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PHILODEMUS' *ON RHETORIC* WAS IN 20 BOOKS

GRAZIANO RANOCCHIA
Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche
*Istituto per il Lessico Intellettuale Europeo e Storia delle Idee**

Abstract: *PHerc* 1669, formerly identified with book 5, book 7 and book 10 of Philodemus' *On Rhetoric*, actually transmits book 20. The book number – a clear K – is still legible in the final title of the papyrus. This means that *On Rhetoric* was in precisely or at least 20 books, depending on whether or not *PHerc* 1669 is to be considered the final book of the work.

Keywords: Philodemus' *On Rhetoric*, *PHerc* 1669, book titles

Of the several books of Philodemus' *On Rhetoric* (Περὶ ῥητορικῆς) still surviving today in the Herculanean collection only three have previously been identified with certainty, on the basis of the numeral included in their *subscriptio*. These are *PHerc* 1427[1] (Α′ = book 1), *PHerc* 1672 (Β′ = book 2) – of which *PHerc* 1674 represents another copy[2] – and *PHerc* 1423 and *PHerc* 1673/1007 (Δ′ = book 4),[3] two copies of the same book of which the former includes only the first part of the text (τῶν εἰς δύο τὸ πρότερον).[4] More recently, I was able to read a probable Γ̣′ = book 3 in the *subscriptio* of *PHerc* 1506,[5] whereof *PHerc* 1426 is another copy,[6] and to question the formerly

* graziano.ranocchia@cnr.it.

[1] This papyrus has been re-edited by Francesca Longo Auricchio ((1977) 1–22), after Sigfried Sudhaus.

[2] Both papyri have been re-edited by Longo Auricchio ((1977) 23–288), after Sigfried Sudhaus. For the relation between them see, first of all, Cavallo (1983) 63–64; (1984) 18–20; Dorandi (1990a) 66–67. These scholars maintain, on palaeographical and bibliological grounds, that the latter is a provisional redaction of the former, which would represent the definitive version. This position has been called into question and essentially refuted by David Blank ((1998) 127–37), who also explains the correct interpretation of the term ὑπομνηματικόν which is legible in the *subscriptio* of *PHerc* 1674. According to him, this should be understood not as referring to the provisional redaction of a book or work, but as a genre designation ('Gattungsbezeichnung') indicating a piece of writing based on a general exposition of the master's lectures. It is known, in fact, that several subjects and polemics tackled by Philodemus in his *On Rhetoric* and even its original inspiration were based on a reworking of the Athenian lectures of his master Zeno of Sidon. For the similar case of *PHerc* 1426 and *PHerc* 1506, see below. Recently Gianluca Del Mastro has claimed to have read an uncertain Β̄ also in the *subscriptio* of *PHerc* 1674 (Del Mastro (2014) 365–67): '[p]oco più in basso rispetto alla diagonale destra dell'*alpha* del termine ὑπομνηματικόν, si vedono delle tracce di una lettera. Dovrebbe trattarsi del numerale *beta* (anche perché nel *PHerc.* 1672 questo numero si legge).' However, based on my personal inspection of the papyrus, preserved in the Officina dei Papiri Ercolanesi of the National Library 'Vittorio Emanuele III' of Naples, and the corresponding multispectral image (both of which are hardly legible), I could not read anything here and, hence, am not able to confirm this 'reading'.

[3] Both papyri have been edited by Sudhaus: (1892) 147–61 and 162–225, respectively.

[4] See Del Mastro (2012a) 50; Fimiani (2012) 122; Ranocchia (forthcoming).

[5] See Ranocchia (forthcoming). The numeral is partially legible below the third line of the title, in correspondence with the η (lost in the papyrus, yet attested by both the Oxonian and the Neapolitan apographs) of ὑπομνηματικόν and above the total number of *stichoi* between the first two XX indicating the first two thousands. I read the lower part of an upright ending below with a long, slightly curved, apex slanting downward to the left. Beside Γ, P, Y and T are also possible, but they must be excluded for obvious reasons. The numeral has recently been misread by Gianluca Del Mastro ((2014) 335) as 'un tratto che doveva avere la funzione di sottolineare lo stacco tra il titolo (con il numerale purtroppo in lacuna) e l'informazione accessoria o di inquadrare il numerale stesso'. Its upper part is no longer legible – contrary to what Del Mastro claims – for the simple reason that it was lost in the horizontal lacuna which goes through the *subscriptio* from side to side.

