

Astrologia Ypocratis* and its vernacular early modern afterlives

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ABSTRACT: *Astrologia Ypocratis* is a Latin zodiacal lunary which deals with the prognosis, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases according to the phases of the moon in the twelve Zodiac signs. It circulated widely during the Middle Ages in Latin (Thorndike 1960; Kibre 1977, 1978), Middle English (De la Cruz Cabanillas and Diego Rodríguez, 2018), and Middle Dutch (Jansen-Sieben 1983). It endured throughout the early modern period due to the degree of confidence of sixteenth-century society in astrological medicine and the figure of Hippocrates. For the present study, two sixteenth-century witnesses – English and Spanish – are transcribed and collated following Thorndike’s methodology (1960). We aim to establish their genetic filiation, tracing the original versions from which both vernacular translations derive to continue tracing the transmission of the text.

KEYWORDS: *Astrologia Ypocratis*, *be boke of Ypocras*, *Hippocrates de la significacion de la muerte y de la vida*, manuscript filiation, early modern vernacular translations.

***Astrologia Ypocratis* y sus pervivencias vernáculas en la temprana Edad Moderna**

RESUMEN: *Astrologia Ypocratis* es un lunario zodiacal en latín que trata de la prognosis, la diagnosis y el tratamiento de las enfermedades según las fases de la luna en los doce signos zodiacales. Circuló ampliamente en latín en la Edad Media (Thorndike 1960; Kibre 1977, 1978), en inglés medio (De la Cruz Cabanillas and Diego Rodríguez, 2018) y en neerlandés medio (Jansen-Sieben 1983). Perdura a través del periodo moderno temprano gracias a la confianza de la sociedad del siglo xvi en la medicina astrológica y la figura de Hipócrates. Para el presente estudio, dos copias del siglo xvi, una en español y otra en inglés, se transcriben y comparan siguiendo la metodología de Thorndike (1960). Nuestro objetivo es establecer la filiación genética, localizando

***Astrologia Ypocratis* e as suas vidas vernáculas no início da modernidade**

RESUMO: *Astrologia Ypocratis* é um lunário zodiacal em latim que trata do prognóstico, diagnóstico e tratamento de doenças de acordo com as fases da Lua nos doze signos do Zodíaco. Circulou amplamente durante a Idade Média em latim (Thorndike 1960; Kibre 1977, 1978), inglês médio (De la Cruz Cabanillas e Diego Rodríguez, 2018) e neerlandês médio (Jansen-Sieben 1983). A sua permanência durante o início do período moderno deveu-se ao grau de confiança da sociedade do século xvi na medicina astrológica e na figura de Hipócrates. Para o presente estudo, são transcritas e cotejadas duas cópias do século xvi – uma em inglês e outra em castelhano – segundo a metodologia de Thorndike (1960). O nosso objetivo é estabelecer a sua filiação genética, loca-

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las versiones originales de las cuales derivan ambas traducciones vernáculas con el fin de seguir rastreando la transmisión del texto.

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Astrologia Ypocratis*, *De boke of Ypocras*, *Hippocrates de la significacion de la muerte y de la vida*, filiación de manuscritos, traducciones a vernáculos en el periodo moderno temprano.

lizando as versões originais das quais derivam ambas as traduções vernáculas para continuar a rastrear a transmissão do texto.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Astrologia Ypocratis*, *De boke of Ypocras*, *Hippocrates de la significacion de la muerte y de la vida*, filiação de manuscritos, traduções vernáculas do início da Idade Moderna.

1. Introduction

Of the plethora of translated ancient Greek scientific medical texts, *Astrologia Ypocratis*¹ stands out as a prominent tract on astrological medicine, purportedly authored by Hippocrates. Written in Latin in medieval times, it deals with the incidence and causes of diseases, their treatment, and the imminence of death, according to the phases of the moon in the twelve signs of the Zodiac.

Writings revealing the intimate connection between medicine and astrology were not a novel phenomenon in the late Middle Ages and the early modern period. These tracts were already present in Antiquity. This astrological text-type is known as a zodiacal lunary.² It is a type of lunary which bases its prognostications on the moon's passage through the zodiac (Taavitsainen 1988, 49).

Astrologia Ypocratis was widely circulated throughout the Middle Ages in three different Latin traditions (Kibre 1978, 136). These Latin translations were carefully identified and classified by Thorndike (1960) and Kibre (1977, 1978). Kibre (1977) produced a comprehensive index of manuscripts dating from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century gathering the *Astrologia Ypocratis*. She also included English translations of the tract. However, even though her identification of witnesses was meticulous, there are still manuscripts containing the *Astrologia Ypocratis* not included in her index. Thorndike (1960) worked on the search for manuscript witnesses and their filiation. He grouped and classified

¹ Called in manuscripts *De Ypocratis astronomia*, *Astronomia Ypocratis*, *Astrologia Ypocratis* or *De Iudiciis infirmitatum secundum dispositionem lune ad planetas*, among others.

