new knowledge, but also codified new terms and, above all, made a major effort to redefine the old ones.

2. *The dictionary and its sources*

When one traces the various entries in the *Lexicon philosophicum* to their sources, the book appears as a mosaic of citations, almost a chrestomathy of passages from the works of major authors and the latest philosophy manuals. Only small parts of the lexicon, it turns out, were actually written directly by Chauvin. These parts, however, are often the definitions of the terms, since in many entries Chauvin cites in full another author’s comment to a definition, but changes the wording of the definition itself.

For most of the lemmas, the *Lexicon* provides first of all the classic—usually Aristotelian—definition, followed by the scholastic explanation. The latter is often followed by the point of view of modern philosophers (“recentiores”). In some entries, Chauvin devotes more space to the modern version than to the traditional one; in these cases, the order is inverted: first we find the opinions of the moderns, then, more briefly, those of scholastic philosophers; or we find only the modern theory. In most cases, the passages containing the doctrines attributed to “recentiores”—or specifically to “Cartesians”—are quoted literally, with minor modifications, from the *Institutio philosophiae* and the *Anthropologia, sive tractatio de homine* by the Cartesian Pierre Cally (1630-1709),⁹

⁹ P. Cally, *Institutio philosophiae*, Cadomi, J. Poisson, 1674 (later republished with the title *Universae philosophiae institutio*, Cadomi, J. Cavalier, 1695); Id., *Primum philosophiae perficiendae rudimentum, anthropologia sive tractatio de homine*, Cadomi, J. Cavalier, 1683; and Cally’s commentary of Boethius

professor of philosophy at the University of Caen. Cally's *Institutio* itself was already replete with quotes from modern authors, some of the most frequently cited being René Descartes, Pierre Gassendi, Jean-Baptiste Du Hamel, Antoine Arnauld, and Pierre Nicole; but almost all the best-known Cartesians, and not just the French ones, were included. In some cases Chauvin suppresses these quotes; in others, he summarizes them and integrates them into the text, but without citing the author.¹⁰ The name of Pierre Cally himself does not appear in the *Lexicon* even once.

Quite a few of the definitions Chauvin attributes to the “veteres” are quoted literally from Cally's *Institutio*. Such is the case, for example, for many terms of Scholastic logic, which Chauvin extrapolates literally from the first volume of Cally's course, the *Logic*, and merely rearranges alphabetically. Many of the quotes from ancient philosophers—Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Cicero, Augustine, Boethius, etc., who are cited in the *Lexicon* more frequently than modern ones—are indirect quotes whose intermediate source is, once again, Cally.

Under the entry *Aeternitas*, Chauvin cites Boethius' definition in *De consolazione philosophiae*, V, 8: “interminabilis vitae tota simul et perfecta possessio.” This is a common definition in theology, echoed, for example, by Thomas Aquinas,¹¹ and clear traces of which can be found in Descartes.¹² It is also found in a modern philosophical lexicon thirty years earlier than Chauvin's, Johannes Micraelius' *Lexicon philosophicum*.¹³ The definition comes up again in Cally's *Institutio philosophiae*.¹⁴ The explanation of the individual terms that make up the definition in Chauvin's lexicon, however, is not derived either from the *Institutio* or from the *Anthropologia*, but from another text by Cally, namely, his commentary to Boethius' *De consolazione philosophiae*, published in 1680. This is a fine edition *ad usum Delphini*—from the time when Cally was involved, with Jacque-Bénigne Bossuet and Pierre-Daniel Huet (at the behest of the Duke of

(Severini Boetii *Consolationis philosophiae libros quinque [...] in usum [...] Delphini*, Parisiis, L. Roulland, 1680).

¹⁰ Here is a list, still not definitive, of the entries in the *Lexicon* derived from Cally (the entries in parentheses are derived from him only in part): “Adiunctum,” “Adverbium,” “Aeternitas,” “Affectio,” “Ambiguum,” “Amphibolia,” (“Anima”), “Anima mundi,” (“Antiperistasis”), (“Arbor porphyriana”), “Argumentatio,” “Axioma,” “Categoriema,” “Cogitatio,” “Cognata,” (“Cognitio”), “Color,” (“Conscientia”), “Corpus humanum,” “Criterium” [in the sense of “regula veritatis”], “Dictio,” “Generatio,” “Homo,” “Idea,” (“Inductio”), (“Intelligentia”), (“Iudicium”), (“Liberitas”), “Lux,” “Magnes, corpus magneticum,” (“Materia”), “Mens,” (“Methodus”), “Nomen,” (“Opposita”), (“Pars”), “Persona,” “Phantasia” (or “imaginatio”), “Philosophia,” “Potentia naturalis,” “Porphyrius,” “Pronomen,” (“Propositio”), “Ratiocinatio,” “Sapidum,” “Substantivo,” “Syncategoriema,” (“Terminus”), (“Vacuum”), “Verbum.”

¹¹ *De tempore*, 4, in: Id., *Opuscula omnia*, ed. P. Mandonnet, V, Paris, Lethielleux, 1927, p. 281.

¹² R. Descartes, *Oeuvres*, ed. Ch. Adam – P. Tannery, nouvelle présentation, Paris, J. Vrin, 1964-1974 [henceforth AT], V 193, 13-21.

¹³ *Lexicon philosophicum*, p. 67.

¹⁴ P. Cally, *Universae philosophiae institutio*, p. 79.

Montausier), in the instruction of Louis XIV—and one that enjoyed a good popularity.¹⁵ Cally's notes to this edition is also the source for Chauvin's entry *Anima mundi*, a Platonic concept which Chauvin also explains starting from Boethius. The fact that Chauvin drew on three different books by Cally clearly indicates that he had a special interest in this author. There is, however, no evidence that the two ever met or corresponded. In the present state of my research, all I can do is to offer some conjectures as to the circumstances of their possible contacts, and some considerations about the circulation of their works. Let us thus open a brief parenthesis on the figure of Pierre Cally.

A native of Grébet, near Argentan in Normandy, Cally studied philosophy in Caen and theology in Paris. From about 1660, he taught philosophy at the university of Caen. He was president of the Collège des Arts at this university, in 1675, and its dean for five times. It is at Caen, while frequenting Pierre-Daniel Huet's circle, that Cally met the Cartesians and Jean-Baptiste Du Hamel, one of the most often cited authors, as we have seen, in his *Institutio philosophiae*.

