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The *Victoria Porcheti adversus impios Hebraeos*: Its Sources and Reception

I.

In 1520, the Italian bishop, scholar and orientalist Agostino Giustiniani put the famous *Dux neutrorum*, the Latin translation of Maimonides' *Guide of the Perplexed*, into print in Paris.¹ In the same year, he also published the work of religious controversy titled *Victoria Porcheti adversus impios Hebraeos*.² While teaching Hebrew at the University of Paris at the invitation of Francis I, Giustiniani intensely pursued publishing activities, bringing to print a dozen important Hebrew, Neoplatonic and humanistic texts for the first time.³ Some of the published books were directly linked and functional to his teaching activity, such as the two Hebrew grammar treatises by Moses Kimhi, published in 1519 and 1520 under the titles *Hebraice grammaticae rabbi Mosse Chimchi aureus libellus* and *Liber viarum linguae sanctae rabbi Mosse Qimchi*.⁴ The choice to disseminate precisely the *Victoria Porcheti* seems to fit the general intellectual project at the core of Giustiniani's teaching and publishing activity in a twofold direction.⁵ Firstly, in the cultural context of a new awareness regarding ancient languages, which characterized Humanism and the Renaissance, Giustiniani's study of the Hebrew language and his understanding of the Scriptures went hand in hand with a strong criticism of the *Vulgata*.⁶ His interest in the biblical text is testified by the numerous translations that

* This research was funded by the Department of Philosophy "Piero Martinetti" of the University of Milan in the context of the project "Departments of Excellence 2023-2027", awarded by the Ministry of University and Research (MUR). I am grateful to Ryan Szpiech for having generously shared with me a transcription of the *Pugio fidei*. I am also grateful to Luca Bianchi and Luigi Campi for their advice, and to Lee Klein for language revisions.

¹ Moses Maimonides, *Rabi Mossei Aegyptij Dux seu Director dubitantium aut perplexorum, in treis Libros diuisus, & summa accuratione Reuerendi patris Augustini Iustiniani ordinis Prædicatorii Nebiensium Episcopi recognitus. [...] ab Iodoco Badio Ascensio. [...] Anno MDXX*. On Giustiniani, see Aurelio Cevolotto, *Agostino Giustiniani: un umanista tra Bibbia e Cabala*, Genoa 1992 (= Cevolotto, Giustiniani); id., s.v. "Giustiniani, Agostino", in: *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* 57 (2001).

² Porchetus Salvaticus, *Victoria Porcheti adversus impios Hebræos, in qua tum ex sacris literis, tum ex dictis Talmud, ac Caballistarum et aliorum omnium authorum, quos Hebræi recipiunt, monstratur veritas catholicæ fidei. Ex recognitione R. P. Aug. Iustiniani ordinis Prædicatorii, episcopi Nebiensis*, Paris 1520 (= Porchetus, Victoria). The work is transmitted in the following manuscripts: Rome, Biblioteca Angelica, ms. 216 and ms. 769; Oxford, Merton College MS. 244 and MS. 245; Modena, Biblioteca Estense Universitaria, Estense, Lat. 915 = alfa.S.9.13; Eton, Eton College Library, 130 (Bl.4.3) I, fol. 1r-91v; Siena, Biblioteca Comunale degli Intronati, G.IV.23, fol. 1ra-101rb; Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, A V 18.

³ See Louis Delaruelle, "Le séjour à Paris d'Agostino Giustiniani (1518-1522)", *Revue du seizième siècle* 12 (1925), 322–337.

⁴ Moses Kimhi, *Hebraicae grammaticae rabbi Mosse Chimchi aureus libellus*, Hagenau 1519; id., *Liber viarum linguae sanctae rabbi Mosse Qimchi*, Paris 1520. See François Secret, "Les grammaires hébraïques d'Augustinus Justinianus", *Archivum fratrum prædicatorum* 33 (1963), 269–279.

⁵ On the intellectual profile of Giustiniani, see Cevolotto, Giustiniani.

⁶ For the broader context of Renaissance humanists and the *Vulgata*, see John Monfasani, "Criticism of Biblical Humanists in Quattrocento Italy", in: Erika Rummel (ed.), *A Companion to Biblical Humanism and Scholasticism in the Age of*

he made, and in the prologue to his Latin version of the Book of Job, the Dominican bishop openly opposed the scholastic tradition, which considered the version of the *Vulgata* irreplaceable.⁷ Following the humanistic *topos* of criticizing scholasticism and the renewed interest in ancient languages, which was typical of the time, Giustiniani conceived a vast project for a polyglot edition of the Bible.⁸ However, only the Book of Psalms ever saw the light of day. The published text was divided into eight columns including the Hebrew original, Giustiniani's literal Latin translation, Jerome's version, the Septuagint, the Arabic text, the Aramaic Targum and its Latin translation, as well as a commentary.⁹ It is precisely in this commentary that Giustiniani's erudition as a biblist becomes evident through the extensive use of the rabbinical tradition, in particular the post-Talmudic rabbinical tradition, medieval Jewish commentators and kabbalistic materials.¹⁰ As will be shown, the *Victoria Porcheti* not only refers to rabbinical writings numerous times, but it also presents the biblical text directly translated from the Hebrew – these textual materials not being original, but a mere adaptation from Raymond Marti's *Pugio fidei*.¹¹ Thus, the Hebrew background of the *Victoria Porcheti*, evident from the structure of the arguments, the sources quoted and the biblical citations included, seems to consort to Agostino Giustiniani's endeavor to establish a new *litera* for the Bible as well as to his well-testified interest in Jewish exegesis.

Secondly, the *Victoria Porcheti* gave the Dominican bishop the opportunity to endorse a specific field of study that had received considerable attention in Renaissance humanist circles, namely the kabbalistic tradition and, in particular, the Christian interpretation of Kabbalah.¹² Therefore, it is not surprising that references to kabbalistic literature appear in the title of the published book: *Victoria Porcheti adversus impios Hebræos, in qua tum ex sacris literis, tum ex dictis Talmud, ac Caballistarum, et aliorum omnium authorum, quos Hebræi recipiunt, monstratur veritas catholicae fidei*, even though the writing does not develop any authentic kabbalistic argument. In fact, the title transmitted in the manuscript tradition does not mention Kabbalah: *Incipit liber Victorie a Porcheto*

Erasmus, Leiden/Boston 2008, 15–38. See also Saverio Campanini, “Hebraism and Humanism”, in: J. Marius J. Lange van Ravenswaay/Herman J. Selderhuis (eds.), *Renaissance und Bibelhumanismus*, Göttingen 2020, 39–54.

⁷ Cf. *Liber beati Iob quem nuper hebraice veritati restituit A. Justinianus Nebiensis episcopus quinque linguarum interpres*, Paris 1520. See Cevolotto, Giustiniani, 77–78.

⁸ See Cevolotto, Giustiniani, 41–47.

⁹ *Psalterium Hebraeum, Graecum, Arabicum et Chaldeum, cum tribus Latinis interpretationibus et glossis*, Genuae 1516.

¹⁰ See Cevolotto, Giustiniani, 47–54.

¹¹ On the *Pugio fidei*, see Göрге Hasselhoff/Alexander Fidora/ (eds.), *Ramon Martí's Pugio fidei: Studies and Texts*, Santa Coloma de Queralt 2017. For the text, Raimundus Martini, *Raymundi Martini Ordinis Praedicatorum Pugio Fidei Adversus Mauros et Judæos cum observationibus Josephi de Voisin, et introductione Jo. Benedicti Carpzovi, Qui appendicis loco Hermanni Judæi opus- culum de sua conversione ex manuscripto Bibliothecae Paulinae Academiae Lipsiensis recensuit*, Lipsiae 1687 (= Raimundus Martini, *Pugio fidei*).

