

THE GRAFTED BRANCHES OF THE SCEPTICAL TREE.
«NOLI ALTUM SAPERE» AND HENRI ESTIENNE'S LATIN
EDITION OF *SEXTI EMPIRICI PYRRHONIARUM*
HYPOTYΠΩΣΕΩΝ LIBRI III

Introduction

1. In the Bodleian Library in Oxford there is a manuscript in which Thomas Rawlinson listed several books printed by the members of the Estienne family until the year 1662. Pages are not originally numbered, but on the verso of the 39th folio we find annotated: «Sextus Empiricus. Lat. H.S. 1562»¹. The short note is interesting: by the XVIII century Rawlinson needed to indicate only the name of the author, the important fact that it was a Latin work, the initial of the editor and the date of publication to refer to the first Latin translation of Sextus Empiricus' *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*² published by Henri Estienne precisely in 1562. Rawlinson was justified in his conciseness. During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, if people had been interested in scepticism at all they had approached it mainly through the unfavourable manuscripts of Cicero and St. Augustine so that Henri's translation represented a turning point in the history of scepticism. For the first time the whole battery of sceptical arguments explained by a radical sceptic himself was diffused in form of a book written in a

¹ Bodleian Library, Oxford, Ms Rawl D 1380, saec. XVIII, ff. 132.

² *SEXTI EMPIRICI Pyrrhoniatarum hypotyπΩσεΩν libri III. Quibus in tres philosophiae partes severissime inquiritur. Libri magno ingenii acumine scripti, variaque doctrina referti. Graece nunquam, Latine nun primum editi interprete Henrico Stephano, Anno 1562* (on pp. 200-217 we find *Pyrrhonis Eliensis Philosophi Vita ex Diogene Laertio*). On previous but unpublished translations cf. W. CAVINI, *Appunti sulla prima diffusione in occidente delle opere di Sesto Empirico* «Medioevo» III (1977), pp. 1-20 and C. B. SCHMITT *John Wolley (ca. 1530-1596) and the first Latin translation of Sextus Empiricus, Adversus Logicos I* (this is Bodleian Library, Sancroft 17 [S.C. 10, 318]) in R. A. WATSON and J. E. FORCE (eds.), *The Sceptical Mode in Modern Philosophy: Essays in Honour of Richard H. Popkin* (Dordrecht, 1988), pp. 61-70, and *An Unstudied Fifteenth-Century Translation of Sextus Empiricus by Giovanni Lorenzi* (this is Rome, B.A.V., Vat. Lat. 2990) in *Cultural Aspects of the Italian Renaissance: Essays in Honour of Paul Oskar Kristeller*, edited by C.H. CLOUGH (Manchester, 1976), pp. 244-261.

language accessible to every educated man. As was predictable, Henri's Latin translation soon overshadowed all the other texts as the most important source for sceptical arguments.³ Montaigne, to mention only the most outstanding example, relied extensively on Estienne's translation when he wrote his *Apology of Raymond Sebond*.⁴

2. Although the *Outlines* are the most influential text in the history of scepticism we still lack a complete and detailed reconstruction of their fortune in modern times.⁵ In this sense Henri Estienne's translation is not an exception and so far it has not yet received all the attention it deserves.⁶ In this article I mean to amend in part this state of affairs by spelling out the *anti-dogmatic motivation* that lies at the roots of Henri's editorial enterprise. For this purpose I shall approach the issue from a somewhat specific point of view: the investigation of the emblem occurring on the frontispiece of the book.

3. The emblem is a famous printer's mark and we can already discard any hypothesis about a *direct connection* between it and the

³ Cf. Schmitt's conclusion in C. B. SCHMITT, *Cicero Scepticus: A Study of the Academia in the Renaissance*, (The Hague, 1972). For the considerable impact that the rediscovery of Pyrrhonism following the editions of Sextus Empiricus had on the philosophy of the following two centuries cf. R. H. POPKIN, *The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Spinoza*, (revised edition Los Angeles, 1979), see also his *Le Scepticisme pour ou contre les sciences a la fin du XVI siècle* in VIII^e Congrès Int. de Sciences de la Renaissance, (Paris, 1973), pp. 83-90.

⁴ MICHEL EYQUEM DE MONTAIGNE, *The Apology of Raymond Sebond* in *Les Essays*, French edition by F. Strowski (Bordeaux, 1906-20), vol. II, p. 12. Montaigne did not know ancient Greek very well and probably used Estienne's translation of 1562 and not that of 1569, cf. P. VILLEY, *Les Sources et l'Evolution des Essays de Montaigne*, 2 vols. (first edited in 1933 and now Osnabruck, 1976), pp. 242-243 and 290.

⁵ In the already quoted article on Wolley, Schmitt wrote that he was preparing the article on Sextus Empiricus for the *Catalogus translationum et commentariorum*. Unfortunately he died before publishing it. Here I may remark that Henri's translation was republished in 1569 in Paris together with *Libri adversus Mathematicos ex versione Gentiani Herveti* Paris (Henri's dedication is on pp. XXII-XXV); in 1619, still in Paris, by Martinus Iuvenus (who reproduces the whole work of 1569 included Henri's dedication, pp. 399-404); in 1621 (without Henri's dedication), *SEXTI EMPIRICI Opera quae extant*, [Greek text plus Henri's and Gentianus' Latin translations], *Graece nunc primum editi*, sumptibus Petri & Jacobi Chouet, Genevae; in 1718 (with Henri's dedication, vol. I, pp. XXII-XXV) with corrections by Albertus Fabricius in his *SEXTI EMPIRICI Opera* [...] Lipsiae, a work which was re-published in two volumes in 1840. Fabricius, as Petrus Faber long before (cf. *In Libros academicos Ciceronis commentarius*, Paris, 1611, apud Claudium Morellum, p. 64 and *editionis primae Commentarius*, pp. 31-32), criticizes but largely adopts Henri's translation.

⁶ An exception is represented by a recent article by F. JOUKOVSKY, *Le Commentaire d'Henri Estienne aux Hypotyposes de Sextus Empiricus*, appeared in the collection published by the Centre V.L. Saulnier *Henri Estienne* (Paris, 1988), pp. 129-145. As it is made explicit by the title of the paper, dr. Joukovsky focuses mainly on the commentary to the text (with special attention to a phenomenist interpretation of Henri's position which stresses the successive impact the text had on Montaigne) and less on the reasons underlying its publication.

edition of the *Outlines* in which it appears. However, we shall soon see that there is an interesting puzzle involving the adoption of the mark by the Estienne whose solution is in a mutually explanatory relation with the philosophical reasons underlying Henri's publication of Sextus' work. The procedure I shall follow is simple: in order to gain a fruitful insight into the broader issue – the background of Henri's translation of the *Outlines* – I shall focus on a connected but less general problem, an instructive micro-question, i.e. the interpretation of the printer's mark. The more specific nature of the latter will, it is hoped, allow for a more reliable and convincing explanation, while its revealing connection to the broader issue will also transform its explanation into a sort of Diogenes' lantern whereby I shall throw light on the latter. Of course the two values of specificity and cruciality of the micro-question are mutually self-regulating (the more specific the micro-question is, the more easily it may allow for a definite solution, but the more distant it becomes from what one has elected as its corresponding mega-issue, and *vice versa*). Therefore, the fundamental, methodological thesis of this paper is that not only is there an interesting puzzle concerning the Estiennes' adoption of their printer's mark whose specificity allows for a persuasive solution, but that the puzzle is at the «right distance» from the principal issue, so that its solution may help us in rendering explicit the anti-dogmatic reasons that led Henri to publish the translation of the *Outlines*. It follows that I shall argue exactly the opposite of what Antoine Augustine Renouard maintained when, in his fundamental work on the Estiennes, he wrote that the reproduction of the Estiennes' devices was «tout-à-fait inutile, d'abord à l'art typographique pour lequel elles ne sont rien (*nullius momenti*) et aussi à l'histoire littéraire dont ces marques emblématiques n'avoient aucune obscurité à expliquer ou à éclaircir» and that «[...] pour la plupart elles [the Estiennes' devices] n'étoient point leur propriété exclusive, qu'elles purent être, et furent effectivement employées par d'autres Imprimeurs contemporains, qu'en conséquence leur représentation ne seroit d'aucune utilité bibliographique, et n'apprendroit rien au lecteur». ⁷

⁷ A. A. RENOARD, *Annales de l'imprimerie des Estienne ou histoire de la famille des Estienne et de ses éditions*, (Paris, 1837-8¹ and now Genève, 1971, a reprint of the 2nd edition 1843), pp. XVI and 278. Renouard's *Annales* is still the standard catalogue of the Estiennes' editions. Corrections and *addenda* can be found above all in L. CLEMENT, *Henri Estienne et son Oeuvre Française, thèse présentée à la faculté des lettres de l'université de Paris* (Paris, 1898) and in the recent work by F. SCHREIBER, *The Estiennes. An Annotated Catalogue of 300 Highlights of their Various Presses*, intr. by Nicolas Barker (New York, 1982). The latter contains a number of

4. The puzzle involving the device is not immediately evident and in order to uncover it I shall explore the iconography of the printer's mark in its details (sec. I/III). In order to search for a solution of the puzzle I shall then concentrate on the history of the mark and on the characters of the two men who adopted it as the most important sign of recognition in their public image (sec. IV/V). The explanation of the puzzle provided there in terms of *humanistic anti-dogmatism* will finally constitute the privileged perspective from where I shall approach Henri Estienne's position regarding the translation of the *Outlines* (sec. VI). I shall conclude the article by some remarks on the development of modern scepticism in relation to Henri's ethical and anti-dogmatic appreciation of the *Outlines* (sec. VII).

I. *The Iconographic Elements of the Mark*

5. Although the legislation concerning copyright was regulated only in 1912 by the Berne Convention, publishers have tried to protect their products from illegal uses virtually ever since the appearance of printed books. Already in 1457 Fust and Schoeffer added their own shields to the frontispiece of the *Psalter* they printed at Mainz. Such printer's marks occurred on the front page, where they were somehow interconnected with the title of the work and came to represent at the same time trade-marks and decorations. They could be either more or less complex logotypes – obtained by the intersection of the initials of the publisher and/or other symbols – or devices/emblems which occasionally could still allude to the name of the publisher (see §.32).

6. Emblems are semiologically composite systems, consisting of a picture or *icon* and a maxim or *motto*. In 1645 a descendant of Henri Estienne, Henri IV, elucidated the significance of such a duality icon-lemma or *picta-poesis* thus: «though an Embleme hath some affinity with the *Aenigma* it differs notwithstanding in this, that drawing (as it were) the Curtaine from before the *Aenigma*, it declares the matter more plainly: For the Embleme is properly a sweet and moral symbole, which consists of picture and words, by which some weighty sentence is declared. [...] There is no invention that merits the title of *Device*, if it is deprived of a *Motto*».⁸

large and clear reproductions of the marks. There is no complete bibliographical work on the literature concerning the Estiennes.

⁸ HENRI IV ESTIENNE, *The Art of Making Devices* [...]. First written in French by Henry Estienne [...] and translated into English by Tho[mas]: Blount of the Inner Temple, Gent.

7. The quotation provides us with a plain description of the structure of the device occurring on the frontispiece of the *Outlines* [fig. 1] where the *icon* consists in an *old, well dressed, almost bald, bearded man without shoes* standing by an *olive-tree* towards which he is pointing with his right forefinger, and in a *motto* written on a scroll entwined in the branches of the olive-tree, which declares «noli altum sapere».

8. This emblem is the most common version of the printer's mark utilised by the Estiennes, in its turn one of the most famous families of editors in the history of printing. Although the elements of the mark are not immune from various metamorphoses,⁹ the olive-tree with the motto occurs in hundreds of their editions from 1526 onwards,¹⁰ when Robert Estienne (Henri's father) was allowed to continue the work of his father, the first Henri. Robert devised it as the mark for his own publications and soon it became so well known that he could stop adding his address on the works he was producing, being confident that the presence of the olive-tree with the motto on the frontispiece of the book was sufficient to inform his clients of its provenance.¹¹ Throughout the XVII century Robert III Estienne (son of Robert II and nephew of Henri II, 1560-1630), Paul Estienne (Henri's son, born in 1566 and active between 1599 and 1626) and his

London 1646: quotations from chap. 4, «Of Emblems», p. 7 and p. 13. The text was first printed in Paris, by Jean Paslé in 1645. The author is Henri Estienne sieur de Fossés, who died in 1647 and was son of Henri III, son of Robert II.

