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Giordano Bruno teacher at Wittenberg and the *Rar.* 51¹

ABSTRACT: This article addresses the examination of a sixteenth-century collection of manuscript and printed texts by the Italian philosopher Giordano Bruno, which is known by the name of its location: *Rar.* 51. The works in the collection deal with the combination method of Raymond Lull and present several crucial aspects of Bruno's philosophy. Through an analysis of the textual and material characteristics of *Rar.* 51, such as the watermarks and the handwriting, it is possible to surmise that the philosopher was preparing a sort of manual for use in his teaching in Germany. The collection was probably compiled when Bruno was teaching at the University of Wittenberg, designed as an introduction to his philosophy for his students.

KEYWORDS: *ars combinatoria* • Wittenberg • Giordano Bruno • Aristotle

Numerous studies on the Italian philosopher Giordano Bruno have been published since the seventeenth century, and research addressing his speculations continues to grow. His death at the stake has undoubtedly furnished a significant stimulus to this persistent interest in his thought, since it transformed him into a proud defender of the freedom of thought, the man who told the inquisitors that he would die “a martyr and willingly”². Despite

¹ This article is an extended and revised version of chapter 4 of Part 2 of my doctoral thesis in *Civilisation of Humanism and the Renaissance* entitled *From the court to the university. Editorial strategies in the work of Giordano Bruno in England and Germany* (2003–2005).

² “On Thursday morning in Campo dei Fiori that wicked Dominican friar from Nola, of whom we have written before, was burned alive: an obstinate heretic, he had upon his own whim invented various dogmas against our faith, and in particular again the Most Holy Virgin and Saints, and the wicked impenitent wanted to die in the name of them, and he said he died a martyr and willingly and that his soul, ascending together with that smoke, would go to Heaven. But now he will realise whether he was telling the truth or not”. “Giovedì mattina in Campo di Fiore fu abbruggiato vivo quello scelerato frate domenichino da Nola, di che si scrisse con le passate: heretico ostinatissimo, et havendo di suo capriccio formati diversi dogmi contro nostra fede, et in particolare contro la Santissima Vergine et Santi, volse ostinatamente morir in quelli lo scelerato; et diceva che moriva martire et volentieri, et che se ne sarebbe la sua anima ascesa con quel fumo in paradiso. Ma hora egli

this, it is the interpretation of the corpus of his works that most attracts and engages scholars, since his complex philosophical system was expressed in a broad and multiform production in print. Recently research has also been approaching disciplinary areas complementary to the history of philosophy and, among these, the material analysis of Bruno's manuscripts and printed works is proving extremely enlightening for an understanding of both the genesis of the works and the intentions driving the author³. The following pages offer an example of the use of certain codicological and bibliographical tools in the study of Bruno's writings, concentrating on the collection known to scholars as Rar. 51 and the years in which the philosopher was teaching at the University of Wittenberg.

The miscellany of Bruno's works Rar. 51, which takes its name from its location⁴, comes from the Jesuit College of Augsburg, the last Catholic stronghold in a prevalently Protestant country, and is now conserved in the Staats- und Stadtbibliothek of Augsburg⁵. It is an octavo volume consisting of 27 gatherings divided into 216 folios⁶ and contains: a printed edition of *De lampade combinatoria lulliana*, with manuscript glosses in the margin⁷, the only existing manuscript of *Animadversiones circa lampadem lullianam*⁸ and the more famous *Lampas triginta statuarum*⁹, another copy of which is

se ne avete se diceva la verità", *Avviso*, date 19 February 1600, [in:] L. Firpo, *Il processo di Giordano Bruno*, ed. D. Quaglioni, Rome 1993, p. 156, n. 73.

³ On new methodological approaches in studying Bruno's works see N. Harris, *Il cancellans da Bruno a Manzoni: fisionomia di una cosmesi libraria*, [in:] *Favole, metafore, storie. Seminario su Giordano Bruno*, ed. O. Catanorchi and D. Pirillo, Pisa 2007, pp. 567–602 and V. Lepri, *Besler a Erlangen: per una nuova datazione dell'ultimo Bruno*, "Rinascimento", 2005, vol. 45, pp. 359–361.