Among Cally's works from this period is the text of an important *disputatio* by Pierre Morel, which was moderated by Cally and published in 1672 with the title *Philosophiae catena aurea*. This work contains one of the first echoes in France of the Cartesian theory of the dependence of eternal truths from divine will, in a passage attacked by the Jesuit Louis Le Valois (1639-1700) in his *Sentimens de M. Des Cartes touchant l'essence et les propriétés du corps, opposez à la Doctrine de l'Eglise* (1680).¹⁶ It is in his polemic against Le Valois that Cally, by defending Descartes' position on the Eucharist, consolidated his reputation as a radical Cartesian, thus making more and more enemies. The debate on the Eucharist was to absorb Cally for twenty more years, and there are traces of it in all of his philosophical works.¹⁷ During the period following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, Cally was accused of being too close to the Huguenots. It does indeed appear that our author—who, like Huet, was trying to promote a reconciliation between Catholics and Protestants—had succeeded in converting many Reformists to Catholicism.

From 1684 onward, Cally was curate of the parish of Saint-Martin at Caen. In 1687, he was banished for a year, possibly not only because he was accused

¹⁵ Cally's notes on Boethius were also republished in an English edition in 1823: *De consolatione philosophiae libri quinque ex editione Vulpiana cum notis et interpretatione in usum Delphini, variis lectionibus, notis variorum, recensu editionum et codicum, et indice locupletissimo accurate recensiti*, Londini, curante et imprimente A.J. Valpy, 1823.

¹⁶ On this polemic, cf. G. Rodis-Lewis, "Les essences éternelles et leur création: le détournement d'un texte augustinien," in: *XVIIe siècle*, 135 (1982), pp. 211-215 and G. Gasparri, *Le Grand Paradoxe de M. Descartes: Il dibattito sulla teoria cartesiana delle verità eterne nella seconda metà del XVII secolo*, Firenze, L.S. Olschki, 2007, pp. 153-162.

¹⁷ On this subject, see G. Vattier, "La doctrine cartésienne de l'Eucharistie chez P. Cally," *Annales de philosophie chrétienne*, 1911, pp. 274-296, and 1912, pp. 380-409.

of “cartésianisme et de jansénisme” (as reported by Pierre Bayle in his *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*¹⁸), but also because his sermons drew too many Protestants.¹⁹ When Huet published his *Censura philosophiae cartesianae* in 1689,²⁰ Cally broke their friendship. From Huet’s memories, one deduces that this had been a long-standing friendship. Huet complains that the polemic between the two had fallen to too low a level, and that Cally, inflamed by Cartesianism as if bitten by a horsefly (“velut oestro quodam percitus”), refused to talk about anything but Descartes.²¹ Huet, of course, must be exaggerating here, since Cally never stopped teaching traditional philosophy, and Aristotelian logic in particular, which he critically complemented with Cartesian logic. Indeed, in his *Traité des études monastiques* of 1691 the Benedictine Jean Mabillon recommends Cally’s philosophy course precisely because “il propose et explique aussi fort bien les premiers principes des connoissances suivant la philosophie ancienne, et suivant la nouvelle.”²²

Cally’s relationship with Bossuet held up against this storm: the *Universae philosophiae institutio* of 1695 is still dedicated to Bossuet. In 1700, Cally published another book on the Eucharist: *Durand commenté, ou l’accord de la philosophie avec la théologie*.²³ The book resuscitates the explanation of the dogma of transubstantiation by Durand of St. Pourçain (1275-1334), which Cally finds to be in accord with the theory formulated by Descartes in his letters to Father Mesland. This theory, founded on the rejection of absolute accidents, could have brought closer the positions of Catholics and Reformists on the important question of the Eucharist. Needless to say, the book caused a new scandal. Even Boussuet could not but proclaim his dissent from Cally on this occasion, which led to the condemnation of the seventeen propositions of *Durand commenté*. In spite of having defined the book’s doctrine as false and leaning towards heresy, Boussuet retained a benevolent opinion of the author as a person. Cally, at any rate, publicly retracted his statements.

What is most interesting to us in the history of the publication of the *Durand commenté* is a detail. Cally had turned over the manuscript to a printer in Caen, asking him to print sixty copies to be sent to various scholars to sound the possibility of an imprimatur. The publisher, instead, had printed 800 specimens and put them on sale: hence the scandal. In the meantime, however, Cally had also

¹⁸ *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, January 1687, in: P. Bayle, *Oeuvres diverses*, La Haye, P. Husson et al., 1727, I, p. 740. The teaching of Cartesian philosophy had been prohibited at the university of Caen as early as 1677.

¹⁹ Cf. F. Martin, *Athenae normannorum*, ed. V. Bourrienne – T. Genty, Caen, L. Jouan, 1901, p. 629.

²⁰ P.-D. Huet, *Censura philosophiae cartesianae*, Paris, D. Horthemels, 1689.

²¹ P.-D. Huet, *Commentarius de rebus ad eum pertinentibus*, Amstelodami, H. du Sauzet, 1718, p. 228.

²² J. Mabillon, *Traité des études monastiques*, Paris, Robustel, 1691, pars II, cap. IX, p. 248.

²³ P. Cally, *Durand commenté, ou l’accord de la philosophie avec la theologie, touchant la Transsubstantiation de l’Eucharistie*, Cologne, P. Marteau, 1700.

sent the text to the Protestant Basnage, who had been among his pupils. This last piece of information is reported by Picot,²⁴ but it is not clear which of the two Basnage brothers, who are often confused, he is referring to, whether Jacques Basnage, who wrote about theology and the history of French Protestantism—against Jurieu and Bossuet—, or his brother Henry Basnage de Beauval, who had been editing the *Histoire des ouvrages des savants* since 1687. Chauvin undoubtedly had a personal relationship with Jacques, borne out by their correspondence. As to Henry, we only know that he was familiar with Chauvin's *Lexicon*, since he mentions it in his *Histoire des ouvrages des savants*, and possibly used it for his second edition of Furetière's *Dictionnaire universel* (1701). At any rate, both brothers had been exiles in Rotterdam and had a friendly and collaborative relationship with Bayle; and both would later become corresponding members of the Berlin Academy, one of whose animators, as we shall see, was Chauvin himself. This was a group of authors who believed in tolerance and the use of reason as the best way to address and solve doctrinal conflicts. If Cally's theory of transubstantiation drew suspicion in his own country, appearing closer to the positions of the Protestants than to Catholic doctrine, it was such as to easily meet favor among the exiles.

