

THE BAROULKOS AND THE MECHANICS OF HERON

A CURA DI
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The three books of Heron's *Mechanics* contain the first systematic theory of the simple and compound machines in the history of science and many other remarkable matters about theoretical and practical mechanics, including three interesting unknown theories by Archimedes. This treatise began

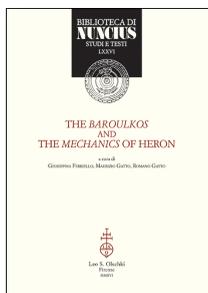
to circulate among Western researchers through an Arabic manuscript discovered by Camille Carra de Vaux, who published it together with its French translation in 1893. A German critical edition by Ludwig Leo Nix (1900) and an English one by Aage Gerhardt Drachmann (1963) were then published after this edition.

La nuova edizione delle Meccaniche di Erone, che qui si presenta con tutte le fonti, è dovuta alla inattesa scoperta di quattro manoscritti persiani che hanno aperto un campo di ricerca inesplorato e hanno offerto nuove prospettive – di carattere sia filologico che scientifico – nell'interpretazione del testo. Inoltre, contrariamente a quanto finora ritenuto, l'analisi del testo ha rivelato la possibilità che qualche scienziato italiano del Rinascimento abbia potuto conoscere, in tutto o in parte, questa importante opera di Erone.

GIUSEPPINA FERRIELLO graduated with a degree in Architecture (1980) and in Persian language and literature (1993). She also holds a PhD in Iranian studies and is the author of more than thirty publications, mainly on medieval Persian science.

MAURIZIO GATTO has a PhD in Classical Philology. At the Max Planck Institute for History of Science in Berlin, he was appointed to study several aspects of the commentaries on *Mechanical Questions* by the Pseudo-Aristotle. He is the author of various works on the history of the poliorcetics.

ROMANO GATTO is a historian of Mathematics. Until 2010 he was Professor of the History of Mathematics and Complementary Mathematics with the Faculty of Sciences at the University of Basilicata. He has taken part in various international research projects, particularly on the History of Mechanics.



The new critical edition, presented here with all its sources, is the consequence of the unexpected discovery of four Persian manuscripts, all concerning the second book of this important treatise on mechanics, which opened unexplored field research and offered new perspectives, both philological and scientific, in interpreting this text.

At the same time, analysis of the work has revealed passages very similar to corresponding passages of works of Leonardo da Vinci and Galileo Galilei, advancing the possibility that Italian scientists of the Renaissance may have been familiar with all or at least part of Heron's *Mechanics*.

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