² According to Taavitsainen, "Lunaries are perpetual prognostications for the lunar month arranged either according to the thirty days of the moon's cycle from one new moon to the next, or according to the moon's passage through the signs of the zodiac. They predict the outcome of actions undertaken at a given point of time, advise people in medical matters, and prophesy the fact of children" (1978, 18). For further information on the classification and different types of this prognostic genre, see Taavitsainen (1988).

the extant Latin copies according to three different translations and established three different groups of Latin texts:

- i. Thirty-five manuscripts dating from the thirteenth to the sixteenth century which include a translation by William of Moerbeke.³
- ii. A group of texts translated by Peter of Abano⁴ that comprises twelve witnesses dating from the late fifteenth century through to the seventeenth century.
- iii. A group containing around sixty copies from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries attributed to an anonymous translator presumably from Arabic and closely related to Moerbeke's translation.

In addition to the aforementioned groupings, there are others that include commentaries, epitomes, and fragments dating from the ninth to the sixteenth century, as well as translations into European vernaculars (Kibre 1978, 136).

However, the chronology covered and the classification established by Thorndike (1960) and Kibre (1977, 1978) for the Latin witnesses does not address the tradition of this zodiacal lunary in European vernacular languages. Jansen-Sieben (1983, 8) identified Middle Dutch as the only European vernacular into which *Astrologia Ypocratis* was translated and titled it *Pseudo-Hippokratische Iatromathematika*. She edited some Middle Dutch witnesses dating from the early fifteenth century. There was no attempt to establish their filiation regarding the three existing aforementioned Latin traditions. Jansen-Sieben (1983, 8) demonstrates that the witnesses in Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS 2818 (ff. 6rb–10rb) and Handschrift Oxford, New College MS 312, (ff. 205r–213r) bear similarities to the translation by William of Moerbeke, as both witnesses comprise a “supplementary passage on the fixed stars” (Thorndike 1960, 109), a feature associated with some manuscripts in Moerbeke's translation.

Astrologia Ypocratis was allegedly also translated into Middle English in the fifteenth century. The English tract is known as *be boke of Ypocras* and it was circulated widely in ten fifteenth-century medical miscellanies.⁵ *Be boke of Ypocras* and its Middle English witnesses have received scholarly attention recently and have been edited and thoroughly stud-

³ On William of Moerbeke as a translator of Greek works, see Brams and Vanhamel (1989).

⁴ On Peter of Abano's translations of scientific texts into Latin, see Thorndike (1923).

⁵ There are three more fifteenth-century witnesses, but they are incomplete versions of *Be boke of Ypocras*.

ied (Diego Rodríguez, 2023). The vernacularization of the Middle English tract has also been examined and a first step was taken to establish the filiation of the extant Middle English translations (De la Cruz Cabanillas and Diego Rodríguez 2018; Diego Rodríguez 2021).

There are Latin and vernacular witnesses of this tract still to be found if one combs scientific miscellaneous manuscripts carefully. We believed that a detailed examination of manuscript catalogues and search for new witnesses, as well as a continued exploration of bibliographical resources, would allow us to find more medieval witnesses in other European vernaculars. So far this has not been the case. Two sixteenth-century European vernacular translations – English and Spanish – have been, however, identified. Despite a painstaking search, no medieval Spanish witnesses have been found. As for the English text, the transmission of *De boke of Ypocras* into the early modern period reflects a degree of confidence that sixteenth-century English society had in astrological medicine and the figure of Hippocrates, and the continuation of astrology as one of the cornerstones of medicine during the sixteenth century. The relevance the three Latin versions had in this vernacular translation (Thorndike 1960), considering the Middle English witnesses at the same time, may shed light on this Early Modern English translation. Therefore, it is our aim to establish their genetic filiation, tracing the original versions from which both European vernacular translations derive as well as to continue searching for more hidden vernacular witnesses.

2. Methodology

For this study, two sixteenth-century manuscripts were taken into consideration. First, Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Bodl. 621.⁶ It is a late sixteenth-century astrological miscellany written in Spanish made up of 450 leaves, written on paper. It gathers “excerpts from the books and translations of dr. Francisco Juntino”⁷ (Bodleian Archives & Manuscripts website). Written in dark brown ink, it allegedly contains a Spanish translation of *Astrologia Ypocratis* titled *HYPPOCRATES de la significacion de la muerte y de la vida segun el mouimiento de la Luna y los*

⁶ Irene Diego Rodríguez is grateful to the Facultad de Filología – UNED for the *Ayuda Complementaria a la Investigación*, which made possible the acquisition of the digitalized images from Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodl 621.

⁷ Giuntini Juntinus (Francesco Giuntini, 1522–1580) was an Italian theologian, doctor, mathematician, and astrologer. His most famous work was *Speculum Astrologiae*. For further information, see Giuntini et al. (1583).

