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Indice, Premessa e Abstracts

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LESSICO INTELLETTUALE EUROPEO

LESSICI FILOSOFICI
DELL'ETÀ MODERNA
LINEE DI RICERCA

a cura di
EUGENIO CANONE



LEO S. OLSCHKI EDITORE
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PREMESSA

Il presente volume costituisce un ulteriore contributo, dopo l'edizione rivista e ampliata del catalogo di Giorgio Tonelli,¹ al progetto sulla lessicografia filosofica nell'età moderna dell'Istituto per il Lessico Intellettuale Europeo e Storia delle Idee del CNR, progetto che fa riferimento alla macrolinea di ricerca dell'ILIESI: «Studi sul lessico filosofico europeo dall'Umanesimo al XX secolo».² Il volume è frutto di studi che mi sembra possano aprire nuove prospettive di ricerca: si vedano, per es., il saggio di Margherita Palumbo sulla censura/espurgazione dei lessici, nonché i contributi di Maria Conforti e di Delfina Giovannozzi dedicati ad alcune esperienze lessicografiche nell'Italia tra Ottocento e inizi del Novecento che si richiamavano, in diverso modo, alla cultura filosofico-scientifica europea (*infra*, pp. 1-27, 137-169).

Del resto, quello sulla lessicografia filosofica latina è un progetto costitutivo dell'ILIESI, che ha dato risultati verificabili e ritengo importanti. Penso sia auspicabile che tale ambito di ricerca venga ulteriormente sviluppato, nel solco di quanto già rilevato da Tonelli³ e riguardo, in particolare, ai lessici filosofici nelle lingue moderne e ai lessici d'autore (vedi in questo volume, alle pp. 67-135, sia i contributi di Dagmar von Wille e di Annarita Liburdi, dedicati ai primi dizionari filosofici in tedesco e in inglese, sia l'articolo di Giuseppe Landolfi Petrone sui dizionari kantiani di Mellin).

Il progetto sulla lessicografia filosofica latina è stato impostato a metà degli anni Ottanta da chi scrive, anche a seguito dell'integrazione di una prima sinossi delle entrate di alcuni dizionari filosofici, messa a punto nel decennio precedente da Giovanni Crapulli nell'ambito delle attività dell'allora Centro per il Lessico Intellettuale Europeo.⁴ Si trattava di tre significativi dizionari seicenteschi ri-

¹ G. TONELLI, *A Short-title List of Subject Dictionaries of the Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*. Extended Edition Revised and Annotated by E. Canone and M. Palumbo, Firenze, 2006.

² Si tratta di una delle *commesse* del CNR (periodo di attività: 2006-2010).

³ Il quale osserva che «la relazione tra dizionari e tendenze dottrinali contemporanee a essi, e la loro influenza sull'evoluzione e diffusione del pensiero dovrebbe essere un basilare campo di ricerca della storia delle idee, così come un ulteriore contributo a un uso più adeguato di questo tipo di fonti» (vedi E. CANONE, *I lessici filosofici latini del Seicento*, in *Il vocabolario della République des Lettres. Terminologia filosofica e storia della filosofia. Problemi di metodo*, a cura di M. Fattori, Firenze, 1997, pp. 93-114: 93). Ho cercato di seguire quel suggerimento nell'articolo *Phantasia/imaginatio come problema terminologico nella lessicografia filosofica tra Sei-Settecento*, in *Phantasia-Imaginatio*. Atti del V Colloquio Internazionale del Lessico Intellettuale Europeo, a cura di M. Fattori e M. L. Bianchi, Roma, 1988, pp. 221-257.

⁴ L'iniziale sinossi fu da me integrata, anche in collegamento con il progetto del *Lessico fi-*

pubblicati, in ristampa anastatica, negli anni Sessanta del Novecento da meritori editori tedeschi: il *Lexicon philosophicum* (1613) di Rudolph Goclenius, edito nel 1964 da Georg Olms, Hildesheim, e i dizionari filosofici di Johannes Micraelius (2^a ed. 1662) e di Étienne Chauvin (2^a ed. 1713⁵) ristampati, rispettivamente nel 1966 e nel 1967, da Stern-Verlag Janssen & Co. di Düsseldorf, entrambi con una introduzione di Lutz Geldsetzer.

