


Marcus Musurus and the Aldine Septuagint. With a reconsideration of the recently-recovered BH UCM 22 (442 Rahlfs)¹

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ENG Abstract: The following pages perform an evaluation of Marcus Musurus' partial review of 1-2 Kings in two manuscripts (London, British Library, add 10968 [L] and Madrid, BH MS. 22 [M]). On the one hand, the nature and contexts of both codices reviewed by Musurus (the books he *worked upon*) provide valuable information on the long-debated issue of Aldus' (and particularly Musurus') access to Bessarion's former Greek library, as it also stresses the need to reconsider the contexts of copying and revision of these codices. Especially M, whose production, revision, and sending to Spain will be reconsidered. On the other hand, textual collation will confirm the use of several manuscript sources as part of Musurus' well-known and praised philological work (the books he *worked with*), making the very revision of M, finally recovered, a part of the editorial process of the Aldine Septuagint.

Keywords: Marcus Musurus; Septuagint; Aldine Bible; Polyglot Bible.

ES Marco Musuro y la Septuaginta Aldina. Con una reconsideración del recientemente recuperado BH UCM 22 (442 Rahlfs)

Resumen: En las páginas que siguen se hace una evaluación de la revisión parcial de Marco Musuro de 1-2 Reyes en dos manuscritos (Londres, British Library, add 10968 [L] y Madrid, BH MS. 22 [M]). Por un lado, la naturaleza y los contextos de ambos códices revisados por Musuro (los libros *sobre los que trabajó*) ofrecen información valiosa al ya antiguo debate sobre el acceso de Aldo (y particularmente de Musuro) a la antigua biblioteca griega de Besarión, además de reforzar la necesidad de reconsiderar los contextos de copia y revisión de ambos códices. En especial será reconsiderado M, en concreto su producción, revisión y envío a España. Por otro lado, la colación textual viene a confirmar el uso de varias fuentes manuscritas (los libros *con los que trabajó*) en el ámbito de su bien conocido y apreciado trabajo filológico, convirtiendo la revisión de M, por fin recuperado y accesible, en parte del proceso editorial de la Septuaginta aldina.

Palabras clave: Marco Musuro; Septuaginta; Biblia Aldina; Biblia Políglota.

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Summary: 1. Musurus, the Aldine Bible, and the books he worked upon. 2. The sources of Musurus' revision of Kings: the books he worked with. 3. Conclusions.

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1. Musurus, the Aldine Bible, and the books he worked upon

The philological collaboration of Marcus Musurus (Crete, c. 1470 – Rome, 1517) with Aldus Manutius during the first years of the Aldine enterprise is well attested², inasmuch as his handwriting seems to have inspired the Greek types of that printing house³. In the following pages, I will address the especial case of a famous and highly-educated scribe reviewing the same text in two manuscripts: London, British Library, add 10968 (**L**), and Madrid, BH MS. 22 (442 Rahlfs = **M**)⁴. On them, Musurus corrects and supplements the same portion of the book of Kings (1:30.12 – 2:2.15 + 2:16.14 – 2:20.18), and this is important as the second of these codices, **M**, was destined to be a part of the editorial process of the two first editions of the Greek Bible –the Aldine Greek Bible (1518 = **A**) and the Complutensian Polyglot (1522 = **P**)⁵. If no more, both revisions are the only material evidence of this scholar's participation in Aldus' Biblical project, which culminated in the publication of **A**, even if, apparently, it started several years before, in the context of Aldus' intents for a trilingual Bible⁶. Besides searching for the manuscript sources of this revision, in itself a contribution to the never-ending issue of the sources of the Aldine Septuagint, the following pages take Musurus' work as a starting point for a new understanding of the historical and codicological contexts of **M**, the codex up until recently believed to have been destroyed during the Spanish Civil War⁷, whose copy is commonly attributed to John Severe the Lacedaemonian and placed around 1515.

Marcus Musurus had a special interest in reviewing the codices he *worked upon* for preparing the Greek editions he was entrusted with⁸, something Aldus repeatedly thanked him for. As early as 1502, in a dedicatory letter published at the beginning of a treatise on orthography and morphology of the Greek words used by Statius (edition prepared by Musurus), Aldus states: «Indeed, we have decided that all who have helped me by offering their labour or by finding new books or lending rare manuscripts of high quality or in any way at all should be made known to students, so that their debt to me is also a debt owed to my helpers»⁹. Again in 1514, in the Preface for Hesychius' *Lexicon*, Aldus mentions that Musurus checked the text to be published «carefully»

² Nigel Wilson has no problem calling him «the most expert of his [Aldus'] collaborators» (2017: 152) and «his most gifted associate» (2017: 155). On Musurus' life and works, see especially Wilson (2017: 167-176), Cataldi Palau (2004: 295-369), and Speranzi (2013: 11-171).

³ That would be the third set of Greek types developed by Aldus, as Barker (2019: 56-59). The third of four sets nowadays identified within the Aldine house (Speranzi 2018). Wilson (2017: 214 n. 13) is not sure of the use of Musurus' handwriting as a model.

⁴ The biblical codices discussed are cited according to the classification of Rahlfs (1914). The ones considered in textual collation are thus abbreviated, for the sake of clarity: Madrid, BH UCM 22 (442 Rahlfs = **M**), London, *BL Add.* 10968 (**L**), Venezia, *Marc. gr.* 2 (29 Rahlfs = **2**), *Marc. gr.* 3 (121 Rahlfs = **3**), *Marc. gr.* 4 (120 Rahlfs = **4**), *Marc. gr.* 5 (68 Rahlfs = **5**), *Marc. gr.* 6 (122 Rahlfs = **6**), *Vat. gr.* 2106 (**N** Rahlfs), *Marc. gr.* 1 (**V** Rahlfs), Paris, *BNF Coisl. gr.* 2 (**Par.**).

⁵ Finished by the first months of 1517 –five months before Cisneros' death– the Complutensian Polyglot was not put to sale before 1522, two years after papal approval for its distribution (March 1520). See Sáenz-Badillos (1996: 139).

⁶ On this, see Van Staaldouine-Sulman (2017: 11 and n. 4) and Jesus (2022).

⁷ De Andrés (1974: 244) considered it *deperditus*; also, Hanhart (1974: 14) and Schenker (1994: 177-186). For a full list of mentions of the codex as lost see Fernández Marcos (2005: 65-69). Very recently (and oddly), O'Connell (2006: 82 + n. 29; 89 + n. 53) still believed that the codex was impossible to recover.

⁸ For a list and appreciation of the codices so-far identified that were reviewed and supplemented by him, see Speranzi (2013: 258-286). Among them, of course, are **L** and **M** (idem: 139-140, 270-271).

⁹ Translated by Grant (2017: 37).

(*diligenter*) and made it better, «since a vast number of passages have been emended, as will easily be recognized if one compares the manuscript itself with this new text»¹⁰. Finally –just to quote some examples–, in the Preface to Athenaeus' *Learned Banqueters*, published in the same year and month, he states: «Our friend Musurus has checked them [the readings] so carefully with many manuscripts and the epitome that he emended an almost infinite number of passages and restored the original meter of the poems, which elsewhere were read as if they were prose».

