THE STUDY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN THE MIDDLE AGES

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CONCERNING the study of foreign languages in the Middle Ages one rather fre-
quently encounters, even today, views and notions which are not based on facts
and which prevent a proper evaluation of the actual achievements. It is really
not true that the Irish read the Greek Homer in the seventh and eighth centuries
when classical studies had ceased nearly everywhere on the Continent. Nor can a
general conclusion as to the nature of Greek studies in Petrarch's times be drawn
from the story that the poet shed tears when, after many attempts, he finally got
a Greek Homer; for, knowing no Greek, he could not have read him, and of
course his century did not provide any possibility for Greek studies in the West.

I shall try to sketch the nature and range of mediaeval language studies
mainly on the basis of the extant monuments[1] and to characterize these according
to their symptomatic value in the cultural history of the Middle Ages. To take
one example, what evidence we have of Hebrew studies among Christians of our
Middle Ages can be connected with quite different purposes: Biblical studies,
religious polemic, interest in Hebrew science or philosophy, or even the require-
ments of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. These may be regarded as typical. But
we also find the curious confession of a Westphalian priest, Johannes of Scheven,
the author of a *Margarita exorcistarum*, the only manuscript of which was de-
stroyed in World War II. He took some Hebrew lessons from a Jew in order to
pronounce correctly in his exorcisms the names of the demons which mainly
sounded Hebrew.[2]

From our survey we must exclude Latin. Latin in the Middle Ages did not be-
long to either of the two normal categories of dead languages or living languages.[3]

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[1] Of capital importance for the theoretical background is A. Borst, *Der Turmbau von Babel: Ge-
schichte der Meinungen über Ursprung und Vielfalt der Sprachen und Völker* (Stuttgart, 1957 ff.);
Vols. I-II, 1 and 2, and III, 1 have appeared to date.

[2] B. Bischoff in *Historisches Jahrbuch*, LVIII (1938), 615 n. 1.

[3] Cf. R. Meister, "Mittellatein als Traditionssprache" in *Liber Floridus: Mittellateinische Studien
Paul Lehmann gewidmet*, ed. B. Bischoff and S. Brechter (St Ottilien, 1950), pp. 1–9; L. Bieler,
"Das Mittellatein als Sprachproblem" in *Lexis*, II (1949), 98–104; W. von den Steinen, "Das mit-
telalterliche Latein als historisches Phänomen" in *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Geschichte*, VII (1957),
1–27.

Being the language of the Western church which every little child admitted to an ecclesiastical school had to learn, it became for many centuries the general vehicle of spiritual culture and of practical record. Thus it was most intimately connected with all the deep changes of the mediaeval *Geistesgeschichte*, and with this inner history it showed to a certain extent grammatical changes and other features of life and growth without being a natural organism.

In the mediaeval West the majority of the population were ignorant of Latin; but whoever learned it became a member of a European community;[4] with Latin he could cross all vernacular language frontiers, if only he remained within the social stratum where it was understood. The non-ecclesiastical world also had at times its more than national, in fact international, languages. From the twelfth century on, and especially in the thirteenth century, French acquired such a position; it was highly appreciated and its study was eagerly recommended. Various factors converged towards this: the Crusades, the superiority of French chivalrous culture, the attraction exerted on tradesmen by the fairs of Champagne. In thirteenth-century Italy it was chosen as the literary language by Brunetto Latini and Marco Polo. Already in the twelfth century Danish nobles sent their sons to Paris so that they should become familiar with the French language and literature;[5] and German courtly epics and lyrical poetry show the strongest influence of French models. When in the Old Norse *Speculum regum* essential conditions of foreign trade are discussed the advice is given: "If you wish to become perfect in your knowledge, study all languages, and more than any others Latin and French, for they are the widest known, but do not neglect your native tongue."[6] In the Avignonese age quite similar ideas are expressed in reference to young knights and young merchants by Conrad of Megenberg in his *Oeconomica*.[7] Young Tristan, who in Gottfried of Strasburg's poem was sent to various countries in order to learn their languages, was not merely a poetical ideal.[8]

For some time Provençal played the rôle of a common literary language in the spiritual culture of the *noblesse* of South France, Italy, Spain, and Portugal, especially for lyrical poetry. This explains why in the first half of the thirteenth

[4] Cf. the important study by H. Grundmann, "Litteratus-illitteratus" in *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte*, XL (1958), 1–65.

[5] Arnold of Lübeck, *Chronica Slavorum*, III, 5; cf. Borst, II-2, 698.

[6] Cf. Borst, II-2, 784 and n. 114.

[7] Conrad of Megenberg, *Oeconomica*, Lib. I, tract. 2, c. 17: "Capitulum decimum septimum qualiter iuvenis militaris in tercio septennio in curiis principum sit exercitandus . . . . Sicut enim primum septennium lactiferis moribus nutritur et materna lingwa instruitur, sic secundum septennium litteris afficitur, aliena lingua docetur et moralibus documentis maturioribus informatur . . . " (Seville, Bibl. Colombina, MS. 7-7-32, fol. XIVvb); *ibid.*, Lib. I, tract. 2, c. 21: "Capitulum vicesimum primum de regimine invenum mercatorum. Mercaturus etiam iuvenis in tercio sue etatis septennio incipit evolare. Qui cum a principio tam aliorum lingwas quam eciam mores nesciat et solerciam mercandi ignoret, fideli socio ac trito in eisdem negociandis committatur . . . " (*ibid.*, fol. XVIra); the above passages were kindly communicated to me by Father Th. Kaeppeli, O.P. Cf. A. Pelzer and Th. Kaeppeli, "L'Oeconomica de Conrad de Megenberg retrouvée," *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique*, XLV (1950), 559–616.

[8] Cf. Borst, II-2, 742.

century the Catalan Ramon Vidal and the Provençal Uc Faidit, who wrote in Umbria, composed grammars of troubadour Provençal. And not less is Dante's *De vulgari eloquentia* a prominent witness of a cultural open-mindedness which was not diked in by language frontiers.