Sulla base di quel lavoro di integrazione e del contributo bibliografico di Giorgio Tonelli,⁶ come pure delle ricerche promosse da Eugenio Garin e Tullio Gregory⁷ sulla terminologia e la lessicografia filosofiche, fu impostato nel 1987 il progetto *Index vocum lexicorum philosophicorum* che, rispetto all'iniziale sinossi, si estendeva a un numero maggiore di testi, a partire dalla sorprendente concordanza della tradizione aristotelica e platonica di Giovanni Battista Bernardi (*Seminarium totius philosophiae*, 1582-1585, 3 voll.) fino al lessico ciceroniano di Plexiacus del 1716. Un progetto che si è potuto pienamente realizzare, nell'ambito della menzionata macrolinea di ricerca dell'ILIESI, con la costituzione, a partire dal 2006, dell'archivio *Lessici filosofici dell'età moderna* <http://www.iliesi.cnr.it/Lessici/home_lessici.html>, un archivio digitale open access che offre il testo integrale e l'elenco completo delle entrate – con varie possibilità di ricerca, anche nelle sottoentrate – di numerosi dizionari e repertori terminologici dell'età moderna. Nella sezione *Lessici filosofici, scientifici e di erudizione in latino*, che è quella basilare dell'archivio, assieme alle opere già menzionate (di Bernardi, Goclenius, Micraelius, Chauvin e Plexiacus), figurano opere di Giordano Bruno, Johann Heinrich Alsted, Basilius Faber, Henry Louis Chasteigner, Christoph Philipp Richter, Georg Reeb, Antoine Le Roy, Johann Adam Scherzer, Theodor Hackspan, Henning Volckmar e di altri autori.⁸

Un grazie a coloro che hanno collaborato al volume e all'autrice del poster riprodotto qui di seguito, che mi sembra una presentazione davvero icastica dell'archivio.

EUGENIO CANONE

losofico dei secoli XVII e XVIII. Sezione latina, a cura di M. Fattori con la collaborazione di M. L. Bianchi, 4 voll., Roma, Firenze, 1992-1999.

⁵ La prima edizione dell'opera fu pubblicata nel 1692. Su Chauvin vedi, nel presente volume, l'articolo di Giuliano Gasparri, *infra*, pp. 29-47.

⁶ Mi riferisco alla prima edizione di *A Short-title List of Subject Dictionaries of the Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, London, 1971. Va ricordato anche l'articolo *Philosophical Dictionaries and Encyclopedias* di William Gerber, in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol. VI, New York, 1967, p. 174 sgg.

⁷ Rispettivamente, presidente del Consiglio scientifico e direttore del Centro per il Lessico Intellettuale Europeo. Mi limito qui a rinviare al volume di T. GREGORY, *Origini della terminologia filosofica moderna. Linee di ricerca*, Firenze, 2006.

⁸ A tali opere si è aggiunto, di recente, il lessico astronomico-astrologico di Girolamo Vitali (sul quale vedi ora il contributo di Manlio Perugini, *infra*, pp. 49-65). In merito ad alcuni risultati e possibili sviluppi riguardo a tale sezione dell'archivio, vedi il contributo di Ada Russo, *infra*, pp. 171-199.

Lessici filosofici scientifici e di erudizione in latino

Corpus di dizionari apparsi tra la fine del XVI secolo e gli inizi del XVIII secolo che rappresentano un capitolo importante nella storia della lessicografia filosofico-scientifica e testimoniano l'esigenza di codificazione e sistemazione della terminologia filosofica latina

*Alsted
Bernardi
Bruno
Châteigner
Chauvin
Faber
Goclenius
Hackspan
Le Roy
Micraelius
Plexiacus
Reeb
Richter
Scherzer
Vitali
Volckmar*

Lessici

dell'età moderna



filosofici

Archivio digitale di testi della cultura filosofica e scientifica moderna

Archivio

La raccolta dei lessici filosofici latini contiene la riproduzione digitale delle edizioni a stampa di 24 lessici (13558 pagine) e la trascrizione delle relative entrate (47349 entrate registrate)

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Scheda bibliografica e storica dell'opera e scheda sull'autore e i suoi scritti

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Sviluppo Web · Elaborazione dati
Simona Lampidecchia
Collaborazione alla digitalizzazione dei testi
Marco Cappelloni

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ABSTRACTS

MARGHERITA PALUMBO, «*D'alcuni libri che potrebbero permettersi corretti, ed espurgati*». *La censura romana e l'espurgazione dei lessici*

