

# *Reflections on the Circulation of Wisdom Literature in Late Medieval Aragon and Castile*

Barry Taylor

The British Library

[barry.taylor@bl.uk](mailto:barry.taylor@bl.uk) [barry.taylor@bl.uk](mailto:barry.taylor@bl.uk) - ORCID: 0009-0005-9344-3031

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**ABSTRACT:** This article studies three stages in the circulation of wisdom literature in Aragon and Castile in the later Middle Ages: 1) Origins: wisdom texts in romance were preceded by texts in Arabic, Hebrew and Latin. By the time these romance texts appeared there was a highly developed (in terms of aids for the reader) of florilegia in Latin which, often dependent on other florilegia, preserved a wide range of authors, both familiar and rare. 2) Manuscript context: a conspectus of the manuscripts in which the vernacular texts are found suggests that scribes (or perhaps rather editors) had a sense of what defined wisdom as a genre. 3) Consumption: the article concludes with the use which romance authors made of the Latin florilegia and testifies to the function of these florilegia as a network of knowledge.

**KEYWORDS:** Wisdom literature; Circulation; Manuscript context; Latin florilegia; Literary networks.

## ☛ 1. Introduction

In this article I argue that wisdom literature is a constant presence in the Middle Ages, and that this presence is not always fully appreciated. I ought also to explain that the term *wisdom literature* has its origins in the study of the Bible, that is Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus. An early example is Davison 1894. Its first non-Biblical application I believe is documented in the realm of Old English in the twentieth century (Shippey 1976). Wisdom literature teaches conduct in brief forms, especially proverbs—in a learned context they are called *sententiae*, and when the author is known they are called *auctoritates*, the ‘authority’ being a statement and not a person (Minnis 1984: 10). Wisdom literature employs a variety of *dispositio textus*, sometimes arranged in disconnected staccato statements and sometimes arranged in connected prose—although authors of post-Biblical wisdom texts rarely mention Biblical models, it seems to me that the first type is represented by the staccato Book of Proverbs and the second by Ecclesiastes, close to the early modern essay.

The wisdom text is intimately related to the fragment. One of the models of western wisdom is the genre of the sayings of the philosophers of Diogenes Laertius, a compilation of decontextualised fragments—indeed, in the study of the Pre-Socratics these fragments are a major source. This model is taken up in Arabic culture and its romance descendents: in Catalan the *Mukhtār al-hikam* are a source for Jafudà Bonsenyor and in Castile they are translated as *Bocados de oro* (see in general Taylor 1985; 2014b). The innate brevity of wisdom enabled what Fumaroli (1980: 685-705) termed «la rhétorique des citations». He was referring to the Renaissance, and almost exclusively to France, but the concept is perfectly adaptable to the peninsular Middle Ages. The Latin Middle Ages produced much read texts which were basically collections of authorities: the *Moralia in Job* of Gregory the Great, described by Fumaroli as a «tissu de citations se glosant les unes les autres», the *De contemptu mundi* of Innocent III or the *Imitatio Christi*. The quoter can easily become the quoted: Gregory and Innocent frequently appear in the florilegia. This paper will describe three stages of transmission of Peninsular wisdom

texts: their origins, their manuscript context and their consumption.

## ☛ 2. Origins

Essential to the understanding of vernacular wisdom texts are six great compilations in Latin: the *Auctoritates Aristotelis*, the *Florilegium Gallicum*, Albertanus of Brescia, John of Wales, Vincent of Beauvais and Thomas Hibernicus (for an overview see Taylor 1992). The chronology of these works is unclear.

a) The *Auctoritates Aristotelis*, compiled between 1267 and 1325 (Hamesse 1974: 38) gathers quotations from many works of Aristotle and other authors, in the order in which they appear in the originals. These are reported to be: Aristoteles, Seneca, Boethius, Plato, Apuleius, Empedocles, Porphyrius and Gilbertus Porretanus (see Table I). Although the rubric claims that it is addressed to a double audience —«pro usu introductionis thematum ipsorum praedicatorum ad populum simul ac in artibus studere volentium» [for the purpose of introducing themes for those who preach to the people and those wishing to study the arts]—it is noticeable that the prologue makes specific mention only of sermons (Hamesse 1974: 111-114). As Cuccia (2013: 182) says,

frente al enorme beneficio proporcionado por los florilegios aristotélicos al poner a disposición de un importante número de académicos un conocimiento que fue completamente inaccesible durante siglos, debe considerarse como contraparte una desventaja significativa que es común a todos los florilegios: en general, al mostrar una doctrina parcializada y sintetizada en unas pocas frases muchas veces inconexas, tal tipo de compilación contribuyó a deformar el pensamiento de Aristóteles, tergiversando el sentido de algunas afirmaciones o, incluso, omitiendo pasajes importantes de sus obras.<sup>1</sup>

b) The *Florilegium gallicum* (13th century, North France) has the same form. The authors included are listed in Table I.<sup>2</sup>