[6] For the various hypotheses on the relation between these two copies, see Comparetti (1910) 123–24; Philippson (1938) 2453–54; Longo Auricchio (1970) 128; Cavallo (1983) 63–64; (1984) 18–20. These have all been refuted with some compelling arguments by Blank (1998) 127–37, which also explains the correct

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proposed identification of *PHerc* 1004 with book 7[7] and of *PHerc* 1015/832 with book 8.[8]

The most remarkable case is *PHerc* 1669, which is possibly the last book of *On Rhetoric*[9] and was formerly considered to be book 5 and book 7 of it.[10] More recently, following a doubtful reading by Tiziana Di Matteo,[11] Francesca Longo Auricchio has tentatively identified it with book 10 of the work on the basis of the numeral still present in its *subscriptio*.[12] In particular, in a centred position under the name of the author and the title of the work, she identifies 'a vertical stroke ending below in a slight curve to the left'.[13] In fact, it is an upright culminating below in a small apex slanting upward to the left. To the right of this upright Longo Auricchio detects 'two rounded signs beginning in correspondence with the central part of the vertical element and curving the one upward and the other downward'.[14] She concludes: 'The traces are difficult to interpret: at first sight it seems it may be a K = 20 that would have however been written by a different hand from those which wrote the text.'[15] However, regarding the idea that Philodemus' *On Rhetoric* may extend to 20 books as a problematic hypothesis, she immediately reconsiders her first impression and tentatively postulates that the numeral in question 'is a I = 10, accompanied to the right by decorative flourishes', thereby leaving open the problem of the identification of this book.[16] By a twist of fate, however, this speculative reading received some credit from scholars in the following years.[17] Longo Auricchio's argumentation has recently been taken up by Gianluca Del Mastro. This scholar, after reiterating that 'the final number of the book remains difficult to interpret' and that 'the situation of the papyrus seems to be very complex',[18] nonetheless 'clearly' reads an upright followed, to the right, by 'two slightly divergent oblique strokes'.[19] Paradoxically, it is this very description – and even more that provided by Longo Auricchio before him – that confirms that we are dealing with a K. From a strictly palaeographical point of view, the combination of an upright with two divergent oblique strokes may give us only a K, all the more so if it is clear – as Longo Auricchio acknowledges – that these strokes begin 'in correspondence with the central part of the vertical element'.[20] This notwithstanding, according to Del Mastro it is 'very difficult that

interpretation of the term ὑπομνηματικόν which is legible in the *subscriptio* of *PHerc* 1506. For the similar case of *PHerc* 1672 and *PHerc* 1674, see above. Recently Del Mastro has claimed to have read an uncertain Ī also in the *subscriptio* of *PHerc* 1426: 'in linea con il primo *rho* del termine ῥητορικῆς si vede (prevalentemente nell'immagine multispettrale), nella linea seguente, la barra che doveva coprire il numerale e il tratto superiore del *gamma*' (Del Mastro (2014) 291–92). However, based on my personal inspection of the papyrus, preserved in the Officina dei Papiri Ercolanesi of the National Library 'Vittorio Emanuele III' of Naples, the 'barra' turns out to coincide with an accidental erasure of the papyrus showing underlying carbonized fibres and the 'tratto superiore del *gamma*' is not legible at all. Moreover, below the two supposed traces, up to the stichometric notation, there is clearly a blank space. Del Mastro should explain how it is possible to imagine the vertical stroke of the presumed *gamma* here.

[7] See Ranocchia (2016a) 422–24; (2016b) 115–21; (forthcoming).

[8] See Ranocchia (2019); (forthcoming).

[9] See below for this possibility.

[10] See, respectively, Sudhaus (1892) xl; Dorandi (1990a) 73.

[11] See Di Matteo (2000a) 33; (2000b) 81: 'Recentemente ho rilevato, nel punto in cui doveva esserci l'indicazione del numero del libro, una traccia di scrittura. Essa, per la sua configurazione, risulta di difficile interpretazione.'

