

Greek Aristotelianism in the seventeenth century: uncovering Cesare Cremonini in the works of Theophilus Korydalleus*

Nikos Agiotis

Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities
agiotis@bbaw.de

This case-study concerns Greek Aristotelianism in the seventeenth century. More specifically, my article deals with the impact of neo-Aristotelianism upon the formation of the philosophical curriculum of the Greek-speaking world during that period. I examine aspects of the – rather understudied – influence exerted by Cesare Cremonini on Theophilus Korydalleus. The terms ‘authentic interpreters’/‘authentic interpretation’ and ‘νεώτεροι’ in Theophilus’ works of natural philosophy not only highlight the influence of Cremonini, but also hint at critical views held by the former, as well as terminology which is either absent or has a different meaning in treatises of the latter.

Keywords: neo-Aristotelianism; Cesare Cremonini; post-Byzantine philosophy; seventeenth-century Greek scholars; Theophilus Korydalleus

Introduction

With a few notable exceptions,¹ Greek Aristotelianism of the almost three centuries following the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople remains a rather neglected topic

* An earlier version of this paper was presented at a workshop organized by the CRC 980 ‘Episteme in motion’ – Project C06 ‘Transfer and Overlapping. Configurations of Knowledge in the Era of the Greek Homines Novi in the Ottoman Empire (1641–1730)’ at Freie Universität Berlin. I am thankful to George A. Alexakis for proof-reading the English text. My thanks for their corrections and suggestions are also due to the editors of *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* and the anonymous referee.

1 N. Psimmenos, *Ἡ ἑλληνικὴ φιλοσοφία ἀπὸ τὸ 1453 ὡς τὸ 1821: Ἀνθολογία κειμένων μὲ εἰσαγωγή καὶ σχόλια*, I: *Ἡ κυριαρχία τοῦ Ἀριστοτελισμοῦ: Προκορυθαλικὴ καὶ κορυθαλικὴ περίοδος* [Φιλοσοφικὴ καὶ πολιτικὴ βιβλιοθήκη, 26] (Athens 1988); Ch. Karanasios, ‘Die Begegnung der Neugriechen mit Aristoteles im Rahmen der ideologischen Auseinandersetzungen im griechischen Raum zu Beginn des 17. Jh.’, in Fr. Berger et al. (eds.), *Symbolae Berolinenses für Dieter Harlfinger* (Amsterdam 1993) 219–35; L. G. Benakis, *Μεταβυζαντινὴ φιλοσοφία: 17^{ος} – 19^{ος} αἰώνες: Ἐρευνα στίς πηγές* (Athens 2001); K. Th. Petsios, *Ἡ Περὶ φύσεως συζήτηση στὴ νεοελληνικὴ σκέψη: Ὀψεις τῆς φιλοσοφικῆς διερεύνησης ἀπὸ τὸν 15^ο ὡς τὸν 19^ο αἰώνα*, 2nd edn (Ioannina 2003) 37–229; M. Patiniotis, ‘Ἐκλεκτικὲς συγγένειες: Εὐγένιος Βούλγαρης καὶ

of Aristotelian studies. Inaccessible manuscripts, the absence of relevant research tools, unfamiliarity with contemporary sources in Latin and the lack of critical editions are only a few of the reasons for various shortcomings or biases regarding the assessment of the philosophical discussion conducted by Greek scholars after 1453 and until the final rejection of Aristotelian science in the eighteenth century.

In the following case-study, we examine the philosophical work of Theophilus Korydalleus, perhaps the most prominent Greek scholar of the seventeenth century.² Theophilus was born in 1574 in Athens with the surname Skordalos, which he later changed to Korydalleus. He studied at the Pontificio Collegio Greco (1604–8) and then at the University of Padua (1609–13), where he attended the lectures of Cesare Cremonini (1550–1631).³ After the end of his studies, Theophilus worked in various Greek schools as a teacher before being appointed head of the Patriarchal School in Constantinople in 1622. Patriarch Cyril Loukaris (1572–1638) invited him to serve in this position, thus giving Theophilus the opportunity to reform the curriculum of the school in accordance with the syllabus of the University of Padua. After the violent death of his benefactor, the scholar was appointed Metropolitan of Naupaktos and Arta, with the name Theodosios (1640–2); he died in the city of his birth in 1646.

Θεόφιλος Κορυδαλέας, *Δελτίο Αναγνωστικής Εταιρείας Κερκύρας* 26 (2004) 27–78; E. Leontsini, ‘Η ελληνική φιλοσοφία κατά το 16^ο και 17^ο αι.: Χριστόφορος Κοντολέων, Ιωάννης Κωττούνιος και επίσκοπος Κυθήρων Μάξιμος Μαργούνιος’, in G. N. Leontsinis (ed.), *Επιστημονική έρευνα στα Κύθηρα* (Athens 2008) 279–93.

