Á L V A R O C A N C E L A C I L L E R U E L O

An emendation to the Renotatio Isidori
(CPL 1206º, BHL 4483)*

Summary – At the end of the *Renotatio Isidori*, Braulio of Zaragoza mentions Isidore of Seville's fight against the heresy of the Acephali. In the text of the manuscripts the last sentence (*eam adseruit veritatem*) is commonly accepted as corrupt; it was rightly printed between *cruces desperationis* in the most recent critical edition. This paper proposes reading *sanctam* for *eam*, which may have arisen through the misinterpretation of the common abbreviation *rcam*. The expression *sancta veritas* is regularly used by Late Antique and Early Medieval authors to refer to Holy Scripture and its catholic, orthodox interpretation.

1. After the death of Isidore of Seville († 636), Braulio, the learned bishop of Zaragoza († 651), wrote a concise bio-bibliographical notice on the life, character and writings of his late friend, and appended it to Isidore's De viris illustribus as an additional chapter.[1] Currently known as the Renotatio librorum domini Isidori, this short text constitutes a key piece of information for our understanding of the works of the most important Visigothic writer.[2] In its final section the bishop of Seville is presented as an active

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[1] CPL 1206. See Codoñer, El De viris illustribus. The recension containing the Renotatio attached to the De viris illustribus would ultimately originate from Braulio's exemplar; see Codoñer, El De viris illustribus, 28 and 114 – 128, as well as Dolbeau, Une refonte wisigothique (in particular 44 – 46 and 56), with further references. The archetype, however, should be probably dated to a later age: see § 4 below.

[2] BHL 4483, CPL 1206º, Díaz y Díaz, Index, nº 159, CPPM IIA 461. The main work on this text is Martín-Iglesias, Scripta de vita Isidori, 15 – 191 (Introduction), 193 – 207 (Critical edition), and 209 – 274 (Notes to the text). For previous references, see the

defender of the religious orthodoxy against the heresy of the Acephali;[3] however, as transmitted in the manuscripts the last sentence is corrupt and it has rightly received *cruces desperationis* in the latest, standard edition of the work, published by José Carlos Martín-Iglesias:[4]

> *Quo vero flumine eloquentiae et quot iaculis divinarum Scripturarum seu Patrum testimoniis Acephalitarum haeresim confuderit, synodalia gesta coram eo Hispali acta declarant, in qua contra Gregorium praefatae haeresis antestitem † eam † adseruit veritatem.*

eam *codd.* (*at* eum *r*), catholicam *temptavit Galindo (acceperunt Fontaine et Martín*[1]), *om. Miraeus*

1.1 Despite some syntactic difficulties, the overall understanding of the passage poses no problem.[5] However, in the final clause *eam* is clearly meaningless: it is grammatically correct, but there is no "aforementioned Truth" that *eam veritatem* could refer to and it is not possible to translate the term or to make sense of it in this context. The passage requires a different,

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monograph by the same author: Martín-Iglesias, La Renotatio, containing the first critical edition of the text (259–264).

[3] A monophysite heresy that denied the double nature – human and divine – of Jesus Christ; the name recalls the fact that they had no leader and were opposed to all the patriarchates. During the Second Council of Seville, held in November 619, Isidore opposed their thesis, defended at that time by a Syrian bishop called Gregory, who had taken refuge in Hispania Baetica. On this heresy and the role played by Isidore see Martín-Iglesias, La Renotatio, 286–288, and Scripta de vita Isidori, 271/272, with further references.

[4] Martín-Iglesias, Scripta de vita Isidori, 206, lines 62–66; the apparatus has been adapted. The same author has published an annotated translation: Martín-Iglesias, Escritos medievales, 83–86; the corruption is discussed at page 86 note c.