Between 1513 and 1516, before he left for Rome, Musurus was responsible for the final text, or at least for the revision of codices used in a large number of Aldine editions, even in the months following Aldus' death, in February 1515¹¹. Nonetheless, as the abovementioned testimonies come to show, the philological collaboration with Aldus dates back to the Cretan's first years in Venice, in the nineties of the fifteenth century, and was not restricted to the editions for which he ended up being the final responsible. The Escur. Σ II 18 is one of the codices reviewed by him in those years. It is a copy of the *Sophistici Elenchi* by the *Anonymous Harvardianus* (recently identified as Alessandro Bondino)¹² that, oddly enough, offers a version of that work ascribed to Alexander of Aphrodisias different from the one Musurus himself copied in the Escur. Φ II 16 (finished by July 11 1495)¹³.

As for the revisions of **L** and **M**, Speranzi (2013: 139-40, 296) places them in the same palaeographical group of codices Musurus *worked upon* (group 4), as he identifies in the corrections and supplements of both codices similar traces of the handwriting of the Cretan émigré in his last Venetian years (Speranzi 2013: 139). Still, they are different codices, most certainly copied and even reviewed for different immediate goals, and that is why I shall stand for the need of reconsider the dating and contexts of **M**, as the result of a deeper analysis of its palaeographic characteristics and the very purposes of Musurus' revision.

L is a 114 folia *cartaceo* (dim. 311 x 218 mm; 305 x 211 of writing box)¹⁴ that corresponds to the only *Druckvorlage* of the Aldine Septuagint so far identified –even if textual collation forces us to accept the existence of others¹⁵. In the six fasciculi conserved –only a part of the entire codex–, three scribes¹⁶ are responsible for copying the partial text of 1-2 Kings, Chronicles, Jeremias, Barouch, Lamentations, Letter of Jeremias, Ezequiel, Daniel, Wisdom of Salomon, Ecclesiastes, Judith, Tobit and 2 Maccabees. The codex was submitted to the review of at least two scribes, who introduced hundreds of corrections and supplements to the first-hand copy. The first of these reviewers, in the codex's present organization, is Musurus, who supplemented and corrected to the maximum detail folia 2r-25v (*in linea*, *supra lineam*, and *in margine*), *i.e.* the text of 1Kgs 30.12 – 2Kgs 2.15 + 2Kgs 16.14 – 2Kgs 20.18 (**Plate 1a, 1b**). In most cases, his corrections are accurate, *i.e.*, they restore a text mostly equal to the one printed in **A**. And that constitutes a proof of his participation in the Aldine Biblical project, specifically in preparing the copies that were to be sent to Asolanus' printing house. As for the second reviewer of the codex, his identification is a harder task. Speranzi (2013: 271) suggested the name of no other but Demetrius Ducas, especially by comparing the corrections and supplements of **L** with the *marginalia* of the Milan, *Ambr.* C 195 inf., a copy of Plutarch's *Moralia* that Max Treu considered to have been annotated by Ducas while

¹⁰ Translated by Wilson (2016: 161).

¹¹ See Speranzi (2013: 137-142) for a list of these editions, Musurus' involvement in each of them, and the codices where his interventions have been identified.

¹² See, on this, Orlandi (2022) and Marksimuczuk (2023).

¹³ The identification of Musurus' handwriting in the Escur. Φ II 16 belongs to Bravo García (1985: 295-296). See Speranzi (2013: 102-104), with notes, for both codices, Musurus' work upon them, and their Aldine context.

¹⁴ For its most complete description and the codicological proofs of its use in Asolanus' printing house, see Cataldi Palau (1998: 451-459 + 610) and Speranzi (2013: 270-271). The codex is available online: http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_10968 (last access 24/11/2023).

¹⁵ Hernández Muñoz (2020a: 244, n. 51), *pace* Cataldi Palau (1998: 451, 458).

¹⁶ Of these, Cataldi Palau (1998: 459) mentions the names of Bartolomeo Zanetti and Konstantinos Mesobotes as possible identifications.

preparing the Aldine edition of Plutarch's *Moralia* (1509)¹⁷. While I shall return to this subject in the course of this paper, the truth is that the identification of Ducas' handwriting is still a *vexata quaestio*, and definitive conclusions are actually impossible, as there are no subscriptions or other data enough to establish his *ductus*¹⁸.

Whatever the case might be, **L** resulted in a complex and extremely corrupt manuscript, about which Erasmus already complained in a letter from June 1529, calling it a *deprauatissimum exemplar* when commenting on the Biblical codex used by Aldus' printer¹⁹. In relation to its date, and considering only its use in the printing house, Cataldi Palau (1998: 459) states that the codex was copied «before 1518», a date slightly pushed back by Speranzi (2013: 270), when referring to «the first decade of the sixteenth century». Anyway, one thing is the date of the copy and another (might be) the date of its revision, having the last one taken place, in any case, before Musurus' departure for Rome in 1516.

Still, a full evaluation of Musurus' participation in the Aldine Bible should nowadays consider another testimony: that is **M** (Madrid, *BH UCM 22* = 442 Rhalfs), the parchment once considered lost that was restored and is finally available for consultation²⁰. Being **M** by no means similar to **L**, *i.e.*, one of the copies meant to be used directly in the printing process, a different level of commitment must also be ascribed to Musurus' work upon it. It is rather a carefully-copied and elegant parchment (dim. 370 x 250 mm; 32 lines of writing box; *e.g.* of an almost complete folium in **Plate 2**), textually and structurally close to its accepted model (ms. 68 Rahlfs). It was probably ordered by the Venetian Senate to John Severe the Lacedaemonian²¹ and only later sent to Alcalá, in order to fulfil Cardinal Cisneros' request for a trustful manuscript that could help preparing the Greek column of the Complutensian Polygot. As for Musurus' interventions in it²² (**Plate 3**), most of them are small additions or corrections *in textu* (hundreds), alongside larger *supplementa marginalia* (mostly corresponding to the filling of lacunae and only a few *graphetai*), more frequently found in the folia less damaged by the fire, *i.e.*, outside the range of folia that copy the text of 1-2 Kings (ff. 35-42) this paper will focus on.

As far as **M** is concerned, more important than the text of Musurus' interventions are perhaps the contexts and goals of the revision itself, in relation to the manuscript's date of composition, intervention in the Aldine tasks, and definitive sending to Spain in order to be used in yet another edition of the Bible. In fact, to assume a date around 1515 for its copy or even its revision is simply a literal understanding of Cisneros' words in the Prologue of volume I of the Polygot, when saying: «Quibus etiam adiunximus alia non pauca, quorum partem ex Bessarionis castigatissimo codice summa diligentia *transcriptam* Illustris Venetorum senatus ad nos misit». The truth is, there is no actual chronological indication in these words, as the codex Cisneros is referring to can actually have been *transcriptus* several years before being reviewed by Musurus and only afterwards sent to Spain²³. Furthermore, such a date does not even fit a literal interpretation of the Cardinal's words at all. Why not say *nobis transcriptam*, if that was actually the case?

