

Rome, 8 April 2018-04-08

Dear (now ex-) fellow advisory editors of *Aestimatio*,

I have stepped down as an advisory editor of *Aestimatio*, and I suppose I owe you an explanation (sorry for the length, but in a matter like this I prefer full pedantic documentation with quotations and dates; anyhow you are not obliged to read, and if you do, not obliged to read for details).

Back in 2015, I wrote a review of Fabio Acerbi & Bernard Vitrac (eds), Héron d'Alexandrie, *Metrica*. After receiving it, Alan Bowen wrote (13 April 2015) that “We are delighted to have it and appreciate your efforts to frame your criticism in as constructive a manner as possible”.

Then, 11 March 2018, I received the proofs. This delay is fairly regular, other reviews that have appeared recently concern books published in 2015. Unfortunately, the text was full of badly conceived corrections, and two days later I returned the proofs with this message:

I have spent two 10-hour working days, reading the document twice. As you will know from proper experience, when there are so many corrections, quite a few things will have been overlooked. Actually, I was still somewhat unhappy with certain passages [...] but for the moment I did not dare touch them. Tomorrow I have other urgent proofs (equally long, but hopefully easier), and Thursday I go to Shanghai to make a guest lecture, which means I cannot go on with a third reading for now. In any case, a second proofreading of a clean version is much safer.

No reply to this, but 22 March while waiting in the Airport in Helsinki I saw that the review had been posted on the web. Arrived in Copenhagen and having taken care of the most necessary things after an absence of two months I discovered that many of my corrections had not been respected, and that new changes had been introduced where I had not touched at the text myself during the proofreading. Probably worst of all, a passage “general Hilbert space theory” in my original, which had become “Hilbert's general theory space” and which I had dutifully restored, had now become “general Hilbertian theory of space”. A careful reader of such and other gibberich would have good reasons to doubt my qualifications.

Since I prefer to be responsible for my own blunders only, I wrote to Alan and asked him to take down this version from the web immediately, promising a careful reading and correction of everything no later than 10 April. Receiving no answer, I insisted the next day, saying that “I would appreciate a very quick reaction”.

Still no answer, only a posted message, “Jens Høyrup has asked that the recently published version of his review [...] [*Aestimatio*/ 12 (2015) 199–223] be withdrawn from our website. [...]”

That was, quite naturally, read by a number of colleagues (I know because they have asked me) as a statement that I had withdrawn *my review* – something one would do after the discovery of plagiarism, fraud, serious error, or the like. I therefore wrote: “You failed to tell that what was withdrawn was not “his review” but your unauthorized version. I INSIST ON THIS. You make it look as if I had something to regret. If you prefer, you give me your mailing list, and I explain myself”.

This time I finally got a reply: “The review has been taken down. There will be no replacement. The announcement sent out is final. You will not have access to the mailing list. Your review of the Imhausen volume is now yours to send wherever you please. We decline to publish that as well.”

As I found out contacting Tracey Riehl, she is been out of work since 2016 for personal reasons. Alan’s “we” is thus majestic plural. In consequence I wrote to Alan as follows on 27 March: “Please remove me from the list of advisory editors of *Aestimatio*. I do not want my name to be associated with your kind of variably enlightened despotism”.

Whether for this or other reasons, Alan now cooled down a bit – but when I asked him

to circulate to the same address list

Our previous message, “Jens Høyrup has asked that the recently published version of his review of /Héron d’Alexandrie/, *Metrica*. /Introduction, texte critique, traduction française et notes de commentaire/ by Fabio Acerbi and Bernard Vitrac [*Aestimatio*/ 12 (2015) 199–223] be withdrawn from our website”, has been understood as if he had withdrawn his review. That is not the case. What happened is that he requested that a version with changes (in part erroneous) made after his correction of proofs be taken down, since he could not take responsibility for a text which he had not had the opportunity to approve.

or something similar, *on the condition that we agree upon it*. Whether you want to add “We apologize for the possible misunderstanding” is up to you

Alan still refused, claiming (as an example of my unacceptable English) the technical phrase “general Hilbert space theory” to be “wretched English” (apparently he does believe that it refers to some theory about space), and that I made personal attacks on the editors (if things look like this, it is a result of Alan’s insistence to replace the acronym A&V for the editors of the volume by the full names).

On these conditions, I have no intention to have anything to do with *Aestimatio* as long as it is governed autocratically by Alan. My two reviews will appear elsewhere (both have been accepted).

All best wishes