1. On the *Auctoritates Aristotelis* in the Peninsula, see Ruiz Arzalluz (1996), Muñoz (2009; 2015) and Taylor (2018).

2. On the *Florilegium Gallicum* in the Peninsula, see Fernández de la Cuesta González (2008).

<i>Auctoritates Aristotelis</i>	<i>Florilegium Gallicum</i>	<i>Speculum doctrinale</i> (Santes Creus, 94)	<i>Manipulus florum</i>
Aristoteles	Prudentius	Autor	Augustinus
Seneca	Claudianus	Versificator	Ambrosius
Boethius	Virgilius	Seneca	Ieronimus
Plato	Valerius Flaccus	Valerius Maximus	Gregorius
Apuleius	Statius	Cicero	Bernardus
Empedocles	Lucanus	Ovidius	Hylarius
Porphyrius	Ovidius	Cato	Crisostomus
Gilbertus Porretanus	Tibullus	Gualtherus de Castellione	Ysidorus
	Horatius	Prosper	Damascenus
	Juvenalis	Quintilianus	Origenes
	Persius	Boethius	Cyprianus
	Martialis	Lactantius	Fulgencius
	Petronius	Horatius	Basilius
	<i>Appendix Virgiliana</i>	Varro	Maximus
	<i>Laus Pisonis</i>	Sidonius	Rabanus
	Calpurnius	Juvenalis	Cesarius
	Nemesianus	Martialis	Leo
	Terentius	Gaufridus Vinsauf	Beda
	Sallustius	Claudianus	Prosper
	Boethius	Symmachus	Anselmus
	Plato	Petronius	Ricardus
	Martianus Capella	Didimus	Hugo
	Macrobius	Sallustius	Iohannes Cassianus
	Priscianus	Socrates	Cassiodorus
	Cicero	Lucanus	Alanus
	Quintilianus	Plautus	Petrus Ravennas
	Seneca	Fulgentius	Plinius
	<i>Querolus</i>	Cassiodorus	Solinus
	Sidonius Apollinaris	Prudentius	Rabymoyses
	Cassiodorus	Maximianus	Valerius Maximus
	Suetonius	Hieronimus	Vegecius
	<i>Appendix Virgiliana</i>	Arator	Agellius
		Tibullus	Sydonius
			Tullius
			Boecius
			Seneca

TABLE I

c) With the works of Vincent of Beauvais we come to a work of much greater scope and more sophisticated *dispositio*. Born *ca.* 1190, he entered the Dominican order *ca.* 1218 and died in 1264. He is much valued by modern scholars not only for his works but because he describes his working methods in a prologue, the *Liber apologeticus* (Brincken 1978). Furthermore, he occupies a special space in Parkes's work on medieval *compilatio* and *ordinatio* (1976: 128–131, 133, pl. xii):

He tells us in the *apologia* to the *Speculum* that he has divided his work into books and chapters to make it easier for the reader: «Ut huius operis partes singulae lectori facilius elucescant, ipsum totum opus per libros, et libros per capitula distinguere volui.» These divisions had to be carefully and clearly labelled: «... quia multorum librorum florem quendam, atque medullam in unum volumen compegi; totum sub certis titulis ordine congruo redegi.» He improves the usefulness of the work by prefixing to each book a detailed table of the *tituli* of each chapter. He gave considerable thought to the method of indicating his sources. [...] The *Speculum* survives in a large number of copies most of which follow this pattern and its impact on the standard of presenting texts should not be underestimated. (Parkes 1976: 133)

He explains that his own words are marked with «actor» (Brincken 1978: 468), a term with which he also refers to his predecessor as an encyclopedist Helinand of Froidmont (Paulmier-Foucart 1981; Woesthuis 1997; Paulmier-Foucart 2004: 42–44). The names of authors are placed not in the margins (contrast Taylor 1992: 27, pl. 5 and 6) but in the body of the text «ne facile transponerentur de locis propriis» [so that they may not be moved from their proper place] (Paulmier-Foucart 2004: 151; Brincken 1978: 468). Although Vincent appears not to refer to it in his prologue, in certain manuscripts these names are in red. His longest works are the trilogy *Speculum naturale*, *Historiale* and *Doctrinale*. The fourth book (hence the title of the 1624 edition, *Speculum quadruplex*), the *Speculum morale*, is a later addition, but made before the end of the 13th century (Paulmier-Foucart 1991: 202). In the *Liber apologeticus*, he explains the primacy of the Bible as a model: «procedendi modum nullatenus reperi quam istum, quem pre cunctis elegi, videlicet ut iuxta ordinem Sa-