⁹ W. ROBERTS in his *Printer's Marks, A Chapter in the History of Typography* (London, 1893), pp. 118-123, esp. p. 119 and ff., writes that the Estiennes adopted *seven* different variations of the emblem with the olive-tree and the motto, plus three versions of the icon of a basilisk on a rod intertwined with a branch of a climbing plant (this as King's printer in Greek). However, P. RENOARD, *Les Marques Typographiques Parisiennes des XVe and XVIe siècles* (Paris 1926¹⁻⁸²), pp. 84-93 and 147 lists *twenty* reproductions of the Estiennes' marks, seventeen of which consist in the olive-tree with the motto; among them there are nine different versions, but not even this number is reliable since according to Schreiber these are twenty-five. Renouard's work is a further improvement of a specific section of the catalogue of printers' marks already elaborated by M. L.-C. SILVESTRE, *Marques Typographiques* (Paris 1867), 2 vols. and when possible it gives references to the latter, although it is not always precise. Silvestre reports about the Estiennes' marks on vol. I, pp. 80 e 86 (the copy I consulted has pages 75/76 repeated after p. 80), 165, 277, 299; and vol. II, pp. 394-395, 480-481, 556-557, 585, 656-657, 662-663.

¹⁰ Cf. A. RENOARD, *op. cit.*, p. 285, and P. RENOARD, *op. cit.*, p. 84, where he says that the first mark with the olive-tree and the motto occurs on the frontispiece of the *Terentius* published by Robert the 26th of September 1526 in Paris. See also F. SCHREIBER, *op. cit.*, p. 47 about Robert's edition of Cicero's *Epistolae*. Note that these first versions of the mark, like also that occurring on *Paraphrasis [...] inscripta D. Erasmo [...] in elegantiarum libros Laurentii Vallae* (1531) are still without the old man.

¹¹ E. ARMSTRONG, *Robert Estienne Royal printer, An Historical Study of the Early Stephanus* (Cambridge, 1954), p. 21. All page references are to this first edition (but see now revised edition Abingdon, 1986).

son Antoine Estienne (1592-1674) continued to use the printer's mark invented by their grandfather¹² so that together with the Aldines' device (the dolphin with the anchor) the Estiennes' olive-tree became the best known printer's mark in the history of the book.¹³ Apparently, in 1650 one could still see the emblem of the olive-tree in rue Saint-Jean de Beauvais, the street in Paris where the Estiennes had had their press and shop.¹⁴

II. *The First Element of the Puzzle: the Iconological Interpretation of the Mark*

9. As Henri IV clarifies, though motto and icon are mutually explanatory the key for the interpretation of the iconographic aenigma lies in the former. In our case the «weighty sentence» is a quotation from St. Paul's *Epistle to the Romans*: «noli altum sapere» appears in the *Vulgate* and it is St. Jerome's Latin translation of the Greek verse μή ὑψηλοφρόνει ἀλλὰ φοβοῦ, an exhortation not to be high-minded but to fear, addressed by St. Paul to the new Christians in XI,20. A few lines before St. Paul had developed his thought by means of an analogy including an olive-tree:

10. «[XI,17] But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, a wild olive shoot, were grafted in their place to share the richness of the olive tree, [18] do not boast over the branches. If you do boast remember it is not you that support the root, but the root that supports you. [19] You will say, «Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in» [«Rami defracti sunt ut ego inserer»]. [20] That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast only through faith. So do not become proud, but stand in awe [Noli altum sapere, sed time]. [21] For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you».

11. The *Epistle to the Romans* is a synthesis of Pauline theology and one of the most influential texts in the history of Christian theo-

¹² Cf. *Florilegium Epigrammatum Martialis [...] Lutetiae ex. typ. Roberti [the third] Stephani*, 1607. M. P. DELALAIN, *Inventaire des Marques d'Imprimeurs et de Libraires de la collection du cercle de la librairie* (Paris, 1892, 12 éd. revue et augmentée), pp. 36-37 and 316-317 lists several occurrences of the mark – consisting in «un olivier, aux branches greffées dont un homme s'approche et qu'il contemple» plus the motto *noli altum sapere* – dated 1601 and 1618 (Paul Estienne), 1634 and 1660 (Antoine Estienne).

¹³ F. SCHREIBER, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

¹⁴ Cf. A. RENOARD, *op. cit.*, pp. 284-285, note (**).

logy: after having been associated with Augustinian theology¹⁵ it became one of the main sources for the protestant reformation and both Luther and Calvin also articulated their theologies in terms of comments on the *Epistle*. The passage just quoted belongs to the fourth section of the first part of the *Epistle*,¹⁶ where St. Paul talks about the crucial issue of the unity between the new Christian Church and Israel.

12. Various interpretations of the *parabola oleastri* have been provided in the history of Christian theology.¹⁷ Even though it is problematic to decide whether in the Pauline passage Israel or the Jews may be the olive-tree and the patriarchs of the Old Testament the holy root of the tree,¹⁸ it is clear that the *branches of the wild olive-tree*, which have been *grafted*, are the converted pagans who, having become Christians recently, are joining the tree of the Judaic tradition of the Old Testament. This is the most significant part of the text and the analogy catches its visual core. So much so that one is led to conclude that icon and motto together render the mark a *faithful and detailed illustration of St. Paul's words*. Three essential facts support this conjecture, two internal concerning some details in the design of the tree (cf. §.13 and also §.25) and in the figure of the old man (cf. §.14/§.18 and also §.31) and one external regarding the later development of the mark (cf. §.19). Since the strict relationship between mark and its source-text constitutes the first component of our puzzle I shall devote substantial attention to each factor in turn.

13. As a first step, it will be worth starting from another example of the mark, that occurring on the frontispiece of Robert's famous *Latin Bible* [fig. 2]. According to Hugh William Davies this is «the fir-

¹⁵ It caused the final conversion of St. Augustine, cf. *Conf.* 8, 12, 23.

¹⁶ Cf. *La lettera ai Romani*, in *Le lettere di San Paolo*, Nuovissima Edizione della Bibbia dai Testi Originali a cura di U. Vanni (Roma, 1977¹-1985³), pp. 261-350.

¹⁷ The history of the various interpretations of the allegory is reconstructed by S. MEDALA in his *Parabola Oleastri, Historia Interpretationis Rom. XI, 16-24 eiusque cum ecclesiologia S. Pauli nexus*, Exc. ex. Diss. ad lauream in Facultate Theologica Pontificiae Universitatis Gregoriana (Roma, 1970), pp. 1-76, and more recently in D. G. JOHNSON, *The Structure and the Meaning of Romans 11* in «Catholic Biblical Quarterly», XCVI (1984), pp. 91-103. Both works are concerned mainly with the analogy of the olive-tree and its theological interpretations. There is no reference to the iconological history of the motto.

¹⁸ Cf. L. CERFAUX, *La Théologie de l'Église suivant saint Paul* (Paris, 1965). Page numbers refer to the Italian edition, with an int. by T. FEDERICI, *La Teologia della Chiesa secondo San Paolo* (Roma, 1968), pp. 80-81 and 245-247. Apparently, despite the exegetic disputes, the iconographic tradition opted for the identification of Israel with the olive-tree, cf. *Lexicon der Christlichen Ikonographie* edited by E. KIRSCHBAUM, 8 vols. (Freiburg, 1968-76), vol. 3, cols. 341-342, «Das Haus Israel wird ebenfalls mit dem Ölbaum vergleichen (Jer. XI,16; Os. XIV,6; Rom. XI,17-27)».

st and largest of this pattern».¹⁹ It is also noteworthy that it is *structurally identical* to that of the *Outlines* because it was engraved by the same artist Geoffroy Tory²⁰ (cf. §.32). As a result of its size (ca. 19,5 cm. high and 15,2 cm. wide; note that according to Schreiber, *op. cit.*, p. 219 the smallest device of the Estiennes is 22 mm. in height), the Bible's mark is very clear. Apart from the olive-tree, one can notice the presence of some branches in the air and some on the ground and, most important of all, clearly detect the occurrence both of *new branches*, which have been grafted to the old tree, and of the *grafts* themselves. About the latter, it is even evident that the kind of *grafting* there represented is that known as «slice grafting». This is the most common of the only three ways in which an olive-tree can be grafted and the system was already well known to the ancient Romans. It is used when the scion and the stock have nearly the same diameter, an important analogical factor in the illustration of the parable. After having been cut at a rather narrow angle the two are joined together so that the cambial zones can match perfectly. In order to be tied securely in place and to render the graft joint waterproof the latter is waxed and covered with some grafting compound and wrapped with cloth-backed grafting tape. In this way those sort of balls are formed which we find in all the various versions of the device: they mark the points where the new branches have been grafted to the old ones. Such a specific detail works in favour of the hypothesis of a strict correspondence between the iconography of the mark and the Pauline text.

14. A second series of reflections leading to the same conclusion hinges on the interpretation of the figure of the *old man*. Although the figure has been described as «the philosopher under the tree of knowledge»,²¹ according to F. Schreiber²² he is obviously St. Paul himself.

¹⁹ The edition I have been able to check is *Biblia Utrunque Testamenti de quorum nova interpretatione et copiosissimi in eam annotationibus lege quam in limine operis habes epistolam* Oliva Ro. Stephani, 1557. The first edition of this Bible appeared in 1528, but the only difference is in the collocation of the motto, which lately is only on one line. For Davies' remark cf. W. DAVIES, *Devices of the Early Printers 1475-1560. Their History and Development*, (Folkestone, 1974), pp. 662-3. For a reproduction of the mark dated 1528 see P. RENOARD, *op. cit.*, p. 86-87 and fig. 291.

²⁰ Both drawings bear a little «Lorraine cross» which is Tory's symbol as engraver. Tory produced at least six different marks for Robert, cf. A. BERNARD, *Geofroy Tory peintre et graveur, Premier Imprimeur Royal* (Paris, 1865, rep. by B. de Graaf, Nieuwkoop, 1963), pp. 52, 250 and 344-345. Bernard attributes the mark on the Bible edited by Robert in 1528 and 1540 to Tory and the mark on the Bible edited in 1557 can now be added to the list. Bernard does not mention the *Outlines* but he says that Henri used his father's marks made by Tory after the 1559 as did also Charles and Robert II.

²¹ This is the interpretation given by S.H. STEINBERG in his popular *Five Hundred Years of Printing* (Edinburgh, 1955, 2nd edition 1961), p. 88.

²² F. SCHREIBER, *op. cit.*, p. 247-249.

The only reason adduced by Schreiber to support his interpretation is the fact that the motto belongs to St. Paul's *Epistle* and the scroll could stand for his attribute, instead of the book or the twelve rolls of his epistles (the sword of his martyrdom being thoroughly inappropriate in this case). Unfortunately, there are cases in which a very similar icon does not imply that the man there represented must be St. Paul.²³ So can Schreiber's significant suggestion be placed on more secure grounds ?