Cally thus had contacts in the circle of the French Reformists in Rotterdam. This was, as I have just mentioned, Pierre Bayle and Chauvin's own circle. So this is possibly how the author of the *Lexicon* became familiar with Cally and his works. Another character who may have played a role in the dissemination of Cally's works in Chauvin's circle is Jean Sperlette (1663-1740).²⁵ A Benedictine of the Saint-Vanne Congregation later converted to Protestantism, in 1687 Sperlette had left for the Netherlands, where he had furthered his studies of the Cartesian philosophy, which he espoused with more conviction and more lastingly than Chauvin. In 1689, Sperlette was summoned by Frederic I of Prussia to teach philosophy to his son and, later, to the Protestants who had sought refuge in Berlin. He was, indeed, the first professor of philosophy at the Collège Français in Berlin, where he taught until 1695, when Chauvin succeeded him.

The course of philosophy published by Sperlette in 1696 draws heavily on the teachings of the Benedictine and "radical" Cartesian Robert Desgabets (1610-1678), and displays important analogies with those passages in Cally's work that also show evident echoes of Desgabets' thought—especially as re-

²⁴ M.-J.-P. Picot, *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire ecclésiastique pendant le XVIIIe siècle*, Paris, A. La Clère, 1853, I, pp. 229-230.

²⁵ On Sperlette, see J.-R. Armogathe, *Theologia cartesiana. L'explication physique de l'Eucharistie chez Descartes et dom Desgabets*, La Haye, Nijhoff, 1977, p. 89; G. Rodis-Lewis, "Queques échos de la thèse de Desgabets sur l'idéfectibilité des substances," *Studia cartesiana*, I, Amsterdam 1979, pp. 124-128; *Dictionnaire des philosophes*, Paris, PUF, 1984, s.v. "Sperlette."

gards the latter's theory of the so called "indefectibility of substances."²⁶ It is plausible that Cally's works circulated not only among masters of the Benedictine order interested in Cartesianism, such as Desgabets, but also in the context of these masters' teaching in their schools (where Sperlette had also gained his education). It is sufficient to remember, as I mentioned above, that Mabillon recommended Cally's course in his own *Traité de études monastiques*.²⁷ In sum, it is a possibility that Cally's works reached Chauvin through the intermediation of Benedictine scholars.

Here we remain in the field of conjecture, since there is no evidence that the two ever met, or even corresponded. It is nevertheless clear that Cally—a Cartesian author who had published a clear and detailed course, with exhaustive definitions for each term introduced, and always careful to compare the philosophy of the *novatores* with traditional philosophy; also, an author who was regarded as being close to the Protestants—would have been a natural choice for Chauvin when he was gathering material for his own lexicon.

Pierre Cally's importance is the aspect that most stands out when one investigates the sources of the *Lexicon*, and the one that best explains the solid reputation as a Cartesian earned by its author. But Chauvin draws on a much broader and diversified pool of authors. Descartes, of course, is not cited only in passages taken over from Cally, but also directly, especially his *Principia philosophiae*. Another fundamental author for Chauvin is Francis Bacon, himself quoted sometimes indirectly, through the works of Johannes Clauberg or, again, Cally, and sometimes directly (notably from the *De augmentis scientiarum*). Clauberg himself is a regularly featured source in the philosophical entries of the *Lexicon*. Another of the *Lexicon's* sources is Arnold Geulincx (1624-1669), and notably his *Ethica*, his *Logica*, his *Methodus inveniendi argumenta*, and his *Disputationes metaphysicae*. An important source for logic is the Oratorian Jean-Baptiste Du Hamel

²⁶ J. Sperlette, *Metaphysica nova sive prima philosophia*, qu. I, sect. 4 ("De Essentia, et Existentia. Quid sint, et Quomodo distinguantur?"), in Id., *Opera philosophica*, Berolini, J.M. Rüdiger, 1703, pp. 173-174. On the affinities between the philosophies of Desgabets, Cally and Sperlette, cf. G. Rodis-Lewis, "Quelques échos de la thèse de Desgabets," and Ead., "Les essences éternelles et leur création: le détournement d'un texte augustinien."

²⁷ An epistulary relationship between Mabillon and Cally is attested by two letters addressed by the latter to the former, presently in the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (MS FR 19651, ff. 1 an 3). The first is dated 4 May 1669. The second is almost thirty years later: 4 May 1698. In the latter, Cally comments on Mabillon's *Epistola de cultu sanctorum ignotorum* (1698), which he says he received thanks to their "communis amicus M. Varignon." Pierre Varignon (1654-1722), mainly known as a mathematician, was a native of Caen, where he had studied philosophy and theology at the Jesuit college. A member of the Academy of Sciences in Paris and, since 1711, a corresponding member of its counterpart in Berlin, like Cally he defended the Cartesian explanation of the dogma of transubstantiation, in a brief *Démonstration de la possibilité de la Présence réelle du Corps de Jésus-Christ dans l'Eucharistie, conformément au sentiment des Catholiques* (which can be read in *Pièces fugitives sur l'Eucharistie*, Genève, M.-M. Bousquet, 1730).

(1624-1706), whom Chauvin cites sometimes through Cally and sometimes directly.

Du Hamel—who had begun his studies in Caen and concluded them in Paris, where he became the first secretary of the Académie des Sciences (1666-1697)—was the author of several works striving to conciliate traditional and Cartesian philosophy, including a very popular manual with the abbreviated title of *Philosophia Burgundica*.²⁸ Thus, like Cally and, under some respects, Chauvin himself, Du Hamel can be numbered among the so-called “novantiqui.” When the current of eclecticism arose in the last quarter of the seventeenth century, especially in Germany, Du Hamel was accepted among its ranks. In his *Introductio ad philosophiam aulicam*, Christian Thomasius (1655-1728) includes him among the “Philosophiae Eclecticae addicti,” along with Francis Bacon, Honoré Fabri and Johann Christian Sturm, among others:²⁹ authors who are all among Chauvin’s favorite sources.