I previously hypothesized that Musurus' work upon **M** could be related to the making of other copies directly meant for the Aldine printers, as it is the case of **L**. Consequently, I also stood against the idea that the need for sending a reliable codex to Alcalá was reason enough for Musurus' revision of it, at some date close to 1515²⁴, even when considering the high status

¹⁷ M. Treu (1884: 15-30). Speranzi (2013: 127) takes this identification as accurate without further problematization.

¹⁸ See Martínez Manzano (2009), especially page 718 and nn. 5-6 for the case of the Ambr. C 195 inf.

¹⁹ *Apud* Kranz, in Bietenholz & Deutscher (1985: 63-64). See also Cataldi Palau (1998: 452).

²⁰ *Supra*, n. 7. See Jesus (2020: 718-744) for the codex's true saga and the main bibliography on the subject. And, for its more recent description, see Hernández Muñoz & Martínez Manzano (2019: 141-144). It can be accessed online: <https://patrimonioidigital.ucm.es/s/patrimonio/item/191820> (last access 26/11/2023).

²¹ The first identification belongs to Bravo García (2008: 160-161), and was soon accepted by Ángel Espinós (2009: 180-181, n.14). More on him will be said in what follows.

²² See Jesus (2020: 728-729) for the different types of Musurus' interventions in **M**.

²³ *Apud* Ángel Espinós (2009: 178) and Hernández Muñoz & Martínez Manzano (2019: 141-144).

²⁴ Jesus (2020: 730, 743).

of the addressee. It makes more sense to me that he worked upon a previously-copied codex, originally not meant to be sent to the Spanish Cardinal. Furthermore, it is well known that the Spanish group of Hellenists had some important contacts in the Aldine circle. An important one would be Demetrius Ducas, member of Aldus' Neoacademy and his trustful collaborator until 1513, the year he moved to Alcalá. While one cannot fully discard his philological collaboration in the preparation of the text of the Aldine Bible –if only his identification among the reviewers of **L**, as abovementioned²⁵, proves to be accurate–, it is well known that he was the man whom Cisneros specifically asked for ms. 1670 (Madrid, BH UCM 23) for the preparation of the Greek column of Psalms²⁶. Furthermore, the presence of *marginalia* close to his handwriting in **M** was actually already suggested by Bravo García (2008: 160), an issue that nonetheless calls for a reappraisal. Another one is Hernán Núñez de Guzmán (the Pintianus, as he was best known), the owner of another codex partially copied by John Severe –the Salamanca, *Salm.* 54, a copy of Aristoteles' *Metaphysics* that, nonetheless, he must have acquired in Rome, in the twenties of the sixteenth century²⁷. Indeed, Bravo García (2008: 160) believes that *marginalia* by his hand can be found also in the Madrid codex. Anyone of these men could, hypothetically, have played a role in the search and sending of **M** to Spain²⁸, even if no clear evidence of it can be traced. The mere possibility that both Musurus and Ducas have reviewed **L** (and somehow also **M**) would create a coincidence too revealing to ignore, making the Cretan's revision of both codices go back in time some years to a date prior to 1513, when Lucas was still in Venice and both could have worked in the preparation of Aldus' extremely-wished Bible. The facts are tempting, but not safe enough. Should that be the case, one must imagine Musurus, while doing his revisions before the codex was even meant to be sent to Spain, working upon a manuscript he already considered trustworthy, at least some years older. Most probably, I should now suggest, one of the several copies of Bessarion's treasures that were being made for decades as a means of overcoming the well-known access limitations to the precious text preserved in the Patriarch's library.

And this is a crucial subject. As some scholars stressed the difficulty of accessing and working with Bessarion's books, others focused, for a long time, mostly on textual evidences of such a practice since the early years of Aldus' house, even if in an unofficial or indirect manner²⁹. While it is well known that the lack of a proper space for holding Bessarion's books was still a reality in the mid-sixteenth century, and old testimonies actually inform us that they were kept in wooden boxes³⁰, other documents point in the opposite direction. Such is the case of Sanudo's *Diaries*, according to whom, in 1515, the Venetian Collegio officially purposed that Bessarion's books were to be made available in a library «placed in the custody of some learned man, Marco Musurus, who teaches Greek, and the priest Batista Egnazio, Venetian, a very learned man»³¹. N.G. Wilson,

²⁵ *Supra*, with notes 17 and 18.

²⁶ See De Andrés (1974: 221-226), Hernández Muñoz & Martínez Manzano (2019: 45-148), and Jesus (2020: 733-735). The issue of the Greek text of Psalms in the Polyglot has been reconsidered in the last years, after Hernández Muñoz (2020a: 238 n. 30) argued for the need of another source for establishing the Complutensian text, as he detected a line (Psalm 138.23) missing in ms. 1670, yet printed in the Polyglot (and also in the Aldine and ms. 68). Afterwards, Martínez Manzano (2021: 311-321) provided arguments for the use of a specimen of the Aldine Psalterium (c. 1496-1498) by the editors of Alcalá, more specifically the incunable Madrid, BH I-281. Finally, Molina Molina (2024: 227-239), by collating the text of no fewer than 44 psalms, has just demonstrated that the Complutensian editors must have used, besides ms. 1670 and the Aldine edition, also the one by Laonicus (1486).

²⁷ *Apud* Bravo García (2008: 160). See Jesus (2020: 724 and n. 25) for more bibliography.

²⁸ Geanakoplos (1962: 246) believed that Ducas' collaboration with Aldus' project of a trilingual Bible (of which only one page was ever printed) was the reason for Cisneros' invitation to coordinate the Septuagint column of the Polyglot. On this, *supra* note 6.

²⁹ On this subject, see Lowry (1974: 138-148), and Sosower (2011: 390 + nn. 59 and 60).

³⁰ «[Bessarion's] library was everybody's property and nobody's responsibility. (...) Clearly, no real study was possible in the Sala di Scrutinio [in the Palazzo Ducale], so readers had to take the books away» (Lowry 1974: 135). See also Labowsky (1979: 57-63, 169).

³¹ Sanudo, *Diarii*, xx, 176-177. The motion was finally passed in the Senate (col. 178) to establish a library in the Piazza for the 800 volumes, even if by then the two custodians earlier proposed are no longer mentioned. *Apud* Ross (1976: 542-543 and n. 78).

who mostly refuses to accept a widespread access to Bessarion's books (Wilson ²⁰¹⁷: 151-152), takes the acknowledged existence of occasional loans³² and the well-known Bessarionian models of some famous Aldine editions to «posit the existence of copies, made from Bessarion's manuscripts» –even if having in mind, in his case, only the copies made before the donation of the Library to Venice in 1468 (Wilson ²⁰¹⁷: 171). An example of those copies might be the Heidelberg, *Pal. gr.* 47, copied by Paolo Canal (1481-1508) from the Venice, *Marc. gr.* Z. 447 (coll. 820), a ninth-century codex copied by John Calligrapher that was considered the main textual witness of Athenaeus' *Deipnosophistae*, annotated by different hands since the 11th century, and finally by Bessarion himself³³. Canal's copy, as it is nowadays accepted, was used by Musurus when preparing the previously mentioned Aldine edition of Athenaeus (colophon: August 1514)³⁴, being only one among several manuscripts that have their origin in Bessarion's Athenaeus³⁵. In such a group of privileged and authorised copies, many of which are still unidentified, I believe **M** must be included, within the context of preparation of the Aldine biblical text.