¹² On Renaissance Christian Kabbalah, see Saverio Campanini, “I cabbalisti cristiani del Rinascimento”, in: Patrizia Reinach Sabbadini (ed.), *La cultura ebraica*, Turin 2000, 149–165; Id., “Ebrei ed ebraisti cristiani in Italia nel Rinascimento”, in: Giulio Busi/Silvana Greco (eds.), *Il Rinascimento parla ebraico*, Cinisello Balsamo 2019, 184–195. On Dominicans and the Kabbalah in particular, see François Secret, “Les dominicains et la kabbale chrétienne à la Renaissance”, *Archivum fratrum praedicatorum* 27 (1957), 319–336.

de Salvaiguis Ianuensi divina favente gratia compilatio ad Iudaicam perfidiam subvertendam et ut prestanti veritas fulgeat fidei Christiane.¹³ The innovation introduced by Giustiniani integrates the writing of Porchetus – which actually treats mostly rabbinic literature – into the *corpus* of kabbalistic materials that several intellectuals in the Humanist and Renaissance period dealt with.¹⁴

The nowadays rather unknown author of the work, Porchetus Salvaticus – one of the numerous variants of his name that circulated – was probably a member of the Salvago family that belonged to the Genoese nobility.¹⁵ Apart from his anti-Jewish treatise, there is not much information about him: Porchetus seems to have been a Carthusian monk and probably lived in Genoa in the second half of the 13th century.¹⁶ In various attempts to identify him through archival documents, he has often been confused with some other figures known by similar names, and biographical details about him remain uncertain.¹⁷ That he belonged to the Carthusian order is reported by Giustiniani, but there is no historical evidence from the 14th century for this. The name of Porchetus Salvaticus appears in a list of authors belonging to the Carthusian order composed by Giacomo Loreto and dating back to the second half of the 16th century.¹⁸ One of the manuscripts transmitting the *Victoria Porcheti*, the codex Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, A V 18, attributes the title of “Archidiacono” to him in the *incipit* of the text.¹⁹

Nevertheless, despite of his nowadays blurred profile, Porchetus Salvaticus was certainly held in high esteem by his compatriot Agostino Giustiniani, who, in the *Castigatissimi annali della eccelsa e illustrissima Repubblica di Genova* – a work aiming at the ethical-political education of the ruling class, also through the example of leading cultural figures from the past –, mentions his name:

The city had another citizen named Porcheto Salvego, who was a Carthusian monk and compiled a book entitled *Victory against the Jews*, which is the best to be found on this matter. And for the use of scholars and for the honor of the homeland, I printed it in Paris. He also

¹³ Modena, Biblioteca Estense Universitaria, Estense, Lat. 915 = alfa.S.9.13, fol. 1r.

¹⁴ On Talmudic literature and Kabbalah in the works of Christian Hebraists, see Saverio Campanini, “Talmudisti e cabbalisti. Un’immagine dell’ebraismo alle origini della qabbalah cristiana”, in: Domenico Felice/Anselmo Cassani (eds.), *Civiltà e popoli del Mediterraneo: immagini e pregiudizi*, Bologna 1999, 119–135.

¹⁵ Other known variants of his name are: Salvagus, Porchetus Salvagus, Porchetus de Salvaticis, Salvaticus, Victor Porchetto de’ Salvatici, Porchetto de Salvatici, Porcheus de Salva ignis, Portheus.

¹⁶ See Andrea Lercari, s.v. “Porchetus Salvaticus”, in: *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* 85 (2016) (= Lercari, Porchetus Salvaticus).

¹⁷ See the attempts made by Ora Limor, “Missionary Merchants: Three Medieval Anti-Jewish Works from Genoa”, *Journal of Medieval History* 17 (1991) (= Limor, Missionary Merchants), 35–51, 42; for archival documents mentioning the name of Porchetus, see Lercari, Porchetus Salvaticus.

¹⁸ Giuseppe Rotondi, “Il ‘De viris illustribus, sive de scriptoribus sacris ordinis Cartusiensis’ di Giacomo Loreto”, *Aevum* 13 (1939), 179–186.

¹⁹ Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, A V 18, fol. 156r.

compiled another book entitled *De entibus trinis et unis*, which is preserved in the library of the convent of San Domenico.²⁰

In 1667, the Genoese historian Raffaele Soprani, in his book *Li scrittori della Liguria e particolarmente della Maritima*, praised the value of Porchetus' work, mentioning precisely the two elements that had drawn Giustiniani's attention to this treatise, namely its exegetical content and the use of rabbinic literature:

The worth of his pen is clearly seen in the work he composed against the Jews, which was the most worthy work of those on the same subject that ever came out from the most learned minds, not only because its author appropriately explained in it the most difficult passages of the Old and New Testaments, but much more because he convinced the Jewish obstinacy with reasons and arguments drawn from the most classical authors of their same sect.²¹

The description of Porchetus' biography and the reference to his lost writing *De entibus trinis et unis* seems to rely mostly on Giustiniani's account:

He was a Carthusian monk and flourished around the year 1315, but the work was given to the press much later by the bishop Agostino Giustiniani, who says he had it printed in Paris under the following title: *Victoria Porcheti adversus impios Hebreos*, in Paris, by Egidio Gormontio in 1520. Besides this, he composed another book, entitled *De Entibus trinis et unis*, which is preserved in the library of St. Dominic monastery in Genoa, rich in mysterious and most subtle speculations, which make the name of its author immortal.²²

²⁰ Agostino Giustiniani, *Castigatissimi annali con la loro copiosa tavola della eccelsa et illustrissima Republica di Genoa*, Genoa 1537, 114r (= Giustiniani, *Castigatissimi annali*): "La città ha havuto uno altro cittadino nominato Porcheto Salvego, il quale è stato monaco cartusiense et ha compilato un libro, intitolato *Vittoria contra hebreos*, che è il meglio che si trovi in questa materia. Et io per utilità de i studiosi et per honor della patria l'ho fatto stampire a Parigi. Ha etiamdio Porcheto compilato uno altro libro intitolato *De entibus trinis et unis*, il quale si conserva in la libreria del convento di San Domenico."

²¹ Raffaele Soprani, *Li scrittori della Liguria e particolarmente della Maritima*, Genoa 1667, 244 (= Soprani, *Li scrittori*): "Il valor della cui penna facilmente si scorge dall'opera ch'egli compose contro gl'Hebrei, la quale portò il vanto della più degna fra quante su l'istesso soggetto n'uscissero mai da gl'ingegni più dotti, non solo per haver il suo Autore felicemente spiegati in essa i più difficili passi del vecchio, e nuovo Testamento, ma molto più per haver convinta l'Hebraica ostinatione con ragioni e argomenti cavati da gl'Autori più classici dell'istessa lor Setta."

²² Soprani, *Li scrittori*, 244–245: "Fu egli Monaco Cartusiano, e fiori circa l'anno 1315, ma l'Opera fu data alle Stampe molto dopo dal Vescovo Agostino Giustiniano, il quale dice d'haverla fatta imprimere a Parigi col titolo seguente: *Victoria Porcheti adversus impios Hebreos*, in Parigi, appresso Egidio Gormontio 1520. Oltre a quale compose cert'altro Libro intitolato: *De Entibus trinis et unis*, che si conserva nella Libreria del Monastero di S. Dominico di Genova abbondante di misteriose, e sottilissime speculazioni, che rendono immortale il nome del loro Autore."