cre Scripture» [I have not found any better way of proceeding than this, which I chose above all others, that is according to the order of Holy Writ] (Brincken 1978: 467; Paulmier-Foucart 2004: 151). The *Speculum historiale* covers in thirty-four books all history from the creation to the compiler's times, ending with 1250. The *Doctrinale* is organised according to the arts and virtues and vices. The *Speculum historiale* and *Doctrinale* overlap: for example, the Aesopic fables are in *Speculum historiale* 4.2–8 under the life of Aesop in the reign of Cyrus and in *Doctrinale* 3.114–123 under the title «De arte poetica». One aspect of the *Historiale* is the inclusion of mini-florilegia of authors (Paulmier 2004: 321–24), an arrangement adapted by the *General estoria* of Alfonso el Sabio (Taylor 2015). Shortly after Vincent's time, *ca.* 1320, Jean Hautfuney made some alphabetical indexes (Paulmier-Foucart 1980–1981).<sup>3</sup>

In her study of MS Santes Creus 94, a version of books IV and V of the *Speculum doctrinale*, Villarroel Fernández (2011: 221–223) identifies the sources which are cited more than ten times (see also Draelants 2016). These are listed in Table I above. Vincent—and therefore his readers—had access to the finest libraries of the time in Paris and the network of the Dominican order (Paulmier-Foucart & Duchenne 1999).

d) Thomas Hibernicus OP (Thomas of Ireland) (*ca.* 1265–75 – after 1338) taught at the University of Paris (Nigham, *Electronic Manipulus*). The *Manipulus florum* (alias *Flores doctorum*) is a compendium for preachers and teachers [«in sermonibus aut lectionibus»] of more than 6000 extracts from the Fathers and the classics, sometimes derived from existing compendia, under 266 alphabetical titles. His Prologue (Rouse & Rouse 1979: 237) lists the sources which are included in Table I.<sup>4</sup> In the Peninsula these florilegia circulated almost exclusively in Latin (see FLORes DB).<sup>5</sup>

3. On Vincent of Beauvais in the Peninsula, see Taylor 2015, Villarroel Fernández (2010; 2020) and Cabré L. *et al.* (2018: 202–207).

4. On Hibernicus in the Peninsula, see Catalán Casanova (2013: 377–378), Taylor (2014a), Cabré L. *et al.* (2018: 195–6) and Muñoz (2019).

5. See however the Catalan Vincent of Beauvais (Cabré L. *et al.* 2018: 202–207).

Two other works were available in the vernacular:

e) The jurist (*causidicus*) Albertano da Brescia wrote three moral treatises each dedicated to one of his sons: the *Liber de amore et dilectione Dei* (1238), the *Liber de doctrina loquendi et tacendi* (1245) and the *Liber consolationis et consilii* (1246); as well as some *Sermones*. His compilatory practice can be observed thanks to the survival of his manuscripts of Seneca and St Augustine with glosses in his hand (Villa 1969).<sup>6</sup>

The *Liber consolationis et consilii* has a rudimentary plot. Melibeus's home is broken into and his wife and daughter assaulted. With his wife and friends he debates whether or not to take revenge. The tale ends in reconciliation. What gives the work its distinctive tone is the heavy use of *sententiae*, placed in the mouth not of the author (which we might consider the norm) but of the protagonists:

Hijis auditis et diligenter intellectis, respondit Melibeus dicens: Domina mea, talem prudentiam nec habeo, nec habere spero. Jam enim in aetate processi fere usque ad finem meae juventutis; et in tempore transacto curis secularibus ac voluptatibus taliter deditus fui, quod, licet valde dives sim, multa de meis facultatibus consumendo, tempus amisi, et dicere possum:

6. On Albertanus in the Peninsula, see Taylor (2014a: 20-24) and Cabré L. *et al.* (2018: 195-6).

Dampna fleo rerum, sed plus fleo dampna dierum:

Quisque potest rebus succurrere, nemo diebus.

Nec etiam prudentiae vel aliis rebus studere valeo; nam

Qui non assuescit virtutibus, dum juvenescit.

A vitiis nescit desuescere, quando senescit.

Et iterum:

Dedita mens curis fit veri nescia juris.