Furthermore, Musurus was believed, already in the nineteenth century, to have acted as an informal librarian of the collection, mostly after his nomination for the Venetian Greek chair in 1512³⁶. While the truth is that the Cretan is outside any official list of the holders of that position, the chronology actually suits the aforementioned examples and, in general, the period when he seems to be more directly involved in Aldus' editions, from 1513 onwards³⁷. And this gives us yet another hypothetical *terminus post quem* for the revision of **M**. Should that be the case, the codex would have been copied for several years by the time of its revision.

The relation of John Severe to the Madrid codex faces the obstacle of lack of information regarding his career prior to his Roman venue, from 1517/1518 onwards –the date he is credited to have produced an inventory for the Vatican library, preserved in the Vatican, *Vat. gr.* 1483, until now the oldest codex where his handwriting has been identified (Canart 1977: 119-121). No less problematic, although not impossible, has been to establish a personal or professional link between him and Musurus that could help explaining the revision of **M** by the Cretan. Canart (1977: 121) calls him «jeune Grec», when referring to the date of composition of the inventory, while stressing the experience and deep knowledge of Greek manuscripts needed to elaborate such a detailed record. As concluded by Ángel y Espinós (2009: 181), the acceptance of the copy of **M** as his would not only provide the addition of yet another codex to his list, but also enlighten the first years of his career within a Venetian context. And this is also why the dating of **M** has been pushed forward to 1515, a year that suits both the scribe's youth and the mention of the codex by Cisneros, no sooner than 1516, in the Prologue of Volume I of the Polyglot.

As I stated on a previous occasion (Jesus 2020: 724), a possible explanation for Severe's copy may come from the identity and career of his patron, Girolamo Aleandro. Born in 1480 in Treviso, Aleandro spent the first part of his career in Venice, where he is known to have been a member of Aldus' Neacademy. This would be the context, one can speculate, where he also contacted Demetrius Ducas, or the Pintianus, via Aleandro, if we only accept that he already worked for him in those years prior to his Parisian venue, where he moved into in 1508³⁸. Musurus himself could be added to this philological network, inasmuch as he reviewed and supplemented the Milan, *Ambros. gr.* C 195 inf., one of the codices identified as the *Druckvorlage* of the Aldine edition of

³² For the available records of these loans, from 1474 to 1527, see Coggiola (1908: 47-70).

³³ On the codex, see Gamba (2020: 229, 230-233, 272).

³⁴ The influence of that codex is accepted since a very famous lacuna in Atheneus' text, kept in the Aldine, can also be found in it. See Vendruscolo (2008: 211, n. 9), and Gamba (2020: 229, 262). The textual tradition of Atheneus, with a full description of these and other codices, was recently reconsidered in the PhD dissertation of Consonni (2021: 3-27).

³⁵ For a deeper analysis of the codices whose textually dependent Bessarion's Atheneus, see Di Lello (2000: 129-182).

³⁶ Schück (1862: 78).

³⁷ *Apud* Geneakoplos (1962: 146).

³⁸ On Aleandro's Parisian career, see Vecce (1998) and Botley (2010: 10-11, 20-22). And, for an overview of his biography, see Gall (2014).

Plutarch's *Moralia* (1509), prepared by Ducas with the collaboration of Aleandro³⁹. In a word, the data and the characters involved lead us to a date range close to 1508-1510 as yet another possibility for the copy of **M**, if only one accepts John Severe as already working for (or with) Aleandro by those years.

Yet another scenario is possible. As stated at the beginning of this paper, Musurus' «lending of rare manuscripts of high quality» was recognized by Aldus as early as 1502, and the revision of codices for the Aldine press must also go back as early as the nineties of the fifteenth century. Aldus' intentions for what ended up being a “stillborn”⁴⁰ trilingual Bible go back at least as early as 1501, the date of the single folia ever printed (with the opening of Genesis in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, in parallel columns). What I mean is that, in terms of context, the copy of **M** could actually go back as early as the final years of the 15th century, a period when several copies of Bessarion's treasures were being done.

Eguren (1859: 17), our earliest description of **M** (some eighty years before the codex's destruction in the Civil War), mentioned «a decoration previous to the fifteenth century» in the cover folium. This indication has often been discarded with no further explanation, considered a mistake by the author. While it can also be so, one cannot help but ask for the reasons for such a statement. Could he be referring to the fifteenth century and only his “previous” be misleading? Could an experimented scholar as he was fall into such an evident mistake? Whatever the case is, he was totally right when considering that «this was not irreconcilable with that codex being the one sent by the Venetian Senate to the Cardinal». If anything seems clear to me, that is that **M** was not copied with the immediate goal of being sent to Cardenal Cisneros in Alcalá, as I still cannot see a way to include Musurus in such an equation.

In what follows, I shall look for the textual sources of Musurus' revisions, working with the premise that his interventions in both codices, while probably distinctly motivated, can only be understood in the Aldine context. In other words, what can textual collation tell us regarding the books Musurus could *work with*?

2. The sources of Musurus' revision of Kings: the books he worked with

The textual influence of several codices from Bessarion's old library on the constitution of the text of the Aldine Septuagint (namely mss. 29, 68, 121 and 122 Rahlfs) has been acknowledged as early as Lagarde (1868: 6), Delitzsch (1886: 53-57), and Swete (1900: 173-174). More recently, Hernández Muñoz (2020b) mentioned ms. 120 Rahlfs as yet another important codex for the Aldine text and, in relation to the sources of Musurus' annotations upon the text of Maccabees in **M**, argued also for the use of codices **V** Rahlfs and, perhaps, 29 Rahlfs (Hernández Muñoz 2023).

As far as the text of Kings corrected in **L** and **M** is concerned (specifically 1Kgs 30:12 – 2Kgs 2:15 + 2Kgs 16:14 – 20:18), it is copied in the Venetian mss. 29, 121, 120, 68 and 122 Rahlfs⁴¹. And these codices, once part of Bessarion's library, are the first ones to check when looking for the manuscript sources for Musurus' revision⁴². Yet, as the following pages show,

³⁹ *Supra*, and notes 17 and 18. See also Sicherl (1978: 142-144), Bravo García (2008: 160), Speranzi (2013: 127) and Ledo (2019: 259 and n. 4).

⁴⁰ *Apud* Jesus (2022). See note 6 for more bibliography.

⁴¹ Ms. 122 Rahlfs (**6**) is considered a *descriptus* of ms. 68 Rahlfs (**5**) by Holmes & Parsons (1798: 44). Nonetheless, my collation also revealed some different readings that may compromise such an identification, to be added to the ones already found by Hernández Muñoz (2020a: 238-239). *E.g.* 1Kgs.30:13 πόθεν εἶ και τίνος εἶ σύ **6**, πόθεν εἶ **5**; I.30.21(a) τοῦ πορεύεσθαι ὀπίσω **6**, τοῦ πορεύθηναι ὀπίσω **5**; II.1.1 δύο **6**, ὁμ. **5**; II.1.3(a) και εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτόν **6**, ὁμ. **5**; II.1.3(b) ἐγὼ **6**, λέγων **5**; II.1.12 ἐν ῥομφαίᾳ **6**, σφόδρα **5**; II.1.23(b) οὐ διεχωρίσθησαν **6**, οὐκ ἐχωρίσθησαν **5**; II.18.14-15 ἐπὶ αὐτοῦ ... ἐπάταξαν τὸν Ἀβεσσαλωμ **6**, ὁμ. **5**.