2 For Theophilus Korydalleus see the monograph of Cl. Tsourkas, *Les débuts de l’enseignement philosophique et de la libre pensée dans les Balkans: La vie et l’oeuvre de Théophile Corydalée (1550–1646)*, 2nd edn (Thessaloniki 1967); see also, indicatively, G. P. Henderson, *The Revival of Greek Thought, 1620–1830* (Albany 1970) 12–19; G. Podskalsky, *Griechische Theologie in der Zeit der Türkenherrschaft 1453–1821. Die Orthodoxie im Spannungsfeld der nachreformatorischen Konfessionen des Westens* (Munich 1988) 194–9; P. M. Kitromilides, ‘Το κοινό φιλοσοφικό παρελθόν των βαλκανικών λαών’, in M. Dragona-Monachou (ed.), *Η φιλοσοφία στα Βαλκάνια σήμερα. Philosophy in Balkan Countries Today* (Athens 1994) 171–9; idem, *Enlightenment and Revolution: The Making of Modern Greece* (Cambridge, MA 2013) 27–30. For modern editions and reference works concerning the *aristotelica* of Korydalleus in particular, see *Théophile Corydalée, Introduction à la logique* [Théophile Corydalée, Oeuvres philophiques, 1], ed. A. Papadopoulos and C. Noica (Bucarest 1970); *Théophile Corydalée, Commentaires à la Métaphysique* [Théophile Corydalée, Oeuvres philophiques, 2], ed. C. Noica (Bucarest 1973); V. I. Tsiotras, ‘The manuscripts of Theophilus Korydalleus’ commentaries on Aristotle’s Logic’, in *Cesare Cremonini: Aspetti del pensiero e scritti* (Atti del Convegno di Studio-Padova, 26–27 Febbraio 1999) (Padua 2000) 219–48; idem, ‘Τρεις ανέκδοτες έπιστολές του Θεοφίλου Κορυδαλλέως και οι άριστοτελικές πηγές τους’, *Ο Έραμιστής* 24 (2003) 11–27; idem, ‘Ο “Εις κοιμηθέντας” λόγος του Θεοφίλου Κορυδαλλέως και η αριστοτελική περί ψυχής θεματική του’, *Ο Έραμιστής* 29 (2016) 5–45. For a comprehensive bibliography on the scholar see the entry ‘Theophilus Korydalleus’ in the database of the *Commentaria in Aristotelem Graeca et Byzantina* project: <<https://cagb-db.bbaw.de/register/personen.xql?id=cagb:b3c76632-671c-43c4-a889-c857923ae1f9>>.

3 For the work of Cremonini see H. C. Kuhn, *Venetischer Aristotelismus im Ende der aristotelischen Welt: Aspekte der Welt und des Denkens des Cesare Cremonini (1560–1631)* (Frankfurt on Main 1996); E. Riondato and A. Poppi (eds.), *Cesare Cremonini: Aspetti del pensiero e scritti*, 2 vols (Padua 2000).

Korydalleus' influence was immense: manuscript copies of his works are to be found today in their hundreds in all significant libraries of lands formerly belonging to the Ottoman Empire; for example, the commentary on Aristotle's *Physics* is transmitted either in part, or in total, or in different versions by at least 162 manuscripts dating from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries.⁴ Theophilos defined the philosophical content of the curriculum of his era and thus became the benchmark for the study of the Aristotelian corpus among Greek-speaking intellectual circles of the next one and a half centuries. The importance of Theophilos' apprenticeship to Cesare Cremonini has become a *locus communis* among older and contemporary scholars, which occasionally results in hidden contempt or exaggerated praise: Korydalleus is then presented either as 'nothing more than a Cremoninus Graecus',⁵ or 'the chief philosopher of Greek neo-Aristotelianism'.⁶ However, there is hardly any study⁷ regarding the student's dependence on the master. In this paper, we examine the reception of Cremonini's work in Theophilos' treatises concerning two key-concepts of what later came to be known as 'κορυδαλλίζειν':⁸ (a) the authentic interpretation of the Aristotelian corpus and (b) the conflict with the 'νεώτεροι'.

Authentic interpretation

Nikolaos Koursoulas (1602–52), a scholar belonging to the first generation of Aristotelians after Korydalleus, seems to be rather sceptical regarding the philosophical efficacy of the latter. Nikolaos proclaims, in his commentary on the *Physics* of Aristotle:

4 I am currently preparing an article on this subject.

5 I. A. Dimitrakopoulos, 'Βούλγαρης: Λογική: Ευγενίου Βουλγάρεως: Λογική («Κείμενα νεοελλήνων φιλοσόφων», 2). Προλεγόμενα – επιμέλεια – ευρετήρια: Κ.Θ. Πέτσιος. Ιωάννινα: Πανεπιστήμιο Ιωαννίνων 2010, 875 σ.', on *Κριτικά: Φιλοσοφικές βιβλιοκρισίες* (July 2011) <<http://www.philosophica.gr/critical/2011-07.html>>.

6 Chr. P. Marazopoulos, *Θεόφιλος Κορυδαλέας: Ὁ πρωτοφιλόσοφος τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ Νεοαριστοτελισμοῦ* (Athens 2008).

7 For the edition of the commentary of Cremonini translated into Greek by Korydalleus see A. Antonioni, 'Caesaris Cremonini In Aristotelis librum "De divinatione per somnium" commentarium adjecta versione anonyma Theophilo Corydaleo forse adjudicanda', *Miscellanea Marciana* 7–9 (1992–4) 7–101. A recently discovered manuscript transmits an earlier version of Korydalleus' commentary on the *Physics*. A preliminary examination has shown that the text bears certain resemblances to four unpublished works of Cremonini; see E. Tebelis, 'Η επίδραση της ευρωπαϊκής φιλοσοφίας του 17ου αιώνα στη διαμόρφωση της πρώιμης νεοελληνικής φυσικής φιλοσοφίας: Η περίπτωση του Θεόφιλου Κορυδαλέα', in Ch. Terezis (ed.), *Τόκος εν καλώ. Τόμος τιμητικός - Αφιέρωμα στον Αύγουστο Μπαγιόνα* (Athens 2016) 284–5.