(X, «De studiis»; Sundby 1883: 27-29)

In the Old Catalan translation:

Quant Melibeus hac oïdes aquestes paraules, respon: —Dona, yo no he aytal saviesa ne la esper d'aver, cor ja són enantat de dies e són vingut quax en la fin del meu jovent; e són estat tan curós dels adelitamants seculars que, jatsia açò que yo só rich, yo he perdut mon temps e molt consumat del meu. E puch dir ço que diu lo savi: «Yo plor lo dampnatge de les coses despeses, mas més plor lo dampnatge del temps perdut; cor cascun pot ajudar a les coses perdudes, mas lo temps perdut no recobra hom». Encara, no pusc estudiar en sciència ne en altres virtuts, cor lo savi dix: «Qui no usa en jovent en bones costumes, no's partex de les males en sa veylesa»; encara dix: «Cor molt ansiós no aprèn ben sciència de virtuts».

(Sansone 1965: 59-60)

A number of his sources are listed in Table II:

<i>Liber de amore et dilectione Dei</i> (1238)	<i>Liber de doctrina loquendi et tacendi</i> (1245)	<i>Liber consolationis et consilii</i> (1246)
Cicero	Ovidius	Cicero
Cato	Pamphilus	Seneca
Ps-Balbus	Seneca	Cato
Plato	Cassiodorus	Ovidius
Hugo de S Victore	Petrus Alfonsi	Sallustius
Petrus Alfonsi	Martialis	Petrus Alfonsi
Prosper	Innocentius Papa	Prosper
Pamphilus	Prosper	Gregorius
Cassiodorus		Pamphilus
<i>Regulae amoris</i> (Andreas Capellanus)		Horatius
		Cassiodorus
		Gualterus Martialis (Godfrey of Winchester)

TABLE II

f) John of Wales (Joannes Gallensis) OFM (1210/30-1285) compiled the *Breviloquium de virtutibus* (arranged by subject), the *Communiloquium* and the *Summa collationum* (arranged *per distinctiones*). There were various translations into Catalan and Spanish.<sup>7</sup>

It is clear that the *Auctoritates Aristotelis*, and the works of the friars Vincent of Beauvais,

7. On John of Wales in Catalan see Cabré L. *et al.* (2018: 199-201); in Spanish, Huéllamo San José (1997; 1999; 2009).

Hibernicus and John of Wales were designed for preachers; the *Florilegium Gallicum* is undeclared. Albertanus is different, with the author and audience being laymen. Until very recently, work on these authors ignored the Peninsula but this is being remedied. As was logical, the compilers made use of earlier compilations. Hibernicus used John of Wales (Swanson 1989: 27) and Vincent of Beauvais used the *Florilegium Gallicum* (Villarroel 2020: 214). Curiously, according to Swanson (1989: 36), Gallensis himself did not

	<i>Poridat</i>	<i>Bocados</i>	<i>Buenos Proverbios</i>	Other wisdom works	Non-wisdom works
Sal 1763	x	x	x	<i>100cap, Segundo, Bernardus, Lucidario, Calila</i> from Hebrew	<i>Coloquio memoria</i>
Sal 1866		x		<i>Cuento y aventura de Gracián</i>	<i>Crónica mundial</i>
BNE 3378		x		<i>100cap</i>	
BNE 6545	x	x			
BNE 6608		x		<i>100cap, Xerxes, LConsejo</i>	Treatise on humours
BNE 6936		x		<i>Flores</i>	<i>Invencionario, sermons</i>
BNE 8405		x		<i>100cap</i>	Sumario de la <i>Corónica de España</i>
BNE 9055				<i>Teodor</i>	<i>LConoscimiento, chronological notes</i>
BNE 9204		x		<i>Segundo</i>	
BNE 9428	<i>Secretum</i>		x	<i>Flores, Bernardus, «Recela los secretos»</i>	<i>Carta que envió un moro</i>
BNE 17853	x			<i>Teodor</i>	
BNE 17822		x		<i>Teodor</i>	
BNE 17814			x		Villena
Esc e-III-10		x		<i>Segundo</i>	
Esc h-III-1	x		x	<i>Flores, Segundo, «Cómo los hijos deven honrar al padre», Eccles, Sapientia, Burley</i>	<i>De las edades que fueron hasta la venida de Jesu Cristo</i>
Esc h-III-6		x		<i>Teodor</i>	
Esc h-III-24		x			TCartagena, <i>Vencimiento del mundo</i>
Esc L-III-2	x		x	<i>Pr Sen, Flores</i>	
Esc S-II-13			x	<i>Flores, Santillana, Proverbios PRINT</i>	Valera, <i>Tratado de providencia PRINT</i>
HSA 321/257	x		x	<i>Flores</i>	
Lisbon Ilum 46	x				<i>Mappamundi</i>
March 20/4/1		x			<i>De officiis</i>
RAE 155	x			Zadique	<i>Zodiac, Regimiento para conservar la salud, CMingo Revulgo</i>
R Moñino V-6-75			x		Boethius
Santander 128		x		<i>100cap</i>	