⁴ Cf. R. Stölzle, *Eine neue Handschrift von Giordano Brunos Liber triginta statuarum*, "Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie", 3, 1890, pp. 389–393 and V. Spampanato, *Vita di Giordano Bruno, con documenti editi e inediti*, Rome–Gela 1988 (first edition 1921), p. 450.

⁵ At the Staats- und Stadtbibliothek of Augsburg I consulted the following catalogues: *Catalogus librorum bibliothecae collegii societatis iesu Augustae*, 1670, and the *Catalogus librorum bibliothecae collegii societatis iesu Augusta*, 2 vols, 1780.

⁶ Size: 160 x 90 mm.

⁷ Fols. 6r–57v. Cf. *Jordani Bruni Nolani Opera latine conscripta*, publicis sumptibus edita, recensabat F. Fiorentino [F. Tocco, H. Vitelli, V. Imbriani, C. M. Tallarigo], 3 vols. in 8 partes, Neapoli [-Florentiae] 1879–1891, 3, par. II, pp. 229–327. See: R. Sturlese, *Bibliografia, censimento, e storia delle antiche stampe bruniane*, Florence 1987, pp. 79–81; on manuscripts see also V. Salvestrini, *Bibliografia di Giordano Bruno 1582–1950*, ed. L. Firpo, Florence 1958, pp. 163–164 and G. Bruno, *Opere magiche*, edition supervised by M. Ciliberto; ed. S. Bassi, E. Scapparone, N. Tirinnanzi, Milan 2000, pp. xii ff.

⁸ Fols. 58r–97v. The first folio bears the date 17 March 1587. See: *Bruni Opera latine conscripta*, *op. cit.*, 2, pars. II, pp. 359–399.

⁹ Fols. 98r–205v. See: *Bruni Opera latine conscripta*, *op. cit.*, 3, pp. 1–258.

known, conserved in Moscow¹⁰. The texts have been subjected to a partial bibliographical examination only by the person who discovered the collection, Remigius Stölze in 1889 and although his description continues to be an important benchmark for Bruno scholars, the material observation that it is now possible to carry out on codices and ancient editions has made substantial progress and benefits from new methods¹¹. Through the combined analysis of the composition of the gatherings, the watermarks and the handwriting, not only can Stölze's investigation be amplified, it is also possible to find support for the theory that Bruno had a precise purpose in mind for this collection, which was to be used as a tool in his teaching.

1. Material analysis of *Rar*. 51

Leafing through the volume, we are immediately struck by two aspects: the binding, which dates approximately to the same time as the leaves it contains, and the layout of the pages which are without the margins for commentary characteristic of writings destined to private study¹². The gatherings are not standard: the first and the eighth have only 4 folios, the twenty-third and the twenty-fourth have 9 and the last has 12 folios¹³. Within the pages of the documents are 5 different watermarks, positioned – as is normal in the octavo format – on the upper inner edge of the page. The gatherings, the watermarks and the presence of numerous blank pages¹⁴ taken together

¹⁰ Ms. Norov 36, (Russian State Library, 201, No. 36). See: S. Bassi, *Da collezionista a studioso: il percorso di Avraam Norov*, "Rinascimento", 2006, vol. 46, pp. 619–628.