In the realm of the Mediterranean trade Italian, Catalan, and Greek probably were the most important languages in the late Middle Ages. When, towards the end of the Middle Ages, the cities of South Germany were at the height of their economic prosperity and German merchants had organized the Fondaco dei Tedeschi in Venice, knowledge of German became desirable for the Italians. This accounts for the fact that not only were various vocabularies compiled and copied by hand but also a book was printed which bears the title: *Questo sie uno libro utilissimo a chi se dileta de intendere Todescho dechiarando in lingua Taliana;* it was published in several editions.[9]

Texts illustrating language studies are preserved rather unequally. It is often difficult to estimate the life of languages and their contact in those zones where it was closest. I mean those zones in which linguistically different populations lived side by side or were mixed altogether. Such zones or countries were more numerous in the Middle Ages than they are today. I mention only some: England, with English, French, and Welsh, plus Gaelic in the North; the Low Countries; the German-Slavonic borderlands; South Italy and Sicily; Spain. Such regions were the natural home of interpreters and translators. Of them little is known, as their activity generally remains anonymous.

The relation between languages that have to live next to each other, with each other, may be friendly or neutral; it may be rivalry full of tension or open hostility and hatred. Everything depends upon the relation existing between the ethnical groups. Anglo-Saxons thought that the devil spoke the detested language of the detested British.[10] Also from Bohemia we have mediaeval testimonies of undisguised mutual scorn of languages. The Czechs invented the story that at the separation of languages after the construction of the Tower of Babel the slave Theucades first had spoken German.[11]

On the other hand, there exist examples of a quite different sort, of rational attitude and eager exchange. In late mediaeval England there arose a large literature of schoolbooks for the study of French,[12] and from the Low Countries, which were a zone of greatest mercantile activity, we still have numerous vocabularies and patterns of conversation for Flemish-speaking as well as for French-

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[9] D. Reichling, *Appendices ad Hainii-Copingeri Repertorium bibliographicum*, Fasc. III (Munich, 1907), p. 51, no. 966; G. Manacorda in *La Bibliofilia*, xviii (1916–17), 245.

[10] B. Colgrave, ed., *Felix's Life of Saint Guthlac* (Cambridge, England, 1956), pp. 109 f., 185 f.

[11] Cf. Borst, ii-1, 701 f.; ii-2, pp. 905 f.

[12] Cf., e.g., W. A. Wright, ed., *Femina. Now first printed from a unique MS. in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge* (Cambridge, England, 1909); J. Gessler, ed., *Fragments d'anciens traités pour l'enseignement du français en Angleterre* (Paris, 1933); *id.*, ed., *La manière du langage qui enseigne à bien parler et écrire le français* (Paris, 1934). For the study of Law French in Oxford University cf. H. Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, new ed. by F. M. Powicke and A. B. Emden, iii (Oxford, 1936), 162.

speaking people.[13] Practically entirely lacking, as far as I know, are formal documents of language study from South Italy and Sicily; the reason may be that, the people being bilingual, familiarity with both Greek and Latin-Italian was rather common in this region,[14] which since the early Middle Ages distinguished itself as a channel by which Greek hagiography and Greek medicine were communicated to the West in translations.

Specially apparent is the neighborhood of different languages — and of religions — in the part of Spain under Arabic rule. Many Latin manuscripts which are written in the Spanish national script contain also Arabic marginalia, for those who read and annotated these books were Christians who adopted, or at least became acquainted with, Arabic. We know that even bilingual Latin and Arabic manuscripts of Biblical books were produced. Scholarly study of Arabic in the twelfth century can be observed in a Latin-Arabic lexicon which is now in Leiden;[15] it is still free from the features of polemical or missionary tendency against Islam which dominated many later Spanish efforts in this field. Around 1500 mediaeval linguistical method reached its culmination in the works of the Spanish Hieronymian monk, Pedro de Alcalá. When he wrote his famous grammar of the Moorish dialect of Granada he still followed the Latin grammatical system.[16]

This brings me to another point. We see from extant texts or learn from the titles of others that the more seriously and systematically mediaeval language studies were pursued the more they derived their principles from Latin grammar. I have already mentioned Uc Faidit, who in the thirteenth century wrote his *Donat Proensal*. About the same time the Englishman, John Basingstoke, the friend of the great translator, Robert Grosseteste, wrote a *Donatus Grecus*. The loss of this is easier to forget than that of the adaptation of Donatus to the Old Prussian idiom spoken in the country of the Teutonic Order that was made by the papal legate, William of Modena;[17] for Prussian, a member of the Baltic family, died out in the seventeenth century. We shall meet it once more. After so many analogies, it seems not improbable that the first strictly mediaeval grammar, the Old High German "grammatica patrii sermonis" that Charlemagne had ordered compiled[18] closely followed the model of Donatus.

[13] *Le livre des Mestiers de Bruges et ses dérivés*, ed. J. Gessler (Bruges, 1931). Cf. H. Rheinfelder, "Das mittelalterliche Sprachbüchlein der Stadt Brügge," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Geistesgeschichte*, III (1937), 175–193.

[14] Some instances are recorded by R. Weiss, *The Greek Culture of South Italy in the later Middle Ages*, Proceedings of the British Academy, XXXVII [London, 1951], 25 f.

[15] Leyden, Univ. Libr., Cod. Scalig. 31 (*saec. xii*). Cf. *Glossarium Latino-Arabicum ex unico qui exstat codice Leidensi*, ed. Chr. Fr. Seybold (Berlin, 1900); W. M. Whitehill, "The Date of the Earliest Arabic-Latin Glossary," *Isis*, XXVI (1937), 370–372.

[16] Cf. J. Fück in *Beiträge zur Arabistik, Semitistik und Islamwissenschaft*, ed. R. Hartmann and H. Scheel (Leipzig, 1944), pp. 113 ff.; *id., Die arabischen Studien in Europa bis in den Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Leipzig, 1955), 29 ff.

[17] Albericus Trium Fontium, *Chronica*, A.D. 1228 (*Mon. Germ. Hist., Scriptores*, XXIII [Hanover, 1874], p. 921). Cf. B. Altaner in *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft*, XVIII (1928), 203 f.

[18] Einhart, *Vita Karoli*, c. 29. Cf. Grundmann, *l.c.*, pp. 39 f.