8 I. Moisioudax, *Απολογία* (Vienna 1780) 154.

... πολλάκις ἐθαύμασα καὶ θαυμάζων οὐ παύσομαι τῆς ἐνίων ἀφροντισίας, ἢ μᾶλλον εἰπεῖν ἐθελοκακίας, οἷτινες οὕτω τῆ τοῦ ἀφροδισέως Ἀλεξάνδρου ... πρόσκεινται διδασκαλία ... ἠδυνάμην πολλοὺς ἀγαγεῖν εἰς μέσον, καὶ τὴν τοιαύτην ἀντιμισθίαν τῆς πλάνης αὐτῶν πρόδηλον τοῖς πᾶσι ποιῆσαι ἄρκει δ' ὅμως Θεόφιλος Κορυδαλλεὺς ὁ Ἀθηναῖος ... ὁ μὲν τὴν προρηθείσαν μέθοδον τῆς διδασκαλίας παρὰ Καίσαρος Κρεμωνί[ν]ου τοῦ Παταβίου διδασκάλου καὶ φιλοσόφου λαβών, ἐν τῇ Ἑλλάδι διασπείρων οὐκ ἔληξεν, ἕως οὗ, παραχωρήσει Θεοῦ, εἰς ἀδόκιμον ἐνέπεσε νοῦν.⁹

... I have always wondered – and I shall never stop wondering – at the disregard, or rather let us say wickedness, of some who put in this way faith in the teaching of Alexander of Aphrodisias ... I could bring to your attention many of them, and make clear such requital for their deceit in front of everyone; however, the case of Theophilus Korydalleus the Athenian is enough ... after getting a grasp of the aforementioned teaching method beside the professor and philosopher of Padua Cesare Cremonini, he did not cease spreading it in Greece until he went, God permitting, into a reprobate state of mind.

A less passionate assessment may be found in the *Ἐπιτετιμημένη ἐπαρίθμησις τῶν κατὰ τὸν παρελθόντα αἰῶνα λογίων Γραικῶν καὶ περὶ τινῶν ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι ἀνθούτων*, written by Dimitrios Prokopiou in either 1720, or 1721, and then published for the first time in 1722 by J. A. Fabricius in his *Bibliotheca Graeca*:

Θεόφιλος ὁ Κορυδαλλεὺς Ἀθηναῖος, ὁμιλητὴς τῶν ἐν Ἰταλία σοφῶν, εἰδήμων τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς, καὶ Λατινικῆς, καὶ Ἰταλικῆς φωνῆς, τῆς Ἀριστοτελικῆς φιλοσοφίας ἐμπειρότατος, γέγονε μεγάλης ὠφελείας πρόξενος τῷ γένει τῶν Ἑλλήνων, ἀναπτύξας εἰς Ἑλληνικὴν διάλεκτον τὰ φιλοσοφικὰ ὑπομνήματα τοῦ Καίσαρος Κρεμονίνου.¹⁰

Theophilus Korydalleus; Athenian; disciple of learned men in Italy; expert on Greek, Latin and Italian; most experienced in Aristotelian philosophy. He has greatly benefited the Greeks by expounding the philosophical commentaries of Cesare Cremonini in Greek.

What transpired in the century separating Koursoulas from Prokopiou, and thus caused the two opposite opinions on Korydalleus, has been studied elsewhere;¹¹ there is an interesting element on which both scholars agree: the decisive influence of Cesare Cremonini upon Theophilus.

In the passage from Theophilus quoted above, Koursoulas emphasizes the appropriation of the work of Alexander of Aphrodisias as being the reason for this close relation. Indeed, in the preface of his *De formis quattuor corporum simplicium quae vocantur elementa disputatio*, Cremonini divides the first section of this treatise into three chapters according to a tripartite classification of philosophical schools regarding the matter in question; he refers to the following three groups or cases of commentators: (a) the Greeks, (b) the ‘biting’ (‘mordicus’) Latins and (c) Averroes. One might be right in considering that the ‘biting’ Latins is a wordplay of Cesare standing for ‘Hounds of the Lord’ or ‘domini canes’, in other words the Dominicans who wished to reconcile Christian theology with Aristotelian philosophy, and for that reason received the harshest criticism in his work. Cremonini expresses his doubts regarding Averroes and maintains that in some cases the views of the Greeks are not evidently clear; however, he begins his examination of the Greek school with the

9 Psimmenos, *Ἡ ἑλληνικὴ φιλοσοφία*, 231–3.

10 J. A. Fabricius, *Bibliotheca graeca*, XI (Hamburg 1722) 776. For the work of Prokopiou see N. Psimmenos, “Ἡ “Ἐπιτετιμημένη ἐπαρίθμησις” τοῦ Δημητρίου Προκοπίου ὡς πηγὴ γνώσεως τῆς νεοελληνικῆς φιλοσοφίας”, *Ἡπειρωτικὰ Χρονικά* 24 (1982) 204–48.

11 Psimmenos, *Ἡ ἑλληνικὴ φιλοσοφία*, 231–3.

‘prince’ of the latter, Alexander of Aphrodisias, whose interpretation should – according to Cremonini – always be trusted.¹²

A substantially expanded version of the same predilections is to be found in Theophilos’ commentary on Aristotle’s *De generatione et corruptione*, in a chapter under the title ‘Ἐπεισόδιος θεωρία περὶ τῶν ἐν Φιλοσοφίᾳ Αἰρέσεων, καὶ τῆς παρ’ ἀρχαίοις ποικιλίας τῶν δογμάτων’:¹³

... there have been many Aristotelian scholars, of whom the most prominent is the Aphrodisian Alexander, who wrote commentaries after both correcting the text and comparing the content of many books. And he put so much effort into his work that no one who does not understand Aristotle’s doctrines according to Alexander is really a Peripatetic or is considered as such. For the rest of the interpreters, having blurred the vision of their own mind, did not authentically discern the Philosopher’s (= Aristotle’s) notions; e.g. Porphyry, Ammonius, Philoponus, Simplicius, Themistius, regarding whom I do not know whether we should say that they interpret the works of Aristotle Platonically or that they comment on the works of Plato Aristotelically. Or, perhaps, since they belong to Platonism and are not able to neglect Aristotelianism – since the latter is by far superior to the former –, they preferred to fit them together, because they thought that the pupil Aristotle does not altogether disagree with the master Plato; yet, they were refuted by later readers of the Aphrodisian, because they conflated incompatible things. And there were many more Aristotelian scholars, but concerning the Arabs Averroes takes the first place. In the case of the Latins, however, all scholars are called Peripatetics, even though they philosophize unlike the Peripatetics; but by pouring together skills of different origin and of another kind, and scrambling a mixture of philosophy and theology, they were deprived of both true philosophy and right judgement; in the latter case, they drift away from the righteous mind, in order that they do not say things not agreeing with the ... teachings of the Philosopher; in the former case they wander away from Aristotle while being forced to agree with the Church Fathers.