Following requests made by the secretary of the Congregation of the Index, Tommaso Agostino Ricchini, a new edition of the *Index librorum prohibitorum* was published in 1758. The official reason given for publishing the new edition was that many of the corrections and integrations added to the previous Index published in 1681 were not in alphabetical order, thus making its consultation difficult. However, when reading Ricchini's *Memorie, e Riflessioni* one finds that he felt the need to revoke certain condemnations which he considered outdated and, above all, to address the vexed question of the expurgation of prohibited works. The formula *donec corrigatur* (i.e. 'until corrected') could be used to justify their removal from the list. The proposal to prepare an adjourned Index was supported by Pope Benedict XIV. Among the various categories of books on which the ban could have been lifted, Ricchini identified a number of lexica, such as Johann Jacob Hofmann's *Lexicon universale* and Johann Calvinus' *Lexicon iuridicum*. Apart from works by theologians, philosophers and others who were considered enemies of the Church of Rome, the books prohibited by the Holy Office also included works by 'heretical' philologists who had published highly regarded editions of Greek and Latin writers, as well as authors of important grammatical and lexical studies. Works such as Étienne Dolet's *Commentarii linguae Latinae*, Robert Estienne's *Dictionarium, seu Latinae linguae thesaurus*, and the *Lexicon Graeco-Latinum* by the Calvinist Jean Crespin, had all been placed on the list of prohibited books. Such works could not be deemed 'heretical' on account of their contents but were nonetheless condemned insofar as their authors were 'heretical'. This article traces the various phases of the expurgatory efforts of Ricchini, who was convinced that, besides 'prohibiting', the Congregation of the Index's institutional role was also to 'expurgate'. Notwithstanding Ricchini's commitment, the end result was not a new, expurgatory Index. Very few of the prohibitions originally identified by the secretary of the Congregation were actually revoked in the *Index librorum prohibitorum* of 1758. It is significant to note, however, that lexica were among the works which were once again made available to be «studied by many virtuous men».

GIULIANO GASPARRI, *Étienne Chauvin e il suo Lexicon philosophicum*

The *Lexicon rationale* (1692, republished as *Lexicon philosophicum* in 1713) by the Huguenot savant Étienne Chauvin (1640-1725) is often regarded as the first 'modern' philosophical dictionary, in so far as it puts the theories of modern philosophers – such as Descartes and Gassendi – next to the traditional scholastic definition of terms. Among his modern sources, the most important are the works of Pierre Cally (1630-1709), who taught the Cartesian philosophy at the University of Caen during the 1670's and 1680's. For many entries of the *Lexicon*, Chauvin lists different opinions on the same subject without taking a stand. But here and there he distances himself not only from the scholastic tradition, but also from Descartes' natural philosophy and metaphysics. As for the classification of the sciences, Chauvin seems to be close to the composite current of the 'ontologists', who in their turn gathered the ideas of the late Spanish Jesuites' Scholasticism and of the Lutheran and Calvinist *Schulphilosophie*. They aimed at separating 'first philosophy' – a universal science dealing with the notion of being qua being, i.e. abstracted from any conceivable determination – from the science of Being in the eminent sense, i.e. natural theology, which they came to consider as a special discipline. To that end the taxonomy of scientific disciplines needed to be modified: ontology ('ontologia' or 'ontosophia') becomes the science which studies the common attributes of the objects of every science, thus being able to set subject and boundaries for all of them (see the entries *Philosophia*, *Scientia*, *Ontosophia* and *Metaphysica* in Chauvin's *Lexicon*). The Staatsbibliothek of Berlin holds a series of *Disputationes* over which Chauvin presided between 1696 and 1700, while he was teaching philosophy at the French College of the Prussian capital city. These texts show what Chauvin's personal philosophical stances were in the years between the first and the second edition of his *Lexicon*. In his teaching, he proves to be more independent, more polemical and, to a certain extent, even more 'modern' than his own dictionary was. As a matter of fact, Chauvin was clearly inclined towards an experience-oriented use of reason and took part also in the tide of gradual emancipation of natural science from metaphysics.