The culture of imperial Rome and early Christianity was bilingual; it was based both on Greek and Latin, and a number of texts that were characteristic of this co-existence and exchange survived the deep cultural break between the sixth century and the early Carolingian time.[19] They were no longer in living use but they still existed in a few manuscripts. Among them the most important are certain Greco-Latin and Latin-Greek lexica and a number of typical Greco-Latin schoolbooks known as Hermeneumata which can be traced back to the third century after Christ. They regularly include conversations as they occurred in the daily life of a student in ancient times. From another origin sprang the bilingual Graeco-Latin manuscripts of books of the Bible. As a type they may go back to the early centuries of Christianity, when Greek was the language of the church even in Latin-speaking countries. A number of them survived and stimulated attempts to learn Greek, as we see in Bede's use of the Laudian Acts.[20]

In addition to these there were some minor Greek texts or lists of ancient origin accessible in the West. One of them gave the names of Greek months in two series to which the Hebrew and Egyptian (i.e., Coptic) names were added.[21] They were incorporated by Bede into his *De temporum ratione* where he added the Anglo-Saxon names. With the Greek alphabet, which was known all over in the Latin Church, very often the Greek numerals were transcribed; in this we find an interesting variety, for they show both the classical forms and more frequently Vulgar Greek forms, which may have been brought over by Greek merchants.[22]

Both kinds of lists — of the months and of the numerals — worked like magnets. Since about 1100, that is, after the First Crusade and possibly as an effect of it, we encounter in some German *computi* a new column with the Armenian names of the months: *Margats, Hrorti, Nanasardi*, etc.[23] Besides the Greek numeral words, we find occasionally the Hebrew ones, and in two early French manuscripts we have the Coptic numeral words in the Sahidic dialect.[24] I think, however, that these lists and enumerations in general cannot be regarded as a result of, or as an attempt at genuine language study. They might rather be regarded as a symptom of a naïve curiosity which manifests itself also in the collecting — it is a kind of collecting — of foreign and strange alphabets which can be observed in manuscripts from the eighth century on and continued to post-mediaeval times. The collections often include real as well as invented alphabets without discrimination, amongst them, e.g., the alleged alphabet of the kingdom of Prester John. Quite often they were used for cypher, and Greek and runes most frequently of all.[25]

[19] Cf. B. Bischoff in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, XLIV (1951), 41 ff.

[20] *Bedae Venerabilis Expositio Actuum Apostolorum et Retractatio*, ed. M. L. W. Laistner (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1939), pp. xxxix f.

[21] Cf. C. W. Jones, "Polemius Silvius, Bede and the Names of the Months," SPECULUM, IX (1934), 50–56.

[22] B. Bischoff in *Byazntinische Zeitschrift*, XLIV (1951), p. 44 and notes 3, 4, 5.

[23] *Mon. Germ. Hist., Scriptores*, v (Hanover, 1843), 395; E. Schulz in *Humanismus. Katalog 95 Jacques Rosenthal* (Munich, 1934), p. v.

[24] Vat. Libr., MS. Vat. Regin. Lat. 755 (*saec.* ix), fol. 23 v. Regin. Lat. 123 (A.D. 1056), fol. 1 v.

[25] B. Bischoff, "Übersicht über die nichtdiplomatischen Geheimschriften des Mittelalters," *Mit-*

On a different level is the interest that Carolingian scholars took in the remnants of Gothic.[26] They knew from Isidorus that Ulfilas had created a special alphabet for his Gothic version of the Bible. There existed Visigothic communities in South France in which the old paternal language was still alive, as is attested by Theodulf of Orleans, a Visigoth himself. But when some scholars in the ninth century prove to know the Gothic alphabet, or even be aware of the relation between Gothic and Old High German, we realize that this knowledge probably was derived from another source. There were, I think, monuments of Gothic script from the time of Theodoric which Charlemagne and his courtiers may have found — I dare say must have found in Ravenna. At least two Carolingian scholars transcribed words and phrases from Ulfilas manuscripts — not only from the existing Codex Argenteus — and tried to understand them. A third, Walahfrid Strabo, knew about the existence of Gothic manuscripts.

Walahfrid's remarks as to the affinity between Gothic and *Theotiscum* are one instance, but by no means the only one, showing that comparison of languages was not altogether beyond the scope of mediaeval scholars. Used to explain words by etymologies right or wrong, they frequently without any method had recourse to words taken from different languages; some who had a more solid knowledge came to more or less correct results. It may suffice to name Giraldus Cambrensis, who was presented in the first issue of SPECULUM as a mediaeval forerunner of Indo-Germanic philologists[27] and his contemporary, Alexander Neckam, who rightly compared Hebrew, Greek, English, and French, which use the article, with Latin, which does without it.[28] And quite amazing are the observations which were reported by the Dutch Franciscan, William of Rubruk, as a result of his mission to the Mongol ruler, Kublai Khan, in 1253–1255.[29] He had an excellent sense both for geography and for languages: he spoke of the family of Slavonic languages, he reported the affinity of the Bashkir and Hungarian languages and also of the relation of the Turkish and of the Cumanic languages to Uigur. He described with precision the differences of the Chinese, Tibetan, Tangut, and Uigur scripts. With him may be compared Marco Polo, who during his sojourn in Mongolia learned to speak and to write four languages current in the Mongol state.[30]

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teilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung, LXII (1954); also reprint [Vienna, 1954], pp. 20 f., 23; R. Derolez, *Runica Manuscripta: The English Tradition* (Rijksuniversiteit te Gent, Werken uitgegeven door de faculteit van de wijsbegeerte en letteren, 118, Bruges, 1954), *passim*.

[26] The Gothic excerpts in Vienna MS. 795 (*saec.* ix) from Salzburg have been much discussed. Cf. W. Krause, *Handbuch des Gotischen* (Munich, 1953), pp. 20 f.; F. Mossé, "Bibliographia Gotica," *Mediaeval Studies*, XII (1950), 268. I hope to take up the subject on the basis of palaeographical evidence and in the light of a newly discovered Gothicum in a Paris MS.

[27] Cf. C. C. Coulter and F. P. Magoun, Jr, "Giraldus Cambrensis on Indo-Germanic Philology," SPECULUM, I (1926), 104–109; Borst, II-2, 694–696.

[28] P. Meyer in *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, XXXV, 2 (Paris, 1897), p. 37.