⁴² I dismissed from collation ms. 731 Rahlfs (Venice, *Marc. gr.* 16), from the late-thirteenth century, pointed out as the partial model of ms. 68 Rahlfs by Hanhart (1979: 12) and, more recently, by Hernández Muñoz (2020a: 238, n. 32). Yet, that seems only to be the case of the books of Esdras (ff. 344-357), Tobit (ff. 390-398v), Judith (ff. 399-413) and Maccabees (ff. 413-462), as the remaining books, e.g., the books of Kings (ff. 12-271), are copied in that manuscript among several commentaries by other Byzantine authors. See also

neither of them provides a source for all of Musurus' interventions. Other codices had to be considered, with interesting results coming out of ms. 64 Rahlfs (Paris, *BNF* gr. 2 = **Par.**), a 10th century manuscript whose necessary relation to the Aldine Biblical enterprise will be discussed below.

It is well known that the editors of the Aldine (**A**) and the Complutensian Polyglot (**P**), regarding the book of Kings, worked with different textual traditions. Nonetheless, while arguing for the preferred use of ms. 108⁴³ in the composition of the Greek text of Kings printed in **P**, Revilla Rico already considered the inclusion of some readings from **M** (fully available by his time) and other personal corrections, mostly when such versions were closer to the Hebrew text⁴⁴. That is what he concluded from collating the readings of 2Kgs 23:1–5⁴⁵ in ms. 108 and **M** with the text printed in **P**, underlining some words where the Complutensian readings differ from their primary source and might have received the influence of **M**⁴⁶. As for Musurus' interventions over **M**, the fragmentary state of the corresponding folia does not allow to establish any conclusions on their possible inclusion in **P**, which, as considered by its first commentators, used **M** probably in a second moment for reviewing a text already pre-established upon ms. 108 Rahlfs.

On the contrary, several coincidences of **A** with both **L/L^{pc}** and **M/M^{pc}** tend to relate the codices and reinforce the argument for the use of **M** in the editorial process of the Aldine Septuagint:

[1:31.1] οἱ ἄνδρες **ML^{pc}3^{mg}Par.A**, ἄνδρες N246, ἄν (sic) L^{ac}5

[2:1.1] δύο **ML^{pc}N2346Par.A**, om. L^{ac}5

[2:16.14] λαός] λαὸς Ἰσραηλ **LM^{pc}A**, λαὸς αὐτοῦ Par., λαὸς ὁ μετ'αὐτοῦ NP, λαὸς μετ'αὐτοῦ 2456, λαὸς αὐτοῦ μετ'αὐτοῦ 3

[2:18.25] ἐμπορευόμενος M^{ac}, ἐπορ[εύετο πορ]ευόμενος **LM^{pc}N23456Par.A**

[2:18.32] τὸν **ML^{pc}N234Par.A**, τὸ L^{ac}56

[2:19.9] τῆ **ML^{pc}N23456Par.A**, om. L^{ac}

[2:19.15] σὺ **LM^{pc}N2456Par.A**, οὐ 3, om. M^{ac}

[2:20.12] ἀπέστρεψε(v) **ML^{pc}N^{ac}2346Par.A**, ἀπέστρεψαν N^{pc}, ἀπέστραψε 5, ἀπάστρεψε (ut vid.) L^{ac}

Still, several other examples could be mentioned where corrections are only performed in one manuscript (more often **L**), a fact that dismisses any chance of Musurus reviewing **L** and **M** in parallel, given the several cases within the pattern **L^{ac}M**, *i.e.*, where **L** is corrected differently from **M**, not corrected in many cases:

[1:30.29] ἱερεμέηλ L^{pc}N2Par.A, ἱεραμέηλ 4, ἰσραηλ L^{ac}M56

[2:17.11] ἐν μέσῳ L^{mg}N23APar., ὀπίσω L^{ac}M456

[2:17.12] πρὸς **ML^{ac}56**, ἐπ' L^{pc}N234APar.

[2:18.5] μοι L^{pc}3ANPar., μοῦ **ML^{ac}2456**

[2:18.9] ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον τῆς γῆς L^{pc}APar.A, ἀνὰ μέσον τῆς γῆς καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ οὐρανοῦ **ML^{ac}N23456**

[2:19.7] καὶ ἀπήγγειλας L^{pc}N, καὶ ἀνήγγειλας Par.A, ὅτι ἀπήγγειλας **ML^{ac}23456**

Mioni (1981: 29-31). I am arguing, in a word, that it would have been odd for Musurus to correct a text for being printed by referring to a commented copy like the one of Kings in such a codex.

⁴³ The lending of this codex and at least another one (ms. 248 Rahlfs) to Cisneros, as well as their influence on **P**, is well attested as soon as Delitzsch (1886: 1-28), and was later confirmed by O'Connell (2006), Fernández Marcos (2009: 302-315; 2014: 125-142), and Hernández Muñoz (2020a: 245). The last author (Hernández Muñoz 2020a: 246) poses the possibility that also ms. 671 Rahlfs (Vatican, *Vat. gr.* 348) –a fifteenth-century exclusive copy of the three books of Maccabees– might have been lent to Cisneros, alongside the two other *Vaticani* already identified, given the proximity to the text printed in **P**.

⁴⁴ Revilla Rico (1917: 100-101). See also Jesus (2020: 741-742), with n. 73 for bibliography.

⁴⁵ Since it is not copied in **L**, the passage is not object of this paper's collation.

⁴⁶ And after him, O'Connell (2006: 98-100), who also established a relation between the version of **P** and the group of codices *boc₂e₂*. Obviously, O'Connell could not consult **M**, as the codex, back in 2006, was still unavailable.

[2:19.7] ἔγνωκα 246, ἔγνωσαν **ML**^{ac5}, ἔγνωκας **L**^{pc}N3Par.A

[2:19.17] ἀπάντησιν² **L**^{mg}N4Par.A, ἀπαντήν **ML**^{ac}235

[2:19.43] ἐκ **L**^{pc}N23Par.A, παρὰ **ML**^{ac}456

[2:20.14] Βαιθμαχα **L**^{pc}24A, Βεθμαχα VPar., Βαιθμάχαιρα **ML**^{ac}356

The result is a relation **LA** closer than **MA**, which must be understood not only textually but also chronologically, as both codices must have played their role at different moments of the composition of the Aldine text. It is therefore plausible to assume that the correction of **M** was prior to the first-hand copy of **L**, which would only afterwards be reviewed by the Cretan. Either way, the number of improvements Musurus believed to be required by **L** (**L**^{pc}) was larger than the ones needed by (or intended for) **M** (**M**^{pc}), being **L** a codex that already mixes the readings of several others and, apparently, a rushed copy.