*aspectos de los Planetas El Interprete Gulideolo Medico*⁸ (ff. 213r–237r). The *incipit* of this Spanish witness refers to “El Interprete Gulideolo Medico.” Gulideolo may be a Spanish translation from the name of Guilelmus of Moerbeke. William of Moerbeke⁹ was a Flemish Dominican archbishop, and classics scholar whose translations of the works of Aristotle and other Greek philosophers into Latin played a very important role in the transmission of Greek knowledge into the Latin West throughout the thirteenth century. When he became archbishop of Corinth, he came upon a Greek manuscript attributed to Hippocrates that was not in the ancient Byzantine translations of the *Corpus Hippocraticum* (Finkelmann 2011, 291): *Astrologia Ypocratis*. Copied in manuscripts countless times over the following centuries, it is based on the idea of Hippocrates as an advocate of astrological medicine.

Second, London, Wellcome Library MS 7117. This is a sixteenth-century English medical miscellany compiled for the use of an unknown Elizabethan practitioner. It includes an incomplete English copy of John of Arderne’s treatise on *Fistula in ano*, medical recipes, astrological tracts, and a series of lists and classifications of diseases and medicines. It contains one hundred and forty folios written mainly in dark brown ink, and from f. 92r to f. 94v, contains an Early Modern English witness of *Be boke of Ypocras*. In this translation, Hippocrates “teachythe to know þe planetes, syknes, lyf and deathe, and þe tymes þer of” (f. 92r). The translation of this English text is not attributed to William of Moerbeke or any other scholars but to astronomers of the standing of Avicenna (“translatyd of astrolamyors the best vpon avecen,” f. 94v).

The texts have been transcribed and compared to Thorndike’s three Latin versions: 1) William of Moerbeke’s translation, 2) Peter of Abano’s translation, and 3) the anonymous translation from the Arabic. Regarding the third translation, Kibre identified that the *incipits* of the numerous witnesses of this third group vary among themselves. The most frequently encountered are: “Dixit [Dicit] Hypocras...”; “Dixit Hippocras medicorum optimus. Cuiusmode medicus est...”; “

⁸ In the transcriptions, the original spelling has been maintained, whereas the abbreviations have been silently expanded.

⁹ Morbeka, Moerbeke, or Morbecque is a reference to his origin that had not yet become an inherited family name (Beullens 2023, 110). Several Latin manuscripts employ corrupt Latinized forms of his name, such as Gulideolus Mordicus (Wellcome Library, *Libellus, de significatione mortis et vitae secundum cursum lunae et aspectus planetarum*). Roger Bacon used the toponym *Flemingus* to refer to him: *Willielmus Flemingus* (Maloney 2018, 174). In the modern-day Belgian province of East Flanders, two villages are called Moerbeke. The toponym *Flemingus* used by Roger Bacon is correct for these two villages. One village lies in the Land of Waas, between Antwerp and Ghent, the other is situated some forty kilometers to the west of Brussels, near Geraadsbergen (Grammont). The latter Moerbeke particularly prides itself on being William’s birthplace (Beullens 2023, 111).

“Dixit [Dicit] Ypocras qui [cum] fuit medicus et magister Optimus...”; “Sicut dicit Ypocras qui fuit medicus et magister optimus...” (1978, 136). These variants attributed to the anonymous Arabic translation are considered for our analysis. We also took into consideration the Middle English witnesses and Imbrasius of Ephesus’s *Prognostica de decubito* in Gundisalvus’s version (1550) for the collation of specific passages.

The various titles attributed to this tract, *Astrologia Ypocratis*, in different manuscripts link its authorship to a broad array of ancient authorities, with a particular emphasis on Hippocrates: Galen (*Prognostica de decubito ex mathematica scientia* or *Mathematices scientiae prognostica de decubito infirmorum*),¹⁰ Hermes Trismegistus (*Iatromathematica* or *De decubito decretoriis*),¹¹ Imbrasius of Ephesus (*Prognostica de decubito*),¹² and Hippocrates (*Astronomia Ypocratis*, *Secreta pronostica Ypocratis*, *Compendium Ypocratis*, *Hippocratis libellus de significatione mortis et vitae*, among others).¹³ All these denominations point to a similar *Astrologia Ypocratis* text signed by a Byzantine scholar, which he based on Galen’s *Prognostication of Diseases by Astrology*.

This treatise, attributed to Imbrasius of Ephesus, the alleged author of *Prognostica de decubito*, was identified by Richard Durling.¹⁴ Controversy surrounds the tract.¹⁵ Kibre, for instance, proposes that it might derive from an earlier Byzantine or Greek text “relating to lunar and other prognostications in medicine, which are extant in manuscripts of the ninth century onward” (Kibre 1978, 135). Modern scholars argue *Astrologia Ypocratis* may derive from Imbrasius of Ephesus’s *Prognostica de decubito*. They believe that when the name Gulideolus Mordicus appears as translator and differs from the “Dixit Hippocrates” structure that Thorndike (1960) attributes to the anonymous Arabic translation, it is the text by Imbrasius of Ephesus. For this study, this fourth translation has also been considered. The witness of this version contained in

¹⁰ Cumont (1935) explains how the name of Galen was linked to this (anonymous) prognosis due to a copyist’s mistake.

¹¹ See Bull (2018).