[12] See Longo Auricchio (1996) 171–72. The *subscriptio* is preserved in *PHerc* 1669, cornice 11, pezzo 1. The numeral is legible only on the papyrus. Neither the Oxonian nor the Neapolitan apograph records it.

[13] Longo Auricchio (1996) 170.

[14] Longo Auricchio (1996) 170.

[15] Longo Auricchio (1996) 170. As Cavallo (1983) 39 and 41 demonstrates, two different hands are attested in *PHerc* 1669, i.e. 'Mano A', which wrote the first part of the papyrus (cols 1–23, 24 Sudhaus), and 'Mano B', which wrote the second (from col. 23, 25 Sudhaus up to the end of the book). The alternation of different hands in the redaction of the main text of one book is also attested in other Herculaneum papyri. See, for instance, Puglia (1987) 81–83; Dorandi (1990a) 85–86; Del Mastro (2009) 283–99.

[16] See Longo Auricchio (1996) 170–71; Di Matteo (2000b) 81, n.11; Del Mastro (2012b) 131, n.5.

[17] See, just to mention some examples, Dorandi (2007) 75; (2010) 104 (Dorandi previously identified *PHerc* 1669 with book 7: (1990a) 72); Erbì (2009) 119, n.3; Del Mastro (2012b) 131.

[18] Del Mastro (2014) 353.

[19] Del Mastro (2014) 353.

[20] Longo Auricchio (1996) 170; see also Di Matteo (2000b) 81, n.11: 'Essi hanno inizio in corrispondenza della parte centrale della sbarra verticale.'

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Fig. 1. *PHerc* 1669, cornice 11, pezzo 1, multispectral image: *subscriptio* (top) and detail of the numeral (left) (reproduced with permission of Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali e del Turismo; images by Steven W. Booras; © Biblioteca Nazionale 'Vittorio Emanuele III', Napoli and Brigham Young University, Provo, USA).

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we may read a *kappa*: on the basis of the books in our possession (I, II, III, IV, VII and VIII) it does not seem likely to believe that we are dealing with Book Twenty of the work'.[21] One wonders whether it is acceptable to disregard the palaeographical evidence on the basis of arguments which are completely foreign to a simple reading of the text or to reject a correct reading of the papyrus in favour of a different one which is considered more plausible for other reasons.

Judging from my new personal inspection of the papyrus[22] and the corresponding multispectral image (fig. 1), it is possible to infer that what Longo Auricchio defines as 'decorative flourishes' or 'rounded signs' are in reality the two (upper and lower) diagonals of a K. In the picture they are partly interrupted by a vertical fracture of the papyrus typically due to the pressure of the lava mud. However, if one inspects the original manuscript and inclines the 'tavoletta' downward to the left under the microscope these diagonals (at least the lower one) appear to originate from the upright – as previously noted by both Di Matteo and Longo Auricchio[23] – although not exactly from the middle of it, but rather from its upper part. And while the upright projects fairly below the line, the lower diagonal, which looks slightly shorter than the upper one, appears to be suspended far above it.[24] All around the numeral there is blank space. On the other hand, as acknowledged by Longo Auricchio herself, the ornamental elements which are sometimes present in the titles of Greek papyri are normally added 'at the borders, and not at the centre of the text', so as not to interfere with it.[25] One wonders why the scribe should have wished to add ornamental elements beside or even *in correspondence with* the numeral of the book (if it is true that the two 'rounded signs' originate from the upright), where the risk of possible misreadings is very high,[26] and, moreover, why he should have done so only on its right side and not, for reasons of symmetry, also on its left side![27] It is not by chance that the only decorative elements which are discernible with certainty in the *subscriptio* of *PHerc* 1669 – those pairs of concave strokes added by the scribe immediately above and under the initial letter of the title of the work[28] – appear to be placed very far from the numeral.

In conclusion, as has been shown, *PHerc* 1669 hands down book 20 of Philodemus' *On Rhetoric*, and not book 10 as several scholars have believed since Longo Auricchio's article of 1996. If that is true, *On Rhetoric* was in at least 20 books or, possibly, in *precisely* 20 books, provided that *PHerc* 1669 is the last book of the whole treatise.[29] This may also explain, at least

[21] Del Mastro (2014) 353.