Although Cartesianism is to the fore in the *Lexicon*—especially in its first edition—it appears that with the passing of the years Chauvin’s own sympathies leaned increasingly towards new eclectic authors, as well as authors who inclined more towards the empiricism of Bacon or Gassendi than towards Descartes’ rationalism, and generally had a critical and suspicious view of metaphysics. This evolution is confirmed by an examination of the sources used by Chauvin in the domain of natural philosophy, on which I shall soon be dwelling, and the subject matter of the dissertations he advised at the Collège Français in Berlin.

Chauvin’s choice of sources for the *Lexicon* also shows that he had no prejudices against Catholic authors, or authors from different confessions than his own. There are, however, also authors that Chauvin seems to have not had much liking for, although he knew he could not overlook their contribution to philosophical discourse. These include Thomas Aquinas and the Thomists, as well as some important authors of the late Spanish scholastic school, such as Francisco Suárez. The latter’s philosophical theses only rarely appear between the lines of the *Lexicon*, and Chauvin usually evokes them only to dissent with them, without ever mentioning their author. As to Thomas, his doctrines are of course included in the dictionary’s entries, but his name is very seldom mentioned. As we shall see further on, while in the entry “Praedeterminatio” Chauvin cannot avoid explicit reference to the Thomist school,³⁰ there are in-

²⁸ J.-B. Du Hamel, *Philosophia vetus et nova ad usum scholae accomodata, in Regia Burgundica olim pertractata*, Paris, Michallet, 1678.

²⁹ C. Thomasius, *Introductio ad philosophiam Aulicam; seu, Lineae primae libri de prudentia cogitandi et ratiocinandi, ubi ostenditur media inter praepudicia Cartesianorum, et ineptias Peripateticorum, veritatem inveniendi via* (first ed.: Lipsiae 1688), editio altera, Halae Magdeburgicae, Renger, 1702, pp. 43-44.

³⁰ See below, V, 2.

stances where he clearly appears to be intentionally leaving out Thomas' name in the passages drawn from his sources.³¹ Chauvin displays the same attitude in his use of another group of entries in his dictionary, namely, those including typical terms of scholastic doctrine drawn from the *Distinctiones philosophicae* (1629)³² by the Jesuit Georg Reeb (1594-1662), from Ingolstadt, who taught philosophy at Dillingen. Reeb's manuals of philosophy were very popular, and reprinted until the 1800s, under the impulse of the Neothomist school. Adam Scherzer also included the *Distinctiones* in his *Vademecum sive manuale philosophicum quadripartitum*, a very popular text in Protestant circles, first published in Leipzig in 1654. As far as I could ascertain, Chauvin certainly draws on Reeb's *Definitiones* for his definitions of the lemmata "Bonitas," "Immediate," "Intentionaliter primo" and "Intentionaliter secundo," "Per se," "Positive," "Primario," and "Supernaturale." For all these terms, the sources Reeb referred to most often were Thomas Aquinas and the Spanish Jesuits Francisco Suárez and Pedro Hurtado de Mendoza (1578-1641), the latter of whom was one of the most important exponents of the nominalist current of seventeenth-century scholastic philosophy. But Chauvin regularly omits the names of all three.

A group of entries that Chauvin added to the second edition of his *Lexicon*, which touch on themes of theology, ethics and politics, incorporate passages from the works of Johann Rudolf Rudolf (1646-1718), a Swiss Reformist theologian with an open attitude, and a great admirer of Descartes' philosophy. However, the most noteworthy additions to the 1713 edition of the *Lexicon* are the entries regarding natural law, which Chauvin put together mainly on the basis of texts by Samuel Pufendorf, Gottlieb Gerhard Titius (1661-1714) and Philipp Reinhard Vitriarius (1647-1720). Vitriarius' *Institutiones juris naturae et gentium*³³ was a highly successful manual, which recapitulated Grotius' doctrines clearly and schematically for the use of law students. As we shall see below, this group of entries reflects interests that Chauvin had pursued ever since his Rotterdam years while working at the *Nouveau journal des savants*, and also his personal as well as scholarly connections with the milieu of scholars involved in commenting, translating into French and spreading modern jusnaturalism. Jean Barbeyrac (1674-1744), Chauvin's son-in-law, also belonged to this milieu.

Slightly different considerations apply to those entries in the dictionary that concern the philosophy of nature, a sphere to which Chauvin devotes much space—indeed, most of the new entries added to the second edition of the

³¹ See below, III, 3; IV, 5.

³² Reeb's *Distinctiones* first came out in an edition of just 36 pages in Dillingen in 1624. A second, more substantial edition was published at Ingolstadt in 1629, and there were many other editions and reprints until the end of the nineteenth century.

³³ P.R. Vitriarius, *Institutiones juris naturae et gentium [...] ad methodum Hugonis Grotii*, Lugduni Batavorum, F. Zeitler – H. G. Mussel, 1692.

Lexicon are about the natural sciences.³⁴ In this case, too, some important entries are based on Cally's works, but not as many as the entries regarding philosophy *stricto sensu*. In the case of physics, the differences between the first and the second edition of the *Lexicon* are more conspicuous than in the case of subjects that today we regard as being more strictly philosophical. These modifications show how Chauvin intended to renovate his physics, still too "Cartesian" in the 1692 edition, by introducing the opinions of other scientists and new theories which had become popular over the last twenty years. Under the entry "Color," for example, in his second edition Chauvin adds Isaac Newton's theory to the Aristotelian one, describing the phenomenon of the modification of light through a crystal prism.³⁵

Among the *savants* Chauvin explicitly mentions in the physics entries in the *Lexicon*, René Descartes, Pierre Gassendi, Galileo Galilei and Robert Boyle are especially prominent. Chauvin draws regularly on the works of the "empiricist Cartesian" François Bayle (1622-1709) and the eclectic philosophers Johann Christoph Sturm (1635-1703) and James Dalrymple (Stair, 1619-1695), but also on those of some Aristotelians who were more open to innovation, such as Franco Burgersdijk (1590-1635) and the Jesuits Honoré Fabri (1607-1688) and Francesco Lana Terzi (1613-1687).

So these were the authors whom Chauvin used as his main sources in the compilation of his dictionary. I will be discussing all of them in the next chapters. Furthermore, while examining the content of the *Lexicon*, I will be referring to many other works that Chauvin used less frequently, or only in single entries.

³⁴ Cf. A. Liburdi, "Scheda sinottica delle due edizioni del *Lexicon* di Étienne Chauvin," <http://www.iliesi.cnr.it/Lessici/Chauvin-differenze.htm>.

³⁵ Chauvin, *Lexicon philosophicum*, p. 117.