¹² Weinstock (1948) tried to reveal the identity of Imbrasius of Ephesus. Steinschneider (1856: 19) did not mention Imbrasius of Ephesus as the author of *Prognostica de decubito*. He claimed that *Prognostica de decubito* was exactly the same treatise as the pseudo-Hippocratic tract entitled *Esse Aegrotorum Secundum Lunam*, which circulated in different recensions attributed to three different translators: Guideolus, Petrus d’Abano, and Wiliam of Moerbeke.

¹³ See Jansen-Sieben (1983) for a more extensive list of the authors’ names and titles under which this piece was probably in circulation.

¹⁴ See Durling (1985, 1988).

¹⁵ In printed editions, the tract attributed to Imbrasius of Ephesus is known as *Hippocratis Libellus, de significatione mortis et vitae secundum cursum lunae et aspectus planetarum*.

the early European printed books collection from London, Wellcome Library, *Amicus medicorum* by Domenicus Gundisalvus (1550).

Following Thorndike's methodology (1960), we will focus our analysis on specific parts of the tracts: the *incipit* and a following paragraph about physicians behaving like blind people if they do not know astrology, the signs of Taurus and Pisces, and the *explicit*. We will determine whether the Spanish and English witnesses are both translations from the anonymous Arabic version, the one by William Moerbeke, Imbrasius of Ephesus or Peter Abano's translation.

3. Analysis and findings

We worked based on the premise that the Spanish and English witnesses under study are translations from Latin or in one way or another derived from Latin. Tracts on astrological medicine were part of learned Latin anthologies. However, the vernacularization of this text-type aimed at a wider audience. The translator of this text-type may have acted "as an editor and compiler, freely excepting, rearranging, and paraphrasing the material of the source text and blending it with material from other sources" (Pahta and Taavitsainen 2004, 13). Translators "come close to original compositions" (ibid.), and they often readjust their exemplars considering their potential readers. In this way, the collation of the two vernacular witnesses will reveal if this text-type corresponds to a "word-for-word" or "sense-for-sense" translation and as such the vernacular witnesses under consideration may be a literal translation from a Latin exemplar, but a different text which only resembles its source because it reproduces the ideas of its Latin predecessor.

Thorndike argued that as a rule in the three Latin recensions "the treatment of the first six signs of the zodiac is about twice as long as that of the last six. Cancer, rather than the first sign, Aries, receives most space of any single sign" (1960, 118). Before collating the passages under study, we should mention that only the sixteenth-century Spanish witness follow this rule.¹⁶

The four Latin versions and the two sixteenth-century witnesses preserve the attribution to the great physician of Cos from opening sentence of the tract (see table 1 on the following page). The Spanish and the English sixteenth-century vernacular translations

¹⁶ The sign of Cancer in Bodl. MS 621 contains 781 words. The longest sign after Cancer is Aries (591 words). Aquarius is the shortest (291 words).

TABLE 1: The four Latin versions, the two vernacular translations, and their *incipits*

| Translation | <i>Incipit</i> |
|----------------------|---|
| William of Moerbeke | Sapientissimus Ypocras, omnium medicorum peritissimus ait: Cuiusmodi medicus est qui astronomiam ignorat, nemo quidem in manus illius se committere debet, quia imperfectus est et cecus, et ideo non merito talis medicus reputatur (Thorndike 1960, 105). |
| Peter of Abano | Cum legerem libros Ypocratis medicorum optimi inveni hunc parvum sed magne utilitatis librum, et valde necesse est omnibus medicis. Qui hunc bene sciverit, sanitatem mortem vel vitam infirmi poterit pronunciare (Thorndike 1960, 116). |
| Anonymous Arabic | Dixit Ypocras, qui fuit medicus et magister optimus, Cuiusmodi medicus est qui astronomiam ignorat, nullus homo debet committere se in manus illius, qui non est medicus perfectus (Thorndike 1960, 113). |
| Imbrasius of Ephesus | HIPPOCRATES DE SIGNIFICATIONE mortis, et vitae, secundum motum Lunae, et aspectus Planetarum, Gulideolo Mordico interprete Pisco. Praefatio interpretis. ii. Hippocrates optimus medentium dixit, cuiusmodi Medicus est, qui ignorat Astronomiam? nemo debet se committere manibus eius, quia non est perfectus Medicus (Gundisalvus 1550, 551) |
| English vernacular | Thys ys þe booke of Ipocrats in thys booke he teachythe to know þe planetes, syknes, lyf and deathe, and þe tymes þer of Fyrst sayth Ipocrates þat a leche shall take hede of þe moone (MS Wellcome 7117, f. 92r). |
| Spanish vernacular | HYPPOCRATES de la significacion de la muerte y de la vida segun el mouimiento de la Luna y los aspectos de los Planetas El Interprete Gulideolo Medico./. + Prologo del Interprete. Hyppocrates el mejor de los Medicos dixo, de que manera es el Medico que no sabe Astrologia, ninguno se deue poner en sus manos, porque no es perfecto Medico, (MS Bodl. 621, f. 213r). |