At another level, the majority of textual supplements added to **L**^{mg} are not found in **M**, as they are already copied by the first-hand scribe, who was more competent when copying from his model. But the truth is that the level of conservation of the folia where the books of Kings are copied is too bad to allow a proper evaluation. Whatever the case is, it seems fair to assume that **M** had already a better first-hand text, or so did Musurus believe when reviewing it, even if the opposite (**LM**^{pc}) is also to be found, *i.e.*, when **M** was the one in need of correction:

[2:16.14] λαός] λαός Ισραηλ **LM**^{pc}A, λαός αὐτοῦ Par., λαός ὁ μετ'αὐτοῦ NP, λαός μετ'αὐτοῦ 2456, λαός αὐτοῦ μετ'αὐτοῦ 3

[2:19.15] σὺ **LM**^{pc}N2456Par.A, οὓ 3, om. **M**^{ac}

[2:19.30] διελεῖσθε **LM**^{pc}3456, διέλεσθε NPar.A, διελεῖσθαι **M**^{ac}2

[2:20.10] βοχωρι **LM**^{pc}V23456Par., βοχωρι A, χοβορι (sic) **M**^{ac}

These very last cases –assuming the possibility of λαός Ισραηλ in 2:16.14 being a personal correction of Musurus– could suggest that the revision of the text of Kings in **M** was no more than a confrontation with ms. 68, its recognized model of copy. While such an assumption would have much to say about Musurus' access to Bessarion's treasures, even if it were true, it would only be the case for the text of Kings (or even only a part of it). Indeed, no model of revision for a specific Biblical book can be considered the model for all the others, as it is well known that those who prepared the text for printers could (and often did) change their manuscript sources.

As stated above, Hernández Muñoz (2023) collated Musurus' corrections and supplements in 2 Maccabees, standing for his use of the Venice, *Marc. gr. 1* (**V**) –or in any case, a copy of it, I would say– as their main source. But the text of Kings is not even copied in **V**, rather in the Vatican, *Vat. gr. 2106* (**N**), a codex long identified as the first part of the aforementioned *Marcianus*. Nonetheless, all data suggest that the original codex was early divided and that the Vatican part was actually never in Venice⁴⁷, and the truth is that a large number of Musurus' interventions in both codices being discussed are not found in it. In fact, there are so many cases where **L**^{pc} is different from **V** that its simple reproduction would seem redundant and unnecessary to conclude that **N** must not be considered a possible source of Musurus' revision in either **L** or **M**. Another source (at least one) is yet to be found. Deepening the search still within the five *Marciani* collated, none of them covers all the readings of **L**^{pc} and **M**^{pc}. Even so, ms. 29 Rahlfs (Venice, *Marc. gr. 2*) deserves further attention, as the following cases demonstrate:

⁴⁷ Swete (1900: 132). The PINAKES website wrongly considers that the Vatican volume also belonged to Bessarion. For a description and the main bibliography on this codex, see Rahlfs (1914: 270-272), Jellicoe (1993: 197-199), Orsini (2019: 183 + n. 447, 184 n. 449, 190), and Andrist (2020: 45-55). While the Venetian volume can actually be identified with num. 4 of the list available in the Venice, *Marc. lat. XIV.14* (= 4235), a seventeenth-century copy of Bessarion's letter to the doge Cristoforo Moro and the Senate of Venice announcing the donation of his library to St. Mark's Basilica («Item [Biblia tota] Proverbia, Ecclesiastes, Cantica canticorum, Sapientia Salomonis, Jesus Syrach, sexdecim Prophetre, Thobias, Judith, Machabreorum libri tres et Josephi quod ratio sit moderatrix passionum, in pergameno»), no item in that list matches the books copied in the Vatican specimen. See Omont (1894: 21).

- [1:30.14] Χολθι] μελιτ L^{ac}5, κορι L^{Pc}, χορρι N2, μελιθ 6, χελθει 3, χελθι 4, χελεθι Par.A
 [1:31.9] εξαποστέλλουσιν L^{Pc}2A, αποστέλλουσιν 34, αποκόπτουσιν N56Par.
 [2:1.16] Δαιιδ πρὸς αὐτόν 3Par., αὐτῷ Δαιιδ L^{ac}456, πρὸς αὐτόν Δαιιδ L^{Pc}N2A
 [2:17.2] post ἐκλελυμένος hab. ἐργαζόμενος L^{m9}2, deest L^{ac}N3456Par.A
 [2:17.29] εἶπαν L^{Pc}N2, ἦν L^{ac}3456Par.A
 [2:18.26] ἐβόησε(v) L^{ac}N3456Par., ἀνεβόησε(v) L^{Pc}2A

The cases of 1:31.9, 2:17.2, 2:17.29 e 2:18.26 correspond to corrections in **L** only attested in **2**, among the collated codices, and even in cases as 1:30.14 one can trace its influence (κορι L^{Pc}, κορρι **2**). Furthermore, 2:17.2, 2:17.29, and even 2:18.26 are examples of textual improvements that would hardly be the result of Musurus' personal intervention. This might suggest that **2**, or another codex textually related to it, was also among the sources of Musurus' revision, at least of **L**, as far as the books of Kings are concerned. And so, a step at a time, the number of codices Musurus had at his disposal keeps growing, as his access to Bessarion's books is more and more undeniable.

I was able to trace yet another possible source in ms. 15 Rahlfs, the Paris, *BNF*, gr. 2 (**Par.**), a tenth-century parchment (dim. 512 ff., 342 × 249 mm) written in elegant minuscule –or at least, once again, any codex related to it. Even if it occasionally deviates from the readings of L^{Pc} or M^{Pc}, some corrections and supplements only found in it may be revealing, inasmuch as they ended up being printed in **A**.

- [2:17.12(b)] post ἀνδράσιν hab. αὐτοῦ L^{m9}Par.A, deest N23456
 [2:18.3] ἀποθάνωμεν L^{Pc}Par.A, ἀποθάνωσιν L^{ac}N23456; post ὅτι hab. σὺ L^{Pc}Par.A, om. N23456; τοῦ βοηθεῖν L^{m9}Par.A, om. 23456N
 [2:18.7] post ἐκέινη hab. ὡς L^{Pc}Par.A, om. N23456
 [2:18.8] πάσης τῆς γῆς L^{m9}Par.A, ὅλου τοῦ ὄρουμοῦ L^{ac}N23456
 [2:18.9] ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον τῆς γῆς L^{Pc}Par.A, ἀνὰ μέσον τῆς γῆς καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ML^{ac}N23456
 [2:18.16] ἐφείδετο L^{Pc}Par.A, ἐφείσατο L^{ac}N23456
 [2:18.17] τῷ ὄρουμῳ εἰς τὸν βόθυνον τὸν μέγαν καὶ ἐστήλωσε(v) L^{m9}Par.A, τῷ βουνοῦ καὶ ἐστήλησε(v) L^{ac}N2456 (τῷ ὄρουμῳ) 3
 [2:18.20] εὐαγγελίας L^{ac}23456N, εὐαγγελίων L^{Pc}Par.A
 [2:18.29] καὶ³ L^{Pc}Par.A, om. L^{ac}N23456
 [2:18.30] ἐστηλώθη L^{m9}Par.A, ὀπίσω αὐτοῦ L^{ac}N23456
 [2:19.10] ὑπὸ Αβεσσαλωμ hab. L^{m9}Par.A, om. L^{ac}N23456
 [2:19.36] εἶτι L^{Pc}Par.A, om. L^{ac}V23456
 [2:19.39] post ὅσα hab. ἄν L^{Pc}Par.A, om. L^{ac}N23456
 [2:20.1] ὁ Ιεμενι M456, Ιεμινάος L^{Pc}Par.A, Ιεμινεῖ N, om. L^{ac}, Ιεμινί 23