The references to the three schools in the Greek text are presented in a similar way to, and follow the same order as, those in the relevant chapter of Cremonini’s treatise: Alexander is the commentator par excellence; the rest of the Greeks are rather incoherent; Averroes is mentioned again in a somewhat neutral way, although to him belongs the ‘primacy’ among the Arabs, just as Alexander is the ‘prince’ of the Greek philosophers in Theophilos’ text.

12 C. Cremonini, *De formis quatuor corporum simplicium, quae vocantur elementa* (Venice 1605) 1, 2, 3, 5.

13 Th. Korydalleus, *Γενέσεως καὶ φθορᾶς πέρι κατ’ Ἀριστοτέλην* (Venice 1780) 27–8.

It is worth noting that, in the above passage, Theophilus introduces the notion of the ‘authentic interpretation’ which is not mentioned in the text of Cremonini; this might be a hint to Cesare, although similar expressions are used elsewhere in the commentary with regard to Alexander.¹⁴ Unlike other members of the Paduan School, Cremonini strongly emphasized that the Aristotelian text is the foundation of valid knowledge;¹⁵ could the authority of the master – besides Alexander of Aphrodisias – necessitate the use of a term stressing the value of the authentic interpretation in the text of the student?

In a passage of his commentary on *De caelo*, Theophilus treats the subject of ‘voeiv’ (see the table below). The editor, Nikos Psimmenos, claims that ‘Korydalleus appears in these chapters as a philosopher who knows how to systematically revisit issues regarding voeiv raised by his patron Aristotle, and interpreted by ancient or more recent readers of the latter, rather than as a commentator or as a historian of philosophy’.¹⁶ As can be shown in the pertinent quotations, however, Korydalleus’ text is an augmented version of the respective passage in Cremonini’s *Desputatio de coelo*:

Korydalleus¹⁷

Εἰς δύο τρόπους τὸ νοεῖν γενικώτερον διανέμεται τοῖς γνησιωτέροις τῶν φιλοσοφούντων. Τὸ μὲν γὰρ δι’ εἰδούς νοητοῦ πέφυκε γίνεσθαι, τὸ δὲ κατ’ οὐσίαν.

Τούτων ὁ μὲν α^{ος} τρόπος διαφορῶς λαμβάνεται παρὰ τοῖς σχολαστικοῖς.

Παρὰ μὲν γὰρ τοῖς Πλατωνικοῖς νοεῖν δι’ εἰδούς ἐστὶ ἢ διὰ τῶν ἰδεῶν ἔννοια, ἃς ἐκεῖνοι καλοῦσιν εἶδη ἔμφυτα, εἴτ’ οὖν φυσικά.

Παρὰ δὲ τοῖς νῦν σχολαστικοῖς διττὸν παρὰ ταῦτα γένος εἰδῶν εἰσάγεται, δι’ ὧν τὰς νοήσεις ἀποτελειοῦσθαι φασί.

Τὰ μὲν γάρ φασί συμπηρηγμένα, καὶ οἷον ἐνδεδημιουργημένα τοῖς νοεοῖς, οἷς τὰς ἀγγελικὰς ἔννοιαι ἀποτελειοῦσθαι τίθενται.

Τὰ δὲ ἔμπνευστά φασί γίνεσθαι τοῖς νοητικοῖς ἐν καιρῷ τῆς νοήσεως, δι’ ὧν οἷονται γίνεσθαι τὰς προφητικὰς ἔννοιαι ἐπὶ τῶν προφητευόντων.

Thinking is distributed by those philosophizing more authentically in two modes: one by way of thought, and the other by way of essence.

The first of these modes is assumed in various ways by the scholars.

According to the followers of Plato, thinking by way of form is thought by way of ideas, which they call innate – actually natural – forms.

Contemporary scholars introduce beside the latter a two-fold genus of forms of thoughts, through which, they claim, thoughts are brought to perfection:

In the first case, they say that the forms advance, i.e. are created together, with the intellectual beings, by which, they reckon, the angelic notions are brought to perfection.

In the second case, they say that forms are infused in intellectual beings at the moment that a thought is formed; through the latter, they deem, prophetic thoughts come about as regards those prophesizing.

Cremonini

Duo sunt modi intelligendi passim recepti; unus est per receptionem intelligibilis alius per essentiam.

Modus, qui est per receptionem intelligibilis, est multipliciter distinctus;

hunc enim dicunt intelligere per speciem, quod reperitur multis modis variatum; aut per speciem conatam, veluti est intelligere apud Platonem per Ideas animae connaturales;

aut per speciem concreatam, qualis est Theologis intellectio Angelorum;

aut per speciem infusam, qualis est intellectio Prophetarum.

14 *Op. cit.*, 4, 392.

15 Ch. B. Schmitt, *Aristotle and the Renaissance* (Cambridge, MA 1983) 11.

16 N. K. Psimmenos, ‘Θεοφίλου Κορυδαλέως Ὑπομνήματα συνοπτικά, καὶ ζητήματα εἰς τὴν περὶ Οὐρανοῦ πραγματείαν (ἀπόσπασμα)’, *Τὰ νέα τοῦ Κ.Ε.ΝΕ.Φ.* 8 (2001) 42.