¹¹ See R. B. McKerrow, *An introduction to bibliography for literary students*, Oxford 1927; F. Bowers, *Essays on bibliography, text and editing*, Charlottesville 1975; *Fondamenti di critica testuale*, ed. A. Stussi, Bologna 1998; C.-M. Briquet, *Les filigranes: dictionnaire historique des marques du papier*, 4 vols., Hildesheim, Zürich, New York 1991 (reprint ed. Leipzig 1923); G. Piccard, *Die Wasserzeichenkartei Piccard im Hauptstaatsarchiv Stuttgart*, 17 vols., Stuttgart 1961–1997; R. Ridolfi, *Le filigrane dei paleotipi: saggio metodologico*, Florence 1957, pp. 13–28; A. H. Stevenson, *Paper as Bibliographical evidence*, "The Library", 1962, vol. 17, pp. 197–212; C. Fahy, *Roberto Ridolfi e lo studio bibliologico della carta*, "La Bibliofilia", 1995, vol. 97, pp. 35–57; *Puzzles in paper: Concepts in historical watermarks*, essays from the International Conference on the History, Function and Study of Watermarks (Roanoke, Virginia, 10–12 October 1996), edited by D. W. Mosser, M. Saffle, E. W. Sullivan II, New Castle (Del.)–London 2000.

¹² I should like to thank Hans-Jörg Künast, an expert in antique bindings, who examined the volume with me; he considers the binding to be antique and that the volume could be a working copy of material destined to printing. The type of stitching of the fascicles and the holes indicating the guides would support this theory.

¹³ For example: fascicles 23 and 24, which consist of 9 folios each instead of the normal 8, both have two synoptic tables made using a larger folded paper format, which do not appear to be an extemporaneous addition but rather a part of the author's project.

¹⁴ The following folios are empties: 1; 2v–5; 62v–97; 104–105; 206–216.

indicate what we might call the “working units” of the different phases in the gestation of the text. For a clearer illustration of the structure of the collection, and to view the alternation of the watermarks in the gatherings, we refer to the descriptive table at the end of this article.

The first part of the volume contains the printed *De lampade*, occupying gatherings 2 to 7, and the paper of this edition has a watermark – indicated as H in the table – in the form of a circular band filled with a densely-woven ornamentation¹⁵. It is interesting that the first fascicle of the volume – consisting of 4 folios – instead features the watermark indicated by A in the table¹⁶, which appears again on the paper on which most of the *Animadversiones circa lampadem lullianam* was written, that is gatherings 10 to 13, after the *De lampade*. In the first fascicle of the *Animadversiones* (fascicle 9 of the volume) too, we can observe the same alternation of watermarks: this is made using the same paper as that of the *Lampas triginta statuarum*, since it has the same watermark, indicated in the table with the letter C¹⁷, except for the folio 180¹⁸. This page, in addition to presenting an extremely detailed synoptic table, also has another watermark, indicated as B, which can be traced to a manufacture of German paper, produced in Dresden around 1590¹⁹. The volume ends with gatherings 27 and 28, which have no text but had been prepared for writing, as shown by several pages with ruled lines for the cutting of the edges and the numbering²⁰. These gatherings contain the fifth watermark, indicated as D in the table²¹, which is also to be found in other of Bruno’s printed volumes: the *De progressu et lampade venatoria logicorum* and the *Camoeracensis acrotismus*, printed respectively in 1587 and 1588²².

¹⁵ See : Briquet, *Les filigranes, op. cit.*, no. 7866.

¹⁶ It shows a coat of arms with three parallel arrows. See: Briquet, *Les filigranes, op. cit.*, no. 1505 (Vechterhagen, 1592).

¹⁷ The watermark shows a crest surmounted by a crown and a five-pointed star. See: Briquet, *Les filigranes, op. cit.*, no. 1021.

¹⁸ See table at the end of the paper.

¹⁹ The watermark shows an oval with decorations and a Latin cross in the centre: Dr. Hardo Hilg of the Universitätsbibliothek Augsburg suggests that it could be a variant of Briquet’s image at no. 1409 (Annaburg, 1590, 32.5 x 39), although the dimensions do not correspond.

²⁰ Folios 206r to 209r have ruled lines, although there is no text. On folio 210r there is also a capital A indicating the fascicle.