Chapter I

BIOGRAPHY

1. *Early years in France*

Étienne Chauvin was born in Nîmes on 18 April 1640. His father, Jacques, was a merchant. Étienne was educated first at the gymnasium and later at the Protestant academy of his town, where he graduated in theology. Some biographies claim that his *Theses de cognitione Dei* (in-12°, no place or date)¹ were published in Nîmes, but so far I have not managed to locate any copy of this work.

Not much is known of Chauvin's early study years. One of the strongest personalities among those who taught at Nîmes during that period was David Derodon (ca. 1600-1664), a philosopher who combined the doctrines of Aristotle with those of other authors, such as his contemporaries Descartes and, for physics, Gassendi. The young Chauvin may very well have attended his lessons, because traces of Derodon's teachings—on the conception of logic, the subject for which Derodon was best known, but also on free will—can be found in several of Chauvin's own works, including some later ones. Derodon is never mentioned in the *Lexicon philosophicum*. Chauvin was to remember him, however, in an article published in 1721 in the *Bibliothèque germanique*, as “Mr. Derodon, qui a fait tant de bruit entre les Philosophes Modernes.”² The reference is probably to the scandal raised by the anti-Catholic pamphlet *Le tombeau de la messe*³—which forced Derodon to leave Nîmes in 1663 and seek shelter in Geneva—or to the accusations of heresy leveled against Derodon—as well as Jean Bruguier (ca. 1618-1684)⁴—in 1657.

¹ See for example E. Haag – É. Haag, *La France protestante*, Paris, J. Cherbuliez, 1846-1859, III, p. 429. Étienne Chauvin should not be confused with Pierre Chauvin, the author of *De naturali religione liber, in tres partes divisus* (Rotterdam, P. van der Slaart, 1693). Neither is there any evidence that the two were brothers, as affirmed, for example, by Jakob Friedrich Reimmann (1668-1743) in the *Bibliotheca historiae literariae critica* (Hildesiae, Schroeder, 1743², p. 713) and Jean-Henry-Samuel de Formey (1711-1797) in *Le philosophe payen ou Pensées de Pline: avec un commentaire littéraire et moral*, I, Leide, É. Luzac, 1759, Préface, p. xv.

² *Lettre de M. Chauvin à Mr. Lenfant, contenant quelques particularitez de Mr. Dav. Guiraud*, in *Bibliothèque germanique*, T. III (1721), pp. 187-192: 191. On this letter by Chauvin, see below, I, 7.

³ D. Derodon, *Le tombeau de la messe* Genève, P. Aubert, 1654 (1662²; 1682³).

⁴ É. Labrousse, *Pierre Bayle, I, Du pays de Foix à la cité d'Erasmus*, Dordrecht, Springer, 1985, p. 284. A theologian and philosopher, Jean Bruguier also taught at the Academy of Nîmes, where he was

We know what David Derodon's favorite themes were from his philosophy course—which he published after moving to Geneva⁵—and his students' dissertations, such as the *Theses ex universa philosophia*, defended by Jean-Robert Chouet (1642-1731) in Nîmes in 1662.⁶

Chouet had begun to study philosophy in Geneva with Kaspar Wyss (1635-1668), a professor of “novantiquo” leanings and himself influenced by Derodon, whose lessons he had attended at Orange and Nîmes.⁷ He had then continued his philosophical studies under the guidance of Derodon himself in Nîmes, where he had arrived in 1661, at the age of 19. After Wyss' death, Chouet took over his chair at the Academy in Geneva, which he held until 1686, spreading Cartesian philosophy and physics through his teaching. In Geneva, Chouet was the philosophy teacher of the two Basnage brothers, Pierre Bayle, Jean Le Clerc (1657-1736), Jacques Lenfant (1661-1728) and Jean-Alphonse Turretini (1671-1737), all names we will be running across again, for various reasons, in Chauvin's intellectual biography. These were all authors with an open attitude, who did not shy, in the name of the independence of reason and *libertas philosophandi*, from grafting this or this other element of the thought of the *novatores* onto Aristotelian doctrine (partly through the influence of Franco Burgersdijk, a commentator of Aristotle from Leiden, and his Cartesian student Adriaan Heereboord). In theology, although they clung to their Calvinist faith, they were inspired by the moderate positions of the school of Saumur.⁸

At the end of his course of studies, Chauvin left his native town, probably to complete his education elsewhere, as was customary, as a “proposant” (that is, a candidate to the pastoral ministry). In 1661 he lived in Paris for some time. On his way back he very probably met Louis Tronchin (1629-1705) in Lyon, having been requested by Jean Daillé (1628-1690)—the son of the like-named and better-known minister of Charenton (1594-1670)—to deliver some books by Jansenist authors to Tronchin.⁹

pastor from 1656 to 1663 (*La France protestante*, III, p. 45). Chauvin knew him, since in the above-quoted *Lettre à Mr. Lenfant* he affirms that he had shown him Guiraud's writings on optics. Bruquier must have also been well versed in the hard sciences, as he gave the young Alphonse de Vignoles lessons of algebra, geometry, optics and astronomy, as well as philosophy and theology. (L. Moréri, *Le Grand dictionnaire historique ou le Mélange curieux de l'histoire sacrée et profane*, Nouvelle édition, s.v. “Vignoles, Alphonse de,” X, Paris, Libraires associés, 1759, p. 615).

⁵ D. Derodon, *Philosophia contracta*, Genevae, P. Chouet, 1664.

⁶ *Theses ex universa philosophia selectae. Quas Deo favente, T.O.M. solus et sine praeside tuebatur Ioannes Robertus Chouetus, Genevensis*, Nemausi, E. Rabanus, 1662 (dedicate a David Derodon e Kaspar Wyss).

⁷ See Mario Sina's introduction to Jean-Robert Chouet, *Corsi di filosofia*, ed. M. Sina – M. Ballardin – E. Rapetti, Firenze, L.S. Olschki, 2010, I, pp. xxvi and xxxix.

⁸ For an overview of the teachings of David Derodon and Kaspar Wyss, and the philosophical thought of Jean-Robert Chouet, see again Sina's introduction to J.-R. Chouet, *Corsi di filosofia*, pp. XIII-LXX.