17 The English text is the translation of Korydalleus’ text.

Ἄλλος δὲ παρὰ τοὺς εἰρημένους τρόπους τοῦ νοεῖν ἐστὶ, δι' ὑποδοχῆς εἶδους ἐξῶθεν ἐγγινομένου τῆ νοητικῆς δυνάμει ὑπὸ τοῦ νοητοῦ, οἷον πασχοῦσης τῆς δυνάμεως ἐν τῷ ἐνδέχεσθαι καὶ νοεῖν. Τοῖς δὲ περιπατητικοῖς μόνος ἐστὶ γνῶριμος ὁ ἔσχατος ἐκτεθεὶς τοῦ νοεῖν τρόπος, ὃς καὶ ὑπὸ τοῦ Φιλοσόφου παραδίδεται καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις, καὶ ἐν τῷ γ^ο τοῦ Περὶ ψυχῆς, κφ^ο ε^ο περὶ τοῦ δυνάμει νοός, μορίῳ β^ο, οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ ἀλλότριον τυγχάνουσι τῆς τοῦ Φιλοσόφου διδασκαλίας.¹⁸

Another mode of thinking, beside the ones already mentioned, is possible by means of the reception of a form occurring by what is thinkable in the intellectual capacity from without; i.e. when the intellectual capacity is affected in so far as possible, as well as while we think. The mode of thinking presented last is the only familiar one for the Peripatetics; which mode is also taught by the Philosopher in the treatise On the soul (book 3; chapter 5; section 2), but also in other works. The rest of the modes happen to be foreign to the teaching of the Philosopher.

Qui tres modi sunt ab Aristotele alieni. Ideas quidem Platonis saepe reprobavit; alias species minime cognovit. Alter modus est per receptionem intelligibilis patiendo ab ipso intelligibili, quia intelligere est pati ab intelligibili 3. de Anima textu 2. qui solus est Peripateticus.¹⁹

What is more important for our examination is that Theophilos clearly alludes to Cremonini when he writes ‘τοῖς γνησιωτέροις τῶν φιλοσοφούντων’ (see underlined text in the table above); this reference is missing from the Latin text.

Another example hinting towards a direct connection between Cesare Cremonini and the notion of ‘authentic interpretation’ derives again from Theophilos’ commentary on *De generatione et corruptione*, that is to say, the relation between philosophy and theology or the doctrine of the double truth (see the Greek text below). The person Korydalleus has in mind when referring to authentic disclosure becomes evident if we examine two texts by Cesare Cremonini: (a) his *Responsio ad objectiones apologetica*, which followed the accusations made against him by the Holy Inquisition shortly after the publication of the aforementioned commentary on *De coelo* in 1613 (see the first Latin passage below); and (b) the second edition of this commentary in 1616, containing a revision of the fourth part in the first edition (‘Apologia dictorum Aristotelis, de quinta Coeli substantia’; see the second Latin passage below). In the first of these texts we find – just as in the case of Theophilos – references to the interpretation of the Aristotelian corpus according to principles set out by Aristotle himself, the difference between Truth and Aristotelian philosophy, and the condemnation of those Aristotelian doctrines that are not consistent with the Truth. In the second text, we find a reference similar to the one connecting the authentic interpretation of the Aristotelian philosophy at the end of Theophilos’ text with the divine light.

Korydalleus²⁰

εἰ δὲ ποὺ τὴν Ἀριστοτελικὴν λέξιν ἐκτιθέντες τῇ ἱερᾷ θεολογίᾳ ἀντεφθεγξάμεθα, μὴ τις ἡμᾶς τῶνόντι ταῦτα φρονεῖν νομιζέτω, εἰ γὰρ καὶ

But if we have contradicted sacred theology while explaining the Aristotelian text, let no one think that we indeed believe these things;

Cremonini

a. Exponimus quid dicturus sit Aristoteles; unde solvitur argumentum ex Philosophi

18 Psimmenos, “Υπομνήματα συνοπτικά”, 43.

19 C. Cremonini, *Disputatio de coelo in tres partes divisa, De natura coeli. De motu coeli. De motoribus coeli abstractis. Adiecta est Apologgia dictorum Aristotelis De via lactea. De facie in orbe lunae* (Venice 1613) 336.

20 The English text is the translation of the Greek text.

δέη οὐ μόνον τὰ τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλους,
ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸν ἅπαντα Κόσμον
ἀπομόσαι σὺν Θεῷ προθύμως ἔσχηκα,

ἀλλὰ τὴν τοῦ Ἀριστοτέλους δόξαν
ἀπανταχοῦ γνησίως ἀνεπτυξάμην, οὐχ
ἵνα ταύτη ἀκολουθῶμεν, ἀλλ' ἵνα
διαφυγῶμεν πρὸς τὰ τῆς εὐσεβείας
ἄδύτα ὁδηγήσει θείου φωτός.²²

for even if there was a need to deny
not only Aristotle's doctrines, but
also the whole world, I would have
done it – with God's blessing –
willingly.