[29] Borst, II-2, p. 773.

[30] Borst, II-2, pp. 854 f.

Let us turn back to the study of Greek. Before the Middle Ages the teaching of Greek had practically ceased in the West and it was fatal for the future that no useful Greek grammar on a Latin basis survived; attempts to produce something of the sort which were made from the ninth century on, in part by Irish scholars, had no success.[31] This happened in an age when Greek, together with Hebrew and Latin, had obtained a special nimbus. The Bible told that the multitude of languages arose as a consequence of the construction of the Tower of Babel and it was a widespread belief that their total number amounted to seventy-two. Three of these had the distinction of appearing on the *titulus* of Christ's cross.[32] Two of them were the languages in which the Old and the New Testament were written. This explains, at least in large part, the deep-rooted and often moving desire of mediaeval scholars to acquire the knowledge of these languages, in imitation of St Jerome, who had translated the Bible from the original.[33] Whenever this desire met fulfilment these languages were not learned like dead languages but in living contact with Jews and with South Italian or Byzantine Greeks; that, e.g., John the Scot really mastered Greek can only be explained in this way. For the necessary oral instruction it was easier to find an expert or a teacher in Hebrew than in Greek, and there are instances from various periods in which Jewish rabbis were consulted when the original wording and meaning of Old Testament passages were discussed.[34]

Much more frequent than the notion of what a successful study required, and practically general, was a very strange illusion specially concerning Greek.[35] Lexicographers and grammarians collected from the already lifeless and inflexible lore of Greco-Latin glossaries and from the works of Saint Jerome and others a much mixed mass of Greek words. They handled it not only without knowledge of Greek grammar but with simplifying arbitrary preoccupations instead of knowledge: Greek nouns including feminines had to end with *-os* or with *-on*, Greek verbs with *-in* or *-on*, and so on. This sort of Greek was propagated by the most common Latin grammars, *Derivationes*, and the like. It was much used for the most daring etymologies. In it phrases and memorial verses were composed. It is according to reliable manuscript tradition that Alexander of Hales, the first great theologian of the Franciscan order, wrote a didactic poem, *Exoticon*, blending

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[31] Cf. B. Bischoff in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, xliv (1951), p. 40 and n. 2. The Vienna fragment of an elementary grammar has been published by W. Krause in *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinischen Gesellschaft*, 5 (1956), 7–25.

[32] Borst, *Der Turmbau zu Babel, passim*; on the three languages cf., e.g., vol. ii-1, pp. 396, 454, 468; vol. ii-2, p. 634. Cf. R. E. McNally, "The 'Tres linguae sacrae' in early Irish Bible Exegesis," *Theological Studies*, xix (1958), 395–403. For knowledge of Greek as a mere literary topos cf. M. Coens, "Utriusque linguae peritus," *Analecta Bollandiana*, lxxvi (1958), 118 ff.

[33] An earlier mediaeval "Dialogue" says: ⟨Int.⟩ "Dic mihi, Ieronimus que septem linguis loquebatur." ⟨Resp.⟩ "Idest Ebreice, Grega, Latina, Sirice, Ethiopice, Pentice(!), Gumetice (!), idest patriarchas et septem dona spiritus sancti . . . ." (Paris, Bibl. Nat., Lat. 5596, *saec.* ix in., fol. 161r).

[34] J. B. Hablitzel, "Der Hebraeus quidam bei Paschasius Radbertus" in *Historisches Jahrbuch*, xlvii (1927), 340 f.; B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, 2d ed. (Oxford, 1952), pp. 79 f., 102 f., 126, 155 ff.

[35] B. Bischoff in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, xliv (1951), 50 ff.

such Greek with similar Hebrew, with the result that even the added glosses can not make the sense fully clear.[36]

I like to illustrate the quality of such Greek by the form in which the maxim KNOW THYSELF, ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ, was current in the Middle Ages.[37] ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ was read in Juvenal but his manuscripts reveal a progressive corruption. After a basic confusion of *A* and Λ unsuccessful attempts of emendation followed and ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ became finally ΓΝΟΤΟΣΟΛΙΤΟΣ. A scholarly explanation was at hand: ΛΙΤΟΣ equals firstly, "the stone," and secondly, "oneself." This Greek of the Western schools and their textbooks and lexica was full-grown in the twelfth century and then lived on to the very end of the Middle Ages, unharmed by the criticism of a Roger Bacon, who himself wrote a Greek and a Hebrew grammar, and uninfluenced by that astonishing movement of translations which can be mentioned only briefly.

In that same crucial twelfth century in which the mummification of this kind of Greek became perfect the great hour struck for the bilingual countries, Sicily and South Italy and Spain, for the trade centers on the Mediterranean, Pisa and Venice, and for the Western colonies in Constantinople and Antioch to devote their best intellectual forces to the appropriation of the doctrinal and scientific heritage of Greeks and Arabs by translating it. Not only their inhabitants and citizens, Christians and Jews (often in collaboration), took part in this movement; very important contributions were made by Gerard of Cremona, by people from England, Scotland, Germany, and Dalmatia. By the sum of their efforts, Aristotle and Plato, Euclid and Ptolemy, Arabic and Jewish philosophers, physicians, scientists, and mathematicians became accessible to the West. The Koran and parts of the Talmud were disclosed to the Christian polemicists.

We come to another chapter. In all periods one of the most frequent occasions to be faced with a foreign idiom, and at the same time one of the most compulsory reasons to take the trouble of learning at least part of it, was a voyage to a country with a vernacular different from one's own. When, in the Middle Ages, the foreign traveller could handle one of the mediaeval world languages and make himself understood, it was not necessary for him to learn the language of the country, unless he went beyond the sphere or below the stratum in which the world language was recognized. How necessary an elemental familiarity with a foreign language can be for the sake of sheer self-preservation was drastically pointed out by Hugo of Trimberg. He said: "Parrots and magpies are taught to speak by means of hunger" and then continued:

> Wie der Bêheim rede, Walch und Unger,
> Daz muoz lernen manic man,
> Dem biutel, hant und mage ist wan.