15. Let us first concentrate on the physiognomy of the man. Although in the sarcophagus of Junius Bassus (IV century) St. Paul appears as a young man, bald²⁴ but with a short beard like

²³ While talking about the second mark adopted by Isaac Elzevir in 1620, (an elm around the trunk of which a vine carrying bunches of grapes is twined, there is a man and the motto «non solus») William Roberts says that the man known as the *solitaire*, the *hermit* or the *sage* represents «the solitary individual [who] is symbolical of the preference of the wise for solitude» (cf. W. ROBERTS, *op. cit.*, p. 206). Isaac Elzevir's and Robert Estienne's marks are very similar and if we should reason by analogy, seen that the olive-tree is the attribute of Minerva and the symbol of wisdom-*sapientia*, (cf. GUY DE TERVARENT, *Attributes et Symboles dans l'Art Profane 1450-1600. Dictionnaire d'un Langage Perdu* (Genève, 1958, *Supplement and Index*, 1964, pp. 290-291) we might be justified in supposing at least a *combination* between the Pauline motto and the iconography of the sage, a *variation* in the latter, a *contaminatio* between the Pauline iconography and that of the solitary philosopher-sage or finally, we might even hypothesize that the old man is the king Solomon. This may be the case at least in one of the marks adopted by Nicolas Chesneau, that occurring on *Les oeuvres et meslanges poetiques d'Estienne Jodelle* (1574), a mark whose icon, once again, reminds us very closely of the Estiennes' (there is a tree, a bearded man on its side and a snake around the tree which holds in its coils five arrows). Its motto is «concordia vis nescia vincit» (cf. P. RENOARD, *op. cit.*, p. 48, fig. 171). The man is so similar to the one occurring on the Estiennes' mark that his figure may have been copied from that. PICINELLI in his *Mundus Symbolicus* 1687, Book XXII, section 91 (re-edited with an introduction and a bibliography by D. DONAT [Hildesheim-New York, 1979, pp. 217-218] explains that the shorter «vis nescia vincit» is generally connected with the figure of Solomon because of Prov XVIII,70. Thus, at least in this case the man beside the tree may be Solomon (but see also the mark occurring on the frontispiece of *Christianae religionis [...] propugnatio [...] ANTONIO MONCHACENO DEMOCHARE auctore* (1562) in P. RENOARD, *op. cit.*, p. 46, mark n. 167 where the man's dress is not in good condition and could hardly represent a king like Solomon. On the other hand, in this case there might be a combination of the Solomonic figure with that of the sage who disregards all trivial comforts in favour of the pursuit of philosophical wisdom) and such an identification might be extended to our printer's mark.

²⁴ Cf. P. TESTINI, *Gli Apostoli Pietro e Paolo nella piu' antica iconografia cristiana in Studi Petriani, Atti del ciclo di conferenze a.y. 1966-7 per la celebrazione del XIX centenario petriano*, (Roma, 1968), pp. 103-120, esp. p. 116 and tavola VI with a reproduction of the sarcophagus. St. Paul is represented bald because of Acts XVIII,18: «[...] qui sibi totonderat in Cenchrus caput: habebat enim votu»; and Acts XII,24: «[...] et impende in illis ut radant capita [...]», which is connected with Nm VI,18. On this and more generally on the history of St. Paul's iconography see E. VON DOBSCHUTZ, *Der Apostel Paul, I. Seine weltgeschichtliche Bedeutung*, and *II. Seine Stellung in der Kunst* (Halle, 1926 and 1928), two works which contain 57 reproductions of St. Paul's figures, and above all J. FICKER, *Die Darstellung der Apostel in der altchristlichen Kunst, Eine ikonographische Studie* (Leipzig, 1887). A very extended catalogue of representations of St. Paul is now given by the *Lexicon* edited by E. KIRSCHBAUM, *op. cit.*, vol. 8, under the entry «Paul». It is worth noticing that the section «Inschriften» (col. 134) does not report any

Christ,²⁵ in the Middle Ages the metamorphosis of his iconography followed that of the other apostles: in order to stress St. Paul's wisdom and his role as a teacher he gradually became an old man, with a high forehead, often almost completely bald, with a rather long, sharp and dark beard. Nicephorus (1256 ca.-1335 ca.) provides a precise reference for the final fixation of the iconography of the saint in his *Historia Ecclesiastica*: «Paul had a small and compact [*contracto*] body, as if curved, a fair face which showed many years, and a bald [*psilos ten kefalen/calvus*, meaning hairless by nature or by shaving or shearing] head; his eyes had great grace; the eye-brow inclined downwards; the nose, finely bending, was rather long; the beard was thick and altogether long, and it was sprinkled with whiteness no less than his hair».²⁶ Our old man fits such a description rather well. Moreover, we may note that a similar description of St. Paul was also provided in the *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*:²⁷ its large influence in Christian iconology of the Middle Ages explains why we can find that the figure represented in the mark on the Bible's frontispiece is very similar to that represented in a miniature of St. Paul occurring on a manuscript of 1050.²⁸ Even the position of the man on the left of the tree may not be casual. We know that St. Peter and St. Paul are very often associated as the two most important apostles. When they are represented together St. Peter is on the right hand side of the Saviour because of his role in the history of the church and therefore St. Paul appears generally on the left.²⁹ In all the versions of the mark this is the position of the man: if Tory (see §.19 and §.32) or any other engraver wanted to represent St. Paul, this was his most natural collocation.

16. The man's clothes too deserve a careful examination. He is wearing what look like a *tunica* and a *pallium*. This would be a rather uncommon and oldfashioned way of representing a man of the XVI century, but it is perfectly consistent with the iconography of the apostles, who had always been described with such clothes since the Middle Ages.³⁰ The *tunica* was a common Roman garment and the

representation of St. Paul associated with Rom XI,17, included the printer's mark of the Estiennes.

²⁵ Cf. K. KUNSTLE, *Iconographie der Heiligen* (Freiburg, 1926), pp. 487-490.

²⁶ NICEPHORUS CALLISTUS XANTHOPULUS *Ecclesiasticae Historiae Libri XVIII*, Lib. II, caput XXXVII, par. 196, in J.P. MIGNÉ, *Pat. Cur. Comp. s. G.*, vol. 145, col. 854.

²⁷ Cf. *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha* edited by R. A. LIPSIVS (Darmstadt, 1959 [original edition 1891]), pars prior, *Acta Pauli et Theclae*, III, 7-9 (p.237).

²⁸ Cf. L. RAU, *Iconographie de l'Art Chrétien* (Paris, 1959), vol. III, part 3, pp. 1038-1050. The miniature cod. Vat. Gr. 1208 is reproduced in Dobschutz, *op. cit.* II, fig. n. 30.

²⁹ Cf. L. CLOQUET, *Éléments d'iconographie chrétienne*, (Lille, 1890), p. 195.

³⁰ Cf. *Lexicon ...* edited by E. KIRSCHBAUM, *op. cit.*, vol. 5, col. 237.

pallium, a rectangular mantle which was worn above the *tunica* and over the shoulders, and although it was well known to the Romans, because of its similarity to the Greek *himation*, it was not ordinarily worn;³¹ even this particular is coherent with the figure of St. Paul, who was a Roman citizen but with Jewish and Greek origins.

17. What I have said so far is finally consistent with a third feature which characterizes the old man, namely that of being barefoot. Although this may be just a sign of humility or religious devotion (e.g. on the Biblical basis of *Ex III,5*) and it is a feature that has been often associated with the figure of the sage-philosopher (Socrates, for example, is described by Plato as being barefooted³²), once we are told that the apostles, especially St. Paul, are generally portrayed without shoes³³ and we have ascertained that the literary sources for such an iconographic feature are Luke X,4 and most notably St. Paul's Rom X,15, few doubts remain that the man is likely to be St. Paul himself.³⁴

18. Of course, on the basis of the previous considerations we cannot exclude that, as for the other elements of the mark, so also the interpretation of the figure of the old man by the tree could have changed throughout the decades.³⁵ In iconoclastic Geneva the representation of a saint, albeit as only part of a printer's mark, was unlikely to be welcome. Moreover, the same forces which led to the assimilation of the Pauline iconography with that of the sage-philosopher in the Middle Ages might have been at work, later on, in the opposite direction. For example, a later identification of the man with the figure of the sage seems to be required by the presence of an

³¹ Cf. M. G. HOUSTON, *Ancient Greek, Roman and Byzantine Costume and Decoration* (London, 1963), pp. 65-67, 94 and fig. 103c about the *calcus* (see note 36 below) cf. pp. 96-97 and 99.

³² Cf. *Symp.* 220b.6 and especially *Phdr.* 229a.3 where Phaedrus says that Socrates was always barefoot.

³³ L. CLOQUET, *op. cit.*, p. 194 seems to exaggerate by maintaining *tout court* that «les apôtres ont les pieds nus». E. KIRSCHBAUM, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, col. 67 is more cautious.

³⁴ The two sources are «Nolite portare sacculum, neque peram, neque calceamenta [i.e. a Roman type of boots] et neminem per viam salutaveritis» and «Quomodo vero praedicabunt nisi mittantur? sicut scriptum est: Quam speciosi pedes evangelizantium pacem, evangelizantium bona!» (from *Biblia Sacra Vulgatae Editionis*, Ratisbona, 1929, third edition; the revision of the *Vulgate* started in 1926 is still in course and the last part of the New Testament is not yet available). On the whole issue cf. AURENHAMMER, *Lexicon der Christlichen Ikonographie* (Wien, 1959-67), vol. I, pp. 216-222 where he says that at most the apostles are represented wearing sandals. In Rom. X,15 St. Paul is referring to Is LII,7: «Quam pulchri super montes pedes annunciantis [...]» and Nah I,15: «Ecce super montes pedes evangelizantis [...]».

³⁵ Cf. for example his very different iconography in PLATONIS *Opera quae extant omnia ex nova Johannis Serrani Interpretatione [...] Henr. Stephani de quorundam locorum interpretatione iudicium & multorum contextus Graeci emendatio, excudebat Henricus Stephanus [1578]*.

oriental hat in successive versions of the mark [fig. 4].³⁶ The hat is either held by the man in his hands or left on the ground; in both cases it looks like a turban and it may mean that by that time the figure of the old man was no longer interpreted as St. Paul. Giorgione's «I tre filosofi o le tre eta` dell'uomo [?]

,³⁷ a painting in which a sage, perhaps one of the Magi, wears an oriental turban very similar to that occurring on the marks, reminds us that during the XVI century such a garment could be the common attribute of the oriental/Arabic sage-philosopher.

19. What we can reasonably infer from the previous analysis is that *originally* the old man in the most standard of Robert's and Henri's devices was almost certainly meant to represent St. Paul. The validity of this hypothesis can be further strengthened, indirectly, by a last group of considerations about the external factor of the metamorphoses of the mark. In yet another version of the mark, sometimes adopted by Henri from 1578 onwards [fig.3]³⁸ we find that the same iconographic structure (the olive-tree plus the old man, this time represented in a kneeling posture with his hands united as if in prayer, having thick hair) is associated with the new motto «rami defracti sunt ut ego inserer», which we have seen is just another verse of the same passage from the *Epistle to the Romans*, 11,19. Later on, both Paul and François II Estienne (Henri's brother, born in 1536 and active between 1562 and 1582)), continued to use the olive-tree with grafted branches as their printer's mark and Rom XI,19 as their motto, but they also added to its iconography two hands coming from the sky, one holding a sickle and the other holding a branch.³⁹ The exces-

³⁶ M. L.-C. SILVESTRE, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 662-663 fig. 1144 describes the printer's mark of François II Estienne in which the old man has a turban in his hands, cf. also F. SCHREIBER, *op. cit.*, p. 221, n. 275 and p. 262, fig. 34 with Paul's device with a hat on the ground. Schreiber has relied also on this special mark in order to attribute to the editorial activity of François the new edition of Henri's *Apologie pour Erodote*, Geneva, 1566, cf. *op. cit.*, pp. 187-188.

³⁷ Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum. The work was painted *ante* 1525.

³⁸ Cf. A. RENOARD, *op. cit.*, p. 381. The mark I have been able to check and which I have described in the text appears in PLATONIS *Opera*, 1578 (see above note 34). Schreiber writes that it is the first with this specific pattern and may be the only one (*op. cit.*, p. 167). Indeed, in *Schediasmatum Variorum* [...] exc. Henricus Stephanus anno MDLXXXIX we still find the standard mark with «n.a.s.». The usual mark appears also in QUINTI HORATII FLACCI *Poemata* [...] ab Henrico Stephano illustrata, [...] editio secunda, 1588 (see also below note n.92). According to E. GRESWELL, *A View of the Early Parisian Greek Press; including the lives of the Stephani ...* (originally Oxford, 1833, reprinted unchanged, Amsterdam, 1969), vol. II, p. 161, in the edition of the *Letters of Pliny*, 1591 there is the usual iconography but without the motto, and in the Homer of 1588 there is only the cipher of Henri's name.