[5] "With what a stream of eloquence, with how many javelins provided by the Divine Scriptures and with how many testimonies contained in the writings of the Fathers of the Church did he confound the heresy of the Acephalites! This is apparent in the text of the Acts of the Council that took place in Seville in his presence; on that occasion he proclaimed the Truth [but *eam*? *That* Truth? *What* Truth?] against Gregory, the head of the previously mentioned heresy". The syntax of *synodalia gesta coram eo Hispali acta declarant, in qua … adseruit veritatem* is problematic. According to the meaning of the text, *qua* (singular) is not likely to refer to *Hispali*, but to *synodalia acta*, which is plural (see *declarant*) and would require *quibus*. The most plausible explanation is that *synodalia* has been taken as the genitive *synodi* (feminine: *synodi … in qua*), and *acta synodalia* ("council acts") is equivalent to *acta synodi* ("acts of the council"). This syntax *ad sensum* explains the use of *gesta* as well: *gesta* must not refer to acts, which were drawn up afterwards, but to the celebration of the council (*synodalia gesta acta = synodi gestae acta*).

more significant adjective to be bound to *veritatem*. As shown in the apparatus, the manuscript tradition only provides one variant, *eum*, but it is restricted to a late witness, *r* (Firenze, Biblioteca Riccardiana, 410, 15th century), whose scribe rightly understood that *eam* was senseless. Nevertheless, the stemmatic position of this manuscript as well as the *facilior* character of its reading lead us to discard the latter immediately as a *lectio singularis*: it cannot be more than an unrefined correction to link *eum* to *Gregorium antestitem*.[6]

1.2 The oldest editions offer no useful alternative: *eam* spread as the vulgate text thanks to Jacques-Paul Migne's Patrologia Latina,[7] but Migne's edition is a reproduction of Faustino Arévalo's Isidori opera omnia, and Arévalo had done nothing but print Juan Grial's edition, published in 1599.[8] The corruption was no doubt detected in 1639 by Albert le Mire (Miraeus), who suppressed the term in the edition published in his Bibliotheca Ecclesiastica.[9] However, *eam* cannot be taken as an interpolation, for it adds nothing to the passage. On the contrary, it makes the text clearly worse: deleting the term conceals the problem, but does not solve it convincingly.

1.3 In 1950 Pascual Galindo published the first modern edition of the work, even though it only consists of the transcription of the manuscript *L* (León, Archivo-Biblioteca de la Santa Iglesia Catedral, 22, 9th century, f. 139ra–140rb), slightly corrected with the help of Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 2277 (late 13th century).[10] His text reads *eam*, following *L*, but in a critical note the editor suggests *dubitanter* the

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[6] Were it right, *eam* would be unexplainable as an independent innovation in the rest of the witnesses. It cannot be taken to be an error arising from Visigothic script (with its typical open *a*), for *r* was copied in 15th-century Italy, in the same way as its closest relatives and, probably, its exemplar (*r* had further ancestors in that century). See Martín-Iglesias, Scripta de vita Isidori, 175 and 164–166. On the indirect tradition, which also reads *eam*, see note 10 below.

[7] PL 81, cols. 15D–17B (repr. 1862: cols. 65D–68A).

[8] Arévalo, Isidori Hispalensis, vol. 1, 8–10, and Grial, Divi Isidori, vol. 1, f. 5^v–6^r and 130. The text of De viris illustribus was prepared by Juan Bautista Pérez. On both editions see Martín-Iglesias, Scripta de vita Isidori, 184–187; on previous editions, 180–188.

[9] Miraeus, Bibliotheca, vol. 1, 77/78; the passage is on page 78.

[10] Lynch‑Galindo, San Braulio; the edition of the Renotatio, by Galindo, appears in pages 356–360. In fact, the Paris manuscript does not transmit the Renotatio itself: it is actually the only witness of an anonymous life written in the second half of the 13th century and derived from another 11th/12th-century Vita Isidori. On the Paris manuscript see Martín-Iglesias, Scripta medii aevi, 144*–152*. On the second Vita, Martín-Iglesias, Scripta de vita Isidori, 389–412. Of course both texts read *eam*.

correction *catholicam*, which comes closer at least to the sense, style and syntax required by the passage. The conjecture was accepted by Claude Barlow in his English translation of the Renotatio,[11] by Jacques Fontaine, who broadly reproduces Galindo's text,[12] and also by Martín-Iglesias in the first truly critical edition of the work.[13]