²¹ It is a crest with two five-petalled flowers inside. Briquet takes into consideration the paper mill of Wittenberg (see Briquet, *Les filigranes, op. cit.*, nos. 172, 485) while in Picard (*op. cit.*, 12, no. 1714) the provenance is given as Königsberg (Pr) and the year of production as 1587.

²² I have seen exemplar Res. Ph. Sp. 116 of *De progressu et lampade venatoria logicorum* in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek of Munich and exemplar 8° Phys. 460 of *Camoeracensis acrotismus* in the Universitätsbibliothek, again in Munich.

The structure of the volume reveals the philosopher's practice: during the drafting of a work he also reviewed the text already written, producing a new introduction for it so as to make the entire work more homogenous and compact. In *Rar.* 51 folios that are theoretically more recent introduce pieces that had already been written, as we can deduce from the watermarks appearing in the *De lampade* compared to those of the *Animadversiones*; the same is true of the *Animadversiones* in comparison to the watermarks that appear in the fascicles of the *Lampas*. Unlike almost all Bruno's manuscript works, the hand here is not Besler's but probably that of another of the students who followed the Nolan's teachings in Germany. The characteristics of the hand confirm what is suggested by the composition of the gatherings and the position of the watermarks. There are few corrections to the hand which is almost calligraphic on the first folios where different watermarks appear, whereas in other passages it is more scribbled, as if influenced by the rapid pace of the dictation. The marginal notes to *De lampade* are in the same hand, and it is interesting to note that, in their modern edition of the work Felice Tocco and Girolamo Vitelli have included the integrations in the text itself rather than in the critical notes. The two scholars deemed these additions necessary, and more importantly attributed them to the author's own intentions, surmising that in some manner the philosopher monitored the copyist in his drafting.

In general, the *De lampade* appears to be one of the works that Bruno used most frequently for different ends²³. Of the 23 printed exemplars in circulation, over half (14) are bound together with another work that Bruno produced during his sojourn in Saxony: the *De progressu et lampade venatoria logicorum*, which is a meticulous commentary on Aristotelian logic. Conversely, only 3 exemplars²⁴ are not grouped with other texts, presenting at the beginning the famous letter of dedication to the academic senate of Wittenberg, in which the writer thanks the university for the *libertas philosophandi* which he has been able to enjoy during his sojourn²⁵. Of the

²³ Cf. R. Sturlese, *La ricerca delle antiche stampe* in Eadem, *Censimento e storia delle antiche stampe di Giordano Bruno conservate nelle biblioteche d'Europa*, "Rinascimento", 1984, vol. 35, pp. 289–290.

²⁴ See Sturlese, *Bibliografia, censimento, e storia delle antiche stampe bruniane*, op. cit., pp. 80–81, nos. 17–18 and 20.

²⁵ Cf. A. L. Puliafito, *A proposito di alcune dediche di Giordano Bruno*, [in:] *I margini del libro. indagine teorica e storica sui testi di dedica*, essays from the International Conference, ed. M. A. Terzoli, Rome, Padova 2004, pp. 117–140. *Bruni Opera latine conscripta*, op. cit., 2, par. II, pp. 234 and 244; see also G. Cengiarotti, *Tra Wittenberg e Praga (1586–1588): continuità e discontinuità nel progetto di riforma di Giordano Bruno*, [in:] *Giordano Bruno in Wittenberg 1586–1588: Aristoteles, Raimundus Lullus, Astronomie*, essays from the International Conference, ed. T. Leinkauf, Pisa–Rome 2004, pp. 133–148.

volumes of *De lampade* saved from oblivion, the exemplar conserved in the State library of Augsburg is the only one to be included in an anthology of manuscripts²⁶, once again illustrating the extreme versatility of the text.

The watermarks of *De lampade* and of the manuscript sections make it possible to discern the different phases of work in Rar. 51 and also to establish the period of composition of the anthology between 1587 (watermark D and note at the beginning of the *Animadversiones*)²⁷ and 1590, according to the dating of watermark B. During this short span of time, Bruno was initially a professor at the University of Wittenberg and afterwards lived in Helmstedt, where he was, however, unable to obtain a chair. Nevertheless, he must have devoted himself to private teaching there, since it was in Helmstedt that he met “his German student from Nuremberg”²⁸ Hieronymus Besler, who became his most attentive follower and also the copyist of most of his writings.