reveal some differences, though. The Early Modern English witness includes an introductory sentence which indicates the book's main purpose: to teach about the influence of the planets as far diseases and their outcome – life or death – are concerned, as well as to train readers on prescriptions. The English translation uses the Latin formula of attribution made of a verb denoting “saying” and followed by the name of the authority “Dixit Ypocras” / “sayth Ipocrates.” This authoritative phrase coincides with the one employed in the anonymous Arabic translation. The Spanish witness' opening sentences point to William of Moerbeke (“El interprete Gulideolo Medico”) as its translator. Nevertheless, the *incipit* Thorndike (1960) attributed to Moerbeke only has one similarity: the sentence which refers to the placing of oneself in the hands of a physician who ignores astronomy or astrology.¹⁷ The Spanish *incipit* is similar to Thorndike's (1960) anonymous Arabic translation, as both use the expression “non est medicus perfectus” / “no es perfecto Medico” at the opening of the tract. This attribution to William of Moerbeke, as well as the use of the sentence “no es perfecto Medico” appear in Imbrasius of Ephesus's version. Nevertheless, the distinguishing characteristic of this vernacular translation is a title which precedes the prologue attributed to William of Moerbeke. None of the versions identified by Thorndike (1960) contain this preceding title. It resembles Imbrasius of Ephesus's version: *HIPPOCRATES DE SIGNIFICATIONE mortis, et vitae, secundum motum Lunae, et aspectus Planetarum, Gulideolo Mordico interprete Pisco* / *HYPPOCRATES de la significacion de la muerte y de la vida segun el mouimiènto de la Luna y los aspectos de los Planetas El Interprete Gulideolo Medico*. The collation of the *incipits* in Table 1 above reveals that Peter of Abano's version has no similarities with the sixteenth-century vernacular witnesses.

Moerbeke's translation brings together two distinct passages. First, he includes a passage which compares a physician ignorant of astrology to a blind man.¹⁸ *De boke of Ypocras* contains references in its introduction to the importance of leeches following the course of the moon. *Hyppocrates de la significacion de la muerte y de la vida* emphasises the connection between a physician knowing astrology and the medical field. Neither of these vernacular passages refers to a blind man.¹⁹

¹⁷ In the Middle Ages and throughout the sixteenth century, astrology and astronomy were used indistinctively.

¹⁸ See Thorndike (1960, 106–107).

¹⁹ For the sake of clarity, important parts have been highlighted in bold. This is an editorial practice absent in the original texts.

- i. a **leche shall take hede of þe moone** When she ys at þe full, for them woxethe blod þe marowe & brayne and other humores which dothe **followe þe course of moone** Wherefore when yo take a cure be yt phisyke or surgery, **take hede of þe moone & of þe tyme** when þe syknes toke hym, and yn what singe yt begane first þe moone ys then, an exsample j shall shewe yde by all þe xii signis everyone by hymselfe, (Wellcome MS 7117 f. 92r).
- ii. Hyppocrates el mejor de los Medicos dixo, **de que manera es el Medico que no sabe Astrologia, ninguno se deue poner en sus manos**, porque no es perfecto Medico, Por tanto yo conoci que obra era saber Astrologia y ansi mire los libros de Hyppocrates, y halle esse pequenuelo librillo, mas bonissimo El qual quien bien lo conociere se hará gran Medico/. **Es luego muy neccessario à todos los Medicos.**/. (Bodl. MS 621, ff. 213r–213v).

Second, a passage on *Stelle Fixe* – on the fixed stars – which, in some manuscripts, is appended at the end of *Astrologia Ypocratis*, after the treatment of the moon's influence on the twelve signs of the Zodiac (Thorndike 1960). This is a distinctive excerpt which plays an important role in identifying the Latin tradition followed in that particular translation.²⁰ The Spanish tract closes with the sign of Pisces in f. 237. *De boke of Ypocras* presents a passage on sores after Pisces which advises the reader about a general rule to recognize the different kinds of apostemes and to know how they are connected to different parts of the body to apply the right treatment. This treatise on abscesses after the sign of Pisces closes *De boke of Ypocras* but does not resemble Moerbeke's passage on the fixed stars.

For to knowe of all maner of sores wytheyn and wythe owte of what complexion they be know thys rule and yf ye soe a sore or apostems þat ys wytheowte in what parte of the body se ever yt be / Fyrst take hede of the cullor for yf yt be red yn sight and soft yn feeling yt ys engendryde of blod and yf yt be hot and moyst hys signe ys gemine libra and aquarius hys planets are Jupiter & marcurie and whythe þe mone ys yn this signe wyth the planets nevell not wythe suche a sore / If the cullor of the sore be red ynsyght and somewhat hard yn feeling yt ys engendryd of collar & drye hys signes are aries leo and sagitarius hys planets are sole and mars whylle the money s in these signes wythe the planets medyll not wythe suche a sore / If there be

²⁰ See Thorndike (1960, 109–110).

a sore that ys graye whyte or blake yf yt be hard yt ys ongendryd of coldness and dryness hys signes are taurius virgo and capricorne hys planet ys saturne and yf yt be of the cullore a sore sayde þat yt to suye greye whyte or blake & syt be somewhat softe & in fellyng yt ys engendryd of fleme & coldeness moyste hys signes be cancer scorio and pisses hys planets be venus and libra thys rule ys generall of all maner surgerye of appostems wythrowte sor the /amen/ here endythe the booke of jpcras of lyfe and deathe translatyd of astrolamyors the best vpon avecen (Wellcome MS 7117, ff. 94r–94v).