Cases like 2:18.8, 2:18.9, 2:18.17 and 2:18.30, absent from all the *Marciani* and only traced in the textual family of **Par.**, make this codex the ultimate candidate for being among the sources –in any case more than one, let us all remember– of Musurus' interventions upon **L**. They are so significant that one cannot help but ask if he could have had access to the codex in Venice. The answer can only be a confident yes. Indeed, we are told by Rahlfs (1914: 191-192) that the codex was once the property of the Venetian Monastery of Santa Maria dell'Orto, right until 1538 (ex-libris in fol. 1), the year it was bought by Antony Eparchos (1492-1571), the Corfu-native erudite established in Venice by 1537 who ended up being Chief-Professor at the Greek School in Milan⁴⁸.

One last conclusion, mentioned above and pointed out already in a previous paper⁴⁹, gets supported by the collation this paper performed: that **L**, even when complete, could not have been the only *Druckvorlage* of the Aldine Septuagint. Some cases where the printed text of **A** differs from the reading of **L** or L^{Pc}, also in the text of Kings, seem to prove it:

⁴⁸ On him, see mostly Dorez (1893: 281-363) and Martínez Manzano (2015: 75-78), the last one with the footnotes, for the main bibliography.

⁴⁹ *Supra*, n. 15.

- [2:1.21(a)] ὑετὸς **L^{pc}MN24Par.**, ἦ ὑετὸς **L^{ac}356A**
 [2:17.2] post ἐκλελυμένος hab. ἐργαζόμενος **L^{mg}2**, deest **L^{ac}N3456Par.A**
 [2:17.18] Βαουριμ **L^{pc}456**, Βαθυριμ **A**, Βαρυριμ **L^{ac}**
 [2:17.29] εἶπαν **L^{pc}N2**, ἦν **L^{ac}3456Par.A**
 [2:18.10] τὸν Αβεσσαλωμ κρεμάμενον **N23APar.**, κρεμάμενον τὸν Αβεσσαλωμ **LM456**
 [2:19.7] καὶ ἀπήγγειλας **L^{pc}N**, καὶ ἀνήγγειλας **Par.A**, ὅτι ἀπήγγειλας **ML^{ac}23456**
 [2:19.30] διελεῖσθε **LM^{pc}3456**, διέλεσθε **NPar.A**, διελεῖσθαι **M^{ac}2**
 [2:20.10] βοχωρι **LM^{pc}N23456Par.**, βοχωρι **A**, χοβορι (sic) **M^{ac}**

The non-consideration of some of Musurus' corrections upon **L** in the final text of the Aldine comes thus to confirm the plural found in Andreas Asolanus' Dedication of the Aldine, when referring to his labour as printer of the 1518 Aldine Bible: «ego multis vetustissimis exemplaribus collatis biblia (ut vulgo appellant) graece cuncta descripsi». Other copies, most probably similar to **L** in their aspect, nowadays lost or yet to be identified, must have had a place at Asolanus' printing office.

3. Conclusions

The last pages looked at the two only known documents of Musurus' work on Biblical text from two different yet complementary points of view: we called these the books he *worked upon* (i.e., the volumes he physically marked) and the books he *worked with* (i.e. his manuscript sources) when correcting and supplementing **L** and **M**. As for the former ones, since the late-nineteenth century, scholars were able to identify the influence of the Venice, *Marc. gr. 2, 3, 4, 5* and *6* in the composition of the Aldine Septuagint, recognizably a heterogeneous and complex text⁵⁰. This paper, apart from stressing the probability of the use of ms. 29 Rahlfs (Venice, *Marc. gr. 2*) in Musurus' revision, also for the case of 1-2 Kings, adds another codex to his probable manuscript sources: the Paris, *BNF, gr. 2 (Par.)*, or any other related to it. Be that as it may, it seems obvious that Musurus' contribution to the Biblical text to be printed in 1518 was not restricted to a single codex, not even to a single library or collection. While an evaluation of the use of **M** for the composition of the Aldine Septuagint requires further collation in relation to the other books copied in it –namely those copied in the folia less destroyed, where the Cretan's interventions are easier to see–, the very revision of it by Musurus, I maintain, doesn't seem to get any justification outside the Aldine enterprise.

L, as a *Druckvorlage* for Asolanus' printers, was copied and reviewed specifically for that purpose, presumably at a later date that has a *terminus ante quem* in 1516, the year Musurus' left Venice for Rome. A time range that can actually be pushed back a few years, to 1513 or before, if Demetrius Ducas ends up being identified as the second reviewer of the codex. As a matter of fact, an earlier date would suit better the revision of **M**, which had to be in Spain at least in 1516 for preparing the Complutensian text of the Old Testament, finished and published (only not distributed) in 1517.

Being a copy of ms. 68 Rahlfs as it is, I argued **M** must originally have been one of the several copies known to have been made from Bessarion's books –even if the time and reasons for such a copy are still to be known–, and only afterwards chosen as the manuscript capable of fulfilling Cisneros' demand. If so, it must be included among that group of codices, so far only partially identified, that facilitated the access to the text of Bessarion's books and might help explaining, once and for all, the textual influence of several codices from the Cardinal's old library in many sixteenth-century Aldine editions. In relation to Biblical codices, at a time when the more famous printing houses were competing for being the first ones publishing a Greek Bible, there is also no reason to suspect the existence of such copies. As for the currently accepted identification of its scribe, John Severe the Lacedaemonian, data were given that support the possibility of a copy by

⁵⁰ See Hernández Muñoz (2020a: 245, n. 51; 2020b: 255).

him in a previous date. If only his patron, Girolamo Aleandro, acted as the necessary link, a year around 1508-1510 would then make sense, as explained above.

Whatever the case is, **M** must be considered among the manuscripts that Musurus (and other scholars) could *work upon* when preparing their editions. As direct heirs of the textual traditions of Bessarion's treasures, they should not have been subjected to the loaning and use restrictions imposed on their models, functioning as precious documents that no early sixteenth-century editor could ignore. The careful nature of the copy of **M**, as an example of these codices, made it less needy of correction and supplementing than **L**, itself a sample of the hastier (yet textually complex) copies that used to be sent to the printers.