2. Teaching Bruno’s philosophy

Considering both the material characteristics of the collection and the contents of the texts and the way in which Bruno has connected the arguments, we can posit two complementary theories about the project underlying the creation of Rar. 51: the volume was conceived for teaching activities and, at the same time, the author intended to publish it.

To summarise briefly, in Rar. 51 Bruno, starting from *De lampade* not only illustrates Lull’s circle ‘machine’ but also demonstrates its efficacy through a profound elaboration of his own philosophy, where Lull’s lexicon of divine attributes is replaced with the cornerstones of Bruno’s own thought²⁹. As correctly underscored by Luciana De Bernart, the notion of the “fourth figure”, that relating to the *domus quarta* which Bruno had expounded in *De compendiosa architectura*, disappears in *De lampade*³⁰. It may be that Bruno intended to avoid futile repetitions in the arrangement of the combinations,

²⁶ Cf. M. Cambi, *La machina del discorso: lullismo e retorica negli scritti latini di Giordano Bruno*, Naples 2002.

²⁷ See *infra* note 8.

²⁸ “mio scolaro alemano de Norimberga”, Firpo, *Il processo di Giordano Bruno*, *op. cit.*, p. 166.

²⁹ See: S. Bassi, E. Scapparone, *Bruno e i “munera Lulliani ingenii”*. *Appunti per una rilettura*, “Rinascimento”, 2010, vol. 50, pp. 55–85.

³⁰ L. De Bernart, *Immaginazione e scienza in Giordano Bruno: l’infinito nelle forme dell’esperienza*, Pisa 1986, pp. 99–111, 119–121. See also S. Clucas, “*Illa est mater, haec vero filia*”: reformed Lullism in Bruno’s later works, [in:] *Giordano Bruno in Wittenberg 1586–1588*, *op. cit.*, pp. 59–69; M. Mertens, *A perspective on Bruno’s De compendiosa architectura et complemento artis Lullii*, “Bruniana & Campanelliana”, 2009, vol. 15, n. 2, pp. 513–525.

augmenting the symbolism of the figures so as to enhance their mnemonic function. In truth, De Bernart believes that the philosopher merely sought to make up for his lack of the mathematical skills required to elaborate Lull's method: only by simplifying the system would he be able to provide a concrete example of the combination of the circles³¹. Nevertheless, seen from another angle the *De lampade* could instead express the highest level of fertility of Lull's system of combination, since not only does Bruno wish to experiment it in the terrain of his own philosophy, applying his theories to Lull's circles, he also intends to transform it into a cognitive process. In the *Animadversiones* the Nolan develops his own point of view and uses the methodological approach of Aristotle's *Physics* to summarise the distinctive features of Lull's *ars combinatoria*; consequently he reviews all the elements making up the alphabet of the Catalan mystic and takes into consideration the various ways of accessing knowledge³². Only at this point is it possible for Bruno to address the delicate crux of the issue of the *Lampas triginta statuarum* that concludes *Rar.* 51. The thirty statues of the *Lampas* are capable of 'illuminating' all entities, that is of perusing them correctly, and they correspond to thirty concepts: in accordance with mnemonic practice each statue has a precise iconography that helps to visualise the salient aspects of the concept it is associated with³³. Taking inspiration from both Aristotle and Lull, Bruno explains the logical use of the concepts, considers the nature of the thirty predicables of the substance and argues that these must be placed at the basis of any logical procedure. For the philosopher there is a total correspondence between the symbols and the *res*, and the *ars combinatoria* is not a technique bound up with the ends of rhetorical discourse but rather a tool to be used to construct an edifice the structure of which reflects the structure of the real. As Bertrando Spaventa noted "For Bruno memory is like a compendium of the universe, a treasure, which needs to be conserved, expanded and explained in the system of science"³⁴.