Nevertheless, *catholicam* is not convincing. In order to explain how *eam* could have arisen from this reading, Galindo had to posit the existence of an abbreviation *cam* (provided with a supralinear stroke), but this assumption seems to be far-fetched and in fact Galindo himself presented it in a very tentative way.[14] I could not track down any examples of this abbreviation, and it does not appear in the principal repertories,[15] nor in surveys of the medieval abbreviation system,[16] nor in treatises on Visigothic script,[17] nor even in Ludwig Traube's Nomina sacra, where abridged forms for a term such as *catholicus* might have been expected to appear.[18] Since abbreviations are not fully and systematically registered, one cannot categorically claim that it d o e s   n o t   e x i s t   a t   a l l, but in the absence of significant examples it becomes a *petitio principii* to suggest that it did. Second, even if an adjective is needed to be bound to *veritatem*, there is no special reason to accept *catholicam* – even less when it is based on a more than doubtful abbreviation – instead of any other term that suits *grosso modo* the required meaning, such as *rectam*, for example, which would be closer to *eam*.

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[11] Barlow, Iberian Fathers, 2, 140–142. See page 142 note 5: "*cam*, an abbreviation for *catholicam*, is Galindo's very probable correction of the manuscript reading *eam*." But see *infra* the rather tentative way in which Galindo suggested his correction.

[12] Fontaine, Isidore de Séville, 431–433. The text is reprinted from Galindo's edition and provided with a French translation.

[13] Martín-Iglesias, La Renotatio, 199 and 263, line 53.

[14] See Galindo in Lynch‑Galindo, San Braulio, 360, n. 11: "Creemos que el original que copiaron el cód. 22 y otros tendría tal vez *cam = catholicam*." Note its deliberately uncertain character ("tendría tal vez" = "the exemplar p e r h a p s   m a y   h a v e   had *cam = catholicam*" etc.).

[15] Mainly Cappelli, Dizionario, and Pelzer, Abréviations; see also the bibliography cited in note 20 below.

[16] Lindsay, Notae latinae.

[17] Millares Carlo, Tratado. For a survey of Visigothic abbreviations see vol. 1, 89–108 (= Chapter 11). In fact, an alleged form as *cam* would be closer to *cm / cms / coms = comes*, *cm / com. = communis*, or *cm = centum*, all of which would clearly be meaningless in this context.

[18] Traube, Nomina sacra.

1.4 To put it in Paul Maas' terms, just like *eum* in *r* or Miraeus' deletion, *catholicam* is an effective "diagnostische Konjektur": it is undoubtedly valuable insofar as it has made explicit the problems with the transmitted reading, but it remains unconvincing as a remedy for a better text.[19] Significantly enough, in his latest, excellent edition of the work Martín-Iglesias has returned to the manuscript text, now printed *inter cruces desperationis*. As far as we are aware, it is the last corrupt passage remaining in the text.

2. Unlike the previous suggestions, I propose to correct the transmitted text *eam adseruit veritatem* to *sanctam adseruit veritatem*. As a *nomen sacrum*, the term *sanctam* is usually written in the abbreviated form *ɼcam*, very well attested in Visigothic script,[20] and from a palaeographical point of view the corruption of *ɼcam adseruit veritatem* into *eam adseruit veritatem* would be not only easy, but even trivial. I can illustrate it with at least two different, historical examples in early Medieval Latin literature attesting the inverse change (*eam > sanctam*); they demonstrate that the confusion between both words is not a palaeographical fiction.

The first case comes from the tradition of a pseudo-Isidorian work called Oratio pro correptione vitae.[21] In chapter 43 (PL 83 col. 1274C), the right text is *cum acceperis eam* (scil. *animam*), but it has been transformed into an

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[19] Maas, Textkritik, 32. See also West, Textual Criticism, 58; Lloyd-Jones, Paul Maas, 221; Tarrant, Texts, 74/75.