"Many people whose purse, hand, and stomach are empty, are forced to learn Czech, Italian, or Hungarian." (With this, however, he had in mind not so much

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[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 53 f. The "Exoticon" begins, with the glosses of the Erlangen MS: "Chere (gl. salve) theoron (gl. video) quem gignos (gl. nudum) crucis andro (gl. o aries) phalando (gl. in ligno) . . . ."

[37] *Ibid.*, pp. 54 f.

travellers as poor people who had to leave their country to take up service or work elsewhere).[38]

Written information, maps, and language guides which today are offered, appropriate to various intellectual levels, to make travelling abroad easy, have a long tradition. Roman civilization had its *Tabula Peutingeriana* and its many *Itineraria*. But the highway system of the Roman Empire had been abandoned or neglected and, with the exception of the itineraries to Jerusalem, the tradition was interrupted and a fresh start had to be made in the Early Middle Ages. Out of the experiences, and the notes made on roads and distances, on the occasion of journeys, a new literature of itineraries arose in mediaeval centuries which is larger and more varied than is perhaps realized; some texts are illustrated by practical maps.[39] In addition to this, a rapidly increasing literature of proper description of travels and pilgrimages was produced for personal pleasure and for the benefit of future travellers. In some itineraries and in many accounts of journeys mention was made of foreign languages encountered and, besides this, special vocabularies and conversation patterns for travellers were composed. The situations and needs that have to be met repeat themselves, and one will find analogies between texts from the ninth and from the fifteenth centuries and even a modern Baedeker; but the special character of the journey, the country to be visited, and the cultural situation of the period bring variety into this diffuse literature, of which I shall mention a number of examples.

I begin with the group of the so-called *Altdeutsche Gespräche* or "Old High German Conversations" from the ninth century.[40] They were intended to be of use to Western Franks with Romanic mother tongue when going to Germany. They included questions as to home and country, negotiations with the host, and orders to the servants, servants who converse in a very uncivilized manner. I give a few selected sentences, disfigured as they are by Romanic spelling:

"Guane cumet ger, brothro, idest: unde venis, frater."
"Erro, e guille trenchen, idest: ego volo bibere."
"Bu°zze mine sco, idest: emenda meam cabattam."

Seven centuries after these conversations of Carolingian seigneurs and their grooms we hear in Latin phrases with French translation a poor German student going to Paris:

"Date mihi panem pro deo — Donne moy de pain pour deu."
"Per quel *voie ireis ie en cest ville?*"
"Mon chier sire veleis me herbergier pour deu."

The text from which these lines come occurs in a St Gall manuscript.[41]

A linguistical document of extraordinary interest, an Italian-Vulgar Greek

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[38] Hugo of Trimberg, *Der Renner*, v. 3633 ff. (ed. G. Ehrismann in *Bibliothek des Literarischen Vereins*, Vol. 247 [Tübingen, 1908], pp. 149 f.); cf. Borst, II-2, 839 f.

[39] K. Miller, *Die ältesten Weltkarten*, III (Stuttgart, 1895), 84 ff. (Matthew Paris); R. Vaughan, *Matthew Paris* (Cambridge, England, 1958), pp. 247 ff. and Plates XII, XIII, XV.

[40] E. Steinmeyer and E. Sievers, edd., *Die althochdeutschen Glossen*, v (Berlin, 1922), 517–520.

[41] Saint Gall, Stiftsbibl., MS. 1058 (*saec.* xv), p. 368.

vocabulary of the tenth century which is still unpublished,[42] may testify to an Italian's travel into a Greek-speaking territory. The first group, about sixty words, comprises parts of the human body, e.g.:

De capo	*cefali*
gamba	*poida*
ventre	*cilia*

After this come some garments, utensils, natural phenomena (like *luna — fingari*) and the names of the days of the week; these show a remarkable affinity to the living dialect of the eastern part of the Po valley. In the last part we find mostly names of animals but also *fledemerio — iatros* (the form *fledemerio* representing correct Latin *phlebotomarius* 'phlebotomist'). Of the phrases common in such texts only three occur: "de bevere" and "de mandegare" (apparently in the sense of "Give me something to drink" and "Give me something to eat") and "veni deo" (a formula of salute).

More than casual journeys undertaken by individuals the great pilgrimages brought forth practical aids for travelling people. The finest mediaeval example is the "Pilgrim's guide" to Santiago de Compostela which forms part of the *Liber Calixtinus*, the official codification of the Saint's cult from about 1139.[43] It includes the detailed and archaeologically invaluable description of the great pilgrimage roads that led from France to the West of Spain. After entering Spain the pilgrims had to cross the land of the Basques, of whom a not very flattering description is given in the Pilgrim's guide. Their language is compared to dog's barking; but in spite of this a short Latin-Basque vocabulary of fifteen words is inserted.[44] Here are the words for bread, wine, meat, fish, wheat, and water, and this selection proves a practical purpose. It was intended as a help in difficult situations for those who were on the way to "Jaone domne Jacue," as the vocabulary says. This is the oldest monument of the Basque language.

When we look for similar devices designed for pilgrims to the Holy Land we find keys for Greek from the eleventh and twelfth centuries and for Arabic from the late Middle Ages. Before I speak of them, I must mention a short list of Hebrew words and phrases glossed in Latin and marked with accents which also seems a testimony of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.[45] The manuscripts are from the tenth century. The list, still unpublished, begins:

Adonai	*domnus*
Agmon	*episcopus*

and later on occur words for king, count, queen. But there are also the simple requests: "Tenli chos echad iain" (Give me one cup of wine — beer, bread, fish, cheese, meat, egg, apple, honey, milk, fig).

The wording of these requests recalls closely the following Latin and Vulgar

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[42] Monza, Bibl. Capit., MS.e 14 (saec. ix–x), last page. I am preparing the edition.

[43] J. Vielliard, *Le guide du pèlerin de St. Jacques de Compostelle* (Mâcon, 1938).

[44] *Ibid.*, pp. 26–28.

[45] CLM 19440 (*saec.* x–xi), p. 228; Vienna, Nationalbibl. MS. 2723 (*saec.* x), fol. 7r, and 2732 (*saec.* x), fol. 9r.