To grasp the significance of the lesson of the *Lampas* present in *Rar.* 51, we need to observe it in relation to the other draft of the text contained in the

³¹ De Bernart, *Immaginazione e scienza in Giordano Bruno, op. cit.*, p. 117, note 104.

³² Unfortunately, the writing breaks off suddenly at a crucial passage, that is while the philosopher is experimenting the use of Lull's circle on the theory of the eternity of the world, which was actually rejected by Lull himself.

³³ Cf. M. Mulsow, *Figuration und philosophische Findungskunst. Giordano Brunos Lampas triginta statuarum*, [in:] *Giordano Bruno in Wittenberg 1586–1588, op. cit.*, pp. 83–94.

³⁴ "La memoria per Bruno è come un compendio dell'universo, un tesoro, il quale bisogna conservare, ingrandire ed esplicare nel sistema della scienza", B. Spaventa, *Lettera sulla dottrina di Bruno. Scritti inediti 1853–1854*, ed. M. Rascaglia and A. Savorelli, Naples 2000, p. 110.

Moscow codex Norov 36. In the introduction to their critical edition, Tocco and Vitelli postulate the existence of a third codex of the *Lampas*, situated chronologically between the Augsburg version and that of Moscow³⁵. The two scholars, however, give priority to the Norov lesson, considering it to be more recent and hence the definitive version as compared to Rar. 51. However, an investigation currently in progress on the watermarks of Norov 36 is yielding new information: while on the one hand the phases of composition of the two volumes appear to coincide, on the other certain fascicles of the Moscow codex could be chronologically placed prior to Rar. 51. Without ruling out the possible existence of a third codex, the material analysis described here tends to support the existence of two distinct traditions of the text – the one that Rar. 51 is part of and that represented by the Norov codex – which illustrate an articulated plan of work on the part of the philosopher. Certain passages concerning Lull’s combination system that are present in the Augsburg codex are missing from the *Lampas* manuscript conserved in the Norov³⁶, although this should not lead to the conclusion that Bruno simply decided to eliminate these references. Is it not possible that the two traditions materialised independently, and that the passages on the *ars combinatoria* were in fact part of a precise project for the work known – at present – only as Rar. 51? In practice the destiny of the Muscovite *Lampas* was quite different: it shared the pages of the codex with one of Bruno’s fundamental writings, the *De vinculis*³⁷, and its thematic context is closer to the *De magia naturali*: in other words the more extreme evolutions of Bruno’s philosophy that gravitated around the figure of the “magician”.

Once released for printing, the underlying plan of Rar. 51 would have revealed a solid structure: an initial section in which the philosopher takes his cue from the classic stances of Lull’s logic and then, describing the system of the circles, begins to test them out on his own conceptual vocabulary. Then, in the second part, Bruno develops the topics contained in *De lampade*, both through significant additions (the manuscript notes in the margin) and through a gradual shift in the linguistic register from that of a treatise to

³⁵ Cf. Bruni *Opera latine conscripta, op. cit.*, 1901, 3, pp. LIX and LXI. See also N. Tirinnanzi, *La composizione della Lampas triginta statuarum*, [in:] *La filosofia di Giordano Bruno: problemi ermeneutici e storiografici*, ed. E. Canone, Florence 2003, pp. 305–324.

³⁶ See Bruno, *Opere magiche, op. cit.*, pp. 928 ff. More specifically, I mention here the two most striking examples: the first concerns an analytic exposé of attributes, which in the Moscow codex is simplified and represented by means of a diagram (*ibid.*, p. 1330). The other passage consists of a review of examples of definition, which is totally absent from the Norov codex (*ibid.*, pp. 1416–1417).