⁹ Cf. Jean Daillé jr's letter to Louis Tronchin of 30 June 1661, from Paris: “Ayant trouvé l'occasion de MM. du Gros et Chauvin deux proposans du Languedoc qui retournent chez eux

Chauvin was consecrated a minister at the synod of Montpellier on 3 May 1663. He later exercised this function in several localities in southern France, including Saint-Jean de Ceirargues (1662-1663), the fief of the Baron of Malerargues (1663-1665), Montpellier (1665-1667) and Congénies (1670-1673). In 1673 he moved to Velaux, whence he also traveled to exercise his ministry—contravening the laws of the time—in Aix and Marseilles. In 1674, his activity came within the sights of the Compagnie du Très-Saint-Sacrement de l’Autel. To drive him away, the Catholic secret society accused him of clandestinely acting as a minister in Marseilles. They reported to the Compagnie de la Propagation de la foi of Aix his pastoral visits with families and his participation in meetings, as well as the fact that he had baptized some children and assisted a prisoner sentenced to capital punishment in his last moments.¹⁰ To determine the feasibility and possible modes of a legal action against him, the juridical opinion of the Jesuit Bernard Meynier (1604-1682) was sought. Meynier was an expert of legislation on Protestants and a “grand controversiste” (as Blaise Pascal had sarcastically defined him in the *Provinciales*).¹¹ In his study of the Chauvin case he sent from Paris, Meynier suggested a relatively cautious approach, stressing that Chauvin could not be prohibited from residing in Marseilles as long as he did not exercise the functions of a minister there, such as administering baptism, either publicly or secretly.¹² The Compagnie du Très-

par la voye de Lyon et qui m’ont offert de vous rendre seurement les livres que j’ay achettés pour vous, j’ay crû ne le devoir pas laisser échapper, comme étant difficile que j’en puisse rencontrer une plus commode et plus assurée. Je leur ay donc mis entre les mains: *Jansenii Augustinus*, les *Oeuvres* du Père Aurelius, Arnaud *De la Fréquente Communion*, les *Lettres* de l’abbé de S. Cyran et ses *Apologies*; et ils m’ont promis de les faire emballer avec divers autres livres qu’ils emportent de cette ville pour leur usage; de sorte qu’il y a tout sujet d’espérer que vous les recevez en bon estat. En revanche de ce bon office qu’ils vous rendent volontairement et de si bonne grâce, donnez leur quelque part dans vôtre amitié pour laquelle ils m’ont tesmoigné avoir grande passion et dont je vous puis assurer qu’ils ne sont pas indignes vu leur mérite et les bonnes qualités que nous avons reconnues en eux durant le séjour qu’ils ont fait icy. Je vous tiendray conte de toutes les faveurs que vous leur ferez et je vous les recommande avec la mesme affection qui me fait estre, [etc.]” (in: *Correspondance de Jean Daillé fils, ministre à Charenton (1628-1690)*, présentée et annotée par J.-L. Tulot, 2006, <<http://jeanluc.tulot.pagesperso-orange.fr/Daillefils.pdf>>, pp. 25-26). From Daillé’s letter to Tronchin of 9 September 1661 (*ibid.*, p. 26) we know that the books were duly delivered.

¹⁰ On this whole story, see R. Allier (ed.), *La Compagnie du Très-Saint-Sacrement de l’Autel à Marseille*, Paris, H. Champion, 1909, pp. 255-278.

¹¹ *Seizième lettre aux révérends pères jésuites*, 4 December 1656. Both in the XV and the XVI letter, Pascal polemicalizes with Meynier for accusing the Eucharistic doctrine of the Jansenists of crypto-Calvinism in *Le Port-Royal et Genève d’intelligence contre le très Saint-Sacrement de l’Autel* (Poitiers, A. Pasdelou, 1656).

¹² On this point, too, Meynier’s memorandum introduces some interesting distinctions, which lean towards an acknowledgement, not from a confessional point of view but at least from a “juridical” one, of the value of the sacrament of baptism even if administered by a Calvinist: “Si néanmoins l’enfant estant en danger de mort, le ministre luy a donné le bapteme en presence des domestiques seulement, il ne seroit pas expedient de le mettre alors en instance, parce que de

Saint-Sacrement, however, eventually prevailed and Chauvin was forced to leave Velaux. From 1677 to 1681 he was pastor in Bézier, and from 1681 to 1685 in Uzès.¹³

On all these moves, Chauvin was probably accompanied by his family. He had married Eléonore Le Roux, originally from Montpellier, who was to give him five children.¹⁴

On the morrow of the Edict of Revocation, Chauvin was imprisoned and then exiled. He sought refuge first in Frankfurt and then in Rotterdam, where he arrived “*exulem, errabundum, et ab omnibus rebus vacuum.*”¹⁵

2. *The Dutch period*

In Rotterdam, Chauvin resumed the functions of a pastor again in the Walloon church, and met Pierre Bayle, whom he had the opportunity to substitute in his teaching duties when Bayle fell ill for some time in 1688. Bayle himself comments on this circumstance in a couple of letters, claiming that Chauvin had boasted of a chair that was actually not his own with a correspondent in Lausanne. On 29 July 1688, Bayle wrote from Rotterdam to David Constant:¹⁶

Suivant, comme je fais, l'Ordre de votre *Lettre*, je me trouve à l'endroit où vous me demandez des Nouvelles de *Rotterdam*, et nommément des *Démêlez* de Mr. Jurieu, des *Prétensions* de Mr. Chauvin, et des *Occupations* de Mr. de Beauval [...]. Pour Mr. Chauvin, je n'ai à vous dire autre chose, si ce n'est qu'il eut été bien aise que Messieurs les *Magistrats* lui eussent donné, avec quelque Appointement, la Commmission d'enseigner la *Philosophie*. Mais, quoi que, pendant ma Maladie, mes *Ecoliers* aiant souhaité d'achever leur *Cours*, que je leur avois commencé, et aiant obtenu la permission de le faire achever par Mr. Chauvin, avec *Disputes* et *Leçons Publiques*, cela ait donné lieu à Mr. Chauvin de faire la Fonction de *Professeur* pendant quelques Mois; la chose en demeura là, dès que ces *Ecoliers* eurent achevé ce *Cours*, et il ne s'est point fait d'autres *Leçons Publiques*, jusqu'à ce que j'aie repris mes Fonctions. Je souhaiterois que Mr. Chauvin, qui est un fort honnête-Homme, et habile *Philosophe*, trouvât nos *Magistrats* aussi ardens pour la Protection des *Muses*, qu'ils le

deux maux il en faut choisir le moindre. Or qu'un enfant meure sans baptême et n'aille point au Ciel, c'est un mal incomparablement plus grand que non pas qu'un ministre fasse secrettement quelque chose qui luy est défendue par les Edits” (“Etude juridique sur le cas Chauvin,” signed by Father Meynier and dated Paris, 10 August 1674, in: *La Compagnie du Très-Saint-Sacrement de l'Autel à Marseille*, p. 268).