Greek phrases from an eleventh-century manuscript at Avranches: "Da mihi panem DOS ME PSOMI" "Da mihi piscem et caseum et carnem et faba et poma" — "Da mihi bibere vinum et aquam et lac" and so on.[46] A collection of Greek phrases with Latin interpretation, which was doubtless put together for crusaders making their way through the Byzantine Empire is preserved in a twelfth-century manuscript at Auxerre:[47] "Ti aquis to ape to vasilio romeco? Ti pissem vasilios? Francis calom. Ti calo docem? Pola lacotina que armata." (What is the news about the Greek Emperor? What is he doing? He is kind to the Franks. What good things does he give them? Much money and weapons.) The continuation deals with such problems and things as finding the next castle, getting provision, arms, and implements; after the enumeration of animals, days of the week, parts of the body and salutations, the key ends with: *imati mon* 'my shirt.'

Towards the end of the Middle Ages, when the transport of an ever-growing number of pilgrims from the Italian ports to the Holy Land became a well-organized business, better and more explicit language guides for travels in Saracen countries were available. We know, e.g., that the library of the French King Charles V in the Louvre contained a volume: *Les pélerinages d'oultremer et à savoir demander en langaige sarrazin ses nécessités pour vivre,*[48] and in a manuscript from the Heidelberg Palatina exists a long alphabetical German-Arabic vocabulary, "Teusczsz uff Sarracenisse gedolmetzt."[49]

A pilgrimage souvenir — a souvenir which is valuable for the linguist — are the vocabularies and phrases which a Cologne nobleman, Arnold von Harff, inserted in his memoirs.[50] He lived towards the end of the fifteenth century. In order to visit the great sanctuaries of Christendom — Mount Sinai and Jerusalem, Compostela and Mont Saint-Michel — he travelled through Italy, the Balkans, Syria, Egypt, Arabia, Ethiopia, Nubia, Palestine, Turkey, Spain, and France. He loved to see foreign countries and nations and developed a keen sense for their ethnological characteristics. He collected alphabets (Greek and half a dozen oriental ones) and he also brought back nine vocabularies: Croatian, Albanian, Greek, Arabic, Hebrew, Turkish, Hungarian, Basque, and Breton. They all followed the same order: a list of words, a few sentences, and the numerals 1–10, 100, and 1,000. The words are, apart from an occasional plus or minus, always the same, chosen for practical purposes: bread, wine, water, and other things to eat and to drink: Yes, No, good, bad, God, devil, toll, horse, oats, hay, straw. Among the phrases and sentences we find: "Good morning" and "Good night" "Where is the inn?" "How much does this cost?" "Wash my shirt" and "Lady,

[46] MS. Avranches 236 (*saec.* XI), fol. 97 v; *Catalogue général des manuscrits, Départements,* x (Paris, 1889), 115.

[47] Edited by L. Delisle in *Le Cabinet Historique,* XXIII (Paris, 1877), 10–15.

[48] L. Delisle, *Le Cabinet des manuscrits,* I (Paris, 1868), 30.

[49] Vat. Libr., MS. Palat. Lat. 607 (*saec.* xv–xvi), foll. 2r–4r; cf. K. Bartsch, *Die altdeutschen Handschriften der Universitäts-Bibliothek in Heidelberg* (Heidelberg, 1887), p. 190.

[50] *Die Pilgerfahrt des Ritters Arnold von Harff von Cöln durch Italien, Syrien,* etc., ed. E. v. Groote (Cologne, 1860); English translation: Arnold von Harff, *The Pilgrimage, from Cologne,* etc., trans. and ed. by M. Letts, Hakluyt Society (London, 1946). On the Breton vocabulary cf. R. Thurneysen in *Revue Celtique,* XXXII (1911), 1 ff.

may I sleep with you?" This gay and gallant knight had learned from experience that twenty to thirty words are enough to get along in whatever country and language.

When we pass from the private to the public sphere the number of relevant texts is comparatively small. Still, they throw some light on the relations between the ruler and his subjects who belong to groups linguistically different, and on the rights of language minorities. Long before it was officially formulated that the ideal ruler should know languages, and especially those spoken by his subjects, biographers underlined that Charlemagne and Otto the Great were able to do so. When Gerald the Welshman in his *De principis institutione* recommended Charlemagne as a model of a *princeps*[51] his command of languages may have been not the least of his qualities in Gerald's eyes. Of Henry II of England a flatterer said, with considerable exaggeration, that he spoke all the languages between the Atlantic and the Jordan.[52]

Of all European countries it was Sicily where the principle that the ruler ought to know the current languages was most difficult to bring into reality. However, not only Frederick II, but also the Norman kings seem to have mastered it. There exists, for instance, that beautifully written trilingual Psalter in the British Museum which contains side by side in three columns the Greek, the Latin, and the Arabic texts; this manuscript, produced at latest in 1153, is in all probability a dedication copy from Sicily, executed for a Norman prince, as a homage of the three nations of his kingdom.[53] Of Frederick II it is well known that he corresponded with Greek and Arabic scholars in their languages. That a Slavonic idiom too was not altogether alien to him may be deduced from a fourfold dedication in a Vatican manuscript of zoölogical works written for him;[54] it forms a perfect leonine hexameter, "Felix elmelic dober Friderich salemelich," with the rhyming words in Arabic. Above the individual words the respective languages are indicated.

Even without Greek and Arabic, the Holy Roman Empire was multilingual and it comprehended nations and languages which belonged to three different families. It was in recognition of this fact that, under the erudite Charles IV, chapter 31 of the Golden Bull was expressly created.[55] Here it was decreed that the *sons, heirs, or successors of the secular electors, in addition to their German* mother-tongue, from their seventh to their fourteenth year should be trained in Latin, in Italian, and in a Slavonic language. There can be no doubt that Charles, the son of the king of Bohemia, had in mind the Czech language. But at the same time he seems to have looked at this paragraph without illusions. For it is added:

[51] Giraldus Cambrensis, *De principis institutione* (*Opera*, viii, ed. G. F. Warner, Rolls Series, xxi [London, 1891]), pp. 7, 42.

[52] Borst, ii-2, 690.

[53] London, Brit. Mus., Harl. 5786. Facsimiles: *Palaeographical Society*, 1st series (London, 1873–1883), pl. 132; M. Besson, *L'Eglise et la Bible* (Geneva, 1927), pl. 66.