³⁷ See: E. Scapparone, N. Tirinnanzi, *Giordano Bruno e la composizione del De vinculis*, “Rinascimento”, 1997, vol. 37, pp. 155–231.

that of a series of lectures. The formal differences between a text conceived by Bruno as a treatise and one representing a collection of lectures can, for example, be clearly discerned from a comparison of the *Animadversiones* and another work probably composed during his teaching at Wittenberg: the *Libri physicorum Aristotelis explanati*.³⁸ Unpublished up to the nineteenth century, the latter work summarises the first five books of Aristotle's *Physics*, the *De generatione et corruptione* and the fourth book of *Meteorology*. Here his style is not assertive as in the *Animadversiones*, the pace of the exposition is more relaxed, there is greater recourse to examples, and the collection appears to be intended for reading. A parallel correspondence between the texts and the approaches can be noted in the Augsburg codex between the *De lampade* and what we might call "its" *Animadversiones* where the more austere register clearly evokes the *lectio magistralis*.

3. Bruno's aspirations and his workshop

What were the reasons that drove the philosopher to create *Rar.* 51? We have to bear in mind that in Germany, and especially during the Wittenberg sojourn, the Nolan experienced the university ambit at first hand, gathering around him a group of disciples that continued to follow him when he moved on. It was the best audience that Bruno could have hoped for, since these students had the training necessary to understand his philosophic system. Of all the German cities he stayed in, Wittenberg alone gave him a genuine welcome, to the point of persuading him to remain there at length, from the summer of 1586 up to the spring of 1588. Here the philosopher met again with Alberigo Gentili, whose acquaintance he had made in London, and obtained from the academic senate the position of teacher he had yearned for at length, as he himself recalled during his trial: "[Alberigo Gentili] recommended me and invited me to hold a lecture on the *Organo* of Aristotle, which I gave together with other lectures on philosophy for two years"³⁹. It was in Wittenberg that Bruno returned to writing about Lull's combination method, but the predominant argument

³⁸ Mss. 493, 494 and 494a, stored at Universitätsbibliothek of Erlangen. See: Bruni *Opera latine conscripta*, *op. cit.*, 2, par. II, pp. 359–399. See also N. Tirinnanzi, *I Libri physicorum e la riflessione magica di Bruno*, [in:] *Giordano Bruno, destino e verità*, ed. L. Ruggiu and D. Goldoni, Venice 2002, pp. 53–75 and G. A. Spinoza, *Bruno e gli scritti di Aristotele*, [in:] *Giordano Bruno. Gli anni napoletani e la peregrinatio europea: immagini, testi, documento*, ed. E. Canone, Cassino 1992, pp. 139–143.

³⁹ "me favori [Alberigo Gentili] et me introdusse a legger una lettione dell'*Organo* d'Aristotile; la qual lessi con altre lettioni de filosofia dui anni", Firpo, *Il processo di Giordano Bruno*, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

in his production was commentary on the works of Aristotle⁴⁰ in the *De progressu et lampade venatoria logicorum*, the *Acrotismus camoeracensis*, the *Artificium perorandi* and the *Libri physicorum*⁴¹. His activity as a lecturer undoubtedly conditioned the choice of Aristotle, although it must also have been even more strongly influenced by the cultural policy of the Prince of Saxony Christian I. The prince sympathised with the Calvinist faction and, conscious of the necessity of avoiding religious controversies in the academic community, made efforts to stem the circulation of the ideas of Petrus Ramus by fostering the publication of commentaries on the works of Aristotle⁴². Publications connected with the university were meticulously scrutinised in the course of inspections carried out by investigators and controlled by the issuing of a series of *Leges*. Bruno too encountered censorship with the publication of *De lampade*⁴³ and we can assume that the “other lectures on philosophy” which he mentioned to the inquisitors were similarly focused on Lull’s *ars combinatoria*.