³⁹ Cf. M. L.-C. SILVESTRE, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 394-395 fig. 712, (Paul's emblem), and pp. 662-663 fig. 1144 (François II's emblem).

sive and naive sense of realism exhibited by this version breaks the subtle equilibrium between text and icon present in Robert's mark and still maintained by Henri's and such an iconographic development may be taken as a document of the different pictorial taste of the epoch or of the greater ability of Geoffroy Tory. In the light of our present interest it is certainly a further proof of the close link between the icon and its source-text.

20. At the end of this section we can safely draw the following conclusion: the presence of the motto, the description of the olive tree, the iconological interpretation of the old man and even the historical development of the mark are mutually coherent factors which corroborate the hypothesis that *the whole device was originally meant to be a detailed and faithful illustration of the Pauline text*. Such a strict and explicit correspondence between printer's mark and its source-text represents the first element of our puzzle. We need to keep it in mind while focusing on the second.

III. *The Second Element of the Puzzle: the Motto*

21. In order to identify the second element of our puzzle we must take a step backward to St. Jerome's translation of $\mu\eta\ \upsilon\psi\eta\lambda\omicron\phi\rho\rho\acute{o}\nu\epsilon\iota\ \acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\acute{\alpha}\ \phi\omicron\beta\omicron\upsilon$.

22. The Original Greek sentence has a clear *moral* meaning and it is commonly translated into English by means of longer sentences like «do not become proud, but stand in awe», «be not high-minded: but fear», «put away your pride, and be on your guard», «but do not have proud thoughts about it; instead be afraid».⁴⁰ St. Jerome's translation of $\upsilon\psi\eta\lambda\omicron\phi\rho\rho\acute{o}\nu\epsilon\iota$ by means of «sapere», nonetheless, rendered the corresponding sentence in the *Vulgate* potentially very misleading. In the II century B.C. the Latin poet Ennius had successfully introduced the semantic equivalence between *sapientia* and *sophia/philosophia*⁴¹

⁴⁰ For the first translation cf. §. 10; the second occurs in King James' authorised version and is reported by W. DAVIES, *op. cit.*, pp. 662-663 in connection with the Estiennes' device; the third is given in *The New English Bible* (Oxford, 1961) and the fourth in *The New Testament in Greek and English*, (New York, 1966).

⁴¹ Cf. *Ennianae Poesis Reliquiae* edited by J. VAILEN (Lipsia, 1903), *Annales* Lib. VII, fr. II, p. 39, l. 218. Ennius seems to imply that this is his own innovation (the history of the term/notion is reconstructed by G. LUCK, *Zur Geschichte des Begriff 'sapientia'* in «Arch. für Begriffsgeschichte» (1964), pp. 203-215. St. Jerome himself is one of the most important sources of information on *Ennius life* (cf. his *De Viris Illustribus* (years 1777-240 and 1849-168 [years are counted from Adam's «birth»]) and one may wonder whether he knew about Ennius' linguistic

so that it was almost inevitable that after so many centuries «noli altum sapere, sed time» should naturally sound like a recommendation to avoid the pure search for knowledge, not to investigate into the nature of the universe, especially the divine *arcana*, but to respect the limits of a simple, natural acquaintance with the creation. Moreover, as a profession of anti-intellectualism and as a condemnation of any form of curiosity and philosophical inquisitiveness «noli altum sapere» could be readily connected to a subsequent passage in Rom XII,3: «[...] non plus sapere quam oportet sapere, sed sapere ad sobrietatem» (as it occurs in an emblem⁴² published by Gabriel Rollenhagen in 1611-3), to Tim 2,6-17 («divitibus huius saeculi praecipue *non sublime sapere* neque sperare in incerto divitiarum sed in Deo ...») and to AA 19,19, a passage concerning St. Paul's preaching in Ephesus in which the burning of magic books is described («Multi autem ex eis, *qui fuerant curiosa sectati*, contulerunt libros, et combusserunt coram omnibus ...»). Whether or not Rom XII,3 was only another verse in which St. Jerome's translation had invited a large number of further misinterpretations, certainly St. Paul did not seem to invite speculative or academic approaches to the faith in God and on the whole his thought might be inclined to give rise to such anti-intellectualistic interpretations.

23. St. Jerome himself and the most careful commentators of the *Epistle*⁴³ had attributed to the passage its correct moral sense. The former especially knew Latin and Greek too well to misinterpret the

innovation and made a linguistically «conservative choice». Carlo Ginzburg has remarked that Lactantius, in the third century, interpreted *sapientia* as *veritatis quae* in his *Divinae Institutiones*; now Lactantius is the most important source for *Ennius' fragments* – we owe to his *Institutiones Ennius' Ad Eubemerum* – and probably knew about Ennius' innovation, cf. C. GINZBURG *High and Low: The Theme of Forbidden Knowledge in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, «Past and Present», LXXIII, 1976 nov., pp. 28-42. All page references are to the Italian translation *L'alto e il basso, il tema della conoscenza proibita nel Cinquecento e Seicento in Miti Emblematici* Spie, (Torino, 1986), pp. 107-132, see especially p. 108 and footnote 9.

⁴² Cf. GABRIELIS ROLLENHAGH *Nucleus Selectorum Emblematum*, ex officina Crispiani Passaei, Arnhemiae 1611-3 (Utrecht), emblem n. 13. The emblem is reported in A. HENKEL and A. SCHONE (eds.), *Emblemata ...* (Stuttgart, 1976), p. 151. It consists of a broken tree (which is no longer very easily identifiable as St. Paul's olive-tree) with the motto «n.a.s.». The Latin comment is «noli altum sapere, et plus quam mortalia fas est pectora. Nam sapere, non nimium sapere est», which is a paraphrased combination of the two Pauline verses. See also PICINELLI, *op. cit.*, lib. V, cap. X, n. 116 (p. 254).

⁴³ On the issue see generally A. SOUTER, *The Earliest Latin Commentaries on the Epistles of St. Paul* (Oxford, 1927) and more specifically C. GINZBURG, *art. cit.*, pp. 107-109 and footnotes, esp. n. 11. The *Patristic Greek Lexicon* edited by G.W. H. LAMPE (Oxford, 1961), under the entry ὑψηλοφρόνέω reports the meaning «to be proud», but refers only to Tim 1, 6:17 while the *Greek Lexicon of the Roman and Byzantine Periods* edited by E. SOPHOCLES (New York, 1893) gives the same translation but refers also to Rom XI,20.

original text⁴⁴ and ultimately his only fault was that of having provided a too literal translation. Among the most widely read authors who interpreted the *Epistle*, St. Augustine is an interesting example: although he had radically disapproved of human curiosity, which he had negatively defined «*experienti noscendique libido*»,⁴⁵ he was not misled by St. Jerome's translation and correctly interpreted the Pauline passage as a moral prescription to avoid any pretentious attitude.⁴⁶

24. Still, neither St. Augustine's nor other similar accurate interpretations of the Pauline text by the fathers of the Church could prevent the Latin sentence from acquiring a sort of independent life from the rest of the *Epistle*. Interesting evidence of such a process is provided by a manuscript, preserved in the National Library in Florence, in which the motto is listed in a merely alphabetic order among other proverbs and maxims.⁴⁷ In the XVI and XVII century the autonomy of the sentence from its context may have contributed to its increasingly more frequent interpretation in cognitive terms, as a negative remark on the illicit nature of man's desire for knowledge. Such an interpretative pressure was not without effect even on the iconography of the emblem itself connected to the motto.

25. Georgette de Montenay, in her *Monumenta Emblematum Christianorum Virtutum*⁴⁸ catalogued in 1571 an emblem in which a wild olive-tree, associated with «*noli altum sapere*», is strangely depic-

⁴⁴ St. Jerome's moral interpretation of the passage is explicit in his *Tractatus in Librum Psalmorum, Com. in Ps. 77*, cf. *Pat. Cur. Comp. s. L., Supp.* edited by A. HAMMAN (Paris, 1960), vol. II, p. 108.

⁴⁵ Cf. *Confessiones* X.35, 55 in *Corp. Christ. ser. lat.*, (Turnholm, 1981), vol. XXVII, Pars I,1, 184-8. Cf. also the introduction to *La Curiosité à la Renaissance* edited by J. CÉARD (Paris, 1986), p. 9.

⁴⁶ Cf. for example *De Sermone Domini* I, 4, 11, 198-200 and connected with the olive-tree II, 14, 48, 1059-65, in *Corp. Christ. ser. lat.*: vol. XXXV, p. 139 and *In Iohannis Evangelium Tractatus*, LXXXV, 3, 12-15 in *Corp. Christ. ser. lat.*: vol. XXXVII, p. 540.

⁴⁷ Cf. *Proverbiorum, sententiarum ac variorum dictorum libellus*, Manuscript Cl. I, num. 7, Fir., Bib. Naz., Fondo Magl.. The motto appears, without any other comment, in c. 51v (old numeration) or 53v (recent numeration) and it may be dated from the XVI century, in agreement with *Carmina Medii Aevi Posterioris Latina II/8 Proverbia Sententiaque Latinitatis Medii ac Recentioris Aevi Nova Series* edited by H. WALTHER (Göttingen, 1983), vol. 8, p. 700, entry 38846c, and despite the fact that the standard G. MAZZATINTI e F. PINTOR (eds.) *Inventari dei manoscritti delle Biblioteche d'Italia* (Forlì, 1902-3), vol. XII, p. 93 dated it from the XVII century. I am grateful to the Direzione della Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze for information concerning the nature and collocation of the Pauline motto in the manuscript.

⁴⁸ Cf. *Monumenta Emblematum Christianorum Virtutum tum Politicarum, tum Oeconomicarum chorum centuria una adumbrantia* [...] Cura et impensis Iannis-Cardi Vnckellii, Bibliop. Francofurt. Anno MDCXIX, first edited in French as *Emblems ou Devises Chrestiennes* Lyon 1571 and now reproduced by HENKEL and SCHONE in *op. cit.*, p. 212, the description reports «*Wilder Ölbaum auf einen edlen gepfropft fragt edle Fruchte*».

ted as bearing large fruit. Such an iconography is rather puzzling. We know that the wild olive (*olea oleaster*) can be grafted only into a common olive tree (*olea sativa*) and that we generally insert a scion of *sativa* into the stock of an *oleaster*. It is only for obvious doctrinal reasons that St. Paul has the later process inverted (cf. Rom XI,17).⁴⁹ Although on this point the various versions of the Estiennes' mark are rather different from each other (in many cases the branches simply do not bear any fruit⁵⁰), sometimes the design of the olive-tree follows the Pauline text even in the peculiarity concerning the branches with fruit: in the original mark of the *Bible*, for example, only the newly grafted branches of the *oleaster* bear little olives. Now the alleged fruits occurring on the branches of De Montenay's *oleaster* can by no means be olives, for they are far too large. They rather look to be the size of an apple, and it is very likely that they are the consequence of a modified interpretation of those balls occurring in the iconography of the olive-tree of our printer's mark. The metamorphosis might be due to an association of the olive-tree either with the New Testament's image of the plantation of the Lord, in which the tree is cut unless it bears fruit (cf. St. Matthew 3,10 and Psalterium Gallicanum 51,8-10: «oliva fructifera in domo Dei»), or more likely with that of the tree of knowledge in the book of *Genesis*. With respect to the former case, we find that such an association was in fact already present in the frontispiece of Robert Estienne's *Bible*, where the printer's mark was placed near another large illustration, inserted on top of the frontispiece and representing a vineyard with on the left-hand side of the reader a crucified Christ and on the right-hand side a snake raised on

⁴⁹ The issue is far from being marginal since on its basis it is discussed the relationship between the New and the Old Testament, thus the relations between the Christian Church and Israel, and later on between the Evangelic church and the Biblical tradition, cf. A. G. BAXTER and J. A. ZIESLER, *Paul and arboriculture – Romans 11.17-24* in «Journal for the Study of the New Testament», 24 (1985), pp. 25-32, according to whom the practice described by St. Paul is useful to reinforce an old and weak tree (see the importance of Rom XI,24). Of a different opinion is e.g. *the Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* edited by G.A. BUTTRICK (Nashville, 1962), vol. 3, p. 596, col. b according to which the parable reveals «a lack of knowledge of horticulture» on St. Paul's side. As I have stressed in the text, I am inclined to interpret the oddity of the analogy as simply required by the theoretical context. W.D. Davies has recently showed how relevant Rom XI: 13-24 may be in respect to the problem of anti-Semitism by discussing Maritain's and Voltaire's positions in his «Reflections on a Pauline allegory in a French Context» in *The New Testament Age, Essays in honour of Bo Reicke* edited by W. C. WEINRICH (Macon, GA, 1984), pp. 107-125, a paper also useful for its further bibliographical information.