In the Spanish witness, the treatise finishes right after the sign of Pisces with no traces of the passage on *Stelle Fixe*, as can be seen here:

Cap Xiiij /. Quando la Luna estuuiere en Piscis decrecida de luz y grados, y saturno la mirare de quadrado, ó, de oposicion, la enfermedad será de frialdad con dolor de cabeça y vientre, A este tal enfermo se le ha de dar medicina calida, que expela y quite el frio, y si la Luna mirare el sol viuirà Todavia despues que obrare salud tendrá pesadumbre de las venas y artículos, y quando la Luna estuuiere ally decrecida en luz y grados, y la mirare Marte de aspecto quadrado, ó, de oposicion, será la causa de la enfermedad el mucho comer y el mucho beuer y està llena de colera y de sangre, A este se ha de sangrar, Este tal le dolerà mas de dia que de noche y quando la fortuna no mirare a la Luna en el lugar en que començó la enfermedad morirà, y si la mirare sanarà, quando la Luna viniere al lugar en que estaua al principio de la enfermedad /. Y quando la Luna estaua en Piscis Venus y Jupiter estuuiere en el mismo signo, quando cayere en la enfermedad, la enfermedad se haura producido por sudor, ó, por el mucho beuer agua/. Este tiene dolor de ojos, y tiene callentura con frio, al principio, y a la postre se sigue calor. Este tal tiene neccessidad de medicina que purgue y expella el calor quando la Luna viniere a la oposicion de lugar en que estaua al principio de la enfermedad cobrará salud, quando la Luna estuuiere en Piscis contrarte, la mucha calor interior engendrò callentura, Es neccessario sangrarle /. Y quando la fortuna mirare a la Luna viuirà àquel tal enfermo, y si fuere de oposicion, morirà ./ Fin ./ (Bodl. 621, ff. 236r–237v)

The English and Spanish tracts open with references to physicians and astrology or the moon, they do not establish a parallelism between a blind person and astrological ignorance. They do not, therefore, contain any of the peculiar passages associated with Moerbeke's translation. Only one more recension of *Astrologia Ypocratis*, as well as the text

associated with Imbrasius of Ephesus, can be still considered for the analysis and distinctive zodiacal signs will be collated.

Thorndike (1960) claims that Taurus is another significant fragment to consider to trace the filiation. This is due to the fact that Peter of Abano pictures a patient who “non potest dormire et habet voluntatem bibendi vinum et res calidas” (Thorndike 1960, 123), whereas the Moerbeke and the Arabic versions represent him as wanting to drink also wine but cold things, “res frigidas” (Thorndike 1960, 119, 121). In the English version, the reader finds a man who may suffer from “þe throte þat siknes shalle fever quartain cold goutte cold dropseye & other that be passions of the splene.” (Wellcome 7117, f. xx), but no reference whatsoever is made to drinking wine or hot or cold drinks. Therefore, these three Latin exemplars of Taurus do not seem to be enough to trace the source of the English translation. Furthermore, when comparing the version in Wellcome 7117 with any of the translations in Middle English (see De la Cruz Cabanillas and Diego Rodríguez 2018 and Diego Rodríguez 2023), it is quite apparent that the sixteenth-century copy completely relies on the Middle English ones. In fact, there is no modernization of the spelling or adaptation of the morphology to sixteenth-century practice. It is, indeed, a copy of Middle English rather than an up-to-date version in the language of sixteenth-century Britain. The text is a *literatim* copy of Cambridge Trinity College MS R.14.52, as seen in table 2 on the next page. As demonstrated in De la Cruz Cabanillas and Diego Rodríguez (2018), the Middle English translation must have been from a different source than Abano’s, Moerbeke’s and the Latin versions which derive from Arabic.

As for the Spanish witness, although it bears some resemblance to the Arabic version, it seems to be closer to the translation by Imbrasius of Ephesus, reproduced under the name of Gundisalvus (1550). Firstly, the beginning is peculiar in Spanish as it refers to the moon being the queen, which is absent in both Latin witnesses. But from here, the Arabic recension is quite different from chapter IV found both in the Spanish and Efesus’s versions. Likewise, the mention in the Arabic translation of drinking wine and “res frigidas” is absent both in the Spanish and Efesus’s versions. Furthermore, even if the three translations coincide in the number of days that will go by before the patient dies, some other symptoms of the disease align Efesus’s and the Spanish versions more with the Arabic one. The patient will not talk much, will say few words, and he will have a hard or raw (*crudo*) belly, which means the disease is a product of bile and not phlegm.