However, judgements concerning Porchetus' merits were not unanimous. Besides the above-mentioned eulogies, at the end of the 18th century, Louis-Mayeul Chaudon ironically describes his zeal as being superior to his logic in the *Nouveau dictionnaire historique*:

Learned and pious Carthusian monk from Genoa, who lived in 1315, occupied himself in his solitude with refuting the Jews in his book entitled *Victoria adversus impios Hebraeos*, Paris 1520 in folio Gothic, very rare. This work, for which Raymond Martin had provided the model, and which was then copied by Fr. Galatin, contains some inconclusive reasonings; and the author's zeal is to be praised more than his logic.²³

It is quite likely that the principal advocate for Porchetus' fortune had been Martin Luther, whose autographic annotations are found in a copy of the *Victoria Porcheti* that belonged to his library.²⁴ In the treatise *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen* (1543), Luther used the quotations found in the *Victoria Porcheti* for his German translation of the Targum Onkelos.²⁵ Moreover, an extensive passage from the *Victoria* has been translated into German by Luther in his anti-Jewish pamphlet *Vom Shem Hamphoras und vom Geschlecht Christi*.²⁶ The citation reports a story taken from the anti-Christian tradition called *Toledot Yeshu*, which polemically portrayed Jesus as a false master who had taken possession of one of God's name, the *Shem ha-mephorash*, and thus practiced black magic. Martin Luther did not take this passage of the *Toledot Yeshu* from a Hebrew version, but from Porchetus' writing, who – in turn – had adopted it from the *Pugio fidei*. While retracing the origin of the *Shem ha-mephorash* as one of God's names, Luther ridiculed its worship and presented it as a superstitious belief of the Jews. According to him, the kabbalistic speculations based on the numerical value of the name should be considered a perverted practice of the Jews, which are also accused of sorcery, and the *Victoria Porcheti* provides Luther with the material to argue for his position:

²³ Louis-Mayeul Chaudon, *Nouveau dictionnaire historique*, vol. VII, Caen 1783, 203: "Scavant et pieux Chartreux Génois, qui vivoit vers 1315, s'occupa dans sa solitude à réfuter les Juifs dans un livre intitulé: *Victoria adversus impios Hebraeos*, Parisiis, 1520, in-folio; gothique, assez rare. Cet ouvrage, dont Raimond Martin lui avoit fourni le modèle, et qui depuis fut copié par P. Galatin, renferme quelques raisonnemens peu concluans; et l'on doit plus louer le zèle de l'auteur, que sa logique."

²⁴ See Hans-Martin Kirn, "Traces of Targum Reception in the Work of Martin Luther", in: Alberdina Houtman/Eveline van Staalduine-Sulman/Hans-Martin Kirn (eds.), *A Jewish Targum in a Christian World*, Leiden/Boston 2014, 266–288, 279–280. Luther's copy of the *Victoria Porcheti* can be consulted online: <https://digital.blb-karlsruhe.de/id/33266> (accessed June 28, 2023).

²⁵ Martin Luther, *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen*, Wittenberg 1543.

²⁶ Martin Luther, *Vom Shem Hamphoras und vom Geschlecht Christi*, Wittenberg 1543 (= Luther, *Vom Shem*).

The next book I promised, I wanted to expose how the frantic, miserable Jews lie and blaspheme with their Schem Hamphoras, as Porchetus writes in his book called *Victoria*. This I have done herewith to honor our faith and to oppose the devilish lies of the Jews.²⁷

II.

The reasons and motives for the composition of the *Victoria Porcheti adversos impios Hebraeos* raise a certain number of difficulties, the description of the aim provided in the prologue being succinct and unspecific:

We called this booklet ‘Victory’, since through it the Jews are easily convinced, and their consciences are not only a little penetrated.²⁸

Porchetus does not provide any further details concerning the circumstances that led him to compile the writing nor does he suggest the intended use of his work. However, such questions are quite relevant given the fact that it is not clear whether Jews lived in Genoa at that time, since no archival documentation concerning Jews is found for the years 1286 to 1376.²⁹ This gap led historians to assume that Jews were not allowed to live in the city. In any case, in that same period, the network of relations between Genoese and Jews became closer due to the commercial activities carried out on the same trade routes.

It is precisely in this socio-economic context that two other works of controversy against the Jews originated in Genoa. Two Genoese merchants, Guglielmo Alfachino and Inghetto Contardo, had been protagonists of anti-Jewish disputations. In 1179, Guglielmo Alfachino took part in a dispute with a Jew called Abraham in Ceuta, and around 1286, Inghetto Contardo participated in a debate that lasted several days and included different episodes in Mallorca.³⁰ The account of Inghetto Contardo’s disputation, transmitted by numerous manuscripts, was also known to Agostino Giustiniani.³¹ These

²⁷ Luther, Vom Schem, 2. “Im nehesten Büchlin hab ich verheissen, ich wolt hinnach lassen lauffen was die rasenden elenden Jüden von ihrem Schem Hamphoras liegen und lestern, wie davon schreibt Purchetus in seinem Buch *Victoria* genant. Das wil ich hiemit also gethan haben unserm Glauben zu ehren und den Teuffels lügen der Jüden zu wider.”

²⁸ Porchetus, *Victoria*, 2r: “Libellum autem istum victoriam nuncupamus, eo quod per eum Iudei facile convincuntur, ac eorum conscientie non modicum penetrantur.”

²⁹ See Rossana Urbani/Guido Nathan Zazzu (eds.), *The Jews in Genoa*, vol. I, Leiden/Boston/Köln 1999, XXIV.

³⁰ The disputation between Alfachino and Abraham is transmitted in the manuscript Genoa, Biblioteca universitaria, ms. A.III.19, fol. 1–40. On both disputations, see Limor, *Missionary Merchants*; ead., *Die Disputationen zu Ceuta (1179) und Mallorca (1286): Zwei antijüdische Schriften aus dem mittelalterlichen Genua*, München 1994 (= Limor, *Disputationen*).

³¹ For the edition of this disputation, see Inghetto Contardo, *Disputatio contra Iudeos. Disputes avec les juifs*, ed. and trans. Gilbert Dahan, Paris 1993; Limor, *Disputationen*. See also Jocelyn N. Hillgarth, “The Disputation of Majorca

two texts are certainly significant because the protagonists involved were merchants, and not religious authorities, as it was often the case, and both authors tend to emphasize this point by frequently referring to their profession and to their dialectical ability, despite being laymen.³² The arguments of the two accounts are based on traditional biblical material, and none of them mentions any rabbinical literature.

Despite the common geographical background, the *Victoria Porcheti* appears to be radically different from the two above mentioned disputations. Indeed, Porchetus was able to deal with theological doctrines, displaying his familiarity with a clerical education, and notwithstanding his ‘second-hand’ knowledge of Hebrew texts, one should question to what extent he was possibly acquainted with the Hebrew language and with the topics treated. Attempts have been made to relate the author of the *Victoria Porcheti* to the merchant environment, and specifically to the Contardo family; however, the uncertainty concerning the identity of the person – or the persons – called Porchetus, who appears in notarial documents and testifies to commercial exchanges, prevents any conclusive judgement.³³ If the author of the *Victoria* was the same Porchetus who, according to Jacopo da Varagine’s chronicle, was sent as an ambassador to Venice in 1295, he certainly must have been acquainted with theological notions that were hardly accessible to laymen.³⁴ Moreover, the title of the other treatise attributed to him by Giustiniani, *De entibus trinis et unis*, seems to support his belonging to the ecclesiastical order; indeed, such subject matter could hardly be traced back to the cultural background of a merchant.

Unlike the texts mentioned above, the *Victoria Porcheti* is not a report of a disputation, but rather a collection of polemical arguments, most of them adopted from Raymond Martí’s *Pugio fidei*. That the author is indebted to Raymond Martí is acknowledged directly in the prologue, in which he explains his decision not to quote the biblical text according to the *Vulgata*, but rather according to Martí’s translation, in order to be more incisive and to prevent allegations on the part of the Jews:

In this booklet, in many passages, I will not follow the text or the translation of St. Jerome, since without any doubt it diverges from the literal text in numerous places. Indeed, very often it is different from the Hebrew literal text, since in many passages it follows rather the meaning than the literal text, so that it is impossible to provide a strong conclusive argument for the Jews. But in order to stop any of their excuses, and in order to refute them more easily, I will follow

(1286): Two New Editions”, *Euphrosyne* 22 (1994), 403–413. Agostino Giustiniani mentions Inghetto Contardo in his *Annali*, see Giustiniani, *Castigatissimi annali*, 103v.

³² See Limor, *Missionary Merchants*, 39–40.

³³ See Limor, *Missionary Merchants*, 42. Other documents are discussed by Lercari, *Porchetus Salvaticus*.