⁵⁰ Cf. P. RENOARD, *op. cit.*, pp. 89, 91, 93. Fig. 293 on p. 293, for example, reproduces the mark occurring on *In Ciceronis partitiones commentaria Georgi Vallae* (1533) and this has both old and new branches with fruits.

a pole⁵¹ and five men who are busy with pruning [fig. 5]. In the latter case, the tree of knowledge with Adam and Eve was an iconological element rather common among printer's marks,⁵² and since in the *Apocrypha*⁵³ the tree of knowledge had been already interpreted as an olive-tree, the emblem may somehow equate the meaning of «noli altum sapere» with the original sin of intellectual curiosity and thus interprets the actual balls of the grafting as fanciful, apple-like fruits.

26. The original condition of possibility of both such associations (i.e. olive-tree/tree of knowledge and olive-tree/plantation) lies in the fact that when in his epistles St. Paul needs an image to illustrate the notion of unity he heavily relies on the imaginary sources of the Bible. None of the four analogies concerning unity in his writings is original:⁵⁴ the analogy of the human body (organic unity) has its origins in the Hellenistic culture, while those of the plantation/tree (second analogy of organic unity⁵⁵), of the building/temple (functional or structural unity) and of the spouse (interrelating unity) already belonged to the literary style of the Old Testament and then of the

⁵¹ This because of Num XXI,4-9 and Jo III,14 which draws a parallel between Moses' bronze snake and Christ on the cross.

⁵² See for example *Deutsche Buchdruckersignete des XVI Jahrhunderts* edited by H. GRIMM (Wiesbaden, 1965), p. 147 or *Die Büchermarken oder Buchdrucker und Verlegerzeichen, Klassische Büchermarken bis Anfang des 18. Jahrhunderts*, edited by P. HEITZ (Strassburg, 1892), fig. XXV.2 and *Die Büchermarken [...] die Kölner Büchermarken bis Anfang des XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 1898: fig. LII from n. 185 to n. 190, and LII from n. 191 to 194.

⁵³ Cf. *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* edited by R.H. CHARLES, 2 vols. (Oxford, second edition 1963), *Vita Adami et Evae* XXIX.2-3 (p. 140): «[...] when I [Adam] had eaten of the tree of the knowledge» a tree out of which «floweth the oil of life» (V.A.& E. XXXVI.2, p. 143), see also V.A.& E. XL.1; XL.2; XLI.3 and XLII.4, p. 144, and the corresponding passage in *Apocalypsis Mosis*, VII.1-2, p. 142, and above all IX.3, p. 143: «give me of the tree out of which the oil floweth» (see also A.M. XIII.1/2, p. 144 and XI.1, p. 151). A critical note of the edition (p. 143) referring to A.M. IX.3, p. 143 says that the tree of life is described as an olive-tree and refers to «Ramsay, *Pauline Studies* on 'Wild and tame olives'». Only one passage is inconsistent with such an interpretation, namely A.M. XX.5, p. 146: «But I [i.e. Eva] took leaves from it and made for myself a girdle and it was from the very same plant of which I had eaten». It is difficult to understand how she could cover herself with a girdle made of so small leaves such as those of the olive-tree.

⁵⁴ Cf. L. CERFAUX, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-247. See also H. M. GALE, *The Use of Analogy in the Letters of St. Paul* (Philadelphia, 1964), especially pp. 205-215 on the olive-tree.

⁵⁵ It is worth noticing that the analogy of the «tree of knowledge» in order to express the organization and sistematicity of science enjoyed an interesting revival in modern epoch after the scientific revolution, see for example Bacon (cf. J. SPEDDING, R. L. ELLIS and D. D. HEATH (eds.), *The Works of Francis Bacon*, London, first edited in 1857-74, vol. V *The Advancement of Learning*, p. 337), Descartes with his «tree of science», with its own metaphysical roots in a veridical God and subjective certainty (*Principles*, Preface, 14. 23-30) and later on D'Alembert (cf. M. DIDEROT and M. D'ALEMBERT (eds.), *Encyclopédie ou Dictionnaire Raisonné des Sciences des Arts et des Métiers*, first edited in 1751 and now Paris and New York, 1985, *Discours Préliminaire des Editeurs*, esp. pp. I, XI, XVXXIV and XXV).

parables of the Gospels.⁵⁶ Very appropriately, in Rom XI, 17-20 St. Paul chose the image of the tree with its grafted branches, for in that context he was in need of an *organic analogy*, and that of the human body could not enable him equally well to speak of an extraneous element which becomes an inseparable, living part of the main body. The fact that the olive-tree belongs to the common background of the Biblical analogical sources can be seen as the indirect cause of the interesting variation in the de Montenay's emblem: it allows in the long run the variation of the olive-tree with large fruit (see also §.46).

27. Returning to the more general interpretation of «noli altum sapere»,⁵⁷ it was well known that the cognitive interpretation of Rom XI, 20 and its anti-intellectualistic use had lost any philological ground at least⁵⁸ as early as 1516, when Erasmus of Rotterdam had definitely restored the original, ethical sense of the Greek passage in his critical edition of the *Novum Testamentum*.⁵⁹

28. Erasmus' new translation of Rom XI,20 was: «ne efferaris animo, sed timeas»⁶⁰ and it appeared precisely *ten years before* the first occurrence of Robert's mark. The fact is surprising and it finally give rise to our puzzle: Robert Estienne was internationally famous for his *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* (1532) and could be considered the foun-

⁵⁶ *Novae concordantiae biblorum sacrorum iuxta vulgatum versionem critice editam*, edited by B. FISCHER (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1977), vol. IV, lists 57 occurrences under the entries «oliva/Oliva/olivetum» and 76 under «arbor».

⁵⁷ With respect to a persisting «epistemological» mis-interpretations of Rom XI, 20 in the XVI and XVII century, Ginzburg (*art. cit.*) has recently spoken of a «collective lapsus». Although Ginzburg does not take into exam the evolution of the printer's mark of the Estiennes, the history of the mark confirms various aspects of his reconstruction of this anti-intellectualistic tendency in the emblematics of the XVI and XVII centuries.

⁵⁸ The two clauses «at least» and «definitely» are due to the fact that in his philological enterprise Erasmus acknowledged that he was following Lorenzo Valla, see *Laurentii Vallensis [...] in latinam Novi Testamenti interpretationem adnotationes edidit Erasmus in Aedibus Ascensianis* 1505.

⁵⁹ In 1516 the editor Froben published the Greek and Latin *Novum testamentum [...] ab Erasmo Roterdamo recognitum*. I have been able to check only the second edition, published in Basel, 1519. Erasmus speaks about Rom XI,20 in various places of his opera: in *Paraphrasis in Epistola Pauli ad Romanos*, Lovanii, Th. Martinus 1517 (now in *Opera Omnia*, Hildesheim, 1961, a rep. of the Leiden edition of 1703-6, vol. VII, col. 815), in *Antibarbarorum Liber Unus*, Coloniae Nic. Caesar. 1518 (*Ibid.*, vol. X, col. 1726), where he interprets it in a moral sense together with Rom XII,3; and in *Responsio ad Collationes [in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos] cujusdam juvenis Gerontodidascali*, Antverpiae, Petrus Sylvius 1529, (*Ibid.*, vol. IX, col. 1007). In *De Ratione Concionandi Liber I* (*Ibid.*, vol. V, col. 777) Erasmus draws a moral distinction between *scire* and *sapere*.

⁶⁰ *Novum Testamentum*, 1519: 341b. On p. 325 there is a clear explanation of the new translation and on p. 328 Erasmus connects Rom XI,20 with Rom XII,3 (cf. 343b «... ne qui arroganter de se sententiat, supra quam oportet de se sentire: sed ita sentiat, ut modestus sit et sobrius ...») but this time associating them for their moral sense.

der of Latin and French lexicography;⁶¹ his son Henri was one of the greatest scholarly printers in the sixteenth century, a well-versed Greek scholar so celebrated for the completion of his *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (1572) and so famous for having elevated French to the level of a literate and academic language as to deserve the title of «Henri the Great»; despite all their *savoir, fidélité, exactitude* and *desintéressement* (the four qualities possessed by a good editor according to Adrien Baillet), however, they both adopted as the most important element for their public image a peculiarly old-fashioned motto for their printer's mark. For more than a century learned scholars, intellectuals and all the most literate and educated people in Europe kept on buying books printed by the Estiennes on whose frontispieces an emblem could be easily recognised as combining what we have seen is an explicit and detailed illustration of Rom XI,17-20 with a motto that had been since long recognized as a no longer satisfactory translation of the source text which the mark was meant to illustrate. Certainly, this was not the best publicity for two printers who aimed at the greatest philological accuracy in their publications. Why did they both make such a puzzling choice? As I have said in the introduction, I am confident that an answer to this question can help us in understanding the origin of the Latin edition of the *Outlines*, but before coming to this point we need to ascertain another final, simple fact: both father and son perfectly knew and agreed that «noli altum sapere» was no longer an acceptable translation of Rom XI,20.

29. The following quotation from Jean Hadot conveys all the sense of our puzzle: «[...] l'énorme diffusion de l'oeuvre érasmienne [i.e. the *Novum Testamentum*] lui vient de Robert Estienne (1503-1559), le célèbre imprimeur du Roi. En 1546 celui-ci publie sa mirifique édition du *Nouveau Testament*».⁶² It is surprising that a publisher and editor who contributed so much to the proper understanding of the New Testament could also maintain «noli altum sapere» as a motto for the illustration of the Pauline text or even simply for his own print. The paradoxical aspect of such a choice is manifest in Robert's famous *Bible*: we have seen that the frontispiece contains the illustra-

⁶¹ This was already Armstrong's suggestion in *op. cit.*, p. XIX, see also T. R. WOOLDRIDGE, *Les débuts de la lexicographie française: Estienne, Nicot et le «Thresor de la langue francoyse»* (Toronto, 1977).

⁶² J. HADOT, *La Critique Textuelle dans l'Édition du Nouveau Testament d'Érasme* in *Colloquia Erasmiiana Turonensia*, 1969, edited by J.-C. MARGOLIN (Paris, 1972), vol. 2, pp. 749-760: 759.

tion of Rom XI,20 plus «noli altum sapere», but in the text the actual translation of the passage carefully edited by Robert is that of Erasmus.⁶³ Likewise, in the same year in which he died Robert printed Calvin's *Institutio Christianae Religionis*,⁶⁴ the text book of reformed theology. As always, in the frontispiece of the book we find the emblem with St. Jerome's translation, but in the text Calvin's interpretation of the passage was in agreement with the philologically updated translation. These examples of a puzzling inconsistency between texts and printer's mark are just the most striking, and further evidence could be provided of Robert's knowledge both of the proper translation of Rom XI,20 and of the philological reasons that lay behind it. As for Henri, in a collection of the most important essays written at that time on the *New Testament*, published in 1695-6, we find that Laurentius Valla, Erasmus Roterdamus, Franciscus Vatablus, Nicolaus Zegervus, Hugo Grotius and our «Henricus Stephanus» are listed as being all unanimously convinced of the necessity of re-establishing the original moral sense of Rom XI,17-20. We are no longer surprised to know that Henri Estienne is reported as suggesting «ne elato sis animo» as an alternative translation instead of the no longer adequate «noli altum sapere»:⁶⁵ this was perfectly consistent with his translation of ὑψηλοφρόνῳ in the *Thesaurus*, where he even referred to Rom XI,20 and I Tim 6,17.⁶⁶ I may conclude this paragraph with the following remark: since 1543 it was no longer necessary to know Latin in order to realize that Rom XI,20 should be translated differently, as referring to a moral issue and not to human knowledge of the universe and of divine secrets. Relying on

⁶³ So in *Biblia*, vol. II, p. 194b we have «ne efferaris animo sed timeas» and in the same way we have Rom XII, 3: «... ne sibi supra quam oporteat sapere; sed sapiat ad sobrietatem...».