[20] Usually provided with a supralinear stroke. On this abbreviation and other *nomina sacra* the bibliography is extensive; see Traube, Nomina sacra, esp. 193–204; Lindsay, Notae latinae, 409/410, nº 13; Turner, The Nomina Sacra; Cencetti, Lineamenti, 353–475; Bischoff, Latin Palaeography, 152; Lowe, The Beneventan Script, 159; Mudridge, Copying Early Christian Texts, 121 n. 127, with further references. In Visigothic script, in which the archetype of the Renotatio is likely to have been written, this abbreviation is very well attested. See Millares Carlo, Tratado, vol. 1, 96 (*scs, sci … : sanctus, -i …*). Compare for example the script of Madrid, Biblioteca de la Real Academia de la Historia, cod. 29 (10th century), f. 5va, line 33 (*ɼcam*) and f. 25va, line 6 (*eam*), as well as Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, cod. 80 (10th century; scribe: Florencio de Valeránica), f. 312vb, line 2 (*ɼcam*) and line 4 (*eam*). When the top of the *e* stands out higher, as some scribes did, the confusion between *Ɛam* and *ɼcam* is even easier. For samples of *scs* in Visigothic epigraphy, in which it is very well attested, see Velázquez Soriano, Documentos, 56.

[21] CPL 1228; Díaz y Díaz, Index, nº 306; CPPM IIB 3437. 7th/8th century, by the same anonymous author of two other poems: Exhortatio poenitendi (CPL 1227; Díaz y Díaz, Index, nº 305; CPPM IIB 3436) and Lamentum poenitentiae (CPL 1533; Díaz y Díaz, Index, nº 304; CPPM IIB 3435).

absurd *cum acceperis sanctam* in a whole family of manuscripts depending from a Carolingian hyparchetype whose oldest descendant is Sankt Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, 269 (early 10th century).[22] A second example showing the same confusion is attested in the tradition of Gregory of Tours' Liber in gloria martyrum:[23] in chapter 12 *eam gemmam media intercapidine locat* appears as *sanctam gemmam media intercapidine locat* in two very close manuscripts:[24] Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 9733 (late 9th century) and Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, Aug. Perg. 67 (10th century).[25]

There is no semantic link between both words that would justify a psychologically motivated error; written in *scriptio plena*, *sanctam* would never have motivated the corruption, and of course such a recurring mistake cannot be a matter of pure coincidence in independent traditions. All these cases – and arguably the passage of the Renotatio here discussed – almost certainly involve misreadings of the abbreviation *rcam*; further samples would emerge from critical apparatuses.[26]

3. A number of remarkable parallels support the text *sanctam adseruit veritatem* and allow us to interpret it as a reference to the orthodox understanding of the Holy Scriptures.

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[22] Two copies of this Sangallensis are still extant: Sankt Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, 223, and Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, cod. 794 (both 12th century). The other branch of this family descends from a lost twin witness of Sankt Gallen 269 that can be reconstructed with the agreement of three 15th-century independent *recentiores*: Strasbourg, Bibliothèque Nationale et Universitaire, MS.0.034; Wrocław, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka, Mil. II 150 (extant copy: Berlin, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Magdeb. 13), as well as Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Theol. 208 (extant copy: Jena, Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, 2 Op. theol. IV, 41). All these manuscripts read *cum acceperis sanctam*, as I have checked *de visu* while preparing the critical edition of the whole corpus.

[23] CPL 1024 (comprised within the Miraculorum libri VIII), 6th century.

[24] Edition in Krutsch, Gregorii Turonensis Opera, 46, line 32. Krutsch - Levison, Passiones vitaeque, 728, pointed out the error as an addendum to the same passage.

[25] On the first manuscript see Krutsch, Gregorii Turonensis opera, 16/17, and Bischoff (†), Katalog, nº 1447. On the second, Krutsch - Levison, Passiones vitaeque, 711–716, and Holder, Die Reichenauer Handschriften, 208/209.

[26] As the abbreviation remains stable in the medieval writing system, the mistake reappears in later traditions. For example, in two manuscripts of Gerhard von Sterngassen's De beatitudinibus (14th century) *eis* has been misread as *sanctis*; see Kaup, De beatitudinibus, 339, line 6. On other uncommon forms, see Traube, Nomina sacra, 193–204, and Lindsay, Notae latinae, 409/410, nº 13.