MANLIO PERUGINI, *Il Lexicon mathematicum di Girolamo Vitali*

In 1668, the Theatine priest Girolamo Vitali publishes in Paris his *Lexicon mathematicum astronomicum geometricum*, by far his most important book. Apparently in spite of the title, the main subject of this book is astrology, and there's no mathematical analysis, at least in a modern sense. Vitali's *Lexicon* is one of the most exhaustive compilations of astrological terms, both for the quantity of terms, almost 1500, and for the quality. Not only it collects terms deriving from Greek and Latin astrology, but also from Arabic, Chaldean and Jewish tradition, giving for every word a full definition, or at least referring to the Latin equivalent. Following the path traced by his master Placido Titi with his *Quaestionum physiomaticarum*

libri, Vitali exposes a conception of astrology mainly based on Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos*: that is, a conjectural and experimental knowledge of the world's physical mutations, caused by the motion of stars and planets, therefore not really deserving the definition of science. It is however founded upon astronomy, which is actually not only a science, but even one of the most noble, being the branch of mathematics, all along regarded as the queen of sciences, that deals with the highest subject and with the most perfect kind of motion. In this context, the title of Vitali's *Lexicon* acquires a new meaning, since a lexicon which wants to be properly astrological, has to be mathematical, astronomical and geometrical. In 1690, Vitali publishes a new and completely revised edition of his *Lexicon*, this time in Rome. This new *Lexicon* is radically different from the first one, both for the contents and for the implied approach. Astrological terms are reduced to less than a hundred, in favour of entries concerning architecture, navigation, military engineering, more generally disciplines less math-connected compared to astrology. This restructuring issues from a different conception of astrology, now regarded as a waste product of astronomy, even harmful to mathematics, because, considered not far from superstition, it ingenerates a sense of hostility in the common people toward mathematical sciences. Besides, this new *Lexicon* is no more an exposition of astrology, its terms and its principles, but becomes a book with the purpose of attracting the youth to mathematics, following their disposition. With the insertion of such changes, Vitali's *Lexicon* turns from a scientific instrument into a kind of mathematical erudition companion.

DAGMAR VON WILLE, *Il Philosophisches Lexicon di Johann Georg Walch tra Schulmetaphysik e Popularphilosophie*

First important philosophical dictionary in German language, the *Philosophisches Lexicon* by Johann Georg Walch (1693-1775) represents a link between the early German Enlightenment philosophy and the subsequent *Popularphilosophy*. The analytical exposition of the various editions (1726, 1733 (repr. 1740), 1775) offers an historical-terminological as well as historical-lexicographical overall survey of the course which took the formation of the German philosophical terminology in the eighteenth century through various philosophical and linguistic stages. In the *Philosophisches Lexicon*, the constant comparison with the philosophical-terminological tradition of the seventeenth century is reflected, apart from a programmatic and historically relevant introduction to the previous philosophical lexicography – here contextualized within the lexicographical debate of the time –, by a rich terminology which includes Latin and foreign words, but also neologisms which not always have survived in time. At the same time, the dictionary assimilates the contemporary philosophical debate, characterized by the philosophical-juridical thought of Christian Thomasius and his adherents, by the historical-theological criticism of Johann Franz Budde and by the philosophy of Christian Wolff – of whom Walch was a moderate critic –, for to undergo major transformations in the last edition, above all in the field of natural philosophy, but less incisive from a terminological

point of view. Hence, the dictionary is representative, both on the historical-philosophical and historical-linguistic levels in view of the constitution of a German philosophical terminology, of the «Wolffian era» – even holding a philosophical conception opposite to the Wolffian – and of the pre-Kantian era. Due to its historical-philosophical approach – which covers ancient philosophy and classical literature, the Fathers of the Church, scholastic and Enlightenment philosophy –, it is unique in its genre. Though incorporating the previous logical and metaphysical tradition, the dictionary privileges practical philosophy; it is conceived as expression of the «Philosophie für die Welt». As instruments for further researches on the dictionary, the article provides three indices which give account of the additions to the editions of 1733 and 1775 and of the articles in which Wolff is mentioned; the latter includes three times the number of mentions (165 occurrences) as compared with the 50 occurrences listed for the same author in the index of names of the dictionary.

ANNARITA LIBURDI, *Il Philosophical Dictionary di Franz Xaver Swediauer: un esempio di divulgazione scientifica nel XVIII secolo*