TABLE III

use florilegia. A further suggestion of the use of second-hand sources in these compilations is the appearance of authors who were very little known in the Middle Ages. Alongside the omnipresent Aristotle, Augustine, Ovid or Seneca we find the rare Tibullus, the genuine Martial (as opposed to Godfrey of Winchester), Petronius, Pliny the Younger, only discovered by the humanists; Horace too, in the words of Menéndez y Pelayo (1885: I, 6): «Horacio fué de los poetas latinos menos saboreados en la Edad Media, y hasta muy entrado el siglo XV apenas encontramos reminiscencias de sus ideas y estilo».

This phenomenon of second-hand sources also affects vernacular writers. En Pacs cites Casiodoro (Llabrés 1889: 14), Horaci (14, 31, 33, etc.), Ambros (22, 53, 74), possibly via Hibernicus. He uses the *Liber consolationis et consilii* of Albertano (Riera 1987: 11). He cites «el versificador» (Llabrés 1889: 53), a term used by Petrus Alfonsi and Vincent of Beauvais. Indeed, he names Vincent of Beauvais (Llabrés 1889: 81). Eiximenis too names Vincent of Beauvais (Wittlin 2000: 52), and according to Wittlin makes use of him (2000: 81). Similarly, he owned a copy of Hibernicus and he uses Gallensis without naming him (2000: 52, 87-92). Zadique cites «el autor» (Bizzarri 169: 86), meaning Vincent of Beauvais. The *Doctrina compendiosa* uses Albertanus (Wittlin 2006: 15-27). Although these florilegia were invented for a religious audience, they also figure in the inventories of laymen (see for example Kibre 1946: 270, 285 on Vincent of Beauvais). Their presence in En Pacs is in accordance with this model of reception.

### ☛ 3. Manuscript context

So far we have considered the origins of the vernacular wisdom texts. Let us now examine their manuscript context.

#### 3.1. Castile

Table III shows the prime importance of three texts translated from Arabic in the thirteenth century: *Poridat de las poridades*, *Libro de los buenos proverbios* and *Bocados de oro*. *Bocados* is by far the most copied of the corpus. PhiloBiblon (BETA textid 1312) cites sixteen manuscripts. Only *Buenos proverbios* is securely dated (before 1280), as it is copied in part in the manuscript of *General*

*estoria* IV, produced in the Alfonsine scriptorium (MS Vat. lat. 539). The table also shows that *Buenos proverbios* and *Bocados*, although they are so similar, did not circulate together (Taylor 2014c). Although wisdom texts were copied with works of a variety of other genres, in several cases the co-transmission of wisdom texts strongly suggests that medieval scribes or editors had a conception of wisdom as a genre.

#### 3.2. Catalonia

As Table IV shows, the transmission of the Catalan texts, as in the Castilian case, also bears witness to a concept of wisdom—for example, BnF Esp 55 is copied by a single hand, which reinforces this hypothesis (Rovira 2018: 62). Interaction between wisdom literature in Castilian and Catalan dates back to the origins, when *Buenos Proverbios* was translated for King Jaume of Aragon (most probably the Second of this name: see Kasten 1934 and Conca & Guia, in press) and Juan Fernández de Heredia translated Catalan wisdom texts into Aragonese in his *Rams de flores* (Cacho Bleuca 1997). «Zadique» refers to *Dichos de sabios*, explicitly translated from Catalan into Castilian by Jacobo Zadique de Uclés at the request of Lorenzo Suárez de Figueroa in 1402. The Catalan original is lost. The Catalan origin of the Castilian is shown by various forms: Julio Fronti (Bizzarri 2019: 99), Publi (103), Titus Livius (104), Pupeus [Trogo Pompeo] (109), Orfeus (131), Ruberte (161), Juvanalis (176), Faliciano [Feliciano] (177), Pelestina (177), Anbros (178), Teodoriche (180), Tubias (Escorial MS b-II-19, f. 141v, 146r) (see also Conca & Guia 2022). Encrueri (195) is Cerverí de Girona. It seems to me that Zadique circulated like a Castilian text rather than a Catalan one: that is, it is not copied with other translations from the Catalan but with original Castilian texts. In this respect it contrasts with the collection of Catalan wisdom texts in Castilian translation in the *Cancionero de Ixar*: Jafudà Bonsenyor in Castilian, Albertano in Castilian, *Flores de virtudes* in Castilian (Lacarra 2021), all from the Catalan. Curiously, Ruth Miguel Franco (2009; 2010; 2012), in her studies of all the peninsular versions of Bernard, *De cura*, concludes that the text in *Ixar* is not from the Catalan. Another interesting example of the co-transmission of wisdom texts