³⁴ Giovanni Monleone, *Iacopo da Varagine e la sua cronaca di Genova dalle origini al 1297*, vol. II, Roma 1941, 103.

the literal version of the old Hebrew texts, namely of the Testament, according to the translation made by friar Raymond Martini, the Spaniard, of the Dominican Order of the Catalonia region, from whom I took the subject matter of this booklet for its most part, and who was an excellent scholar in the Hebrew and Arabic writings as much as in the Latin ones.³⁵

After this introduction, clarifying the use of the Hebrew language, a long quotation from the *Pugio fidei*, almost as long as the entire prologue, follows. Porchetus reproduces Martí's presentation of rabbinical literature and his harsh judgement against it. In particular, the famous metaphor of pearls found in a dunghill is cited:

[...] These traditions which I found in the *Talmud* and *Midrashim* – namely the traditions and glosses of the ancient Jews – which I picked up like pearls, as though out of an enormous dunghill. With the help of God, I shall translate them into Latin [...] These traditions, which they call 'Torah she-be-al-peh' – oral law –, they believe and state that God gave them to Moses along with the Law on Mount Sinai. Then Moses, they say, transmitted them to his disciple Joshua; Joshua to his successors, and so on, until they were committed to writing by the ancient Rabbis.³⁶

Afterwards, Porchetus reports the reasons that justify the use of rabbinical literature to argue in favor of Christianity. The entire argumentation of the *Pugio fidei* is reproduced, including the metaphors of the possibility to find a precious stone in a toad, the nobility of honey despite its being the spit of bees and the ability to protect oneself from their poisonous sting. Rabbinical tradition is thus not rejected – again, borrowing the words of the *Pugio* – because:

³⁵ Porchetus, *Victoria*, 2: "In isto vero libello in pluribus non sequar beati Hieronymi textum seu translationem, cum in multis procul dubio divertat a litera. Quoniam sepius se habet aliter quam hebraica veritas, quia in pluribus secutus est magis sententiam quam litere textum, quia quidem sic valide Iudeis nequit concludi. Sed ut omnis eorum excusatio desinat, et ut facilius refellantur, sequar literam codicum hebreorum veteris, scilicet testamenti, secundum quod translatum est a fratre Raimundo Martino hispano, ordini predicatorum de partibus Cathalonie, a quo sumpsi huius libelli materiam in plerisque compilandi, qui fuit vir eximius tam in scripturis Hebraicis et Arabicis quam Latinis."

³⁶ Porchetus, *Victoria*, 2: "Quedam traditiones, quas in *Talmud* et in *Medrassim*, id est in traditionibus et glossis antiquorum Iudeorum, reperi, et tanquam margaritas quasi de quodam maximo fenario sustuli non modicum letabundus, quas quidem in Latinum, Deo iuvante, transferram [...] Has autem traditiones, quas vocant 'Tora sibba al pe', id est legem ore tenus, Deum Moysi simul cum lege in Monte Sinai credunt et referunt tradidisse. Deinde Moyses, ut aiunt, tradidit eas Iosue discipulo suo; Iosue vero successoribus suis, et sic alterutrum deinceps donec per Rabinos antiquos comendate sunt scripto."

Nothing is found so capable as to refute the impudence of the Jews and nothing so effective for overcoming their wickedness. Finally, what would be more joyous for a Christian than if he could most easily twist the sword out of the hands of the enemies.³⁷

After a few examples, the prologue concludes by presenting the structure of the work, which is divided into two parts: the first part is dedicated to the human nature of Christ; the second, to his divine nature.³⁸ The structure of the *Victoria Porcheti* does not completely reproduce that of the *Pugio fidei*, which is divided into three parts, the third part again being divided into three distinctions.

The first part of the *Victoria Porcheti* lists arguments taken from the *Pugio*'s second part, focusing on scriptural evidence proving the messianic nature of Christ based on prophetic books. Further, it adopts arguments on the original sin and the necessity of redemption from distinctions 2 and 3 of part III. The second part of the *Victoria Porcheti* refers mostly to the *Pugio*'s third part, treating the divine nature of Christ, the Trinity, and theological questions pertaining to the validity of the Jewish law. Philosophical topics treated in the *Pugio fidei*'s first part do not appear in the *Victoria Porcheti*, and Porchetus generally does not seem to refer to *Pugio* part I (see Appendix II). This might have been the result of an intentional choice to exclude discussions concerning, for instance, divine omniscience, the eternity of the world and the immortality of the soul; however, one must take into consideration that the manuscript tradition of the *Pugio* testifies to a complex transmission, in which parts of the writing were circulating separately.³⁹ As for now, there is not enough evidence to determine which manuscript copy might have been available to Porchetus, and therefore no conclusive statement can be made regarding the relationship between the structure of the *Victoria Porcheti* and that of the *Pugio fidei*.

Finally, in the last part of his prologue, the author stresses the attention that is paid to the correct pronunciation of the Hebrew expressions quoted in the text, and he reports Martí's observations concerning the transliteration of Hebrew terms. Even if Porchetus' understanding of Hebrew was probably "second-hand" knowledge and relied mostly on the *Pugio fidei*, he nonetheless shows a certain philological consideration of the problems connected to the transposition into Latin letters.

³⁷ Porchetus, *Victoria*, 2: "Quia nihil ad confutandam Iudeorum impudentiam reperitur tam validum, nihilque ad eorum convincendam nequitiam tam efficax invenitur. Denique quid iocundius Christiano, quam si distortere facillime poterit de manibus hostium gladium."

³⁸ Porchetus, *Victoria*, 3: "Huius autem libelli tenor dividitur in duas partes, cuius prima pars continet capitula viginti quatuor, in qua magis et prestantius distinguitur de humanitate Messie sive Christi quam de divinitate eiusdem. Secunda vero continet capitula XVI, in qua magis habetur de divinitate ipsius quam de humanitate ut a scrutantibus manifeste poterit intueri."

³⁹ See Gorge K. Hasselhoff, "The Projected Edition of Ramon Martí's *Pugio fidei*. A Survey and a Stemma", in: Gorge Hasselhoff/Alexander Fidora (eds.), *Ramon Martí's Pugio fidei: Studies and Texts*, Santa Coloma de Queralt 2017, 23–38.

Moreover, being aware of the dangers of corruption intrinsic to the transmission process, Porchetus urges the copyists of his work to carefully reproduce the transliteration of the Hebrew words:

In order that some Hebrew words are more appropriately expressed in Latin letters, the letter ‘ç’, made of our letters ‘c’ and ‘z’, is created, and it ought to have the same sound before ‘a’, ‘o’, and ‘u’ as ‘c’ when it precedes ‘e’ and ‘i’. At the end of a syllable or a word, it has a sound between two letters, namely ‘c’ and ‘z’. Our letter ‘k’ is used for the ‘caph’ of the Jews, which among them often has a hard sound. Therefore, any copyist should be careful not to change the following letters of the Hebrew words, so that the property of the pronunciation is not changed.⁴⁰

III.

As an example of Porchetus’ method to approach rabbinic sources and the *Pugio fidei*, chapter 13 from *Victoria II* part will be examined in more detail. This chapter presents a great number of quotations from midrashic literature as well as arguments taken from philosophical sources – even though, as already mentioned, Porchetus tends to avoid philosophical topics. *Victoria II*, 13 is devoted to the question of man’s creation in the image of God, and it corresponds to *Pugio fidei*, II–III, 1–2. Originally, in the *Pugio fidei*, the topic was treated within the discussion about the Trinity, with the aim of demonstrating that man’s creation in the image of God implied a creation in the image of the Trinity. In his rearrangement of the *Pugio*’s topics, Porchetus skips most of the previous considerations on the Trinity and inserts this chapter into the discussion on the Messiah. However, he retains the introductory sentence, which makes reference to the subjects treated in the previous chapters of the *Pugio*:

In my opinion, enough has been said in the previous chapters to prove to the Jews that God is three and one, and that He is called Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in the Holy Scripture. Now, in this chapter XIII of the second part, I intend – with the help of God – to demonstrate that the Holy Trinity, one God, created man in his image and likeness.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Porchetus, *Victoria*, 2v: “Ut autem quedam nomina hebraica proferri Latinis literis habilius valeant, una figura talis ç, ex c et z composita nostris literis producetur quam talem sonum decebit habere cum a, o et u, qualem habet c cum precedit e et i. In fine vero syllabe vel dictionis sonabit inter duas literas, videlicet c et z. Litera vero nostra que k dicitur pro caf Iudeorum, que aspere sonat sepius apud eos sepius similiter inducetur. Igitur caveat quilibet scriptor, ne literas alteret dictionum hebraicarum subsequentes, ne proferenti alteret proprietatem.”