The Philosophical Dictionary: or, the Opinions of modern philosophers on metaphysical, moral, and political subjects, published anonymously in London in 1786 by the Austrian physician Franz Xaver Swediauer, is the first English dictionary of philosophy ever printed. The work is a collection of selected passages taken from different works by various authors whose names are marked without any news about the title of the works. Some passages are even anonymous, so this article tries to ferret the titles of the works out, to show where the reported passage is just a translation of the original work and where it is a summary, and finally it tries to demonstrate that the anonymous author is but Swediauer himself. Most of the selected authors are chosen among the so called 'Free Thinkers' of the time, and a special role is played by Bolinbroke, Voltaire, Hume, Helvetius and Rousseau. As soon as *The Philosophical Dictionary* appeared it was sharply criticized by journals such as «The Montly Review», «Critical Review» and above all «The English Review, or, An abstract of English and foreign literature» for so large a presence of passages taken from Hume and Voltaire. According to the Author's opinion the book is just a «Common-place Book for private use». Hence, Swediauer's aim is rather evident: he wants to spread the opinion of the so called 'Free Thinkers' among the well-educated readers of the time. His audience is not made of specialist scholars but of cultured, not too sophisticated people. With *The Philosophical Dictionary* Swediauer wants to «satisfy the curiosity of those who cannot purchase many books». In the *Preface* the Author emphasizes his desire to popularize and points out that: «If the publication of it can add to the amusement of travellers who carry few books with them [...] or have little time to read them, it will answer every purpose the editor could expect».

GIUSEPPE LANDOLFI PETRONE, *I dizionari di Georg Samuel Albert Mellin nel contesto della prima commentaristica kantiana*

Georg Samuel Albert Mellin's activity as a popularizer of Kantian philosophy started off primarily as a didactic exercise within the context of the *Gesellschaft zum Studium der kritischen Philosophie*. Founded by Mellin himself in 1791, its main objective was that of disseminating the critical method among a non-specialist public. This task required a good knowledge of the texts, the ability to overcome conceptual difficulties, together with a good grasp of Kant's language, the obscurity of which had perplexed even professional philosophers. Mellin developed a number of illustrative strategies which led him to edit commentaries in the form of paraphrases of the major theoretical texts, from the three Critiques to the *Metaphysik der Sitten*. To these commentaries, significantly entitled *Marginalien*, Mellin added a *Register* of the main terms used by Kant. These initial explorations of Kantian terminology, which are of considerable philological import insofar as Mellin provides one of the first accurate analyses of the printing errors of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, were later developed into his major lexicographical works, some of which were devoted to the particular lexicon of the Critiques, such as the *Kunstsprache* of 1798 and its appendix published in 1800. Together with these specialized dictionaries, beginning in 1797, Mellin started publishing the *Encyclopädisches Wörterbuch der kritischen Philosophie*. The publication of this work was completed in 1804 and its six volumes are still today considered the greatest effort by a single author with regard to Kantian terminology. In this work, Mellin goes beyond giving one or more definitions of the terms together with brief references to the Kantian sources from which they originate (as he had done in the *Kunstsprache*). While remaining as faithful as possible to the texts, he also provides a close examination which facilitates an evaluation of the historical positioning of Kantian criticism in relation to other schools of thought. Finally, Mellin produced a general dictionary of philosophy, of which only the first two volumes are extant (1806-1807), and in which the intention of considering criticism as a definitive form of philosophy becomes clear. Notwithstanding Karl Rosenkranz's negative verdict, Mellin's work is of particular significance (insofar as it is unique) among the first commentators and interpreters of Kant because in it he pursued the ultimate aims of clarification, examination and application of critical philosophy solely by means of his work as a lexicographer.

MARIA CONFORTI, *Compendiato, Classico, Economico: tre dizionari medici franco-italiani nella prima metà dell'Ottocento*

Scientific and technical dictionaries published in the early 19th century are to be seen against the background of an increasing development of new means of communication, especially specialized journals, written by and meant for a public that was mainly composed of professionals in the various disciplines. The paper

deals with three very well-known and diffused medical dictionaries published in Venice beginning with the 1820s and until the 1860s, the *Dizionario Compendiato*, the *Classico*, the *Economico*. They were the result of the cooperation between one shrewd and very successful publisher, Giuseppe Antonelli, and the physician Mosè Giuseppe Levi, the representative of a new group of bourgeois and learned professionals. A Jew by religion, active in one of the main Jewish communities in Northern Italy, Levi was a good practitioner and a better journalist. The three *Dizionari* distinctly show a pattern of evolution from simple translations (mainly from the French, the leading language – and civilization – for the sciences) to an increasingly complex appropriation of foreign techniques, achievements, and scientific changes. In fact, Levi was engaged in making ‘Italian’ what had been cosmopolitan: he achieved this goal by inserting Italian works and contributions in French dictionary entries, as well as developing an original translation method, that has elicited the attention of historians of the Italian language (e.g. Serianni). At the same time, by republishing in their *Dizionari* works by Italian authors that had been originally meant for little-known or even famous journals, or for pamphlets published at a local level, Antonelli and Levi contributed to the diffusion and knowledge of works that were often written by surgeons, pharmacists, and other practitioners that were emerging as one of the most active, and upwards mobile, section of the medical professions, often working in hospitals. The appendix to the paper is a list – from the *Dizionario Classico* – of Italian authors Levi deemed the best, or at least the more representative, of Italian medicine.