3.1 In late antique literature, it can be found at least once in Augustine of
Hippo's († 430) De consensu Evangelistarum,[27] as well as three times in
Cassiodorus's († 585) Expositio psalmorum.[28] In the later Merovingian age,
Leodegar of Poitiers, bishop of Autun († 679), employs *sancta veritas* in the
head of one of his extant letters, addressed to his mother Sigrada of Alsace.[29]
As regards Visigothic literature, to which Isidore and Braulio's Renotatio
belong, *sancta veritas* can be paralleled in two important theological works
from this period written by Ildefonsus († 667)[30] and Julian († 690),[31] both of
them bishops of Toledo. In the Spanish literature of the post-Visigothic
period, Eulogius († 859), one of the 9th-century Christian martyrs of
Cordoba, also made use of the same expression at least twice, once in his
Apologeticus[32] and once in his Memoriale sanctorum.[33] Further examples
could be provided from later Medieval Latin literature.[34]

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[27] Aug. cons. evang. 4, 10, 19 (*Commendare quippe voluimus amatoribus verbi dei et studi-
osis s a n c t a e   v e r i t a t i s , quamvis eiusdem Christi, qui verus et verax est … munus
impleverunt*). CPL 273. Edition: Weihrich, De consensu evangelistarum, 414, lines 16 – 22.

[28] Cassiod. in psalm. 48, 21 (*Resignavit nobis "sancta veritas" quae promisit*); in psalm.
111, 10 (*Quis se videre non credat quae "sancta veritas" pollicetur?*); and in psalm.
143, 15 (*venit ad penetralia sapientiae, hoc est ad vocem ipsam "sanctissimae veritatis"*).
CPL 900. Edition: Adriaen, Expositio psalmorum, vol. CC SL 97, 440, lines 355 – 357;
vol. CC SL 98, 1024/1025, lines 191 – 194, and 1288, lines 304 – 310.

[29] Leodegar ep. consolatoria (*Dominę et sanctissimę genętrici Sigradę … ut inpletum est
illud, quod s a n c t a   v e r i t a s dicit: Quicumque enim fecerit voluntatem Patris mei
etc. [Matth. 12, 50]*). CPL 1077. Edition: Gundlach, Epistolae, 464, lines 17 – 21.

[30] Ildef. virg. (*Unde quia credidi propter hoc loquar, quia audivi non taceam, quia diligo
adnuntiabo, nihil per contentionem et inanem gloriam [Phil. 2, 3] in omni mea propo-
sitione insinuans, nihil in contradictionem s a n c t a e   v e r i t a t i s instituens, nihil quod
subvertat, sed quod aut inveniat aut reseret veritatem intendens*). CPL 1247, Díaz y Díaz,
Index, n° 223. Edition: Yarza Urquiola, De virginitate, 149, lines 39 – 43.

[31] Iul. Tol. progn. 3, 50 (*Etenim, secundum verba ipsius s a n c t a e   v e r i t a t i s , tunc
praecinget … ministrabit nobis [Luc. 12, 37]*). CPL 1258, Díaz y Díaz, Index, n° 270.
Edition: Hillgarth, Prognosticorum, 118, lines 11 – 13.

[32] Eul. Cord. apolog. 22 (*Praedixerat quippe hoc v e r i t a s   s a n c t a auditoribus suis
dicens: Absque synagogis … praestare Deo [Ioh. 16, 2], et iterum: Haec locutus …
pressuram habebitis [Ioh. 16, 33]*). Díaz y Díaz, Index, n° 477. Edition: Gil Fernández,
Corpus, 489, lines 10 – 14.

[33] Eul. Cord. memor. 2, 10, 10 (*Sic denique v e r i t a s   s a n c t a sciscitanti se iuveni qua-
tenus vitam aeternam possideret: Si vis, inquit, perfectus esse … thesaurum in caelis
[Matth. 19, 21]*). Díaz y Díaz, Index, n° 476. Edition: Gil Fernández, Corpus, 419/420,
lines 16 – 19.