⁴¹ Porchetus, *Victoria II*, 13, 82r: “Quia in precedentibus capitulis ad probandum Deum esse trinum Iudeis et nichilominus unum, et hunc fuisse in Sacra Scriptura vocatum Patrem et Filium et Spiritum Sanctum satis est, ut arbitror, dictum. Nunc

This introduction, as well as the rest of the section, corresponds word for word to the text of the *Pugio fidei*, while only the numbering of the chapter differs. Porchetus reports, with few exceptions, the entire argument listing rabbinical sources presented in the *Pugio fidei*, and quotations are only transcribed in Latin. Starting from the classical argument in favor of the Trinity based on the interpretation of the plural form “faciamus” in Gen. 1, 26, Martí – and therefore also Porchetus – corroborates his position through a series of citations from midrashic literature, namely from *Bereshit Rabbah*, *Midrash Tehillim* and the *Mekhiltah*. The aim is to demonstrate that all these post-biblical texts affirm the creation of man in God’s image and likeness.

From *Bereshit Rabbah*, three passages are quoted; in the first one, different positions are discussed concerning the pre-existing elements that supported God in the creation of man.⁴² The opinion that Martí embraced is that of Rabbi Amei, according to which God consulted his heart before creating Adam; the other opinions are considered valid insofar as they affirm the creation in God’s image:

Consider that only the one who says that God made plans with His heart, namely with Himself, seems to tolerably think the truth. None of them denies that man was created in God’s image.⁴³

In the second one, a midrash on Lev. 19, 18 is reported, according to which it is commanded to love one’s neighbor, and not to vilify them, for vilifying them would imply to denigrate the image of God.⁴⁴ The third refers to the presence of angels during the creation of Adam:

in hoc XIII capitulo secunde partis intendo, Deo auxiliante, probare quod hec beata Trinitas unus Deus fecit hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem suam.”

⁴² Porchetus, Victoria II, 13, 82r-v: “Item notandum, quod in *Beressit Raba* super hunc locum queritur in hunc modum: ‘Cum quo iniit Deus consilium, anteliceit voluit Deus facere Adam? Rabi Iehoshua dixit, quod cum opere celi et terre iniit consilium. Dixit Rabi Samuel, quod opus cuiuslibet Diei consuluit. Rabbi vero Ammai dixit, quod cum corde suo iniit consilium. Dixit autem Rabi Hanina, quod cum angelis iniit consilium: in hora siquidem, qua Deus voluit creare Adam primum, consuluit angelos ministerii, et dixit eis: ‘Faciamus Adam’. Dixerunt ei: que utilitas in eo? Ait eis: Iusti stabunt ex eo [...] Rabi Levi dixit, quod cum animabus iustorum iniit consilium, sicut scriptum est.” Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah*, 8, 3. Cf. Raimundus Martini, *Pugio fidei*, II–III, 1, 551.

⁴³ Porchetus, Victoria II, 13, 82v: “Nota, quod solus ille, qui dicit Deum iniisse consilia cum corde suo, id est cum seipso, videtur tolerabiliter opinari verum. Nullus eorum negat, ad imaginem Dei factum fuisse hominem.” Cf. Raimundus Martini, *Pugio fidei*, II–III, 1, 551.

⁴⁴ Porchetus, Victoria II, 13, 82v: “Dixit Rabi Aaqiba: Scriptum est Lev. XIX c: ‘Et diliges proximum tuum sicut teipsum.’ Pars magna rei huius est, quod non dicas: Postquam ego vituperatus sum, vituperetur proximus meus. Dixit Rabi Tanhuma: Si autem ita feceris, scito, quod vituperaberis siquidem vilipendes eum, de quo scriptum est Gen. V a: ‘In similitudine Elohim, id est Dei sive deorum, fecit eum.’” Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah*, 24, 7. Cf. Raimundus Martini, *Pugio fidei*, II–III, 1, 552.

Rabbi Hoshaya said: In the moment that God created Adam the first beçalmo, that is, in his image, the ministering angels erred and sought to say: ‘Holy, holy, holy God, Lord of Sabaoth.’⁴⁵

The *Midrash Tehillim* is quoted twice; in the first citation, Abraham realizes the value of **generosity towards human beings**, since **they are** images of God:

Abraham our father said to the *melchi tzedek* (kings of righteousness) [...]: ‘How or for what reason did you come out from the ark?’ He said to him: ‘Because of the righteousness that we did there.’ He [Abraham] said to him: ‘How could you do righteousness if there was no one besides Noah and his sons there? To whom did you do righteousness?’ He said: ‘We did righteousness to the animals and beasts and birds.’ [...] Abraham said: ‘Just as those who did righteousness to animals, beasts and birds, received a reward, if I do righteousness to the children of Adam, who are in the image and likeness of God, I will receive a reward even more and I will be freed from obstacles.’⁴⁶

In the second one, an extensive parallel between God and the human soul involving different elements is drawn:

Why does David praise God with the soul? David said: Just as the soul fills the body, so does God fill His world [...]. The soul does not eat, and God does not eat [...]. The soul carries the body, and God carries His world. [...] The soul is unique in the body, and God is unique in His world [...]. The soul is pure in the body, that is, it is not stained with the turpitudes of the body, and God is pure in His world. [...] The soul sees but is not seen [...]. The soul does not sleep, and God does not sleep [...]. David said: Let the soul that possesses all these qualities come and praise and laud God, who possesses all these qualities.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Porchetus, Victoria II, 13, 82v: “Dixit Rabi Hossaia: In hora, qua Deus sanctus et benedictus creavit Adam primum beçalmo, id est in imaginem suam, erraverunt in eo angeli ministerii et voluerunt dicere coram eo: ‘Sanctus sanctus sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaot.’” Cf. *Bereshit Rabbah*, 8, 10. Cf. Raimundus Martini, *Pugio fidei*, II–III, 1, 552–553.

⁴⁶ Porchetus, Victoria II, 13, 82v: “Dixit Abraham pater noster ad Melchi çedeq [...]: ‘Per quem modum vel ob quam rem exivistis de archa?’ Dixit ei: ‘Propter elemosinam, quam faciebamus ibi.’ Dixit ei: ‘Et cuiusmodi elemosinam poteratis ibi facere, cum ibi non esset nisi Noe et filii sui? Cui ergo faciebatis elemosinam?’ Ait ei: ‘Feris et bestiis et volucris faciebamus elemosinam.’ [...] Dixit Abraham: ‘Sicut isti, qui fecerunt elemosinam feris, bestiis et volatilibus, receperunt mercedem, si fecerunt elemosinam filiis Ade, qui sunt ad imaginem et similitudinem Dei sancti et benedicti, quanto magis recipiam mercedem et liberabor ab obviantibus.’” Cf. *Midrash Tehillim*, 37. Cf. Raimundus Martini, *Pugio fidei*, II–III, 1, 552.