The philosopher gathered around him various admirers of what the Prince’s investigators called the “*dialectica nolani*”. Among his students, as well as Besler, were Johann Heinrich Hainzel, to whom he dedicated *De imaginum compositione* in 1591, Gregor Schonfeld, Hans von Wansdorf, Michael Forgacz and Raphael Egli, who put together and published some of the lectures given by Bruno in Zurich in 1590⁴⁴. Through Lull’s combinations and Aristotle’s doctrines, the “*doctor italicus*”⁴⁵ introduced the students to his own philosophy, and the structure of Rar. 51 would appear to suggest that the volume is aimed directly at them. It is also feasible to suggest that this particular textbook would have shortly been sent to press, had the in-

⁴⁰ M. Spang, *Kombinatorik und Metaphysik. Zum Lullismus in Brunos Wittenberger Schriften*, [in:] *Giordano Bruno in Wittenberg 1586–1588, op. cit.*, pp. 71–82.

⁴¹ Cf. *Bruni Opera latine conscripta, op. cit.*, 3, par. III, pp. 5–84; *ibidem*, 1, par. I, pp. 53–190; *ibidem*, 2, par. III, pp. 261–393; *ibidem*, 2, par. II, pp. 359–399.

⁴² Cf. E. Canone, *Il soggiorno di Bruno in Germania (1586–1591)*, [in:] *Giordano Bruno. Gli anni napoletani e la peregrinatio europea, op. cit.*, pp. 113 ff.

⁴³ „Inn der buchdruckerey, Wirdt keine Ordnung gehalten, darumb auch mancherley bücher in der Universitet gedruckt worden, Welche nicht allein Unnützlichenn Sondern auch der Uniuersitet schimpfflichen undt nachteylich seindt, undt domit die Universitet bey vielenn andern leuchten nicht weing deformiren. Es werden auch der *Authorum nomina* nicht ausgedruckt, sondern *fictitia nomina* gesetzt darinnen andere leuchte angegriffen undt schimpffirt werdenn, das also der Universitet Ungonst Unvorschulterweyß zugezogen wirdt, als do seindt der *Lupus excoriatus*, die *Dialectica Nolani* eines Itali, undt dergleichen mehr“, „Visitation“, fol. 27v, [in:] *ibidem*, p. 115.

⁴⁴ *Summa terminorum metaphisicorum*, Zurich 1595.

⁴⁵ This was the title under which Bruno enrolled at the university of Wittenberg, see Spampinato, *Vita di Giordano Bruno, con documenti editi e inediti, op. cit.*, p. 664.

quisition not put a stop to the author's plans: "And I was going to Frankfurt again [...] to have other of my works printed"⁴⁶.

For the Nolan this collection may well have represented a text of a dual nature and a dual level: on the one hand a philosophical treatise with university lectures, on the other a dense meshing of references to Lull and to Aristotle with the presentation of his own ontological approach.

The philosopher had a succession of assistants who diligently recorded the words of the master, producing material which then circulated in various ways. In appraising the influence of Bruno's philosophy on European culture, especially when it began to circulate, it is important not to restrict ourselves to the first editions of his works. If we consider the manuscripts, and even more the character of specific collections of texts such as *Rar.* 51, we discover that the philosopher took up different paths in the attempt to divulge his thought, and it is possible that his 'unfinished' projects were known to his early readers. Many intellectuals, including Castelvetro and Corbinelli, and illustrious thinkers such as Tyco Brahe, Gassendi and Leibniz, possessed the works of Bruno and may also have known his manuscript production and his anthologies: in this way they were able to grasp the complexity and richness of his work, giving rise to an interest in the Nolan's philosophy that has endured down the centuries and today is as lively as ever. 

Rar. 51

	De Lampade combinatoria							Animadversiones				Lampas triginta statuarum																
watermarks	A	H	H	H	H	H	H	C	A	A	A	A	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	B	C	C	D	D
gathering	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	f. 180	24	25	26	27

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⁴⁶ "Et andavo a Francoforte di novo, partendomi de qui, per far stampare altre mie opere", see Firpo, *Il processo di Giordano Bruno*, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

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