Tarragona Santes Creus 108	Bernardus, <i>De cura</i> LAT	<i>Secretum</i> LAT	Cessolis LAT	<i>De dictis phi- losophorum</i> LAT	<i>Proverbia Arabum</i> LAT CAT		
BNE 921	<i>Secret</i> CAT	<i>Paraules de Salamó</i> CAT	<i>Ensenyament</i> CAT	<i>LDoctrina</i> CAT	Cessolis CAT	Bonsenyor CAT	Bernardus, <i>De cura</i> CAT
RABL 3-I-7	Gallensis, <i>Breviloquium</i> CAT	<i>Scipio e Ani- bal</i> CAT	Seneca, <i>De providentia</i> CAT	Bernardus, <i>De cura</i> CAT	<i>Consell reina de França</i> CAT		
Olim Palau Requesens VII	Gallensis, <i>Breviloquium</i> CAT	Seneca, <i>Tra- goediae</i> CAT					
ACA Sant Cugat 81	En Pachis CAT	Cato CAT					
Esc b.II.19	Zadique CAST						
Esc b.IV.10	Zadique CAST						
RAE 15	Zadique CAST						
RAE 11	Zadique CAST	<i>Vergel</i> CAST					
Sal 1865	Santillana (incl. Prover- bios) CAST	Zadique CAST	Santillana, Mena CAST				
ACA Sant Cugat 83	Bonsenyor CAT	<i>Filla del rei d'Hungria</i> CAT					
BC 42	Bonsenyor CAT	Brison CAT	Albertanus, <i>De arte lo- quendi</i> CAT				
BC 1031	<i>Sidrac</i> CAT	Bonsenyor CAT	Cato CAT	<i>Proverbis de Salamó</i> CAT			
BnF Esp 54	En Pachis CAT						
BnF Esp 55	En Pachis CAT	<i>Doctrina compendiosa</i> CAT	Metge, <i>Apo- logia</i> CAT	Bonsenyor CAT			
BC 14	Bonsenyor CAT	Albertanus, <i>De arte lo- quendi</i> CAT					
BC 472	En Pachis CAT	Bonsenyor CAT					
BNE 2882 Ixar	Bonsenyor CAST	Albertanus, <i>De arte lo- quendi</i> CAST	Bernardus, <i>De cura</i> CAST	<i>Flores de virtudes</i> CAST			

TABLE IV



is the similarity between Tarragona, Santes Creus 108 and BNE 921 (Taylor 1993). Bosenyor is the most copied of the Catalan wisdom texts (Conca & Guia, in press). The wisdom texts of Ramon Llull circulated with other Lullian works and not with wisdom works by other authors (Tous 2017).

• 4. Consumption

The following charts summarise the influence of the wisdom texts.

In chart I the first row is occupied by Greek sources, probably Byzantine florilegia. In the second are the first monuments of Spanish prose, translated from the Arabic (without Latin inter-

mediaries) in the 13th century—there were no translations from Arabic to Castilian after the thirteenth century. The enigmatic character of these three works is due to a large extent to the lack of a translator’s prologue—contrast the prologues and epilogues to two contemporary exemplum-books, *Calila* and *Engaños*, translated for Alfonso X as prince and his brother Fadrique. A third row shows wisdom books which derive from these. The fourth shows longer prose works which are not sapiential (*El Tostado sobre el amor*, etc.).