⁴⁷ Porchetus, Victoria II, 13, 82v: “Cur visum est David laudare Deum sanctum et benedictum per animam? Dixit David: Sicut anima ista implet corpus, sic Deus sanctus et benedictus implet mundum suum [...]. Anima ista non est comedens, et Deus sanctus et benedictus nequaquam comedit [...]. Anima ista portat corpus, et Deus portat mundum suum [...]. Anima ista unica est in corpore, et Deus sanctus et benedictus unicus est in seculo suo [...] Anima ista munda est in

Finally, a quotation from the *Mekhiltah* accounts for a midrash on Ex. 20, 26, according to which, if it is prescribed to pay respect to the altar in the tabernacle, one should, *a fortiori*, respect the human being, who bears the image of God in them:

Here it follows *qual va homer*, that is, *a fortiori*: indeed, if of stones, which have no consciousness of evil and good, He – namely God – said: Do not deport yourself upon them boldly nor outrageously, how much more it is required that with your neighbor, who is created in the likeness of Him who spoke and brought the world into being, you do not deport yourself boldly nor outrageously.⁴⁸

After the quotations from the midrash, Martí – and, again, also Porchetus – refers to the authority of Albert the Great – who is defined as “magister in theologia et philosophus magnus” – and Augustine for the well-known definition of the Trinity as memory, intellect and will.⁴⁹ Finally, Maimonides’ argument taken from *Guide of the Perplexed* I, 1, concerning the resemblance between God and the human being by means of the intellect, is quoted.⁵⁰ A citation from Peter of Tarentaise on the

corpore, id est non maculatur sordibus corporis, et Deus sanctus et benedictus mundus est in seculo suo [...] Anima hec videt et non videtur [...] Anima ista non dormit, et Deus sanctus et benedictus non dormit [...] Dixit ergo David: Veniat anima, in qua sunt omnes proprietates iste, et laudet atque glorificet Deum sanctum et benedictum, in quo sunt omnes proprietates iste.” Cf. *Midrash Tehillim* 103, 3. Cf. Raimundus Martini, *Pugio fidei*, II–III, 2, 554.

⁴⁸ Porchetus, *Victoria II*, 13, 82v: “Ecce hic argumentatum vel locus *qual va homer*, id est minoris et maioris: Nam si de lapidibus, in quibus non est cognitio mali et boni, dixit ipse, id est ipse Deus: Ut non ambules in eis despective vel contumeliose, quanto magis exigit ratio, ut cum proximo tuo, qui est in similitudine illius, qui dixit et fuit mundus, non ambules contemptibiliter aut contumeliose.” Cf. *Mekhilta de Rabbi Yishmael*, 20, 23. Cf. Raimundus Martini, *Pugio fidei*, II–III, 1, 552.

⁴⁹ Porchetus, *Victoria II*, 13, 82v–83r: “Albertus, videlicet in *Summa super Sententias* cum beato Augustino dicendum esse decrevit, quod in memoria et intelligentia et voluntate est imago Dei, nec plures potest habere potentias nec pauciores. Ex memoria enim formatur intelligentia, nec est, ex quo formetur, nisi ex memoria. Secundum, quod memoria est notitiam rei apud se habere. Nisi enim apud animam sit notitia, non est, quo formetur intelligentia. Intelligentia autem extendentem se et notitia et accipiente id, quod verum est in ratione boni et convenientis statim ex memoria et intelligentia sic extensis formatur appetitus, qui est voluntas. Primus enim impetus anime in bonum conveniens est voluntas, et sicut intelligentia ex memoria formatur, sic ex Patre Filius generatur. Et sicut voluntas ex memoria et intelligentia extensis et quasi spirantibus bonum, sic Spiritus Sanctus ex Patre Filio uno principio existentibus spirandi bonum, quod est Spiritus Sanctus, et in hoc stat processio.” Cf. Albertus Magnus, *Summa theologiae*, I, pars I, tract. III, q. 15, 2, art. 2, I, B, sol. Cf. Raimundus Martini, *Pugio fidei*, II–III, 2, 555. On Albert the Great in the *Pugio fidei*, see Ann Giletti, “Early Witness: Thomas Aquinas, Albert the Great and Peter of Tarentaise in Ramon Martí’s *Pugio fidei* (c. 1278)”, in: Görge Hasselhoff/Alexander Fidora (eds.), *Ramon Martí’s Pugio fidei: Studies and Texts*, Santa Coloma de Queralt 2017, 121–156 (= Giletti, Early Witness).

⁵⁰ Porchetus, *Victoria II*, 13, 83r: “De hac etiam materia loquens Rabi Moyses in *Directione nutantium* in primo capitulo prime partis; ait: Ex hoc, quod dixit Deus: ‘Faciamus Adam beçalmenu, id est in imaginem nostram’, perduxit homines, id est Iudeos, ad credendum Deum esse corporeum, et velut hominem ipsum habere corpus cum omnibus liniamentis humanis et membris simul et spiritum. Quo reprobato dicit et bene, quod non quantum ad corpus est homo factus ad imaginem sui conditoris, sed quantum ad intellectum.” Cf. Moses Maimonides, *The Guide of the Perplexed*, trans. Shlomo Pines, introd. Leo Strauss, 2 vols., Chicago/London 1963, 1, vol. I, 21–23. Cf. Raimundus Martini, *Pugio fidei*, II–III, 2, 555–556. On Maimonides’ quotations in the *Pugio fidei*, see Diana Di Segni, “‘Aristotelis sententia de mundi aeternitate exposita a Maimonide’. Le citazioni dalla *Guida dei perplessi* nel *Pugio fidei* di Raimondo Martí”, in: Alessandra Beccarisi/Alessandro Capone (eds.), *Aliter. Controversie religiose e definizioni di identità tra Tardoantico e Medioevo*,

immortality of the soul present in the *Pugio* is omitted by Porchetus.⁵¹ It is remarkable that Porchetus reports the arguments taken from Albert and Maimonides, despite his apparent lack of interest in philosophical passages, as the absence of references to *Pugio* I seems to prove.

It is evident that Porchetus fully relies on the *Pugio fidei*, not only for the Latin translation of the rabbinical sources quoted, but also regarding the construction of the argumentation – even if the structure of the work as a whole is distinct, as the replacement of the references to the textual divisions in *distinctiones* with chapters shows. By merging two chapters of *Pugio fidei* II–III, Porchetus does not really abbreviate the argumentation, except for the already mentioned quotation from Peter of Tarentaise and the citation of the *Midrash Tehillim* concerning the parallel with the soul, which appears in a longer version in the *Pugio*, including a reference to the midrash *Vaikrah Rabbah* 4, 2.⁵² A peculiarity of Porchetus’ text is the presence of Hebrew words transliterated into Latin, such as the expression *kal va-homer*, the terms *betzalmo* and *betzalmenu*, which are always followed by the translation “id est in imaginem nostram”, and the word *middot*; finally, every occurrence of the name “Elohim” is accompanied by the specification of the plural form attributed to the divinity: “Elohim, id est Dii.” If this latter expression might have been known also to someone with scarce knowledge of Hebrew, it is doubtful whether Porchetus would have been familiar with the other terms without the mediation of the *Pugio fidei*. Further investigations should be made onto the manuscript copy of the *Pugio* Porchetus had at his disposal, in which probably those terms were also transliterated into Latin characters. Finally, for the biblical text, the author of the *Victoria Porcheti* adopts the numbering system using the letters of the alphabet introduced in 1236 by the General Chapter of the Dominican order with the aim of creating a biblical concordance; according to this system, chapters are divided into seven parts, and every part is assigned a letter from ‘a’ to ‘g’.⁵³ This textual division was originally spread in France, and the *Victoria Porcheti* testifies to its circulation in Italy as well.

Rome 2015, 117–141; ead., “Philosophical Quotations from the *Guide of the Perplexed* in Ramón Martí’s *Pugio Fidei*”, *Archiv für mittelalterliche Philosophie und Kultur* 21 (2015), 75–96.

