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HENRICUS BATE, WILLIAM OF MOERBEKE AND THE *CENTILOQUIUM* OF “PTOLEMY”

BATE READER OF THE *CENTILOQUIUM*

The *Centiloquium*, a collection of hundred sayings (*verba*) or maxims to be observed in astrology and wrongly attributed to Ptolemy, enjoyed an extraordinary fortune during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Besides the Arabic, Hebrew and Greek versions, no fewer than five different Latin translations were made from the Arabic. In the Renaissance, George of Trebizond and Giovanni Pontano made Latin translations of the Greek original.¹ A privileged witness of the early Latin tradition of the *Centiloquium* is Henricus Bate of Mechelen (Malines). In his *Nativitas*, his autobiographical horoscope composed in 1281,² Bate refers twelve times to this work (nine times as “Centilogium/Centiloquium,” once as “Liber arboris,” once as “Liber fructus,” once as “Liber 100 verborum”). As we will see, Bate knew four of the existing Latin translations of the *Centiloquium*. However, and this was something previously unknown to scholars, Bate

¹ On the Latin tradition of the *Centiloquium* see D. JUSTE, “Pseudo-Ptolemy, *Centiloquium*,” *Ptolemaeus Arabus et Latinus. Works*, RL=<http://ptolemaeus.badw.de/work/24> (accessed 2018-04-30). I owe much gratitude to my friend David, who gave me the first impetus to study the Greek-Latin translation used by Bate and was always ready to answer my mails. I am also much indebted to Jean-Patrice Boudet, who sent me the provisional edition of the different versions of the *Centiloquium* he is preparing and let me profit from his forthcoming study “The Medieval Latin Versions of Pseudo-Ptolemy’s *Centiloquium*. A Survey,” *Ptolemy’s Science of the Stars in the Middle Ages*, edited by D. Juste, B. van Dalen, D.N. Hasse, C. Burnett, (Ptolemaeus Arabus et Latinus, Studies 1), Turnhout: Brepols.

² See *The Astrological Autobiography of a Medieval Philosopher. Henry Bate’s Nativitas (1280–81)*, edited and introduced by C. Steel, S. Vanden Broecke, D. Juste, Sh. Sela, Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2018. All texts quoted from the *Nativitas* come from that edition.

preferred to use a translation from the Greek, of which no manuscript exists and which is never quoted by any other author. That such a translation from the Greek existed in the 13th century is all the more surprising, since the oldest Greek manuscripts of the *Centiloquium* date from the 14th century.³ If Bate had a translation from the Greek, the Greek model must have existed before 1281. As I will show in this contribution, there are strong arguments to attribute this translation to William of Moerbeke, with whom Bate was in contact.

The starting point for my argument is a section of the *Nativitas* (l. 1065–1083), where Bate examines the qualities of his soul that can be deduced from an examination of his horoscope (the section corresponding to the first house).⁴ Besides Jupiter, Mercury is the second indicator (*significator*) of psychic qualities in his horoscope. Bate learns from Albumasar (*De magnis coniunctionibus* III.4) that Mercury signifies concealment, secrecy and a curiosity in knowing hidden things, and he confirms that this really corresponds to his character: “et re vera tali affectu afficitur hic natus” (*Nat.* 1060–1061). However, as he noticed, there may be threats to Mercury’s beneficent influence. Thus, the fact that Mercury is found in Aries, the house of Mars, associates him with that planet and its malign influence. For, as Albumasar says in *Sadan*, “when Mercury is in the house of Mars, he becomes a second Mars” (*Nat.* 1064–1065).⁵ Moreover, Bate observes that Ptolemy too seems to indicate such an influence in *Centiloquium*, v. 38, at least if one reads the text according to translations made from the Arabic. If, however, one follows the translation from the Greek, the meaning of this saying is much more positive. This is the full text where Bate compares five different translations:

Et Ptolomeus in CENTILOQUIO, 38 uerbo, quod *si Mercurius fuerit in duobus signis Martis, dabit fortitudinem perfidie et stultitie; et fortior duobus locis est Aries. Et hoc quidem secundum unam translationem.*