Catalonia has a similar profile. I have made little reference in my text to the semitic tradi-

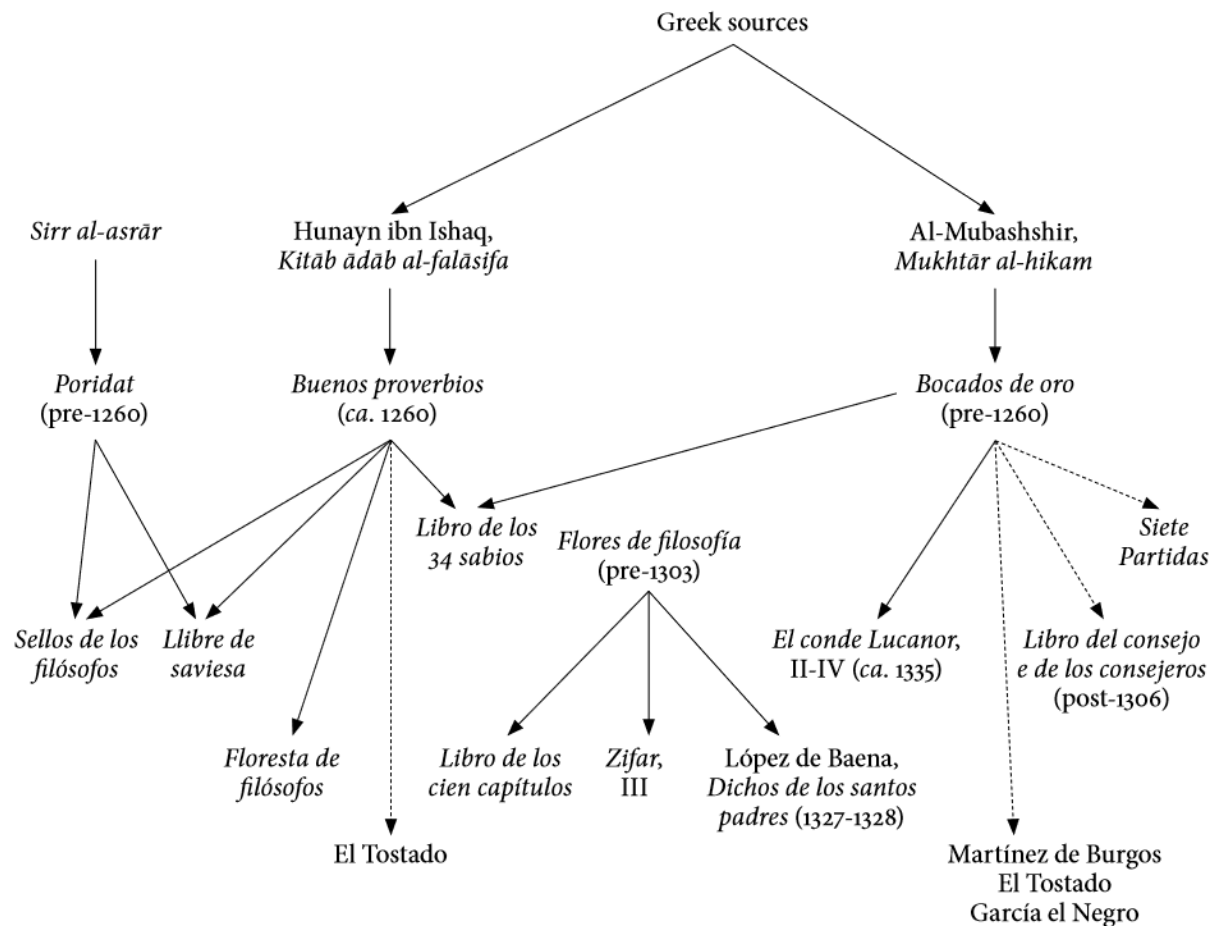


CHART I

tion, but I believe it is made clear in the chart. The Catalan chart is divided into three branches. The first shows the descent from the *Kitāb adāb al-falāsifa*; the second, that of the *Mukhtār*: Ibn Zabara (González-Llubera 1931) and Bonsenyor were Jews writing in Barcelona, ibn Zabara in Hebrew and Bonsenyor in Catalan. Bonsenyor was influential in Catalan (*Tirant*, En Pachs) and Castilian (Conca & Guia in press). The third column groups texts in the Latin tradition, descending from Cerverí (Reixach & Cabré M. 2019). As with the Castilian texts, with the exception of *Tirant* these are wisdom texts. In both languages reception is tantamount to compilation as theorised by Bonaventura with little adaptation. An exception is the modest rewriting of *Flores de filosofia* in *Los dichos de los santos padres*, by López de Bae-

za for the Order of Santiago, in which «el rey» is replaced with «el maestre» (Crosas López 2009).

### 5. Conclusions

This account has examined the circulation of wisdom literature in Aragon and Castile starting with its pre-romance origins in Latin and the semitic languages. The manuscript context of the romance texts is proof of a medieval concept of wisdom literature. Finally, the debt of vernacular authors to Latin florilegia and romance sources is surveyed.