DELFINA GIOVANNOZZI, *Il Dizionario di scienze filosofiche di Cesare Ranzoli*

At a time when, between the end of the 1800s and the beginning of the 1900s, the need for documenting and scientifically studying philosophical terminology was increasingly being felt in Europe, Cesare Ranzoli published, in 1905, the *Dizionario di scienze filosofiche*. This attempt to produce a ‘modern’ philosophical lexicon, which anticipated by over fifty years Nicola Abbagnano’s dictionary, can be located between the publication of Rudolf Eucken’s *Geschichte der philosophischen Terminologie* (1879) and the debate which both preceded and followed the first *Congrès international de philosophie* (Paris, 1900). Ranzoli’s main objective was of a technical nature and aimed at giving philosophical language a scientific character, notwithstanding the complexity which was often seen as the source of obscurity and irreconcilability of doctrines. In pursuing these aims, Ranzoli was careful to leave the philosophical personality of the authors in the background while bringing to the fore, as objectively as possible, the meanings of the philosophical terms used in their works. Ranzoli’s orientation is evident in his *Dizionario di scienze filosofiche*. He suggested a critical rethinking of positivism in favor of a ‘pure realism’, which he considered as a synthesis of realist objectivism and idealist subjectivism. This theoretical proposal, to which even Giovanni Gentile had given space by publishing a number of articles by Ranzoli in his *Giornale critico della filosofia italiana*, is outlined in a volume published posthumously in 1932. This syncretistic perspective

is included in the *Dizionario*, which already in its title recalls the need to document the proximity between physico-psychological sciences and philosophy. Indeed, the list of words in Ranzoli's dictionary includes many entries related to the spheres of anatomy, biology, chemistry, mathematics and physics. However, the lack of a clear explanation justifying the criterion for selection led many of Ranzoli's contemporaries to strongly criticize his work. These included, among others, Giovanni Vailati and Giovanni Papini. Ranzoli's *Dizionario di scienze filosofiche* is an original work in its genre: even though it is lacking in historical awareness and contains a number of inconsistencies, it has nonetheless offered a contribution of historical significance and has enjoyed a considerable popularity, as its many reprints testify.

ADA RUSSO, *Il lessico dei lessici. Una ontologia per i lessici filosofici latini*

The archive *Lessici filosofici, scientifici e di erudizione in latino* is a collection of dictionaries of a philosophical-scientific nature and of erudition published in Latin between the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries (most of them published in the 1600s). The dictionaries included in the archive have been digitalized and published on-line on the website of the Istituto per il Lessico Intellettuale Europeo e Storia delle Idee of the CNR of Rome. The full images of all the pages of the volumes are therefore available for consultation. Moreover, an index of the nomenclature used has been prepared for each dictionary. The archive forms part of the wider project entitled *Lessici filosofici dell'età moderna*, which is devoted to an analysis of the intellectual vocabulary and the instruments of philosophical lexicography in some of the most significant moments between the late Renaissance and the contemporary period. One of the objectives of the project has been that of putting together a unitary index of the entries included in the published dictionaries, as an important tool for the study of philosophical terminology and more generally of the history of ideas. This is an essential instrument which gives access to the overall terminology used in the dictionaries of the archive of Latin lexicons. This article further delves into a deeper analysis of the lexicons in question, with reference to three different levels of analysis: the formal level, the structural level and the semantic-relational level. An 'ontology' dedicated to the terminology of the Latin philosophical lexicons of the 1600s has been favored as a solution to the structural particularities which characterize the unified index of entries. The idea of creating such an ontology aims at responding to two specific needs: on the one hand, the realization of an instrument of access to lexicographical documents and, on the other hand, the possibility of analyzing and studying the philosophical language of modern philosophy as used in seventeenth century lexicons. The project of the ontology of philosophical lexicons has already been planned and will proceed in parallel with the work to enrich the textual and terminological *corpus* of the archive of lexicons, thus placing it within a wider context of continuous revisions of the phases of development of the ontology.