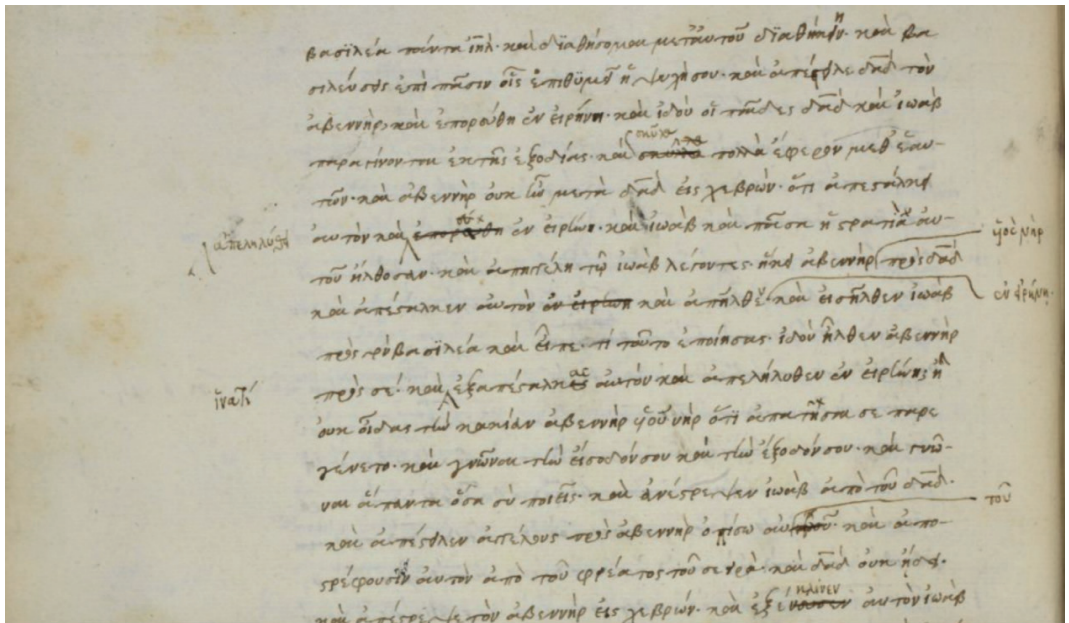
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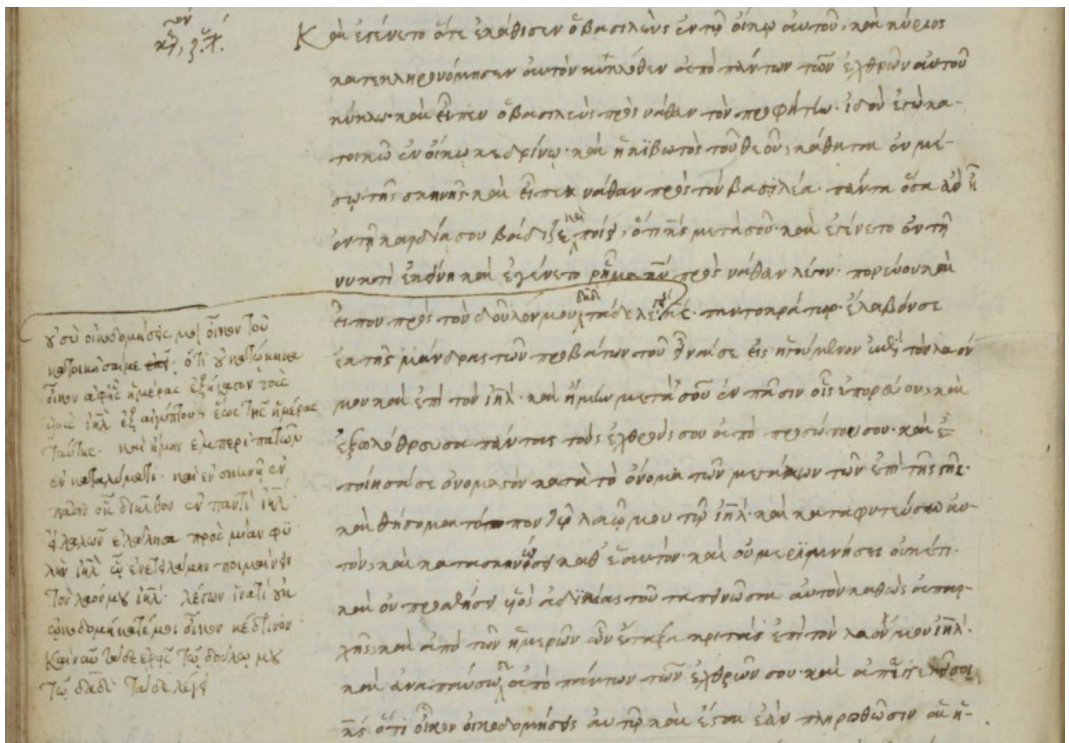
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Plate 1



1a. Sample of Musurus' review in L. Lond. Add. 10968, f. 6v (detail)



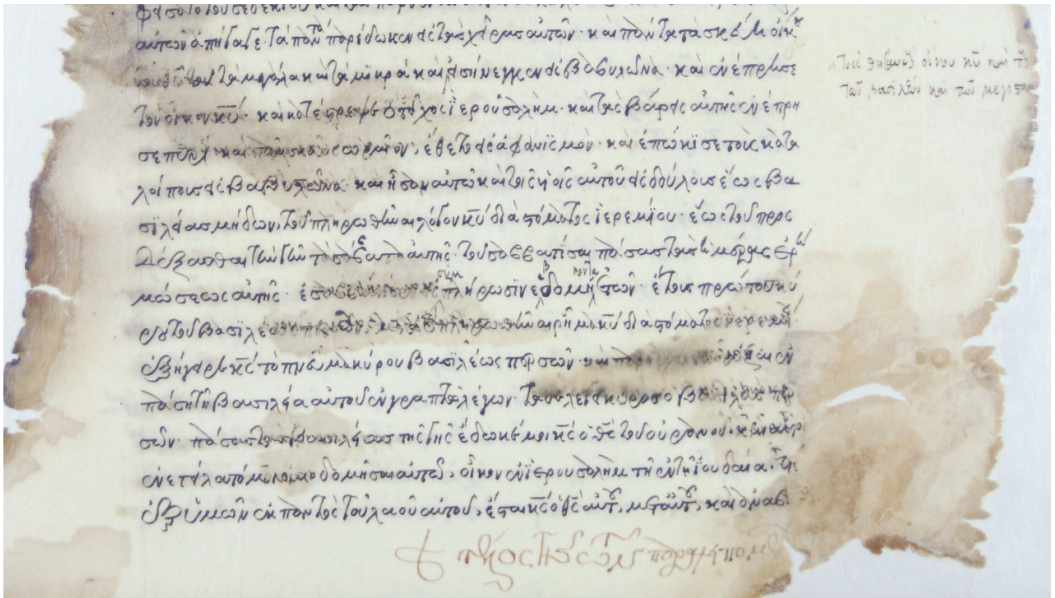
1b. Sample of Musurus' review in L. Lond. Add. 10968, f. 9v (detail)

Plate 2



BH UCM 22, f. 161v (ascribed to John Severe the Lacedaemonian).

Plate 3



Sample of Musurus' review in M. Madrid, BH UCM 22, f. 103r (detail)