⁶⁴ J. CALVIN, *Institutio Christianae Religionis in libros quatuor*, Geneva, R. Est. 16 August 1559. This is the fourth and final revision of the text. For Calvin's comment on Rom XI,20 cf. now *Institution de la Religion Chretienne*, 5 vols. (Paris, 1960), III, II, 22 (p. 40) and III, XXIV, 6 (p. 457): «ne t'enorgueillly point, mais crain».

⁶⁵ *Criticorum Sacrorum Tomus Septimus exhibens annotata ad acta apostolorum et epistolas Pauli*, Frankfurt am M. 1695-6, pp. 828, 832, 836, 839, 851, Henri's text is quoted on p. 841. Cf. also *Syntagmata Dissertationum de Stylo Novi Testamenti Graeco quas collegit [...]* Taco Hajo van der Honert, Amsterdami executit Gerardus Borstius, 1703, which re-publishes on pp. 3-28 Henri's *Dissertatio de Stylo N.T. Graeco*, first edited in 1576. There Henri exalted the concise beauty of the original Greek text of Rom XI, 20 (see p. 9).

⁶⁶ *Thes. Ling. Gr.*, new augmented edition (Paris, 1865), vol. 8, col. 552. See also H. STEPHANUS, *Concordantiae Testamenti Novi Graecolatinae*, in officina Samuelis Crispini 1599, p. 507 where the Greek is translated «efferor animo». The frontispiece of the book has a very interesting emblem which seems to derive from the Estiennes': there is a man with a turban, very similar to that of the latter version of the printer's mark, pointing towards the olive-tree with grafted branches and three cut trees, with the motto «vide benignitatem ac severitatem Dei» which is another quotation from St. Paul, Rom XI, 22.

the second edition of Erasmus *Novum Testamentum* (1521), in that year Martin Luther translated the passage in his German *Bible* thus: «Sey nicht stoltz (proud, arrogant) sondern fürchte dich (be afraid, apprehensive)». ⁶⁷

IV. Three Insufficient Iconological Explanations

30. Three groups of historical data could now be adduced in order to attempt an iconological explanation of the reasons that led the Estiennes to adopt their printer's mark despite the peculiar inconsistency between icon and motto. I shall survey them in order of credibility and we shall soon see that none of them is powerful enough to elicit a persuasive solution of our puzzle. Having established this further conclusion I shall finally turn to a more ideological explanation.

31. The only element which may explain in some way the attachment of the Estiennes to the figure of St. Paul and therefore to his *motto* is also the one which deserves less credit as the basis for an explanation of our puzzle. We know that the original name of the family in the XVI century was «Stephanus». In §.17 I have remarked on the importance of St. Paul's bare feet within the context of the mark and in connection with this the careful reader might have already thought about another important episode in St. Paul's life, narrated in Acts VII,58 and still involving his feet: «Then they cast him [i.e. St. Stephanus] out of the city and stoned him, and the witnesses laid down their garments *at the feet of a young man named Saul* [secus pedes adolescentis, qui vocabatur Saulus]». Of course Saul is nobody else but the young St. Paul, who at that time watched with assent St. Stephen's martyrdom. Acts VII,58 reinforces our conjecture: the Estiennes could easily remember such an important event in the life of St. Paul and check that the engraver represented him correctly barefoot. Still, no hypothesis about Acts VII,58 can help us to solve the puzzle about the adoption of St. Jerome's outdated translation in connection with a precise and vivid drawing of the *parabola oleastri*. It is hardly believable that the Estiennes could be devoted to the image or a sentence of St. Paul because the latter had helped the executioners of their patron saint. In order to discard this conjecture

⁶⁷ M. LUTHER, *Biblia das ist die gantze Heilige Schrift Deutsch*, Faksimile-Ausgabe von der ersten vollständigen Lutherbibel von 1543, in zwei Bänden (Leipzig, 1983).

it is sufficient to recall the fact that in the first two versions of the mark adopted by Robert there is no portrait of St. Paul and that there is no hermeneutic bridge between Acts VII,58 and Rom XI,20.

32. In fact, the previous remarks leave untouched even the question of the Estiennes' attachment to the symbol of the olive-tree. In connection with this, Schreiber has advanced a debatable suggestion. Remarking that «Stephanus» is a name with Greek rather than Latin origins, he has conjectured a connection between the meaning of «stephanos», i.e. «crown», and the fact that «crowns» dedicated to Athens were made of olive-branches (see for example the frame of fig. 5). Admittedly, the conjecture is consistent with another fact, namely that the mark was engraved by Geoffroy Tory, a well-known artist of the time already mentioned above (cf. §.13, §.15 and §.19).⁶⁸ Tory had worked for Simon Colines (or de Colines), who in 1520 had married the widow of Henri I Estienne and had become Robert's stepfather. The mark he produced for Colines includes *two rabbits* and it bears an obvious reference to the French meaning of «colin». Thus, *mutatis mutandis*, Tory might have suggested the same philo/analogical path for engraving Robert's first mark. However, the strength of such an hypothesis lies in Schreiber's first suggestion, and unfortunately the argumentative power of the latter is weakened by the following fact. Although in his *Thesaurus* Henri makes explicit that «crowns [stephanoi] were made of olive branches», when he talks about the etymology of his own name he focuses only on his first name *Henricus*, and it is reasonable to suppose that if the connection hypothesized by Schreiber was so strict Henri would have made it explicit in that context.⁶⁹ Moreover, to explain why the Estiennes adopted the olive-tree does not yet account for the puzzle of the choice of the motto. But more on this later.

33. Before this, we need to touch on a final aspect of the iconological problem. No matter what will happen to the motto, the olive-tree will always remain somehow part of the Estiennes' mark. The olive-tree had already made a linguistic appearance in the motto sometime adopted by Robert's father, Henri the first. Although the latter did not use an original printer's mark but could employ as such the Arms

⁶⁸ On the importance of Tory [1480-1553 ca.] cf. A. BERNARD, *op. cit.*. According to A. F. Johnson, Bernard's evaluation of Tory's importance for the history of engraving was exaggerate, cf. A. F. JOHNSON, *Geofroy Tory*, an article first published in 1928 and now in *Selected Essays on Books and Printing*, edited by P. H. MUIR (Amsterdam, 1970), pp. 166-189. Armstrong refers to Bernard's original position, cf. *op. cit.*, p. 9.

⁶⁹ Cf. *Traicté de la conformité de langage François avec le Grec*, 1565: p. 135, (Liv. III, fifth page).

of Paris university,⁷⁰ yet he occasionally added to the university emblem the personal mottos «*plus olei quam vini*» or «*fortuna opes auferre, non animum potest*». I have not been able to check any of these emblems, but for their description we may rely on Renouard when he says that in Henri I's editions «*ordinairement le titre porte une gravure ou symbole, les armes de l'Université se composant de l'écu de France, ayant au haut une main fermée sortant d'un nuage et tenant un livre fermé, et aux deux cotés, en supports, deux figures des jeunes hommes au d'anges, avec une banderole au-dessus de leur tête, quelquefois avec les mots plus olei quam vini, et au-dessous Henricus Stephanus, ou les initiales H.S.*».⁷¹ Note that this is the same page where he also explains why he will not provide an iconography of the marks, cf. §.3. The same motto was still used later on by François I Estienne (son of Henri I and brother of Robert I, active after 1537), whose emblem is described by Delalain as «*un cep de vigne dans une jarre d'huile [reporting the motto] Plus olei quam vini*».⁷²

That the iconography of the olive-tree was logically prior to Robert's invention of the famous printer's mark is a suggestion also put forward, although much more strongly, by another document, the *Tableau Généalogique et Heraldique de la famille Estienne* according to which the symbol of the olive-tree had been in the Estiennes' family at least ever since 1379, when Raimond II had married M. de Forcalquier, dame de Venelles. Apparently, the coat of arms of the de Venelles contained an olive-tree which therefore appeared also in the coat of arms of their first son, Berenger. Later on Berenger's brother, Geoffroy, married Laure *de Montolivet*; for obvious philological reasons the *tableau* reports that the (alleged?) coat of arms of the de Montolivet too consisted in a single olive-tree placed in the centre of the shield; around 1460 Geoffroy and Laure had a son, Henri I Estienne and we have seen that sometime he and his son Francis adopted the motto «*plus olei quam vini*». Although the *tableau* may not be thoroughly reliable, especially as far as its heraldic iconography

⁷⁰ Cf. P. RENOARD, *op. cit.*, p. 84, who discards Dibdin's suggestion about a possible mark used by Henri I in his *Pauli Aeginetae praecepta salubria*, 1510.

⁷¹ A. RENOARD, *op. cit.*, p. 278, my italics.

⁷² M. P. DELALAIN, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37. See also M. MAITTAIRE, *Stephanorum Historia, Vitas, ipsorum ac libros complectens*, Londini, Typis Benj. Morre, 1709 and E. GRESWELL, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 1-2 where he connects Henri's motto with the emblem adopted by Francis the first. For a reproduction of Francis I's mark see P. RENOARD, *op. cit.*, p. 91, n. 300 and E. SCHREIBER, *op. cit.*, p. 255, n. 13. W. ROBERTS writes that «[Henri] adopted the device [sic] plus olei quam vini» (W. ROBERTS, *op. cit.*, p. 119).

is concerned,⁷³ it is reasonable to think that Henri I formulated his own motto *because of his mother's surname*. The fact acquires even more force if we are to believe that in 1482 Henri I was disinherited in favour of his brother Raymond for having dedicated himself to publishing and editorial activity. It is on this basis that the *Dictionnaire de Bibliographie Française* endorses the conjecture that Il [Henri] aurait emprunté au blason de la famille de sa mère l'olivier, qui sera presque toujours la marque d'imprimeur de la dynastie». ⁷⁴ It follows that Henri's son Robert may have thought about the iconography of the olive-tree for his own printer's mark for the simple fact that the symbol already played an iconographic role in the social and publishing activities of his family.

34. If what has been said in §.32 and/or §.33 is acceptable, Robert's choice of the icon of the mark would be anterior to the motto: the existence of the olive-tree would logically precede Rom XI,20 in the invention of the mark. However, even if this may be the case, the puzzle still lies unsolved. If the olive-tree really precedes the motto, why Robert opted for *such a problematic* motto as «n.a.s.» and not e.g. for the new translation in order to accompany the icon of the mark? We have seen that he was well aware of the inadequacy of «n.a.s.» as a proper translation of the Pauline passage. *A fortiori*, if icon and motto were adopted without any specific logical order, why Robert decided in favour of the olive-tree with «n.a.s.» at all, when the Pauline passage and the corresponding iconography was a matter of such a lively discussion and from the humanist point of view his option in favour of St. Jerome's antiquated translation would have appeared at least as a very conservative one? Let me clarify the problem further. Even if we were to suppose that Robert had already decided in favour of the iconography of the olive-tree, in order to render the interpretation of this fact so powerful as to account also for the puzzling presence of St. Jerome's translation of Rom XI,20 we

⁷³ Cf. *Tableau Généalogique et Heraldique de la famille Estienne* offered to M. Firmin Didot by Antoine V Estienne in 1826, now enclosed in the reprint (1971) of A. RENOARD, *op. cit.*, page not numbered between p. 578 and p. 579. I am grateful to Elisabeth Armstrong for having made me aware of the unreliability of the *tableau* which indeed does not include or refer to extant documents. See however the following note.