Alia uero translatio sic habet: *et si fuerit Mercurius in domibus Martis dabit ei acuitatem ingenii in astutia et maxime in Ariete.*

Item alia translatio: *cum uero fuerit in signo Martis, super primitias et fortunam; potentior autem horum duorum locorum est Aries.*

Et iterum alia translatio: *et cum in uno signorum Martis fuerit, significat hominem qui cito respondet interrogationi; et Aries melius est Scorpione.*

³ A.E. BOER, “ΚΑΡΠΙΟΣ. Pseudo-Ptolemaei *Fructus sive Centiloquium*,” *Claudii Ptolemaei Opera Quae Exstant Omnia*, vol. 3/2, Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1952, p. 37–69.

⁴ See the contribution of Steven Vanden Broecke on this section of the *Nativitas* in *The Astrological Autobiography of a Medieval Philosopher*, chapter 7.5.

⁵ See G. VESCOVINI, “La versio Latina degli Excerpta de Secretis Albumasar di Sadan,” *Archives d’Histoire Doctrinale et Littéraire du Moyen Age*, vol. 65 (1998), p. 317.

Translatio denique de Greco talis est: *in domo autem Martis dabit facilem linguam et maxime in Ariete.*

The first translation quoted is that by Plato of Tivoli, which was completed in 1136; the second is the translation called “Mundanorum,” which originated around 1150; the third is the translation by Adelard of Bath, made around 1120;⁶ the fourth translation is the one found as an alternative translation in manuscripts of the “Mundanorum” version. The fifth translation corresponds indeed exactly to the Greek original: ἐν δὲ τῷ οἴκῳ τοῦ Ἄρεως δίδωσιν εὐγλωττίαν καὶ μάλιστα ἐν τῷ κριῶ. As said, there are no manuscripts known of this translation.

One may wonder why Bate thought it necessary to give five translations of this aphorism, and why he liked the version from the Greek in particular. As the context shows, Bate wanted to neutralise an astrological authority that may seem to be menacing, namely what is said about Mercury in the house of Mars. That Mercury should give the native “perfidia et stultitia,” as is said in Plato’s version, is not very comfortable. The other translations from the Arabic make the judgment less negative.⁷ Most promising, however, is the message one finds in the translation from the Greek: “Mercury gives fluency of speech in the house of Mars, and especially in Aries.”

If Bate prefers the translation from the Greek, it is not only because he likes its content more than that of the other versions, but also because it conveys a meaning that is concordant with the commentary on the *Centiloquium*: “Huic uero sententiae ultime translationis concordant commentatores.” The Arabic text of the *Centiloquium* is accompanied by a commentary, which is also found in most Latin translations from the Arabic. In the main tradition of the Tiburtinus translation and the “Mundanorum” translation this commentary is attributed to Haly. However, the commentary is rightly attributed in some manuscripts to “Abuiafar Hamet filius Ioseph Abrahe” (Abū Ja’far Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf). Bate must have known both traditions, since he attributes the commentary to two authors, Haly and Abuiafar. See *Nat.* 1028–1030: “ut habetur in LIBRO ARBORIS 78° uerbo, quod et manifestius affirmant eius expositores Haly et Abuiafar Hamet filius Ioseph filii Abrahe.” For that reason he refers to the commentator in plural (see also *Nat.* 1077: “commentatores;” 810: “Ptolemaeus et eius expositores”). What does the commentary confirm that is not found in

⁶ Adelard’s translation is only partially preserved in two manuscripts. However, it is also found in manuscripts that offer a threefold version of the *Centiloquium* (Plato of Tivoli, “Mundanorum” and Adelard). Most probably Bate used such a manuscript.