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 267.

¹⁴ Including at least three girls (the second was called Hélène and the third, who died in Berlin in 1750, Rose) and a boy (Jean, born in Rotterdam in 1687; see below, I, 7).

¹⁵ Chauvin, *Lexicon rationale*, dedicatory letter, p. *6.

¹⁶ David Constant de Rebecque (1638-1733), pastor and professor of theology in Lausanne.

seroient ailleurs. Il tient des *Pensionnaires*, et leur fait de bonnes Répétitions ; et j'ai l'un de mes meilleurs *Disciples* logé chez lui.¹⁷

The “disciple” Bayle is referring to in the last sentence may be Jean-Baptiste Brutel de La Rivière (1669-1742), a nephew of Chauvin’s from Montpellier. After the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, this young man had moved from France to Zurich, where he had begun his studies, and later to Rotterdam, where Chauvin was putting him up and where he was attending Bayle’s history and philosophy courses.¹⁸ He, too, would later earn a place in the history of lexicica as editor of the so-called “third edition” (1725-1727) of the *Dictionnaire Universel* (1691) by Antoine Furetière, whose “second edition” (actually the first, revised and expanded, 1701 and 1708) had been edited by Henry Basnage de Beauval.¹⁹

In another letter to Constant, of 8 May 1689, Bayle again refers to Chauvin’s substitution:

Lors que Mr. Chauvin écrivoit que ma Charge lui étoit assurée, il faloit qu’il crut, ou que je ne vivrois pas long-tems, ou que je ne serois pas en état de l’exercer : car, sans l’un ou l’autre de ces deux Cas, la chose ne pouvoit pas lui être assurée; et apparemment, il eut eu bien de la peine à me succeder, quand même ces Cas me seroient arrivez. Car, comme cette Ville n’a fait l’établissement des *Leçons Publiques*, que comme par accident, à la recommandation d’un *Magistrat*, qui vouloit nous servir ici, Mr. Jurieu et moi, fraîchement venus de *Sedan*, où le *Roi* nous avoit cassez; je doute fort, qu’après nous, on continuë la Pension; quoi que, n’étant que de cinq cens Florins, pour chacun, ce ne soit pas une Charge fort pesante pour la Ville. Mais, après tout, on est ménager, et a cent sortes de Dépenses à faire plus utiles à la Ville. Quoi qu’il en soit, Mr. Chauvin, très capable d’une *Profession*, non seulement dans une *Ecole Illustre*; mais aussi, dans une *Académie*, a pu voir que l’Événement n’a pas justifié ce qu’il avoit écrit à *Lausanne*. Je suis seul ici à professer publiquement la *Philosophie*.²⁰

In spite of this incident, Bayle maintained quite a benevolent attitude towards Chauvin and a positive judgment on his qualities as a philosopher.

During his Dutch years, Chauvin’s interests must have gradually drifted away from theology towards philosophy and the natural sciences. A letter from Pierre-Sylvain Regis (1632-1707), published in 1690 in Jean Le Clerc’s *Biblio-*

¹⁷ *Lettres choisies de Mr Bayle, avec des remarques*, ed. P. Des Maizeaux, Rotterdam, Fritsch – Böhm, 1714, I, pp. 243-247: 244-245).

¹⁸ Brutel de la Rivière then continued his studies in Utrecht and Leiden; from 1695 onward, he was pastor of the Walloon church in several towns in the Netherlands. He died in Amsterdam in 1742 (cf. J. Brutel de La Rivière, *Sermons sur divers textes de l’Ecriture sainte*, Amsterdam, Zacharie Châtelain, 1746, p. x) and J. Basnage, *Correspondenza da Rotterdam 1685-1709*, ed. M. Silvera, Amsterdam – Maarsse 2000, p. 175n.

¹⁹ The latter’s brother, Jacques Basnage, remembers Brutel de la Rivière with words of friendship and esteem in a letter to Jean-Alphonse Turretini of 26 March 1702 (in: J. Basnage, *Correspondenza da Rotterdam 1685-1709*, p. 175).

²⁰ *Ibid.*, letter LXXIV, pp. 258-261: 260-261.

thèque universelle et historique, informs us that Chauvin was already devoting himself to experiments on magnetism and studying the physics of the air, a theme that was to engage him until the later years of his scientific activity.²¹ He may have actually been planning to publish a book on physics, as suggested by an anecdote related about forty years later by Charles-Étienne Jordan (1700-1745).²²

At the same time, Chauvin was working on the first edition of his philosophical lexicon, which eventually came out from the Rotterdam publisher Pieter van der Slaart, with the title *Lexicon rationale sive Thesaurus philosophicus ordine alphabetico digestus*. The title page bears the date of 1692, but the book was already in print by October of the previous year. This is proved by a letter of 9 October 1691 in which Pierre Bayle informed Vincent Minutoli (1639-1709) of its publication:

Les *Nouvelles Littéraires* sont fort minces. Nous avons depuis peu pourtant hors de la Presse d'un jeune *Libraire* de cette Ville un *Thesaurus*, ou *Lexicon Philosophique*, par Mr. Chauvin, *Ministre Pensionnaire* de cette Ville, natif de *Nîmes*. C'est un *in folio*, où il y a bien de bonnes choses à apprendre.²³

In those same days, Chauvin maneuvered to obtain a privilege for the sale of his dictionary in Geneva, exploiting his friendship with Jean-Alphonse Turret-

²¹ "Lettre de Monsieur Regis à Monsieur Chauvin, sur la Proportion selon laquelle l'Air se condense", in: *Bibliothèque universelle et historique*, XVII (1690), pp. 520-537. Regis sends Chauvin the solution to a problem they had discussed in person in Amsterdam a few days before. Chauvin, Regis adds in flattering tones, could certainly have found the solution himself, but he wants to save him the effort: "Mais parce que je sçais, que vous êtes extrêmement occupé, il faut que je vous épargne cette peine; ce que je fais avec d'autant plus de plaisir, que cela vous obligera de me communiquer au plutôt les Nouvelles Experiences, que vous avez dessein de faire sur l'Aimant" (*ibid.*, p. 521).