⁷⁴ *D.B.F.* (Paris, 1975), vol XIII, col. 91. Quite puzzling J. Neefs, the author of the entry, in the short bibliography on the family refers to the *tableau* mentioned above, to P. RENOARD, *op. cit.* and to A. RENOARD, *op. cit.*, who, however, is far more cautious than him about the whole issue of the genealogy and the «exhérédation paternelle» (on p. 276 Renouard seems to have in mind the *tableau* but does not mention it). Moreover, in Neefs' short remark it is not clear whether he thinks that it was Henri who introduced the olive-tree as the iconography of the Estiennes (which would be false) or simply that he mentioned the olive-tree in his motto «p.o.q.v.».

should make a further step and add that the choice of the olive-tree *simply determined* the successive selection of «n.a.s.» as its more logical, explanatory maxim. Although the case cannot be excluded in principle, the idea is very implausible. In the absence of *any other factor*, having the family's olive-tree as an already fixed iconographic element, Robert could have opted for any other more original and less problematic Latin sentence. At least he should have associated with it the new translation of the Pauline passage. Both Robert and Henri were exceptionally involved in the «advancement of learning» and *there is no purely iconological reason* which justifies the fact that they should associate and maintain St. Jerome's obsolete and misleading translation to their own printer's mark if they were merely searching for a «weighty sentence» for their olive-tree. The fact that «n.a.s.» was such a well known and controversial aphorism at their time could only render such a choice – or a choice so presented – unacceptably superficial. *A fortiori*, the same consideration are valid if we are to suppose that Robert invented his printer's mark starting from the motto, or simply by putting motto and icon together. If he did not start from an already established iconography, why did he opt *at all* for the combination of the olive-tree plus «n.a.s.»?

I believe at this point we need to recognize that the iconological analysis is no longer sufficient to account for the puzzle: the answer must be sought at a more philosophical level. There was probably some further, compelling reason that prompted the Estiennes to overcome philological considerations about the accuracy of the motto. In such a case the factor which could have been stronger than their scholarly education was an ideological choice, precisely that *anti-intellectualist interpretation* of the motto so widespread in the culture of their time. This is the conjectural bridge that links the explanation of the peculiarity of the printer's mark of the Estiennes to the interpretation of the origin of Henri's translation of the *Outlines*.

V. *The Philosophical Explanation: Anti-dogmatism*

35. Elisabeth Armstrong has remarked that: «we might read the motto [i.e. n.a.s.] as a manifesto of intellectual humility in the presence of revealed truth, directed alike at excessive dogmatism on the part of the Christians and of the excessive presumption on the part of 'humanist' rationalism».⁷⁵ The term «manifesto» is particularly apt to

⁷⁵ E. ARMSTRONG, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

describe the nature of the motto – its semantic impact may be such as to allow one to disregard its philological inaccuracy – and the quotation is an appropriate introduction to the solution of our puzzle in terms of a philosophical choice. It renders explicit the two components of the anti-intellectualist ideology conveyed by the motto – *intellectual humility* and *anti-dogmatism* – on which the philosophical solution of the puzzle can be articulated.

36. *Intellectual humility* may be the «ideological variable we have been searching for in the case of Robert's invention of his mark. From all we know about his life, it is most likely that the young scholar recognized himself in the religious intellectual humility invoked by the most popular interpretation of «noli altum sapere». It is probably in favour of such an ideological manifesto that Robert closed an eye to the philological adequacy of the sentence, in order to convey in a popular, «weighty sentence» an entire philosophy of life. Entering into the modal kingdom of counterfactual speculations one might even say that the fact that Robert opted in favour of «n.a.s.» and not in favour of the other famous, anti-intellectualist, Paoline motto «non plus sapere quam oportet sapere, sed sapere ad sobrietatem» indicates that the olive-tree was indeed a logical precedent to the choice of the motto, the latter being the only one which could be well connected with the family's olive-tree. If this was the case it was the logically subsequent choice of the motto which transformed *a posteriori* the (alleged ?) family's olive-tree into St. Paul's grafted olive-tree, both in order to bring it into conformity with Rom XI,20 and to let the reader interpret the ideological manifesto as its explanation.

However this may be, Robert's strong religious faith, somehow placing him between Protestantism and Evangelical reform,⁷⁶ his edition of the Bible – which caused him such problems with the theologians of the Sorbonne as to force him to flee from Paris in 1550-1 – his strict relationship with Calvin in Geneva (who once said «Robert Estienne is now wholly ours»⁷⁷), his publishing production so largely dedicated to religious matters, these and many other elements already largely analysed in the literature on him point towards the conclusion that during his life he read in «noli altum sapere» the most essential virtue for a Christian scholar: the avoidance of philosophical pride and of that «*experiendi noscendique libidine*» so much blamed by St. Augustine.⁷⁸ In the end, «noli

⁷⁶ Cf. *op. cit.*, chap. 7.

⁷⁷ Quoted in *op. cit.*, p. 260.

⁷⁸ Robert seems to incline for an anti-intellectualistic interpretation of the sentence in his *Bible*, note to Rom XII,3.

altum sapere» was not a *thoroughly mistaken* translation of the Pauline text and Robert's mark could be interpreted as an invitation «not to be *intellectually* high-minded», a little shift from the original sense of the passage, but a perfect motto for a man who prized the Bible more highly than any other book.

37. In order to test the hypothesis of the ideological variable we need only to see what was the effect that the mark had on learned scholars of the time. Claude Mignault was a contemporary of Henri (he died in 1606). He is known for having written a tractatus on emblematics and edited an annotated version of Alciati's *Emblemata*. In his *Syntagmata de Symbolis*⁷⁹ he dedicated a section to the most famous printer's marks of the period. About Robert's olive-tree he wrote: «Sed ad Gallos venio, qui se ijs [sic] superioribus aequarunt, vel certe nusquam inferiores habiti sunt. Inter eos nemo mihi occurrit illustrior, vel suo aevo peritior, aut diligentior Roberto Stephano, qui pro *familiari schemate arborem habuit in ramos porrectam, addita figura speculantis hominis, verbo ascripto D. Apostoli NOLI ALTUM SAPERE: qua nota visus est arguere nimis curiosam de rebus obscuris ac divinis investigationem, & doctrinae cuicumque apponendum modum* [my italics]». In a period so interested in the nature of emblems as the XVII century, Theodore-Jansson van Almeloveen dedicated several pages of his biography of the Estiennes to the history and nature of their mark.⁸⁰ While also stressing the relationship between the olive-tree and Minerva, his interpretation of the mark was still in line with our hypothesis: «ex hisce Apostoli verbis desumptum, sibi velint, cum primus istius symboli auctor ob constanter professam religionis veritatem postea solum verterit, resque suas, cum familia Genevam transtulerit, facto ipso sui dicti veritatem afferens». It is only in 1709 that Michael Maittaire, the other important biographer of the family, could interpret the motto in its more proper, moral sense by saying that: «Ea erat humilitate ac modestia, ut facile hominem cum apprime doctum tum maxime Christianum cerneret».⁸¹

38. If Robert's religious faith is not in question, it is more doubt-

⁷⁹ The edition I have consulted is ANDREAE ALCIATI *Emblemata cum commentariis Claudii Minois* (i.e. Mignault) [...] Patavij apud Petrum Paulum Tozzium 1621. The *Syntagma* is on pp. 45-64, quotation from p. 62, col. a. A previous version of the work was already published in 1589.

⁸⁰ TH.-J. VAN ALMELOVEEN, [...] *De Vitis Stephanorum* [...] Amsterdami, apud Janssonio-Waasbergros, 1683, pp. 7-11.

⁸¹ M. MAITTAIRE, *op. cit.*. There is a long section dedicated to the analysis of the iconology of the printer's mark. Cf. pp. XII-XIV for several reproductions of it and 16-17 for a discussion. At least as far as the issue of the edition of Sextus Empiricus is concerned, there is nothing in Renouard which is not already said by Maittaire.

ful whether Robert could have assumed the motto as a flag for a *moderate and progressive anti-dogmatism*. Indeed, when a firm request for intellectual humility is connected with a radical execration for curiosity one can be easily led to *intolerant conservatism* and confer on the prefix «anti» in «anti-intellectualist» a very aggressive meaning. If it is still obscure whether, and if so how, Robert took part in the process of events that led to the burning of Servetus,⁸² there is a famous document of his intolerance which is worth referring to here because it shows well the sharp difference between his religious version of anti-intellectualism and the humanistic version of his son. As part of a life-long conflict between him and the theologians of the Sorbonne, in the *Prefatio Novae Glossae Ordinariae Specimen* [1553], while complaining about the way he had been treated by the Sorbonne, Robert remarked that the theologians should have rather been worried about the atheistic, impious and blasphemous Rabelais, and at the same time burn his books together with their author (*cum authore cremaretur*).⁸³ The difference from his son could be stressed in no better way: a few years later, Henri was known as the «Pantagruel de Genève» and accused of being the «prince des athéistes».⁸⁴

39. When he started his own printing, Henri maintained his father's mark. We have seen that Henri shared Robert's opinion on the philological inadequacy of the St. Jerome's translation of Rom XI, 20. Certainly, economic as well as practical factors could have contributed to his decision, and yet they did not influence his mind in 1578 (see par. 19), when he took the drastic decision of changing the motto which by then had characterized for decades not only his father's but also his own publishing production. What could Henri have found in «n.a.s.» which temporarily convinced him to maintain it as the motto for his own printer despite the fact that he did not consider it a correct translation of Rom XI,20? I suggest the answer may lie in the other pole of the anti-intellectualistic interpretation of «noli altum sapere», in Henri's *humanistic anti-dogmatism*.

40. As in Robert's case, Henri's life and work supports such a hypothesis. Since the publication of the *Apologie* in 1556 his work caused to Henri as many problems with the Calvinist censorship in

⁸² Cf. E. ARMSTRONG, *op. cit.*, pp. 251-254. On the «Servetus affair» Maittaire writes «hujus [i.e. Roberti] quidem zelum laudare malo, quam illorum saevitiam», *op. cit.*, pp. 80-83.

⁸³ The document is analysed by A. RENOUEAU, *op. cit.*, pp. 327 ff., see now E. ARMSTRONG, *op. cit.*, p. 251 with Latin and English translation of the relevant passage.

⁸⁴ Cf. L. CLEMENT, *op. cit.*, p. 12. On Henri's dislike for Rabelais cf. FEUGÈRE, *Essai sur la vie et les ouvrages de Henri Estienne* (Paris, 1853), p. 126.

Geneva as the *Bible* had to his father among the theologians in Paris. He was even imprisoned for a short time in 1578 and in 1579 he escaped to Paris. Henri's faith was certainly less rigorous than his father's, more a form of temperate, Christian fideism than of orthodox Calvinism.⁸⁵ Of him it was said that he cared more for his Greek books than for his soul.⁸⁶ Hence one could suggest that Robert was a Christian printer and an outstanding scholar, while Henri was a great humanist printer who believed in God. In fact, also thanks to his father, Henri had a first class humanistic education: his tutors were some of the best scholars of the time, such as Pierre Danès, his friend Jacques Toussain and Adrien Turnèbe. The latter two became the first two professors of Greek of the Royal College and the two friends Danès and Toussain belonged to that humanistic group which gathered around the great personality of Guillaume Budé, the famous humanist with whom Rabelais himself enjoyed a friendly relationship. As a young student Henri was «avide de savoir, et come il le dit lui-meme, veritable *philomathes*»⁸⁷: he studied mathematics, for a period even took a great interest in astrology, he travelled through Europe for years, much more than his father ever did, and although he could not leave Geneva because of the latter's will (in such a case he would have lost all his properties⁸⁸), as a true humanist the city he was more in love with was Florence.⁸⁹

41. A reading of «noli altum sapere» in terms of a condemnation of curiosity or as a sub-title for the myth of Icarus, its adoption as a manifesto of religious devotion, all this could hardly be expected from such a man. On the contrary, we may reasonably suppose that Henri's acceptance of the motto as the manifesto of his public image was determined by a different sort of anti-intellectualism: Henri could

⁸⁵ Cf. L. CLEMENT, *op. cit.*, p. 75. In his thesis Clement was worried that Henri might be considered a «sceptique, ... un-deiste ...[or even] un libertin» and argued against Feugère that Henri was a Christian and «il est resté fidèle, si non à la lettre, du moins à l'esprit de la Réforme». Although Clement did not adduce facts in favour of this interpretation, it is true that from what he says in the dedication of the *Outlines* Henri appears not to be a sceptic. As for the conflict between his position and Feugère's this might be solved once we eliminate the negative sense that the former seemed to attach to the notion of a fideistic faith, and we stress the importance of scepticism as a «methodological background» for a new epistemological outlook. On Henri's philosophical position the hypothesis I put forward here is slightly more in agreement with Feugère than with Clement.