TABLE 2: The sign of Taurus in Cambridge Trinity College MS R.14.52 and Wellcome MS 7117

| MS R.14.52 | Wellcome MS 7117 |
|--|---|
| <p>Whan the mone is in the signe of Taurus that signe is of the kynde of the Erth cold and drie and in a planete that is cold Saturnus with the mone. jn this signe if mars that is a planet be contrary to the mone. the sikenes shal be of coldnes and drynes This signe hath of the man þe throte This sikenes shal be fever quarteyne. cold goute cold dropesy and other that bien passious of the splene ¶ Wherfor if the mone be in this signe and the planete with hym cold that sikenes may noct be helid or the mone be contrary to þe planete ¶ And if the mone hold with mars and cast lighte to hym withyn .xxvij. daies he schal die ¶ jf thow. wilt have a medecyne ¶ Whan the mone or venus or the Sonne bien toguryder of Surgery of Cancres and of mormalis and toher woundes with ded flesshe ever in this tyme ¶ ffor al other tymes medicynes werke nat to non efect ¶ And this is for the kynd jmpression that the planete hath ther corde in kynde the whiche is siknes (MS 14.52, ff 143r–143v)</p> | <p>when þe moone ys in þis signe of taurus, þat signe ys of the kynd of þe erthe cold & dry, and in a planet calyd saturne wythe þe moone jn thys signe of mars þat ys a planet be contrarie to þe moone þe sykenes shalle of coldness & drynese thys signe hath of man þe throte þat siknes shalle fever quartain cold goute cold dropseye & other that be passions of the splene. Wherfore yf þe moone be yn thys signe & þe planet whyth hym colde that siknes maye not be healyd tyll þe moon be contrarie to the planet and yf þe moone holde wythe mars and cast light to hym wytheyn xxvij days he shall dye. If ye wyll a medecyne. When þe moone or venus or þe sonne be together of surgerye of cancers & of marmolls and other woundes with dead flesshe ever yn thy styme. For all other tymes medecyn workth nott to any affect And thy sys for þe kynde jmpression þat the planet hath There cold in kynde whythe ys syknes (Wellcome MS 7117, ff. 92r–92v)</p> |

TABLE 3: The sign of Taurus in two Latin recensions (anonymous Arabic translation and Imbrasius of Efesus) and in the Spanish translation

| Anonymous Arabic translation | Imbrasius of Efesus | Bodl. MS 621 |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Quando incidit infirmitas, et luna est in Tauro, et aspicit eam Mars ab appposito vel quarto, illa infirmitas est ex sanguine, et sentit caliditatem et siccitatem, et dolet in nocte et non potest dormire, et habet voluntatem bibendi vinum aut res frigidas, et est necessarium ei minuere sanguinem et dare ei medicinam que reddat eum frigidum et humidum. Si fuerit in isto Saturnus cum luna, aut venerit ad eum et non inuenerit fortunam, mori- etur usque ad dies 9 quando primum capit eum infirm- tas. Et si fuerit luna addens suo lumine et gradibus, et aspexerit eam Mars ex septimo vel quarto, et luna venerit ad Saturnum, et Mercurius cum ea, erit hec infirmitas ex frigiditate, et erit totus fractus et disruptus, et vix pauca lo- qui poterit, et stomachus erit ei indigestus, et non poterit digerere, et interius calorem habebit, et medicina laxativa erit ei necessaria, quia ista infirmitas est de colera alba. (Thorndike 1960, 121–122)</p> | <p>De Luna in Tauro CAPIT. IIII QVando autem quispiam incidit in morbum Luna existente in Tauro, atque eam aspexerit Mars ex opposito, vel aspectu quarto, morbus eius productus erit ex sanguine, is tandem sentit immensum calorem, & siti torquetur, & quaeritur per noctem, nec potest dormire, & potum vini appetit. Est ergo necessarium illi secare venam, & enhibere pharma- cum, quod refrigeret eum, & humectet, sin fuerit in signo Saturnus cum Luna, aut Venus addends, & non inuenerit fortunam, mori- etur infra nouem dies à die, quo incidit in languorem, quòd si Luna addet suo lumini & gradibus, tum demum, atque eam Mars aspexerit, ex oppo- sitione, vel quarto aspectu, & Luna venerit ad Saturnum, & erit Mercurius cum ea, morbus ex frigidis succis erit, vel aeger totus frigidus, & dis- ruptus erit. Ideo vix loquitur, & pauca profert, habet & ventricul- um durum, seu crudum adeò, vt excoquere non valeat alimentum, sed interius ardet. Propterea is eget soluenti medicamine, quoniam morbus is magis particeps est bilis, quàm pituitae: (Gondisalvus 1550, 557–558)</p> | <p>La Luna en todas las partes de Tauro, es Reyna de gran Reyno, y es viciosa/. ¶ de la Luna en Tauro Cap. 4. Y quando alguno cayere en enfermedad estando la Luna en Tauro, y la mirare Marte de oposicion, ó, de aspecto quadrado, su enfermedad se haura causado de sangre, esto lo sentira el ymmenso calor, y la mucha sed, y se quexa de noche, y no puede dormir y dessea beuer vino, Es luego necesario seccarle la vena, y ponerle emplastro que lo refresque, y humedezca, y si estuuere en el signo Saturno con la Luna, ó, Venus añadiendo, y no hallare fortuna, morira dentro de nueue dias, desde el dia que cayo enfermo, y si la luna añadiere en su luz y grados entonces, y la mirare Marte de oposicion, ó, quadrado aspecto, y la Luna viniere a Saturno, y estuuere Mercurio con ella, la enfermedad sera todo frio, y destemplado. por tan apenas hablara, y poco declarar- e las palabras, y tendrà el vientre duro ó, muy crudo, que no podra digirir mas se quemará dentro en las entrañas/. Por tanto este enfermo tiene necesidad de medicina que resuelua porque esta enfermedad es mas participante de la hiel, que no de la flemma, (Weston Library, Bodl. MS 621, ff. 217r–218r)</p> |