⁵¹ Raimundus Martini, *Pugio fidei*, II–III, 2, 555: “Petrus de Tarentasia his verbis ait: Nota quod imago Dei in anima assignatur in sentiis penes potentias naturales. Accipitur autem hic large potentia naturalis, quaelibet naturalis animae proprietas, officium, vel virtus. Sive in suscipiendo aliquid, sive in conservando, sive in operando. Notandum igitur, quod cum potentia intellectiva sit immaterialis, sensitivae vero alligatae organo materiali, oportet quod species immateriales, sicut universalium et huiusmodi suscipiantur et conserventur in parte intellectiva. Quia vero intellectus immaterialis est, reflectitur super speciem receptam, et sic oritur intelligentia. Huiusmodi vero reflexionem sequitur voluntas, quae est respectu finis, et ideo ultima est. Proprietas igitur, secundum quam anima conservat species intelligibiles, appellatur haec memoria. Illa, secundum quam convertitur super illas, appellatur intelligentia. Illa vero, secundum quam afficitur ad rem intellectam, vocatur haec voluntas, et sic patent tres partes imaginis, et ordo partium.” Cf. Peter of Tarentaise, *In IV libros Sententiarum commentaria*, I, d. III, q. 5, art. 1, resp., p. 35b. On Peter of Tarentaise in the *Pugio fidei*, see Giletti, *Early witness*.

⁵² Cf. Raimundus Martini, *Pugio fidei*, II–III, 2, 554–555.

⁵³ See Michel Albaric, “Hugues de Saint-Cher et les concordances bibliques latines”, in: Louis-Jacques Bataillon/Gilbert Dahan/ Pierre-Marie Gy (eds.), *Hugues de Saint-Cher, Bibliste et théologien*, Turnhout 2004, 467–479, 469.

IV.

In conclusion, the *Victoria Porcheti* is nothing less than a piece of the history of the *Pugio fidei*, testifying to its reception and circulation until the Reformation period. Thanks to Porchetus' mediation, the immense material of anti-Jewish arguments gathered in the monumental work by Raymond Martí reached the libraries of Humanist scholars, contributing to the revival of interest in rabbinical sources, which characterized the Renaissance period. This renewed attention mostly focused on exegetical as well as kabbalistic texts, as is demonstrated, for instance, by the *corpus* of Hebrew-into-Latin translations commissioned by Pico della Mirandola.⁵⁴ In this context, the *Victoria Porcheti*, with its massive use of rabbinical writings, certainly matched the curiosity of scholars regarding this kind of literature. It is from this perspective that Agostino Giustiniani's decision to put this very book to print – despite its lack of originality – must be understood. Moreover, the concise nature of the *Victoria Porcheti* undoubtedly favored its circulation, as opposed to the longer and more complex *Pugio fidei*. The Dominican bishop was well aware of Porchetus' debt to Martí, not only because of Porchetus' own declaration in the prologue, but also due to the complexity of the vast material that could not be mastered easily. According to Giustiniani, it was naïve of Porchetus to think that he could give the impression that he had acquired such profound knowledge solely by relying on his own studies:

Porchetus quotes not only their sentences, but also their words, [...] so that you may believe that in the whole time of his life he showed himself to be versed in Jewish commentaries – no doubt was he candid and naïve! –, although he was aided in the construction of his work by the *Pugio*, as the book of Raymond Martini is entitled.⁵⁵

Despite its dependence upon the *Pugio fidei*, Giustiniani describes the work as being the noblest of its genre⁵⁶; Giustiniani – who was also born in Genoa – was probably even proud of his fellow citizen, who distinguished himself with such a work, as his explanation for the publication of the text given in the *Castigatissimi annali* shows: “For the honor of the homeland, I printed it in Paris.”⁵⁷ Certainly, apart from this biographical proximity, the content of the *Victoria Porcheti* also found the favor with Giustiniani, satisfying his interest in the Hebrew language, biblical exegesis, and in part also in the

⁵⁴ See Fabrizio Lelli (ed.), *Giovanni Pico e la cabballà*, Florence 2014.

⁵⁵ Porchetus, *Victoria*, prol., 1: “Citat Porchetus ita eorum non modo sententias, sed et verba [...] ut credas illum toto vite tempore in Hebreorum scholis versatum fatetur, nihilominus (nimirum ut fuit candidus ac ingenuus) se in structura edificii sui adiutum a *Pugione* (sic enim liber inscriptus est) Raimundi Martini...».

⁵⁶ Porchetus, *Victoria*, prol., 1: “Opus proculdubio omnium, qui in hac se exercuere palestra, nobilissimum.”

⁵⁷ Giustiniani, *Castigatissimi annali*, 114r.

Kabbalah, since he seems to ascribe some of the sources quoted by Porchetus to the kabbalistic tradition. Giustiniani speaks of his own frustration and troubles regarding the study of those texts, expressing his admiration for the author's ability to master such an immense *corpus*:

I am amazed [...] that a Christian man, born of Christian parents and in Genoa, a city where, out of respect for religion, Jews are forbidden to dwell, could have examined all the texts that the Jews have, since their number is almost endless. For, besides the Talmud, which is composed of six orders (indeed, they call them that way) and contains more than seventy large books, they have the *Peshatim*, or commentators, who are versed in the literal sense; they have the *Derashim*, who follow the allegorical sense; they have the *Mekuballim*, or Kabbalists, whose peculiarity is to reduce everything to God; and they have many other writers of various kinds, and if the books of all of them were collected in one place, they would make an immense pile.⁵⁸

The confusion between the *Talmud* and the *Mishnah* in the above mentioned quotation seems to be further evidence for the difficulties that Giustiniani encountered when dealing with rabbinical literature. According to him, the only way to approach these texts is through the mediation of a Jew, which is why Giustiniani expresses some doubts concerning the origin of Raymond Martí, assuming that he was a converted Jew. From his personal experience, he considers improbable that a monk or a priest could reach such profound mastery of this literature on his own, that is, without the support of a Jew or without the knowledge that a converted Jew might have:

A Catalan and disciple of our preaching order, that I suspect to have once been a Jew. Indeed, to me it is not credible that a Christian man, and even a Carthusian monk, could have examined the treasures of the Jews without the help of some Jew. For I know that those very stubborn people do not willingly grant us access to the deepest parts of their writings.⁵⁹

The overview provided in this paper has demonstrated the heavy debt of Porchetus with respect to the *Pugio fidei*, but it still left a few questions unanswered. The reasons and motives for the redaction

⁵⁸ Porchetus, Victoria, prol., 1: “Demiratus autem [...] homo Christianus, Christianis natus parentibus sed et Genuae, qua in urbe ob religionis reverentiam Iudaeis interdicitur habitatio, potuerit omnia lustrasse, que apud hebraeos habentur, quando pene infinita censeantur. Nam preter Talmud, quod sex comprehensum ordinibus (sic enim ipsi vocant) continet supra septuaginta magnos libros, habent Pessatim, hoc est expositores qui in literali versantur sensu, habent Darassim, qui allegoriam sequuntur, habent Micobalim, id est caballistas, quibus peculiare est omnia in Deum reducere, habent et multos alios varii generis scriptores, quorum omnium libri si in unum redigantur, immensam conficiant struem.”

⁵⁹ Porchetus, Victoria, prol., 1: “[...] Raimundi Martini Gotalani nostre praedicatorie familie alumni, quem suspicor quandoque Hebraeum fuisse. Nam mihi non est credibile potuisse Christianum hominem eundemque Cartusiensem monachum sine Hebraei cuiusquam auxilio Hebraeorum thesauros ita depillasse. Novi siquidem quam non libenter in suarum literarum adyta nos admittat gens illa pervicacissima.”

of the *Victoria Porcheti* are not entirely clear, since the indications given in the prologue are vague and not specific. The historical context does not seem to provide a sharp background explaining the need and the usefulness of such a work. According to Giustiniani, Jews were not allowed to live in Genoa at that time – an information that seems to be corroborated by the lack of archival documents regarding the Jewish community during that time; yet, historians disagree whether this information is reliable. Certainly, the treatise has a completely different nature than the two accounts of the disputations held by Inghetto Contardo and Guglielmo Alfachino, who, being active as merchants and traveling the trade routes, surely had the occasion to interact with Jews. That Porchetus belonged to the Carthusian order – if we assume that the information provided by Giustiniani and corroborated by Loreto’s list of Carthusian authors is true – seems to further complicate the situation. What could have been the purpose of such an anti-Jewish text, so strongly rooted in rabbinical literature, drafted by an eremitic monk, who would very unlikely be involved in a public or even private dispute with a Jew, in a city where Jews were probably not living? It seems more probable that Porchetus conceived his work as a tool for study, perhaps even with the aim of strengthening Christian faith, rather than as a collection of arguments to be used for evangelization – which would also explain the compilatory nature of the book, resembling a compendium of notes taken from the *Pugio fidei*. On the other hand, the conversion of the Jews seems to play a major role and is explicitly mentioned in the *Victoria*’s prologue, even though in very generic terms: “per eum Iudei facile convincuntur”, possibly referring to an eschatological level rather than to an actual commitment to evangelization.