⁸⁶ L. CLEMENT, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

⁸⁷ A. RENOARD, *op. cit.*, p. 372.

⁸⁸ The economic position and activities of Henri and his brother François II Estienne are described by R. M. KINGDOM, *The Business Activities of Printers Henri and François Estienne in Aspects de la Propagande Religieuse* (Genève, 1957), pp. 258-275.

⁸⁹ Cf. L. CLEMENT, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

probably read in «noli altum sapere» the programmatic slogan for a culture without dogmas, anti-Scholastic, more tolerant and with a greater respect for the past and its pagan culture. For the *Latin* scholar Robert, the knowledge of the «high» was still the kind of knowledge which was really worth pursuing, thus the acceptance of the motto represented an option in favour of the limitation of human ambitions. For the *Greek* scholar Henri, the acceptance of the motto was an invitation to concentrate on the knowledge of the «low». It is because Henri was probably reading «noli altum sapere» as a slogan in favour of his humanistic ideology, quite detached from the original text, that he may have overcome his philological scruples and decided to maintain it in his printer's marks. Like Lorenzo Valla years before,⁹⁰ in Henri's case «noli altum sapere» was no longer to be read as a recommendation not to pursue intellectual knowledge; rather, it represented a message of total historicism, in which a natural faith in God could leave more space to the immanent study of man, his culture and above all the classical tradition. Since *negativa non sunt probanda* Henri's silence on «quae supra nos, ea nihil ad nos» in Erasmus' *Adagia*⁹¹ cannot be taken as a sign of acceptance of the latter motto, but Henri's brief comment on «sapere aude» – another motto which originally had only a pragmatic meaning – is very indicative. Just beside the sentence Henri wrote: «Aude s[ive] fortiter in animu[m] tuu[m] inducito, sapie[n]tiae studiu[m] amplecti».⁹² It seems that Robert read Rom XI,20 with an eye to Rom XII,3 whereas Henri approached it more likely from the point of view of the Horacian motto, that «sapere aude» which was going to represent later on Kant's synthetic answer

⁹⁰ See E. GARIN, *La Crisi del Pensiero Medievale in Medioevo e Rinascimento* (Roma-Bari, 1980, first edition in 1950), pp. 13-39. In the long passage from Valla's *De libero arbitrio* cited by Garin on p. 17 we read: «...Ait Apostolus [i.e. St. Paul]: 'non alta sapientes, sed humilibus consentientes'. Scientia divinorum utilis est ? utilior caritas. [...] [and then without quotation marks, my italics] *Nolimus altum sapere, sed timeamus ne simus philosophorum similes, qui dicentes se sapientes, stulti facti sunt [...]*». Garin comments on the whole passage thus: «Orbene quando il critico e il filologo più consapevole di tutto il 400 scriveva così, non tradiva in nulla la sua posizione, anzi [...] opponeva alla superba e solitaria scienza dell'Essere l'umile opera mondana, un sapere fatto d'esperienza ed impegnato nel rapporto personale dell'uomo con l'uomo; opponeva, giova insistere, una scienza che vuole essere utile alla vita degli uomini, alla visione 'disinteressata' di un intelletto che si esaurisce nella contemplazione dell'essere nella sua unitaria, compatta, immota assolutezza». Note that Erasmus' correct translation of «noli altum sapere» was grounded on Valla's philological analysis.

⁹¹ *Adagiorum Chiliades [...]* ERASMI ROTTERDAMI [...] *Henrici Stephani Animadversiones [...]*, Oliva Roberti Stephani, 1558. There is no comment or note on the motto or on Erasmus' interpretation in Chil. I. cent. VI, 69, col. 215.

⁹² *Quinti Horatii Flacci Poemata [...]* ab Henrico Stephano illustrata [the sample I have seen bears no evident date or place of publication but the usual printer's mark], Epist. Lib. I, *Ad Lolium* Epist. II, v. 40, p. 74. The original text is abbreviated, the squares brackets are mine.

to the question «what is the Enlightenment?». A sense of humanistic anti-dogmatism readable in the Latin sentence may be the kind of ideological variable which in Henri's case made him disregard scholarly requirements in favour of a philosophical statement. With its unresolved philological contradiction the philosophical message implicit in the printer's mark on the frontispiece of the *Outlines* speaks of a modern man, decided upon eliminating any sort of dogmatism in favour of a more natural faith in God, intellectual freedom and concrete, accurate literary studies. I have opened this section with a quotation on Robert's conservatism, so let me now conclude it by citing a passage by Louis Clement on Henri: «l'amour de la science et l'inquiétude de l'ame ce sont les deux traits saillants qui rapprochent de nous Henri Estienne et qui lui donnent, à travers trois siècles, une figure très moderne».⁹³ It is from the vantage point of view finally gained by the interpretation of Henri's acceptance of the motto as a consequence of his humanistic anti-dogmatism that we shall now approach his *dedication* of the translation of the *Outlines* to his friend Henricus Memmius (Henri de Mesmes).

VI. *Anti-dogmatism and Sextus Empiricus*

42. The original document is eight pages long.⁹⁴ In the first part Henri relates the peculiar events in his life which have led him to translate the *Outlines*. After a period of illness and of excessive work, Henri has been assailed by a sort of «spleen»: he does not want nor wish to study any longer and every thought connected with cultural matters has become a psychological pain. Because of this «depression» Henri cannot bear even the view of his once beloved manuscripts and books, and when he is forced to enter his own study, he must put a hand over his eyes to protect himself from their view. One day, while by chance he is looking through his papers, he finds some notes on a Pyrrhonian manuscript (from another dedication still to Memmius, that of the *Traicté de la conformité de langage François avec le Grec*, we know that the manuscripts came from Italy). He starts reading them, finds them first amusing then more and more

⁹³ L. CLEMENT, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

⁹⁴ The only author who seems to have taken some interest in the preface to the *Outlines*, apart from the already mentioned work by F. Joukovsky, is A. RENOARD, *op. cit.*, pp. 391-392, but his brief comment on it concerns only the first three pages, those more curious but philosophically less interesting.

interesting until he decides to resume the original text. The work for the translation leads to a full recovery from his depression. The story takes the first four pages and on p. 5 Henri «starts talking more seriously» in order to explain to Memmius the theoretical reasons that led him to such a philological effort. Wondering why the *Outlines* are the only book which could have a positive effect on his hostility towards culture, Henri remarks: «I think that the reason why I re-acquired my peace of mind really thanks to sceptical books rather than any other was that *skepsin* refuted all professors of all subjects and I hoped to make my mind more and more firm in such a hatred. In it I placed my hope for a recovery, because I thought that what was left of my life was going to be lifeless if I had carried on my studies». What happened in fact is that by a sort of inverting process Sextus reconciles him with his scholarly work. The secret of such a process lies in the anti-dogmatist function of scepticism. Henri is careful in repeating that he is not a sceptic, and that according to him Sextus Empiricus, although he may sometimes be right in his attacks, on the whole abuses his great argumentative capacities. Yet, after what seems an obligatory concession to the common opinions of the time – in the *dedication* to the *Traicté de la conformité* he actually writes that «il me sembla lors [the sceptics] avoir la plus grande raison du monde» (p.2) – Henri starts his defence of a moderate scepticism: «however, if it is necessary to make a choice between two bad things it is possible to be justified in considering more tolerable the sceptical, indolent *epoche* with respect to any question, than the shameless and rash assertion of any dogmatist». After having reported the episode of Diodorus and Erophilus in order to show how ridiculous dogmatism can be (an episode narrated by Sextus himself in the *Outlines*) he comes to the most important point of his preface, the problem of religious faith: «[...] let us now turn to serious things and compare the dogmatics with the sceptics in respect to the knowledge of God. Who does not know that when many dogmatics, because of their more than unrestrained temerity in judging, measured God's providence according to its meaning, as if they were its critics, have fallen into atheism ? On the contrary, the sceptics from what the philosophers argued for and against [and here Henri uses the formula «in utramque partem» which is a sceptical, technical expression] on the problem of God were led to *epoche*. Moreover, since they were unassertive with regard to what concerns ordinary life, they used to say they were urged by a natural instinct to believe in the existence of God [...] and to worship and venerate him». Nevertheless, Henri insists that «neither do I wish to be an advocate of scepticism nor to procure it other defenders. So why,

someone may ask, 'do you print this book?' [p.7]». The answer finally goes beyond the usual tribute to the execration of scepticism: «First in order to drive crazy the impious dogmatic philosophers of our time. Do I say 'to drive them crazy'? Well, I should rather say in order to cure them, for if the opposite of a disease is also its own remedy, we may hope that those of the dogmatic philosophers who have caught the disease of impiety may be cured by the strength of *the sceptical praxis of epoche* [the term «ephecticorum» is a neologism formed on the basis of the Greek term «ephektikos» which means «practising suspense of judgement», a technical attribute of the sceptics]. Secondly, in order to relieve the sober lovers of philosophy (that is those who exercised such a reasonableness in their studies as not to absorb anything impious from what is profane) from a very long work and the uttermost tediousness [...]» and finally, for the benefit of scholars and historians. The «zealous philosopher» who should think that the *Outlines* are the work of someone who declared war on philosophy and therefore are not worth reading could not be more mistaken unless those who can show all the limits and nonsense of dogmatic philosophy should also be considered as the authors less worth reading. There is no need to be worried that the publication of the *Outlines* may obscure the light of truth; truth is powerful enough to show itself, and the *Outlines* will rather contribute to the achievement of clearness by dispersing the clouds of dogmatism.

43. From the acceptance of «noli altum sapere» as the motto for his printer to the collection, translation and then publication of the *Outlines*, Henri's anti-dogmatic humanism emerges in an increasingly clearer way. So much so that the transformation of the printer's mark in 1578 can now be interpreted as the conclusion of such a process of historicization of his intellectual position. Just before being forced to escape from Geneva, with a brilliant shift within the Pauline text which allowed him to maintain the visual element of the olive-tree, Henri adopted «rami defracti sunt ut ego insererer» as the new manifesto of his scholarly activities. We know that in the Epistle the sentence is not part of St. Paul's thought, but a rhetorical objection he formulates to himself in order better to explain his doctrine of humility. However, removed from the context, the motto acquires precisely that direct function of exaltation of man – the ego and his cultural history within the universe – which «noli altum sapere» could provide only in a very indirect way, that is by being interpreted as fixing the limits within which and not beyond which, what matters lay. Thanks to his appreciation of the anti-dogmatic function of scepticism Henri avoids the paradox of endorsing a Pyrrhonian philosophy while practicing the

profession of intellectual. In the same way that the anti-dogmatic reading of the Pauline text allowed him to maintain it as a manifesto for his interest in classical studies, so a methodological interpretation of the sceptical challenge convinced him of the validity of the *Outlines* as an instrument for the «advancement of learning». If after Descartes' introduction of the methodic doubt the philosophical tradition was to look at the sceptical challenge more and more exclusively in terms of its epistemological component (we must wait until Hume to find a philosopher who is concerned so much with the moral import of the sceptical challenge as to abandon scepticism precisely on such a basis), at the roots of the first Latin translation of the *Outlines* we find there is a moral need for a reform of the culture, of the mental attitude towards knowledge, an ethical interpretation of scepticism as a moral force capable of breaking the barrier of otiose discussions and dogmatic presuppositions, in synthesis: an anti-dogmatic and humanistic reading of the invitation «noli altum sapere».⁹⁵

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