[22] *PHerc* 1669 is preserved in the Officina dei Papiri Ercolanesi of the National Library 'Vittorio Emanuele III' of Naples, Mob. XXIII, cornici 1–11, and Mob. Osl. 9, cornice 1.

[23] See above.

[24] These features, which are typical of several Greek bookhands, also among Herculanean papyri, disclose the possibility that this letter was written by a different hand from those of the main text ('Mano A' and 'Mano B'). See already Longo Auricchio (1996) 170 for this possibility.

[25] See Longo Auricchio (1996) 170. This scholar quite rightly adduces the example of the *subscriptio* of *PHerc* 1008, in which the $\overline{\text{I}}$ indicating the book number 'è tracciato isolatamente, senza alcuna aggiunta decorativa'. See also Di Matteo (2000b) 81, n.11.

[26] If the numeral were really to be read, as Longo Auricchio proposes, as a $\overline{\text{I}}$ followed by two 'decorative flourishes' consisting in two divergent oblique strokes, this would be the easiest way to have readers misread it as a K!

[27] On the left side of the upright there is only blank space.

[28] They are legible above and below the initial Π of the title of the work (the latter has been ignored by Del Mastro). For reasons of symmetry, they were probably repeated above and below the final C (not preserved). Based on my personal inspection of the papyrus, I cannot confirm the existence of the other decorative elements detected by Del Mastro ((2014) 353) in this *subscriptio*, i.e. a 'stroke' below the Φ of the name of the author and a 'line' in a centred position below the title of the work; the former, though being theoretically possible, is not legible at all, while the latter coincides with an accidental erasure of the papyrus showing underlying fibres.

[29] According to Dorandi (1990a) 73, the content of *PHerc* 1669, which further develops – in a grand style and with a wealth of arguments – the comparison between rhetoric and philosophy (σύνγκρισις τῆς ῥητορικῆς καὶ φιλοσοφίας) that is the central topic of the entire work, suggests that this was probably the final book of the whole treatise. This appears to be further confirmed by the closing section of the papyrus, which solemnly reaffirms the superiority of philosophy over rhetoric and seems to encompass in one concise message the main thesis of the work.

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in part, the large number of papyri ascribed to it on various grounds. In fact, the papyri which are either certainly or probably or else possibly attributable to Philodemus' *On Rhetoric* (58 according to Tiziano Dorandi)[30] are the most numerous in the Herculanean collection. Thus, according to the currently available information, what we are dealing with is the most extensive treatise by Philodemus known to us. Previously, we knew from Diogenes Laertius (10.3) that his major 'historico-philosophical' work, the *Systematic Arrangement of the Philosophers* (Cύνταξις τῶν φιλοσόφων), was in ten books – six of which scholars believe to have identified in the Herculanean collection[31]– while from the ending section of *PHerc* 1008, containing book 10 of his *On Vices* (Περὶ κακιῶν),[32] we knew that this important ethical treatise extended beyond book 10.[33] Now we additionally know that Philodemus' aesthetic work *On Rhetoric* (Περὶ ῥητορικῆς) was in precisely or at least 20 books: further confirmation of this author's literary fecundity and of his exceptional interest in rhetoric.

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[30] See Dorandi (1990a) 64.

[31] Among these we should at least include the [*History of the Academy*] or [*Academicorum Index*] (*PHerc* 1691/1021, 164), the [*History of the Stoa*] or [*Stoicorum Index*] (*PHerc* 1018), the [*History of the Garden*] or [*Epicureorum Index*] (*PHerc* 1780) and – possibly – the [*History of the Eleatic and the Atomistic School*] (*PHerc* 327), the [*History of the Pythagorean School*] (*PHerc* 1508) and the [*History of Socrates*] (*PHerc* 495, 558). However, no title is preserved in any of these papyri, whose identification has been made on the sole grounds of their genre, structure, content and intentions; nor do we know the number each book was assigned within the treatise. See Crönert (1906) 127–33; Philippson (1938) 2463–64; Cavallo (1983) 61–62; Dorandi (1990b) 2407–23.

[32] Col. 24, 23–26 Ranocchia. See Ranocchia (2007) 2.