I have two conclusions, one practical and one theoretical. At a practical level, nobody imagines that when a medieval author cites Plato this means he has read his works: it is a commonplace to say «doubtless via some florilegi-

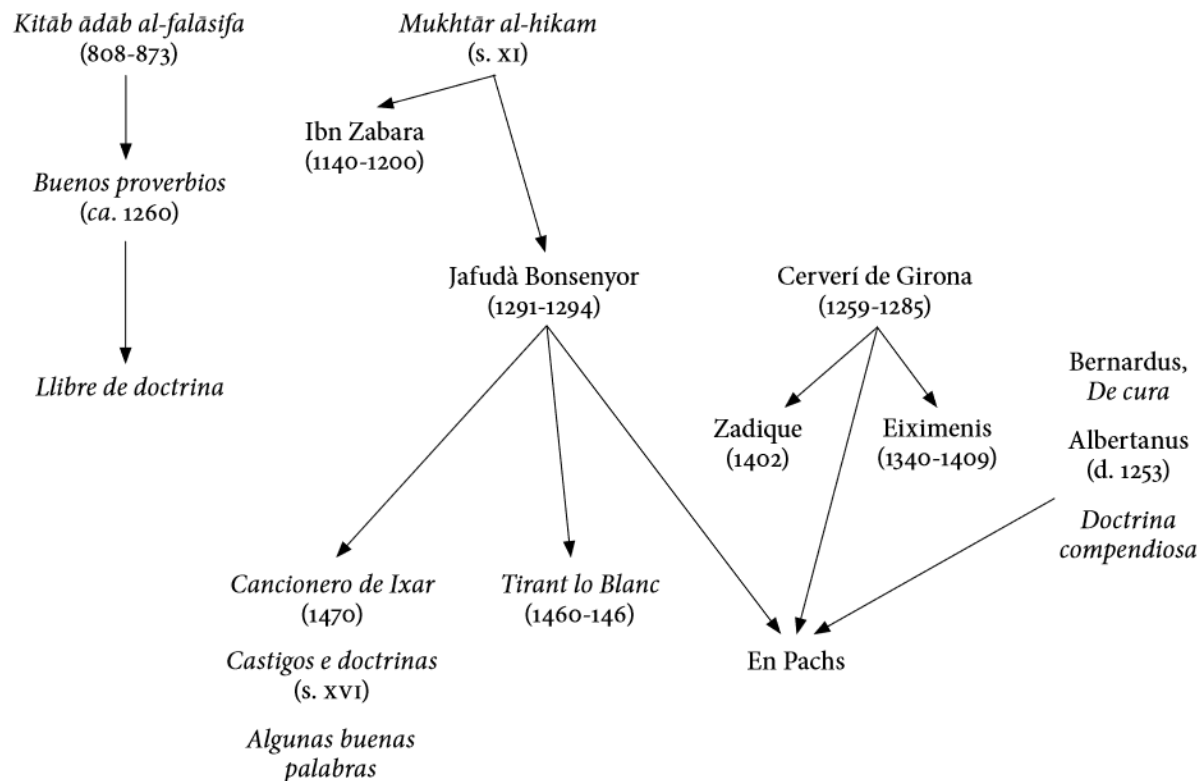


CHART II

um» (Russell 1991: 118-121). And this commonplace is true. Nowadays with digital resources it is ever easier to verify references. This has revealed the debt of authors—and not only those writing in the vernacular—to what I have termed the six greats. At a theoretical level, if we wish to recover the world picture of medieval authors it is not sufficient to conclude that «certain ideas were in the air». Granted there will always be an oral element—now lost for ever—in medieval culture, but the study of written transmission allows us a clearer vision of what was «in the air».

### ☛ List of abbreviations of libraries

BC = Biblioteca de Catalunya.  
 BNE = Biblioteca Nacional de España.  
 BnF = Bibliothèque nationale de France.  
 Esc = Real Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial.  
 HSA = Hispanic Society of America (New York).  
 Lisbon = Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal.  
 March = Biblioteca de la Fundació Bartolomé March (Palma de Mallorca).  
 Palau Requesens = Arxiu del Palau Requesens (Barcelona).  
 RABL = Biblioteca de la Reial Acadèmia de Bones Lletres (Barcelona).  
 RAE = Biblioteca de la Real Academia Española (Madrid).  
 R Moñino = Biblioteca de la Real Academia Española, Colección Antonio Rodríguez-Moñino (Madrid).  
 Sal = Biblioteca Universitaria de Salamanca.  
 Santander = Biblioteca de Menéndez Pelayo.  
 Sant Cugat = Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó, Manuscrits, Còdexs de Sant Cugat del Vallès.  
 Tarragona = Biblioteca Pública de Tarragona.

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