

Echoes of Manichaeism in the *Architrenius*¹

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*We present a reading of the poem *Architrenius* by Johannes de Hauvilla in the context of the twelfth-century debate on dualist heresy. We argue that the dialogue between man and Nature in Johannes' poem can be read as a quaestio de providentia between a potential dualist heretic and Christian orthodox. In particular we claim that the basic tenets expressed by the main character are typical of what contemporary anti-heretical writers called "Manichaeism". On the other hand the views expressed by Nature match anti-dualistic arguments common in twelfth-century anti-heretical literature.*

Keywords: *Architrenius*, Providence, Manichaeism, Nature, XII century philosophy.

1. Introduction and Overview

The *Architrenius* by Johannes of Hauvilla is a Latin poem written around 1184². It is written in hexameters and consists of nine books, totaling 4361 verses. Very little is known about the life of its author.

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² The medieval poem has the following printed editions: *Architrenius*, Paris, ed. Jodocus Badius Ascensius, 1517; Johannes de Altavilla, *Architrenius*, in *The Anglo-Latin Satirical Poets and Epigrammatists of the Twelfth Century*, ed. Thomas Wright, 2 voll., London, Rolls Series, 59 (1872), vol. I, pp. 240-392. The critical edition is Johannes de Hauvilla, *Architrenius*, ed. Paul Gerhard Schmidt, Munich, Fink, 1974 (from now on quoted as P.G. Schmidt, *Architrenius*). The only commercial translation in a modern language is Johannes de Hauvilla, *Architrenius*, trans. Winthrop Wetherbee, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994 (from now on quoted as W. Wetherbee, *Architrenius*). Wetherbee uses Schmidt's edition of the latin text. Quotations from the *Architrenius* in the present paper are from Schmidt's edition. Previously the poem was translated (mostly using Wright's edition) by Nicholas Peter Carlucci in his unpublished 1977 PhD Thesis (N.P. Carlucci, *The Architrenius of Johannes de Hauvilla: a translation with introduction and notes*, University of Minnesota Diss., 1977). Kuno Francke edited selected excerpts from the poem in Francke, K. *Der Architrenius des Johan von Anville*, "Forschungen zur deutschen Geschichte", Band 2, XX (1880), pp. 475-502. Recently Minkova suggested some emendations to Schmidt's edition in M. Minkova, *Some Textual Suggestions on Architrenius by Johannes de Hauvilla*, «Filologia mediolatina», 19 (2012), pp. 375-393. Corrections to Wetherbee's translation are in A. Placanica, Recensione a *Johannes de Hauvilla, Architrenius*, ed. and trans. by W. Wetherbee, in «Studi Medievali», s. 3, 40 (1999), pp. 739-754. A translation in italian verse by the authors is forthcoming (Giovanni di Altavilla, *Architrenius*, ed. and trans. by Lorenzo Carlucci and Laura Marino, Biblioteca Medievale, Roma, Carocci, 2019).