Nevertheless, I expounded
Aristotle's opinion authentically
everywhere; not in order for us to
follow it, but to escape towards the
innermost sanctuary of reverence
through the guidance of the divine
light.

sententia, non ex re ipsa et Veritate.
Damnatur Aristotelis doctrina²¹

b. Dum ego Aristotelem sic extollo,
nemo sit qui me existimet aliter
illius doctrinam amplificare quam
eam cum veterum sapientia
comparando, nequaquam vero
illam referendo cum Patribus
christiane Veritatis, qui scripserunt
lumine naturali, adjecto lumine
Fidei.²³

The term 'νεώτεροι'

The term 'νεώτεροι' is employed in a negative way by Korydalleus in most instances: their frenzy for novelties shows their lack of fondness for the 'authentic interpretation'; they obfuscate the Aristotelian doctrines or even have a superficial understanding of them.²⁴ Contemporary scholars seem, however, to have conflicting views on the subject:

1. Otto Jochem believes that 'νεώτεροι' is a typical term signifying Christian scholars opposing the ancient Greek commentators, from the beginning of Scholasticism until the time of Korydalleus; terms such as 'οἱ νῦν φιλοσοφούντες' serve the same purpose.²⁵
2. Kleonoulos Tsourkas suggests that 'οἱ νῦν φιλοσοφούντες' and 'οἱ νῦν φιλοσοφούντες ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ' are supporters of neo-Aristotelian ideas contemporary with Theophilus, who also calls them 'νεώτεροι'; they have no relation whatsoever to Scholasticism or theology.²⁶
3. Nikos Psimmenos assumes that Korydalleus employs the term 'νεώτεροι' when alluding to Aristotelian commentators who flourished a few centuries before the time of Theophilus, for instance Averroes.²⁷
4. Finally, Charalampos Chronis deems that the term is employed either as an allusion to all Aristotelian interpreters after the end of Late Antiquity, or as a negative characterization for all those who introduce new interpretations of Aristotle; the latter tradition starts perhaps with Averroes (1126–98). Chronis also points out

21 L. Mabileau, *Étude historique sur la philosophie de la Renaissance en Italie (Cesare Cremonini)* (Paris 1881) 366.

22 Korydalleus, *Γενέσεως καὶ φθορᾶς πέρι*, 414.

23 Mabileau, *Étude historique*, 47.

24 Korydalleus, *Γενέσεως καὶ φθορᾶς πέρι*, 153, 324, 362–3.

25 O. Jochem, *Scholastisches, Christliches und Medizinisches aus dem Kommentar des Theophilus Korydalleus zu Aristoteles' Schrift von der Seele* (Giessen 1935) 37.

26 Tsourkas, *Les débuts de l'enseignement*, 111.

27 Psimmenos, "Υπομνήματα συνοπτικά", 42.

that expressions such as ‘οἱ νεώτεροι τῶν Ἰταλῶν’ and ‘οἱ νῦν φιλοσοφούντες ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ’ imply Cremonini and the Neo-Aristotelians, with whom the ‘νεώτεροι’ should not be identified.²⁸

Could the treatises of Cremonini be of any help in deciphering the use of these somewhat vague terms by Korydalleus? The philosophical works of both scholars remain mostly unedited, but a preliminary examination shows that, in most cases, Theophilos’ critique against the ‘νεώτεροι’ takes into consideration a passage from Cremonini’s work.

To the best of our knowledge, ‘οἱ νεώτεροι τῶν Ἰταλῶν’ and the similar expression ‘οἱ νῦν φιλοσοφούντες ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ’ are to be found exclusively in Theophilos’ commentary on the *Physics*, that is to say, in his analysis explaining the different opinions regarding the subject of this Aristotelian treatise.²⁹ The classification of the different opinions and their labels seems to have its starting point in Cremonini’s *Explanatio prooemii librorum Aristotelis De physico auditu*. More specifically, there are ‘sententiae’ of the ‘latini prisci’, in other words, the Scholastics, which are accepted by ‘recenteriores multi’;³⁰ the latter group of opinions corresponds to the ‘δόξαι’ of the ‘νεώτεροι τῶν Ἰταλῶν’ and the ‘νῦν φιλοσοφούντες ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ’ in the text of Theophilos; in this respect, Chronis’ theory is correct (at least in part, because the term ‘νεώτεροι’ has – as we are going to show below – a wider meaning than the one he suggests.)

The more generic term ‘οἱ νῦν φιλοσοφούντες’ occurs at least twice in Theophilos’ commentary on *De anima* and three times in the commentary on the *Physics*. Concerning the former passages, we should trust Jochem when he says that Korydalleus refers there to Scholasticism.³¹ In the second commentary on the *Physics*, however, Theophilos, in all probability, alludes to his tutor once again:

Τῶν δὲ νῦν φιλοσοφούντων, οἱ μάλιστα προὔχοντες, εἰς ἑπτὰ κατατέμνουσιν εἶδη τὸ αὐτὸ γένος. ὃν α’. μὲν ἐστὶ τὸ αἰθέριον σῶμα. β’. τὰ ἀπλά σῶματα τῶν ὑπὸ σελήνην. γ’. τὰ ἀτελῆ σύνθετα ἐκ τῶν ἀπλῶν, οἷον χιῶν, χάλιαζα, καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα. δ’. τὰ ἐντελῆ σύνθετα, οἷον μέταλλα, καὶ ἀπλῶς τὰ ὀρυκτά, καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα συντίθενται μὲν ἐκ τῶν ἀπλῶν, ἄμυχα δὲ εἰσὶ. παρὰ ταῦτα δὲ τὰ ἔμψυχα διαιροῦσι τριχῶς, εἷς τε τὰ φυτὰ, καὶ αἰσθητικὰ ζῶα, καὶ παρὰ ταῦτα τὰ λογικὰ, οὐκ ἀγενεῖς οὐδὲ αὐτῆ ἡ διαίρεσις, πλὴν τρανώτερον δηλωθήσεται ἡμῖν ἐφεξῆς.³²

The most prominent of those philosophizing at the present time divide the same genus [= the natural body] into seven species, of which the first is the aetherial body; to the second species belong the simple bodies of the sublunar world; to the third belong imperfect bodies composed of simple elements; e.g. snow, hail and things of that sort; to the fourth species belong perfect composite bodies; e.g. minerals and mined things in general, and whichever others are composed of simple bodies; the latter are inanimate. Beside these species, they divide the animate bodies in a threefold manner into plants and sentient living beings, and rational beings beside them. This division is not at all unprecedented, but it will be manifested more thoroughly by us.