²² "Ceci me fait ressouvenir de ce que me dit un jour feu M. *Chauvin* Professeur de Philosophie; nous parlions de l'état déplorable où sont réduites les Lettres dans certains païs; il me dit là-dessus qu'étant en *Hollande*, il offrit à un *Libraire* une *Physique* qu'il avoit destinée à l'usage du public: l'Imprimeur lui demanda, Monsieur, sauriez-vous faire des chansons? Non, répondit M. *Chauvin*. J'en suis fâché, répondit le Marchand à chansons, si vous en vouliez faire, le debit que j'en ferois m'engageroit à vous les bien paier. *O tempora!*" ([Ch.-É. Jordan], *Recueil de littérature, de philosophie et d'histoire*, Amsterdam, François l'Honoré, 1730, pp. 7-8; emphasis in the original). Jordan's *Recueil* also remembers Chauvin as the inventor of a method for stuffing animals: "Secret pour embaümer des animaux. Prenez 6 parties de sel d'alun, et une partie de vitriol. Le tout bien broyé soit mis dans l'anus de l'animal, que l'on suppose bien purgé. Après cela versez dans son anus, autant que vous le pourrez à diverses reprises, la liqueur suivante. ½ *Livre d'huile de Thérébentine*. Une *Once de gomme Sandarasse*. ½ *Once de Thérébentine de Venise*. Laissez digérer le tout dans un matras sur des cendres chaudes, et le passez en suite au travers d'un linge. Je tiens ce secret de Monsieur Chauvin qui en est l'inventeur" (*ibid.*, p. 22). On Jordan, see J. Häselser, *Ein Wanderer zwischen den Welten. Charles Etienne Jordan (1700-1745)*, Sigmaringen, Jan Thorbecke Verlag, 1993.

²³ Bayle, *Lettres choisies*, I, pp. 339-343: 340.

tini.²⁴ The two must have met in Rotterdam, where the young Genevan would stop during his *peregrinatio academica* in the years 1691-1693 (he was in Holland between 1691 and 1692). Jean-Alphonse Turretini, in his turn, through his uncle Bénédict II Turretini (1631-1707) and Barthélemy Micheli du Crest (1630-1708), turned to Jean-Robert Chouet (then Secretary of State in Geneva), who personally oversaw the putting down in writing of the privilege.²⁵

In his Rotterdam years, Chauvin also undertook the publication of a bi-monthly journal, the *Nouveau journal des savants*, patterned after the Parisian *Journal des savants* and Bayle's *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*. Four issues came out from 1694 to 1698, two in Rotterdam and two in Berlin.²⁶ In a letter of 8 March 1694, Bayle announced the inauguration of the journal to Minutoli. His judgment on Chauvin's enterprise, however, was less than enthusiastic:

Mr Chauvin, *Ministre Réfugié* en cette Ville, a entrepris un *nouveau Journal des Sçavans*. Il paroitra de deux en deux Mois. On a vu *Jamvier et Février* 1694. Chaque Tome sera de huit

²⁴ Chauvin's correspondence with J.-A. Turretini, kept at the Geneva Library (the former Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire) continued in the following years. Besides the letters, which I will be quoting further on, I will mention here, for the sake of exhaustiveness, the three letters that Chauvin sent to Turretini from Berlin between 1697 and 1699, although they are of scarce relevance to his intellectual biography: see M.C. Pitassi, *Inventaire critique de la correspondance de Jean-Alphonse Turretini*, avec la collaboration de Laurence Vial-Bergon, Pierre-Olivier Léchoet et Éric-Olivier Lochard, 6 vols., Paris, H. Champion, 2009, I, n. 1054 (25 March 1697) and n. 1186 (28 May 1698); II, n. 1246 (20 June 1699). The last letter that we have from Chauvin to Turretini is of 1708, but the two must have gone on corresponding, because in a letter of 17 September 1711 Barbeyrac informs Turretini that the counts of Wartensleben—the sons of the powerful Prussian general Alexander Hermann von Wartensleben (1650-1734)—had a letter from Chauvin for him (*Inventaire critique*, n. 222).

²⁵ See Jean-Alphonse Turretini's letters to Bénédict II Turretini, from Rotterdam, 6 September 1691 (*Inventaire critique*, I, n. 302, pp. 212-213: 212); Jean-Alphonse Turretini to Barthélemy du Crest, from Utrecht, 13 September 1691 (*Inventaire critique*, I, n. 307, p. 216); Jean-Alphonse Turretini to Bénédict, from Rotterdam, 11 October 1691 (*Inventaire critique*, I, n. 325, p. 228-229: 229); J.-R. Chouet to J.-A. Turretini of 8 October 1691 (excerpts in E. de Budé, *Vie de Jean-Robert Chouet, professeur et magistrat genevois (1642-1731)*, Genève, M. Reymond, 1899, pp. 169-171; Jean-Robert Chouet to Jean-Alphonse Turretini, from Geneva, 16 October 1691 (excerpts in Budé, *Vie de Jean-Robert Chouet*, pp. 170-172; *Inventaire critique*, I, n. 327, p. 230). In the final part of his letter of 8 October 1691 to Jean-Alphonse Turretini, Chouet sends his greetings to Chauvin: "Cependant faites moy la faveur, Monsieur, de saluer de ma part Mr Chauvin, de l'assurer que je m'estimerois heureux si je pouvois trouver quelque occasion plus importante que celle-ci pour luy tesmoigner les sentiments que j'ai pour sa personne, et de luy demander pour moi la continuation de l'honneur de son souvenir" (Budé, *Vie de Jean-Robert Chouet*, p. 171). Chouet acknowledged the receiving of three copies of the dictionary, sent by the publisher, in a letter to Jean-Alphonse Turretini of 31 December 1691 (excerpts *ibid.*, pp. 172-173; cf. *Inventaire critique*, I, n. 372, p. 262).

²⁶ On the *Nouveau journal des sçavans*, see especially Frédéric Hartweg's article in *Dictionnaire des journaux: 1600-1789*, sous la direction de Jean Sgard, Paris, Universitas, 1991-2012, édition électronique, notice 980 (<<http://c18.net/dp/dp.php?no=980>>).