

Cambridge University Press

978-1-108-08483-3 - De Corporibus Marinis Lapidescensibus Quæ Defossa Reperiuntur: Addita Dissertatione Fabii Columnæ De Glossopetris

Agostino Scilla and Fabio Colonna

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### **De corporibus marinis lapidescensibus quæ defossa reperiuntur**

In 1747 the Roman publisher Venantius Monaldinus produced a Latin edition of two early works proposing the animal origins of fossils (reproduced here from the 1752 printing). The first, originally entitled *La vana speculazione*, first appeared in Italian in 1670. Its author, Agostino Scilla (1629–1700), was a skilled artist who painted fresco cycles in several churches in his native Sicily. From examining the fossils found in the strata on either side of the Strait of Messina and observing sedimentation in rivers, he deduced that not only molluscs but even the mysterious *glossopetrae* (actually fossilised sharks' teeth) were the remains of living organisms. The second essay, by Fabio Colonna (1567–1640), a Neapolitan botanist who corresponded with Galileo, appeared in 1616 as part of a longer Latin treatise, and also argues for the organic origins of *glossopetrae*. The book is illustrated by engravings of fossil and living marine animals.

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# De corporibus marinis lapidescentibus quæ defossa reperiuntur

*Addita dissertatione Fabii Columnæ de glossopetris*

AGOSTINO SCILLA

FABIO COLONNA



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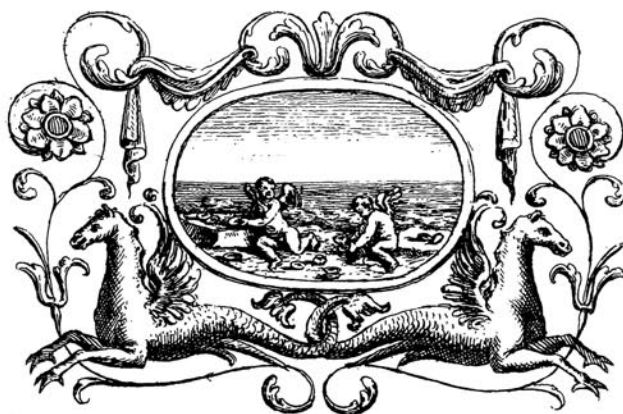
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*EDITIO ALTERA EMENDATIOR.*



*ROMÆ, MDCCLII.*

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EX TYPOGRAPHIA LINGUARUM ORIENTALIUM  
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 IN ÆDIBUS MAXIMORUM.  
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# INTERPRES LECTORI SALUTEM.

**M**Ultis ab hinc annis Augustinus Scilla Siculus, pingendi arte illustris, & rerum antiquarum investigatione multo illustrior, hanc epistolam italica lingua conscripsit, atque in lucem edidit Neapoli per Andream Colicchiam, anno scilicet 1670. eamque D. Marchioni Carolo Gregorio de Podio Gregorio equiti Stellæ dicavit. Epistola vero hunc titulum, ut ea ferebant tempora, in fronte præfixit: La vana speculazione disingannata dal senso. Hæc eadem in latinum sermonem versa iterum in præsentia fit publici juris. In ea vertenda munere functus fidi interpretis minime curavi verbum verbo reddere, sed illa omnia, quæ ad officia, & ad obsequii, amoris & humanitatis significationem pertinebant, prætermisi, quum iis tota nimium fortasse hæc scateret epistola; verum ea selegi, quæ ad naturalem historiam pertinebant, ne eruditum, & ad solidam doctrinam properantem, meris distinerem verbis. E civitate Messana scripsit Scilla hanc epistolam ad quemdam Doctorem, quo familiariter utebatur, quique Melitæ commorabatur, nomen autem ejus honoris gratia reticuit, quum ab ejus sententia, quæ a doctis omnibus, his præsertim temporibus, uti absona rejicitur, longe distet, imo eam strenue oppugnet, ita ut si eum nominasset, visum quodammodo esset de amici inscitia triumphum agere voluisse. Ad hanc maxime scriptio-

nem

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## VIII

*nem calcaria Scillæ addidit Paulus Bocconius Cosmi III. M. D. Etruriæ Botanicus, & rerum naturalium scrutator sagacissimus, ac editis operibus percelebris. Magnis sane laudibus excepta est hæc opella, & semper apud doctos in pretio fuit, cum ob recte philosophandi rationem, & ob sententiæ firmitatem veritati consonam, tum ob imagines rerum naturalium, de quibus tractat auctor in hoc libro, quæ graphice admodum & summa diligentia delineatæ sunt, & non minus eleganter & scite æri incisæ, quibus iisdem omnino usus sumus in hac interpretationis editione. Plurimi quoque faciendæ est Dissertatio Fabii Columnæ Lincei, quam ad calcem hujus libelli adjecimus, quippe quæ in eodem argumento versatur; nam qualis vir fuerit Columna notum est lippis atque tonsoribus, sed magis etiam elucet ex iis, quæ eruditus, ac plane doctus Johannes Bianchius Ariminensis scripsit in disertissimis lucubrationibus, quas ad ejusdem Columnæ ΕΥΤΟΒΑΣΑΝΟΝ adjecit. Itaque hanc Dissertationem, quum admodum rara, & inventu difficilis jam evaserit, operæ pretium duxi, iterum typis mandare. Vale.*

DE

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