28 Ch. Chronis, *Ta Μετὰ τὰ φυσικὰ καὶ ημεταφυσικὴ του Αριστοτέλη στο ἔργο του Θεοφίλου Κορυδαλλέως: Η συμβολή του Θεοφίλου Κορυδαλλέως στην ερμηνεία του Αριστοτέλη* (Thessaloniki 2001) 319 [digitized copy of the Εθνικὸ Ἀρχεῖο Διδακτορικῶν Διατριβῶν (Greece): <<https://www.didaktorika.gr/eadd/handle/10442/22786>>].

29 Th. Korydalleus, *Εἰσὸδος Φυσικῆς ἀκροάσεως κατ’ Ἀριστοτέλην* (Venice 1779) 47–8.

30 C. Cremonini, *Explanatio prooemii librorum Aristotelis De physico auditu. Cum introductione ad naturalem Arist. philosophiam, continente Tractatum de Paedia* (Padua 1596) f. 44r.

31 Jochem, *Scholastisches*, 12.5, 19.23.

32 Korydalleus, *Εἰσὸδος*, 44.

The brief reference to the different kinds of natural bodies is in fact a summary of the contents of the chapter ‘Partitio philosophiae naturalis et ordo partium’ in Cremonini’s *Explanatio*;³³ in this respect, Tsourkas seems to be not far from truth.

Korydalleus, however, was not always willing to accept the views of his master; a pertinent example is found once again in the commentary on the *Physics*. According to Theophilus there are three groups of ‘νέωτεροι’, which assume the subject of natural science to be either a mobile being, or a mobile essence, or a body that comes into being and passes away.³⁴ These opinions are also mentioned in the *Explanatio*;³⁵ of particular interest is the second one, which is represented by Albert Magnus (ca 1200–80) and – according to Theophilus – is held in high esteem ‘παρὰ τοῖς νῦν φιλοσοφοῦσι’.³⁶ Theophilus mentions a fourth case, the opinion of those ‘who engaged in the study of nature more outspokenly’ (‘ὅσοι παρῶρησιαστικώτερον ἦψαντο τῆς περὶ φύσεως θεωρίας’) and favoured the natural body as subject of natural science; furthermore, he offers documentation deriving from Aristotle’s *De coelo*.³⁷ The latter opinion, along with the reference to the Aristotelian treatise, belongs, of course, to Cesare Cremonini.³⁸ Theophilus, however, deemed the subject of natural science to be ‘what has a nature in so far as it has one’ (‘τὸ φύσιν ἔχον ἢ φύσιν ἔχει’) rather than the natural body; the reason is that the term ‘body’ can be attributed, because of homonymy, to things bearing no relation with the study of nature at all.³⁹

Nevertheless, the term ‘νέωτεροι’ concerns not only Aristotelians. In his commentary on *De generatione et corruptione*, Korydalleus proclaims the following:

... περὶ μαγνητικῆς δυνάμεως θαυμάσιά τινα διαπλάττουσιν οἱ νέωτεροι, περὶ ὧν ἐν τοῖς μετεωρολογικοῖς θεοῦ διδόντος εἰρήσεται.⁴⁰

... concerning the qualities of the magnet, the moderns mould some marvellous things, about which more will be explained – God willing – in the commentary on *Meteorologica*.

Theophilus did not write – as far as we know – any commentary on that particular Aristotelian work; but why would he treat the opinion of the ‘νέωτεροι’ on the properties of the magnet there? Again, we have to seek an answer in the work of Cremonini. In his *Expositio primi libri Meteorum Aristotelis*,⁴¹ Cremonini unleashes harsh criticism against the astrologers, who think that celestial bodies may have an effect – apart from

33 Cremonini, *Explanatio*, ff. 26v–37r.

34 Korydalleus, *Εἰσοδος*, 27, 32–3, 33.

35 Cremonini, *Explanatio*, ff. 22r, 27v.

36 *Op. cit.*, f. 27v; Korydalleus, *Εἰσοδος*, 37.

37 *Op. cit.*, 38.

38 Cremonini, *Explanatio*, f. 22r.

39 Korydalleus, *Εἰσοδος*, 38.

40 Korydalleus, *Γενέσεως καὶ φθορᾶς πέρι*, 239.

41 Edited in Kuhn, *Venetischer Aristotelismus*, 669–714.

movement and light – on the sublunar world. The main points of his criticism can be grouped into the following four passages:⁴²

- a. Tertium inventum Astrologorum, sunt Influentiae, dicunt enim agere caelum per quasdam qualitates occultas, quas vocant influentias.
- b. Influentiae ... penetrant universam terrae molem, ita ut etiam sint ad producenda omnia subterranea, ad quae loca, nec lumen, nec motus proveniunt.
- c. Habent ... varios effectus in natura, velut fluxus et refluxus maris, dies criticos, quos vocant Medici, et alia similia.
- d. Isti putant adesse effectus, qui nos cogant ad istos influxus concedendos, ut dicebamus de fluxu, et refluxu, de diebus decretoriis, de virtute magnetis, et de aliis talibus.

A third concept invented by the Astrologers are the ‘influentiae’, for they say that heaven acts by means of some occult qualities, which they call ‘influentiae’.

The ‘influentiae’ ... penetrate the entire mass of the earth, so that they are present even in the production of every underground thing, in places where neither light nor movement comes forth.

[The ‘influentiae’] have ... various effects on nature, such as for instance the ebb and flow of the sea, the critical days as doctors call them, and other similar things.