[34] Among the medieval spiritual writers, see for example a prayer written under the
influence of John of Fécamp († 1079), perhaps by one of his disciples: *Doce me, quaeso,
clementia tua, s a n c t a   V e r i t a s , te invocare in te, quia hoc fieri quomodo oporteat*

3.2 The most remarkable aspect of this group of parallels emerges not from its large number of attestations, but from the context in which *sancta veritas* is employed and the meaning given to it. In the first one, discussing the text of the Gospels, Augustine uses *studiosi sanctae veritatis* as correlative of *amatores verbi Dei*, thereby equating *studiosi* and *amatores*, as well as *sancta veritas* and *verbum Dei* (the "Holy Truth" and the "Word of God", that is to say, the Holy Scriptures). Cassiodorus writes *sancta veritas* as a reference to the Holy Truth of the text, the meaning, and the interpretation of the Psalms: when explained and understood, the Holy Truth, namely the text of the Psalter, reveals what it had promised (*resignavit nobis sancta veritas quae promisit*). Even more eloquent are the 7th/9th-century examples: Leodegar employs *sancta veritas* to introduce Matth. 12, 50, Julian to quote Luc. 12, 37, and Eulogius to cite Ioh. 16 twice and Matth. 19, 20 once. In short, they all allude to or introduce the text or the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures.

3.3 From this point of view, at the end of the Renotatio, *sancta veritas* can be taken as a reference to Isidore's defence of the right understanding of the Holy Scriptures against Gregory. The text *contra Gregorium praefatae haeresis antestitem sanctam adseruit veritatem* connects perfectly to the preceding words. Isidore fought against the heresy of the Acephalites (*Acephalitarum haeresim confuderit*) and as weapons he took up the javelins of the text of the Holy Scriptures (*iaculis divinarum Scripturarum*); by stating the Holy Truth (*sanctam adseruit veritatem*) he consequently provided a truthful interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, opposed to that of Gregory. Of course, in a context dealing with heretical ideas on the nature of Jesus, this usage of *sancta veritas* would imply a strong component of orthodoxy, but in Visigothic texts this very meaning is well attested in the above-mentioned passage by Ildefonsus. There, the bishop of Toledo, including also a biblical quotation (Phil. 2, 3), encourages "not to propose anything contradicting the Holy Truth" (*nihil in contradictionem sanctae veritatis instituens*), "anything subversive" (*nihil quod subvertat*), that is to say, anything against the orthodoxy, as heretical movements such as the Acephalites supposedly did.

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nescio, sed a te doceri, beata Veritas, humiliter imploro. Edition: Cottier, Anima mea, 170, lines 162–164 (PsOr 13). On this text, traditionally found as the second of Anselm of Canterbury's prayers in an interpolated version (PL 158, cols. 858D–865B = PL 40, col. 905, among Pseudo-Augustine's Meditationes), see Cottier, Anima mea, 159, with further references.

4. This kind of fault is not likely to have taken place more than once within a given textual tradition. It would consequently require the existence of an already corrupted archetype, different from Braulio's exemplar. However, this implication is entirely consistent with the picture of the textual tradition provided by Martín-Iglesias: at least two other corruptions are to be attributed to the lost source of all the extant manuscripts, which should be probably dated at least after 693 – forty-two years after Braulio's death.[35] The corruption *eam* and, if accepted, its correction into *sanctam* are not only in line with the hypothesis of a faulty archetype: they provide further evidence for it.

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[35] Renotatio line 20 ⟨*suo*⟩ *stylo* and line 45 *quindecim*] *viginti*. According to Martín-Iglesias, the second is a misreading of the numerals XV ~ XX; *contra*, Galindo in Lynch - Galindo, San Braulio, 358 – 360, and Barlow, Iberian Fathers 2, 142, who read *quindecim*. On both errors and the dating of the archetype, see Martín-Iglesias, Scripta de vita Isidori, 167 – 170.

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Álvaro Cancela Cilleruelo
Universidad Complutense de Madrid
Departamento de Filología Clásica
Facultad de Filología, A-321
Ciudad Universitaria 28040 – Madrid
alvarocancela@ucm.es