CHAPTER 19

On Terminological Variation in the Late Latin Translation of the Hippocratic Aphorisms

Gerd V.M. Haverling

Abstract

There is much variation in the technical terminology in the translation of the Hippocratic Aphorisms and in the Old Commentary on that text. The translator of the Greek text sometimes uses Greek words that are not common in Latin and that have created problems in the later transmission of the text; and he often chooses Latin expressions that are not very elegant and that do not always correspond to the Latin technical terminology. The author of the Old Commentary often chooses a more elegant form of Latin and a technical terminology more in accordance with that of Roman medicine; he also explains the Greek expressions found in the translation. There are therefore reasons to assume that the person who translated the Hippocratic Aphorisms was a native speaker of Greek rather than of Latin and that the author of the Old Commentary was a native speaker of Latin who knew Greek.

1 Introduction

There is a considerable amount of variation in the Latin language and in the medical terminology in the manuscripts transmitting the late Latin translation of the Hippocratic Aphorisms, both in the manuscripts containing the Old Commentary on that text and in those without it. The Greek terminology has often created considerable problems in the transmission, but there is notable variation also in the Latin terminology. I shall now discuss the variation in the terminology and the relationship between this problem and the problem regarding the first language of the translator and of the author of the Old Commentary.

※ All translations from Greek and Latin are mine unless otherwise noted.
2 The Manuscripts Containing the Translation of the Hippocratic Aphorisms

The late Latin translation of the Hippocratic Aphorisms is found in several manuscripts from the ninth through the twelfth century, with and without commentaries. Of the manuscripts that have the translation without a commentary, three are almost complete:

- **A** = Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 7099; f° 1r–15r; Aph. 1.1–7.60; s. xiiin;
- **P2** = Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 7021; f° 2r–18r; Aph. 1.10–7.87; s. ixm;
- **VcI** = Vendôme, Bibl. Municip., 172; f° 1v–11r; Aph. 1.1–7.87; s. xin.

There are also a number of major or minor fragments. The abbreviations are in italics in order to distinguish these manuscripts from the ones in which we also have the commentary:

- **Mu** = Modena, Archivio Capitolare, O.I.11; f° 25r–36v; Aph. 5.20–7.86; s. viiix;
- **P1** = Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 11219; f° 1va–11vb, 212ra; Aph. 2.24–4.75, 5.22–7.83; s. ix;
- **P3** = Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 7021; f° 1r–1v; Aph. 1.3–1.23; s. xin;
- **Ro** = Rouen, Bibl. Municip., 1407 [= O.55]; f° 196r–198v, 215r–222v, 199r–201v; Aph. 1.1–4.72, 7.37–7.87; s. xiex;
  Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 7029; f° 32r–48v; s. xiiim;
  Lincoln, 333 [37]; f° 1r–3; s. x.

Of the Old Commentary we currently know of about a dozen complete, or almost complete, manuscripts, and a number of fragments of various sizes. The complete, or almost complete, manuscripts could be divided into three

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2 After the publication of the acts of the colloquium at Manchester (Langslow/Maire [2010]), Monica H. Green, Arizona State University, kindly gave me some information about the 450 medical manuscripts from about 1075 to about 1225 that she has collected. Some of them seem to contain this translation of the Hippocratic Aphorisms: Gotha, Universitäts- und Forschungsbibliothek Erfurt/Gotha, Membr. II 144, s. xi/xii; Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, ms Otto. lat. 2298, s. xii; Vendôme, Bibliothèque Municipale, ms 175, s. xiex.