A clue to the answer to this question may be provided by the analysis of the criteria adopted by Porchetus for the selection of textual material from the *Pugio*. The preference for certain sources or arguments could reveal fundamental information that helps understand the purpose and nature of the treatise – as conceived by its author. In order to reconstruct in clear terms the dependence on the *Pugio*, a preliminary study must be conducted on the manuscript transmission of both Martí’s and Porchetus’ works, to determine which version of the *Pugio* Porchetus had at his disposal, given the fact that different versions transmitting different content were circulating.

As for the manuscript circulation of the *Victoria Porcheti*, evidence from the surviving copies testifies to a wide dissemination outside Italy: the manuscripts Eton, Eton College Library, 130 (Bl.4.3) and Oxford, Merton College, ms. 244 – both dating back to the 14th century – were copied by an English hand; Oxford, Merton College ms. 245 originates from France; Basel, Universitätsbibliothek, A V 18, fol. 156r-377v was copied in Switzerland. An investigation into the dissemination of this work will certainly provide a sharper picture of its reception before the Renaissance and the Reformation period. Besides Agostino Giustiniani and Martin Luther, the work also reached figures such as Pietro

Colonna Galatino and Christoph Wolf.⁶⁰ Pietro Colonna Galatino, who was accused of forgery for his *De arcanis catholice veritatis*, probably relied on the *Victoria Porcheti*, which thus constitutes another step in the history of the complex reception of the *Pugio fidei*.

⁶⁰ See Petrus Galatinus, *De arcanis catholicae veritatis, contra obstinatissimam Iudaeorum nostrae tempestatis perfidiam. Ex Talmud, aliisque Hebraicis libris nuper excerptu. Et quadruplici linguarum genere eleganter congestum*, Orthona ad mare 1518. The writing was later published in 1550 (Basel); 1561 (Basel); 1603 (Paris); 1612 (Frankfurt a. M.). For the reference in Wolf, see Johann Cristoph Wolf, *Bibliotheca Hebraea*, vol. II, Hamburg 1721, 1124–1127.

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Appendix I

The Structure of the *Victoria Porcheti*

I pars

1. De divisione Hebreorum in Israel et Iuda et de divisione Iudeorum tempore Christi in Iudeos et Christianos.
2. Quod sceptrum recessit de Iuda et quando et quomodo et quare. Qua propter probatur Messiam venisse et quod tunc miracula de templo recesserunt omnino.
3. De septimanis LXX dictis a Daniele et qualiter incipiem de proseguende et finiende sunt et qualiter ipsa auctoritas sit exponenda et quod Christus occisus fuit in fine ultime ebdomade.
4. De obiectionibus Iudeorum quod Christus nondum venit et qualiter eis resistitur.
5. Adhuc de obiectionibus Iudeorum quod Christus non venit.
6. In quo probatur secundum Talmud Iudeorum quod Christus venit.
7. Quod templum tertio non reedificabitur nec habitabunt Iudei terram suam ulterius. Et quod pauci Iudei salvari debuerunt ad tempus Messie sed penitus debeant destrui et erunt in perpetuum reprobati donec Iudei extiterint.
8. De peccato primi templi et ultimi et de causa huius captivitatis Iudeorum.
9. Quod promissiones Iudaice sunt semper fere cum conditione.
10. De falsis duobus messiis Iudeorum quos fecerunt unum post alterum post passione Christi et de stulta opinione de Messia quem Iudei venturum expectant et quod aliqui Iudei duos Messias expectant venturos.
11. Quod Dominus Iesus Christus fecit miracula secundum Iudeos et qualiter fecit ea ut mentiuntur et quod apostoli fecerunt miracula in nomine Christi.
12. Quod apostoli et alii fideles sunt semen et filii Israel.
13. Quod Messias dicitur David et Salomon in divina pagina secundum hebreorum Scripturas.
14. Quod Messias dicitur lapis in divina pagina et in scripturis Hebraicis.
15. Quod Iudei plurima abarserunt de divina pagina valde digna.
16. Quod Messias id est Christus debebat pati et etiam Deus secundum auctoritates expositas in Talmud.
17. Quod Adam et Eva fuerunt Deo culpabiles, qua propter totum humanum genus est corruptum.
18. Quod omnes propter originale peccatum descendebant ad infernum usque ad Christum nec inde eximebantur patres sancti, et quod Christus liberare debebat captivos inferni.
19. De resurrectione Christi et omnium defunctorum in generali iudicio.

20. De Christi ascensione.
21. De sacramento eucharistie.
22. De sacramento baptismi.
23. De sacramento penitentiae.
24. De analogia temporum.

II pars

1. In quo probatur quod Messias est Deus, et quo ipse solus et nullus alius nisi Deus vocatus est nomen quod est super omne nomen, scilicet nomen Dei Tetragrammaton, id est quatuor literarum.
2. Adhuc quod Messias, id est Christus, est Deus.
3. Quod Christus est verbum Dei et verbum Dei Deus.
4. De distinctione divinarum personarum et Dei mittentis et Dei missi.
5. De pluralitate divinarum personarum ac essentiae unitate.
6. De trinitate et filio Dei.
7. De Spiritu Sancto.
8. De trinitate sub nomine Dei quatuor litterarum id est Tetragrammaton.
9. De incarnatione filii Dei.
10. Quod non est aliquis redemptor nisi Deus. Et Messias est ille redemptor sive salvator.
11. De consortio divinitatis cum homine. Et de equalitate Dei cum homine et participatione.
12. Quod Gentiles salvandi erant tempore Messie.
13. Quod homo factus est ad imaginem Dei.
14. De virginitate matris Dei.
15. De circuncisione et sabbato et ceremonialibus non observandis ad litteram.
16. Qualiter diabolus procuravit restaurare legem Iudeis. Et iterum aliqua de Sabbato

Appendix II

Correspondences of the *Victoria Porcheti* with the *Pugio fidei*

Chapters of the *Victoria Porcheti* do not always correspond to full chapters of the *Pugio fidei*. The following chart reports thematic correspondences between the two writings.

I pars

<i>Victoria Porcheti</i>	<i>Pugio fidei</i>
I, 1	II, 1 II, 2
I, 2	II, 3
I, 3	II, 3
I, 4	II, 11 II, 13
I, 5	II, 14
I, 6	II, 10
I, 7	III–III, 22
I, 8	III–III, 16
I, 9	II, 15
I, 10	II, 4
I, 11	II, 8
I, 12	II, 9 I–III, 11
I, 13	II, 7 III–III, 4
I, 14	II, 5
I, 15	III–III, 4 III–III, 21
I, 16	III–III, 16
I, 17	II–III, 6
I, 18	II–III, 8 II–III, 9

I, 19	III–III, 18 II, 5
I, 20	III–III, 19
I, 21	III–III, 15
I, 22	III–III, 13
I, 23	III–III, 14
I, 24	I, 5

II pars

<i>Victoria Porcheti</i>	<i>Pugio Fidei</i>
II, 1	III–III, 2
II, 2	III–III, 16
II, 3	III–III, 1 II, d. 1, 5
II, 4	III–III, 4
II, 5	I–III, 2 I–III, 3
II, 6	II, d. 1, 8 III–III, 21
II, 7	I–III, 11
II, 8	III–III, 4
II, 9	III–III, 4
II, 10	III–III, 2
II, 11	III–III, 6
II, 12	III–III, 14 III–III, 10
II, 13	II–III, 1 II–III, 2
II, 14	III–III, 7 III–III, 8
II, 15	III–III, 11

II, 16	II, 4 III-III, 11
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