[54] Vat. Libr., MS. Chigi E 251 Convento Sacro, foll. Iv, 109r, and at the end. Cf. also Borst, ii-2, 756.

[55] Ed. K. Zeumer, *Quellensammlung zur Geschichte der deutschen Reichsverfassung in Mittelalter und Neuzeit*, 2d ed. (Tübingen, 1913), p. 213. Cf. Borst, ii-2, 847.

"ita quod . . . existant in talibus iuxta datam sibi a Deo gratiam conditi." As a matter of fact, hardly anything is known to prove that this decree was observed by the electors' young princes in later generations. At first glance it is highly tempting to see in this light a rather voluminous conversation book that comes from the *Bibliotheca Palatina* formerly at Heidelberg and now in the Vatican.[56] It covers the four languages of the Golden Bull and begins:

Bonum mane et bonum annum	*Bon die el bon anno*	*Buoh day dobre gitro, pane, y dobro leto*	*Gutten morgen und gutz jor*

Yet it would be a mistake to regard this book as designed for young princes. One of the speakers introduces himself: "My name is Peter." This might do for a young prince, but then the other asks: "What do you bring along?" and the answer is: "I come from Milan and have good wares with me."

I close this section by mentioning an example of language studies for a military and political purpose, as it was exceptional at least in its time. When King Edward III (1327–1377) prepared for the war against France by which he intended to become the successor of the Capetians he issued an order that those of his nobles who did not know French had to acquire at least an elementary knowledge of it before the opening of the war.[57]

When the Golden Bull ordered that German, Italian, and Czech be studied, it was for the sake of the major nations in the Empire. It was on the behalf of a minority, the Slavonic Sorbs and Wends in Saxony and Brandenburg, that the following law was proclaimed by the *Sachsenspiegel:* Everybody accused may refuse to answer unless he is accused in his native tongue.[58] This meant that a charge against a Sorb who did not know German had to be put forward in the Sorb language before the court. This could be done by the intervention of an interpreter but in special cases it might be advisable for the judge himself to have some command of the other language. The probability has been pointed out that the same law was valid for the Poles in Silesia and for the Slavs in Pomerania, at least for a certain period.[59]

I believe that the assumption of an analogous rule helps also to the understanding of a highly interesting and unique monument which comes from a still more remote corner of the German Empire. The text I have in mind is the so-called Elbing glossary of German and Old Prussian,[60] that long extinct member of the group of Baltic languages. The glossary stands in a unique fifteenth-century manuscript together with three law codes. It contains about 750 words, the first of

[56] MS. Vatic. Palat. Lat. 1789 *(saec.* xv); cf. K. Bartsch, *Die altdeutschen Handschriften der Universitäts-Bibliothek in Heidelberg* (Heidelberg, 1887), p. 197.

[57] Froissart, *Chroniques,* ed. K. de Lettenhove, ii, 419. I owe the reference to Professor May McKisack. The historical truth of the story is not beyond doubt.

[58] Sachsenspiegel, Landrecht, iii, art. 71§1; cf. Borst, ii-1, 761.

[59] K. G. Hugelmann, *Stämme, Nation und Nationalstaat im deutschen Mittelalter* (Stuttgart, 1955), p. 473.

[60] Facsimile edition: A. Bezzenberger-W. Simon, *Das Elbinger Deutsch-Preussische Vokabular* (Königsberg, 1897); R. Trautmann, *Die altpreussischen Sprachdenkmäler* (Göttingen, 1910), pp. 82–93.

. which are: *Got* (god) = *deywis*, *Engel* (angel) = *rapa*, *Hemel* (heaven) = *dangus*.
They are followed by terms of chronology, but thereafter the whole real world is
systematically named, the earth with the various forms of its surface, man, his
dwelling, his occupations, agriculture, crafts, plants and animals, those he breeds
or hunts to clothe and feed himself; one gets a complete picture of a simple life.

Whereas languages such as I spoke of were recognized and to some extent pro-
tected by the law, it was quite the opposite with the bastard among the languages
of mediaeval and later centuries, I mean the *argot* of criminals, especially the
fraudulent beggars and imposters who crowded around church porches and
places of pilgrimages, a real nuisance of the late Middle Ages. One characteristic of
their language is a strong admixture of words derived from Hebrew; in Germany
they themselves called their language *Rotwelsch*.[61] Beginning with the middle of
the fifteenth century, we still have texts which, with almost modern criminological
preciseness, describe their various genres and disclose their special tricks. Such
texts were composed and some even issued officially in order to fight and to con-
trol this kind of underworld; vocabularies of this jargon were added to the de-
scription. A text from Basel from about 1450[62] begins: "Dis ist ir rottwelsche.
Item lem ist brott. ioham ist win. bosshart ist fleisch. . . . Item ein klabot sind
kleider," and so on. Description and vocabulary were also combined in the *Liber
vagorum*, which appeared in many editions from 1510 on; the editor of one of these
was Martin Luther. However successful the efforts were to suppress the criminals
and their jargon in the past, the tradition seems unbroken and at least one *Rot-
welsch* word has become rather common in German civil and military slang:
Klamotten (instead of *klabot*).

Earlier, when I spoke of the imposing studies and achievements of those trans-
lators who made accessible to the West not only Greek and Oriental science but
also the theology of Damascenus and the religious literature of Jews and Moham-
medans, I named the topic of religious polemic. This polemic is one of the *acciden-
tia* of Christian missions. As a conclusion of my exposition I shall present a few
facts from the history of that missionary activity, in which both the method and
the scope of mediaeval language studies reached their highest point. To this as-
pect Berthold Altaner among others has devoted numerous and valuable studies[63]
which allow me to be brief.

[61] Friedrich Kluge, *Rotwelsch*, I; *Rotwelsches Quellenbuch* (Strassburg, 1901); S. Wolf, *Wörterbuch des Rotwelschen* (Mannheim, 1956).

[62] Kluge, *Rotwelsch*, pp. 15 f.