[33] With some certainty, it is possible to assign to *On Vices* book 1 *On Flattery* (*PHerc* 222, 223, 1082, 1089, 1643, 1675), another book on the same topic (*PHerc* 1457), book 9 *On Household Management* (*PHerc* 1424), book 10 *On Arrogance* (*PHerc* 1008), the book *On Avarice* (*PHerc* 253, 415, 465, 896, 1090, 1613, 1077 *frs* 8–10, 12) and, only possibly, the book *On Slander* (*PHerc Paris* 2) and the books contained in *PHerc* 1017 and 1025. See Capasso (2001) 179–94; Capasso (2010) 97–104.

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ADDENDUM

When this article was already in press, Tiziano Dorandi advanced in a short note (Dorandi (2018)) the idea that '[t]he letter at l. 3 is neither a I nor a K but, patently, a digamma (Ϝ), that is a six in the Ionian or alphabetic numeral system' and confidently concluded that *PHerc* 1669 hands down book 6 of Philodemus' *On Rhetoric*. However, Dorandi (a) does not explicitly state that he personally inspected the original manuscript, (b) does not explain on which palaeographical grounds K should be excluded, (c) does not provide any palaeographical description of the surviving traces proving that a digamma is to be read here, (d) does not adduce any instances of F-shaped digamma used as a numerical element in either Graeco-Egyptian or Herculaneum papyri, (e) does not refer to modern literature on the subject. As is known, in inscriptions, digamma underwent already in the Archaic period a gradual transformation leading to the two main Classical variants F and ⊏.[1] The latter was normally used as a numeral (= six), whereas the former was very rarely employed in this function.[2] In Graeco-Egyptian papyri, the F-shaped form is only attested as a phonetic element (/w/ or *waw*) – *never* as a numeral – in poetic authors like Alcman, Sappho, Alcaeus, Corinna and a 'Boeotian verse',[3] while the latter variant, which developed from its original square shape into a rounded one (C) and then, eventually into ϛ,[4] is the only one used as a numerical sign.[5] Likewise, in Herculaneum papyri the only instance of F-shaped digamma known to us – embedded in a quotation from, again, Alcaeus – has a merely phonetic value,[6] while, as expected, the other form is the only one used with a numerical function.[7] If, as Dorandi contends, the book number in the *subscriptio* of *PHerc* 1669 was six, then we should have here the latter form of digamma, not the former! Finally, palaeographically speaking, the surviving traces of the letter and, in particular, its two divergent diagonals are clearly incompatible with an F-shaped digamma, whose known occurrences show either perfectly parallel or even slightly convergent horizontal strokes.[8] To sum up, there is no way of justifying this conjecture.

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[1] The latter form is attested in, for example, Euboea, Boeotia, Thessaly and Corcyra: see Jeffery (1961) 24–25.

[2] See Tod (1950) 135.

[3] See at least *PLouvre* 3320, col. 1, 6 and ≈ 7, 8 (Alcman); *POxy* 7, col. 1, 6 (Sappho); *POxy* 2291, col. 2, 2 (Sappho?); *POxy* 2295, fr. 8, 2 (Alcaeus); *POxy* 2370, fr. 4, 3 (Corinna); *POxy* 2374, fr. 9, 3 ('Boeotian verse'); Turner and Parsons (1987) 44, n.11; Romeo (1988) 308.

[4] See Gardthausen (1879) 265; Tod (1950) 135, n.22; Cole (2017) 3.

[5] See, for example, *PLondLit* 28, col. 11, 42; *PGrenf* 2 11, col. 2, 4; *POxy* 4449, col. 1 (upper margin); *POxy* 4499, fr. 16, 3 *recto*; Ohly (1928) 80–81.

[6] See Demetr. Lac. *Poem.* 2 (*PHerc* 1014), col. 63, 6 Romeo: ϝόν. The presence of the digamma at this point, noticed for the first time by Crönert (1903) 200, has been confirmed – *pace* Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1914) 240 – by the latest editor of this book: see Romeo (1988) *ad loc.*, 307–08.

[7] See, for example, Phld. *Rhet.* 4 (*PHerc* 1423), col. 13 (lower margin): ρλϛ΄ = 136; Fimiani (2012) 144–145.

[8] See, on the latter case, the F-shaped digamma referred to at n.6, an example from, again, Herculaneum.

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