[The astrologers] think that the ‘influentiae’ are present and force us to be consigned to their influence, as we were saying about the ebb and flow, the critical days, the power of the magnet and other similar things.

Such remarks are endorsed in a similar list, including various beliefs of astrologers, in the second part of Theophilos’ commentary on *De generatione et corruptione*, bearing the title ‘Συνοπτική πραγματεία περί τοῦ ὅτι πρώτως ποιητικὸς ὁ αἰθήρ τοῦ θνητοῦ σώματος’:

... παῖδες Ἀστρονόμων τῆς περὶ τὰ γενέθλια ματαιότητος ἀρχηγοῖς χρησάμενοι διαφοροῦς ἐν τοῖς ἀστράσι ποιότητος εἶναι δι᾽ ἰσχυρίζονται· καὶ τούτων τὰς ἐνεργείας καθικέσθαι τῆς γῆς, καὶ τῶν ἐν τῇ γῆ ... Τὸ μὲν οὖν φῶς καὶ τὴν κίνησιν οὐκ ἀποχρηθῆναι πρὸς τὰ τῆδε γιγνώμενα δεικνύουσι. ... αἱ τε γὰρ κριτικαὶ ἡμέραι τοσοῦτον ἐν ταῖς τῶν νόσων προγνώσεσι χρησιμεύουσαι, καὶ αἱ γινόμεναι ἐν τοῖς πελάγεσι παλίρροιαί ... ἐνδοτέραν τινὰ καὶ ἀφανῆ αἰτίαν αἰνίττονται. ... τὰ μὲν μικτὰ ... παρὰ τὰς ἐναργεῖς ἐν αὐτοῖς ποιότητος κεκρυμμένας (read κεκρυμμένας) τινὰς καὶ ἀπορρήτους ιδιοτροπίας ἴσχειν (read ἴσχουσιν), καθ’ ἧς ἢ μὲν Ἡράκλειος λίθος ἔλκει τὸν σίδηρον ...⁴³

... after studying the founders of the vanity concerning the day of one’s birth, the followers of Astrologers affirm that there are various qualities in the stars, and that the cosmic forces of the latter reach the earth, as well as what is in the earth ... They show then that light and movement do not suffice in reference to things taking place there. ... for both the critical days, being so useful to the prognoses of diseases and the tides occurring in the seas, ... hint at a more inward and unseen cause. ... And compound bodies ... have in them – beside visible qualities – concealed and secret peculiarities, according to which the Hercules-stone attracts iron ...

From the last two passages of Theophilos above one may infer: (a) that the term ‘νέωτεροι’ concerns not only Aristotelians; and (b) that Korydalleus’ ‘Brief treatise on Aether’ was actually the work he meant by referring to the commentary on *Meteorologica*. This means in turn that the latter part of the commentary on *De generatione et corruptione* may have been written after 1613 or 1616, as it contains allusions to the doctrine of ‘double truth’ also found in Cremonini’s *Responsio* and in the second edition of his commentary on *De coelo*.

42 *Op. cit.*, 671–2, 676.

43 Korydalleus, *Γενέσεως καὶ φθορᾶς πέρι*, 396–7.

Conclusion

The research on Aristotelian philosophy of the first centuries after the Fall of Constantinople in 1453 remains a desideratum. The various labels employed by scholars in the last forty years in order to define the Aristotelianism of that period ('post-Byzantine Aristotelianism',⁴⁴ 'pre-Korydallic' and 'Korydallic period',⁴⁵ 'Modern Greek Aristotelianism',⁴⁶ 'Greek neo-Aristotelianism',⁴⁷) may imply different research priorities or even confusion; above all, however, these conventions highlight the imperative need for a systematic examination of the respective vast, understudied or largely unknown manuscript material. Digital sources have, of course, enhanced our capability to access considerably more information and text sources, but the 'state of the art' still leaves much to be desired.

Such a deficiency is plainly obvious in the case of Theophilos Korydalleus, who undoubtedly played a pivotal role in the study of the *corpus aristotelicum* in the seventeenth century. The influence of Cesare Cremonini upon the Greek scholar is stated by both older and contemporary research, but the general tendency in contemporary research is to study the commentaries of the student while completely or partially ignoring the works of the master. This, in turn, has resulted in arbitrary conclusions and exaggerations, suggesting either the depreciation or the overestimation of Theophilos' philosophical acumen. The endorsement of the 'authentic interpretation', as well as the polemics against the various 'νέωτεροι' (and similar expressions or terms) in the works of Theophilos certainly shows the effect that Cesare's instruction had on him. The commentaries of Korydalleus, nonetheless, represent a vast labour and should not be considered as mere imitations of Cremonini's works; after all, as we have seen, Theophilos not only expands or summarizes passages from the texts of Cremonini, he also does not hesitate to express criticism against his master's doctrines. In this respect, the interrelation between the text corpora of both Cremonini and Korydalleus ought to be studied with greater attention.

44 L. Benakis, 'Απὸ τὴν ἱστορία τοῦ Μεταβυζαντινοῦ Ἀριστοτελισμοῦ στὸν ἑλληνικὸ χῶρο: Ἀμφισβήτηση καὶ ὑπεράσπιση τοῦ φιλοσόφου στὸν 18^ο αἰῶνα. Νικόλαος Ζερζούλης – Δωρόθεος Λέσβιος', *Φιλοσοφία* 7 (1977) 416–54 [= Benakis, *Μεταβυζαντινὴ φιλοσοφία*, 34–72].

45 Psimmenos, *Ἡ ἑλληνικὴ φιλοσοφία*, 53–169 and 173–315 respectively.

46 Petsios, *Ἡ Περὶ φύσεως συζήτηση*, 169–90.

47 Marazopoulos, *Θεόφιλος Κορυδαλέας*, 23.