

***De intellectu*: Greek, Arabic, Latin, and Hebrew Texts and Their Influence on Medieval Philosophy. A Tribute to Rafael Ramón Guerrero**

Faculty of Arts, University of Porto, 6th-7th February 2020

Philosophy changed radically during the Middle Ages as a result of the translation of a considerable number of texts by Aristotle and his followers from Greek into Arabic, Latin and Hebrew. As an example, epistemological and anthropological questions were rethought and substantively reshaped in the Latin world after the translation of Aristotle's *De anima* by James of Venice and William of Moerbeke (from Greek), and by Michael Scot (from Arabic, together with Averroes's long commentary on it), after it had been successively translated into Syriac and Arabic. This crucial and complex process followed an already long and parallel history of paraphrases and commentaries on this work in Greek, Syriac and Arabic.

The Latin discussion of *De anima* III.4-5, on the intellect, was conditioned or driven by a large number of texts from different periods. Among those texts are the commentaries or paraphrases on *De anima* by Alexander of Aphrodisias, Themistius, Simplicius, John Philoponus, and Averroes, alongside independent short treatises, such as Alexander of Aphrodisias's *De intellectu et intellecto*, al-Kindī's *De intellectu*, al-Fārābī's *De intellectu et intellecto*, Averroes' *Epistola de connexione intellectus abstracti cum homine*, and his son's *Epistola de intellectu*. In several other works "intellect" plays a most pivotal role, such as in Plotinus's *Enneads* paraphrased in the Arabic *Theologia Aristotelis* and in Proclus's *Elementatio Theologica* epitomised in the *Liber de causis*. Other works added to the debate, such as Avicenna's *Liber de anima*, al-Ghazālī's *Summa theoriae philosophiae*, Averroes's *Long Commentary on De Anima*, Maimonides' *Dux neutrorum*, Isaac Israeli's *Liber de definitionibus*, not to mention texts from the Christian tradition, such as Nemesius of Emesa's *De natura hominis* and Sophonias' commentary on *De anima*. A similarly radical change occurred in thirteenth-century Jewish philosophy through the translation into Hebrew of many of these same texts, at the same time that a very different change was taking place in Arabic philosophy.

"Nous" – rendered as *'aql*, *sekhel*, *intellectus*, and their vernacular derivatives – became a key philosophical concept in late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, being intimately connected to a wide range of issues in psychology, epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics. However, because of its centrality and the manifold conflicting interpretations and solutions accompanying it, "intellect" became a highly contentious problem, one that both authors and commentators tried to disentangle within the context of overlapping Platonic, Aristotelian, Neoplatonic, and Stoic traditions. The ways intellect was conceptualized in this long period influenced and shaped the discussions of fundamental philosophical problems, such as: the body-soul relationship, intuitive and abstract knowledge, mental content, intelligible forms, immortality of the soul, happiness and the highest end of man.

Celebrating the career and the scholarly contributions of Rafael Ramón Guerrero, we welcome a discussion of current research on texts and problems concerning the intellect within the four linguistic spaces in which Aristotelian theories played a central role. We also encourage the submission of contributions centred on the circulation and diffusion of these and other texts which the historical actors in the Greek, Arabic, Latin, and Hebrew spaces used to facilitate, shape, and turn specific debates on the intellect into predominant discourses in the history of philosophy.

Rafael Ramón Guerrero (Granada, 1948), Professor of History of Medieval and Arabic Philosophy in the Facultad de Filosofía of the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, along his career he has produced an outstanding contribution to teaching and research in Medieval Philosophy. He obtained his PhD in Madrid in 1979 under the supervision of José Antonio García-Junceda with a thesis entitled *Contribución al estudio de la filosofía árabe: Alma e Intelecto como problemas fundamentales de la misma*, which served as the basis for his book *La recepción árabe del De anima de Aristóteles: Al-Kindi y Al-Farabi* (Madrid 1993). This problem remained the focus of his attention in several publications, translations of Arabic philosophers, teaching, conferences, supervision of doctoral theses, and direction of research projects. His work is internationally renowned, and his academic activity is particularly influential in Spain, Portugal, and Latin-America. With this Conference, his students, colleagues and friends wish to honour the Professor, the Academic, the Scholar.

Call for papers

Open until October 30th, 2019. Send a proposal with name, institution, title, and an abstract up to 300 words, to gfm@letras.up.pt

Presentation: 20 minutes + discussion. *Languages*: English, Portuguese, Spanish, French, Italian, German.

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