4. Conclusion

The Latin tract *Astrologia Ypocratis* has been identified in numerous manuscripts dating from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries and gathered in libraries all over Europe (Thorndike 1960; Kibre 1977, 1978). It widely circulated in late medieval miscellaneous compendiums in Middle English (Diego Rodríguez 2023) and Middle Dutch (Jansen-Sieben 1983). The transmission of the treatise goes beyond the Middle Ages, reflecting the ongoing interpenetration of medical astrological thought in the sixteenth century. Early modern witnesses are attested in Early Modern English and Spanish. It is undeniable that *Astrologia Ypocratis* and its vernacular medieval and early modern versions demonstrate the huge success this zodiacal lunary enjoyed for centuries.

The aim of this study is not to question the work's authorship or to consider further exemplars of the zodiacal lunary under study before the thirteenth century, when the first Latin witnesses of *Astrologia Ypocratis* were first identified (Kibre 1977, 1978). However, we have proved that the ascription of different titles and the attribution of the zodiacal lunary to a wide variety of physicians from antiquity complicates the task of tracing the origin of *Astrologia Ypocratis*. Galen, Hermes Trismegistus, Imbrasius of Ephesus, and Hippocrates are four recurrent names associated with the different denominations the Latin text uses. All in all, only the versions attributed to Hippocrates identified by Thorndike (1960) and the one associated with Imbrasius of Ephesus seem to have connections with the early modern witnesses under study. We concentrated on the Early Modern Spanish and English copies to study the transmission into the sixteenth century. We aimed to track the afterlives of the medieval *Astrologia Ypocratis*.

Neither the *incipit* nor much in the symbols of Taurus and Pisces and other passages mentioned above, such as the one on the blind man and the *Stelle Fixe*, link Peter Abano's, William Moerbeke's and the anonymous Arabic translation to these two sixteenth-century witnesses. The findings obtained after collating the four Latin recensions, the Middle English witnesses and the two early modern European vernacular treatises under study reveal that *Hippocrates de la significacion de la muerte y de la vida* seems to be a translation of Imbrasius of Ephesus's *Prognostica de decubitu*. We can also conclude that the *pe boke of Ypocras* contained in Wellcome MS 7117 is a witness copied in Middle English in an early modern compendium. Its line of transmission can only be studied going

back to the fifteenth century, as the witnesses in Middle English do not resemble the Latin recensions studied here. Therefore, we conclude that there must be a missing Latin exemplar from which all these English vernacular translations derive.

However, the results of this research are of greater importance and go beyond the aims and scope of this project. *De boke of Ypocras* and *Hypocrates de la significacion de la muerte y de la vida* are not early modern translations of *Astrologia Ypocratis*. They clearly deal with the zodiac signs and their influence regarding health. Moreover, both are attributed to the great physician of Cos. However, against what has been established since the nineteenth century, they are not the same medical astrological writings, which does not mean that *Astrologia Ypocratis* may not have influenced the exemplars from which these two vernacular witnesses derive. Sources and researchers – from the nineteenth onwards (Steinschneider 1856; Thorndike 1960; Kibre 1977, 1978; Jansen-Sieben 1983, among others) – have considered *Astrologia Ypocratis* as the source text from which different European translations derive, which clearly oversimplifies the transmission of medical astrological knowledge attributed to Hippocrates from antiquity to the sixteenth century, and even beyond. *Astrologia Ypocratis* needs, first, to be redefined regarding its characteristics, content, and distinctive features. This will allow scholars to properly distinguish all the different Latin treatises that have been included under the same umbrella regardless of their attribution to different physicians, and regardless of the differences found in the information they compiled.

The reexamination of the different Latin traditions on astrological medical Hippocratic knowledge will be the first step to draw a better and more complete picture of the transmission history of these different texts into European vernacular languages. We do not believe that *De boke of Ypocras* and *Hypocrates de la significacion de la muerte y de la vida* are the only vernacular translations of Latin zodiacal lunaries. We believe that future examinations of medieval and early modern miscellaneous manuscripts that remain unexplored in library collections worldwide will allow the continuation of the study of the text's transmission history and also the discovery of witnesses in other European languages.

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