[63] The following studies by B. Altaner are quoted below as "Altaner I" to "VII": (I) "Die Heran-
bildung eines einheimischen Klerus in der Mission des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts," *Zeitschrift für Mis-
sionswissenschaft*, XVIII (1928), 193–208; (II) "Sprachstudien und Sprachkenntnisse im Dienste der
Mission des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts," *ibid.*, XXI (1931), 113–136; (III) "Die fremdsprachliche
Ausbildung der Dominikanermissionare während des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts," *ibid.*, XXIII (1933),
233–241; (IV) "Zur Geschichte des Unterrichts und der Wissenschaft in der spätmittelalterlichen
Mission," *ibid.*, XXVI (1936), 165–171; (V) "Raymundus Lullus und der Sprachenkanon (can. 11) des
Konzils von Vienne (1312)," *Historisches Jahrbuch*, LIII (1933), 190–219; (VI) "Die Kenntnis des
Griechischen in den Missionsorden während des 13. und 14. Jahrhunderts," *Zeitschrift für Kirchen-
geschichte*, LIII (1934), 436 ff.; (VII) "Zur Kenntnis des Arabischen im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert,"

The mediaeval attitude towards the question of languages in missions was not at all uniform. For practical, institutional, and liturgical reasons, it seemed desirable that the Christianized nations should become familiar with Latin as the language of the Roman Catholic Church, and in the countries situated on the northern and eastern edge of the Latin Christian world this was achieved. After the conquest of Constantinople in 1204, and again in the fourteenth century, plans were made for the reunification of the Church, and some radical theorists like a certain Dominican Adam even considered the extirpation of Greek language and script; but such plans were moderated in view of the fact that Greek had been one of the sacred languages of the inscription on Christ's Cross.[64] Pope John XXII proposed to a king of Armenia to have his subjects study Latin so that the union of the Church might be facilitated.[65] But this proposition failed, and instead the Dominicans, who were active in the mission field, translated works of Saint Thomas into Armenian. The indefatigable Catalan Raymundus Lullus (Ramón Lull) is known to have insisted more than anybody else on the study of the languages required for active missions; but even he in his utopian missionary romance *Blanquerna* gave the advice that Latin should be made the universal world language so that definitely all language barriers and language difficulties should vanish once and for all.[66] The following curious fact shows that at least at times Latin held a place in the program of the missionary schools. When in 1338 a caravan led by the Franciscan John Marignolli was about to set out from Avignon for Peking thirty-five gold florins were expended by the papal chamber so that a Bible, a breviary, a *Doctrinale*, a *Grecismus* and the other unwieldy Latin grammars should be sent to the Franciscan missionaries in China.[67]

Missionary practice demanded in the first place the study of the vernacular languages, if the missionary did not content himself with the mediation of an interpreter. Besides preaching, it was indispensable to translate at least parts of the Bible, the liturgy and catechisms, Creed and confessions, and in fact quite a number of languages became recorded in script for the first time in this way and in such texts. Of mediaeval documents of this order I only mention one precious original, the *Codex Cumanicus*[68] (dating from about 1303) now in Venice, a unique monument of a language that died out in the eighteenth century. This book was actually used by the Franciscans who spread Christianity among the Cumans, a Turk nation at that time settled in Rumania. It contains a Latin-Persian-Cuman dictionary and grammar and religious texts, hymns, prayers, sermons, etc., in the Cuman language.

Orientalia Christiana Periodica, ii (1936), 437 ff. Cf. also U. Monneret de Villard, *Lo studio dell'Islām in Europa nel XII e nel XIII secolo* (Studi e Testi, 110 [Città del Vaticano, 1944]); M. Roncaglia, "I Frati Minori e lo studio delle lingue orientali nel secolo XIII" in *Studi Francescani*, ser. 3, xxv (1953), 169 ff.

[64] Altaner VI, p. 441, n. 10.

[65] Altaner II, p. 115.

[66] Altaner V, p. 197.

[67] Altaner IV, p. 166.

[68] K. Grønbeck, *Codex Cumanicus* (Facs.; *Monumenta linguarum Asiae maioris*, IA [Copenhagen, 1936]); *id.*, *Komanisches Wörterbuch* (*id.*, IB [Copenhagen, 1942]).

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries it was the Dominicans, and still more the Franciscans, who propagated the Christian faith in the realms of Islam and of Eastern non-Christian religions. Their success was very remarkable in some countries; one must not forget that at the time of Marco Polo missionaries who went by land or by sea to East Asia organized bishoprics in Peking (Cambaleh) and in other cities and that these existed for generations.

Efforts to win converts from Islam, however, had very small results. Insufficient linguistical training and a distorted picture of Muhammedanism were among the main reasons for this failure.[69] All the more did men like Magister Laurentius of Aquileja,[70] the Spanish Dominican Raymundus Martini, and Raymundus Lullus relentlessly point to the necessity to organize systematically the study of languages, including Mongolian. Lull's proposals were rejected many times, but he was still alive when the Council of Vienne agreed to the following resolution: In the universities of Paris, Oxford, Bologna, Salamanca, and in the Papal curia two professors should be appointed for each of the following languages, Hebrew, Greek, Arabic, and Chaldaic, in order to teach them and to make translations into them. The hopes and expectations connected with this decree by far exceeded the actual results; it was equally difficult to find enough students and enough candidates for so many chairs.[71]

But at least in the University of Paris the decree was still effective in the fifteenth century.[72] Here the last mediaeval holders of these chairs of languages, which were established for the development of Christian missions, could shake hands with the first humanistic teachers of Greek, and this at a time when the master of arts whose turn it was to treat the *Grecismus* might declare: For Latin *Cognosce te ipsum* 'Know thyself,' you must say in Greek: *Gnotosolitos.*

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[69] U. Monneret de Villard, *Lo studio dell'Islām in Europa nel XII e nel XII secolo*, pp. 33 ff.

[70] G. De Luca in *Archivio italiano per la storia della pietà*, I (1951), 233; R. Weiss, "Per una lettera di Lorenzo d'Aquileja sullo studio del Greco e delle lingue orientali a Parigi alla fine del duecento," *Rivista di storia della chiesa in Italia*, v (1951), 266–268.

[71] Cf. Altaner V; U. Monneret de Villard, *Lo studio dell' Islām nel XII e nel XIII secolo*, pp. 44 ff.; R. Weiss "England and the Decree of the Council of Vienne on the Teaching of Greek, Arabic, Hebrew, and Syriac," *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, XIV (1952), 1–9.

[72] Altaner II, pp. 126 f.