⁷ Plato’s version corresponds best to the Arabic original: “If Mercury were in the two houses of Mars, it will give an excellent readiness for intuition and foolishness, and the most powerful of both positions is Aries” (translation Sh. Sela).

the Arabo-Latin versions of *verbum* 38, but only in the Greco-Latin translation? A comparison of the five translations shows that only the Greco-Latin translation attributes “fluency in speech” to Mercury’s influence, and this is exactly the property Bate finds present in his own character: “quantum igitur est ex hac parte, significatur nato facilitas lingue” (*Nat.* 1082–1093). But where is this character mentioned in the commentary? I could find no indication in the “Mundanorum” version nor in the standard Tiburtinus version (as I know it from the provisional edition of Lemay/Boudet). However, in one subfamily of the Tiburtinus version the commentary reads as follows: “Cuius nativitati pre-fuerit Mercurius erit acutus *et addet ei subitam eloquentiam super cogitationem eius* et maior erit eius prudencia ad audita intelligendum quam ad meditandum.” The words in italics are not found in the standard text, but only in some manuscripts⁸ and in the first edition of the text (Venice: Ratdolt, 1484). There is no doubt that Bate had access to a manuscript of the text with that addition, for “subita eloquentia” in the commentary is exactly the confirmation of what he read in the Greco-Latin translation “facilem linguam.”

Another example of exploiting variations in translations and appealing to the authority of the Greek to deal with embarrassing astrological authorities is found in the last part of the *Nativitas*, which discusses the revolution of the 36th year (*Nat.* 3074–3083). After having examined the position of Mercury “according to the direction from the sort of fortune and the midheaven forwards” (*Nat.* 3065–3066: “secundum directionem factam a parte fortune et a gradu medii celi in ante”), Bate remarks that it is superfluous to examine also the planet’s position in the retrospect direction (*retrorsum*), though this is what a translation of the *Centiloquium* seems to indicate and this is also a view some scholars attribute to Ptolemy. However, as Bate observes, the correct text translated from the Greek does not give such an advice, nor it is found in the *Quadripartitum*. Only in exceptional cases, when “the hyleg⁹ is in the fourth section in the West,” is it also necessary to examine the direction “retrorsum,” as Bate stated earlier in the *Nativitas* with a Pleiad of astrological authorities.¹⁰ This case may be the origin of the error that is found in the bad translations from the Arabic. This being said, nothing is to be found in the Greco-Latin translation to make a general rule of the *retrorsum* direction to be followed by astrologers.

⁸In ms. *Madrid Biblioteca Nacional* 10015 and *Vat. Latinus* 7616 one reads in the margin of the standard text: “in alio: et addet eius subita eloquentia super cogitationem eius.”

⁹The “hyleg” is the “giver of life,” the planet determining at birth the lifespan of the native.

¹⁰*Nat.* 654–660: “Et postquam gradus hyleg in quarta occidentali repertus fuerit, necessarium est ut directio, que ab ipso fieri debet ad sciendum esse uite, retrorsum fiat, secundum quod uoluit Ptolomeus et Aomar et uterque Abraham cum tertio uocato Compilatore. Iohannes quoque Hispanensis uult hoc idem in suis YSAGOGIS.”

Superfluum autem et inutile mihi uisum est directionem retrorsum facere a parte fortune, secundum quod aliqua translatio CENTILOQUII sonare uidetur ac secundum quod Ptolomeo imponitur a pluribus. “Correcta namque littera que de translatione Greca non sic habet, neque in *Quadripartito* consimiliter hoc reperitur usquam, nisi quando gradus hyleg in quarta occidentali fuerit, ut pretactum est, et occasione huius forsansumpsit exordium error ille, qui ex prauis translationibus que de Arabico processit.”

Unfortunately, Bate does not tell us which passage in the *Centiloquium* he is referring to nor does he quote the correct translation from the Greek. An examination of both the Tiburtinus and the “Mundanorum” version of the *Centiloquium* leads me to conclude that Bate must be referring to *verbum* 25. For only in this *verbum* the terminology “retrorsum” is used.¹¹ Compare:

Diriges significatores cum fuerint in medio celi cuiuslibet civitatis per ascensiones circuli directi, et cum fuerint in gradu ascendentis per gradum ascensionum eiusdem civitatis. In eis que sunt inter illa, fac in ascensionibus graduum secundum quantitatem casus eorum, et duo loca eis opposita, secundum quantitatem illius. Partes vero diriges *retrorsum*, et quanto magis crescunt, tanto motus principiorum retardantur [Tiburtinus].

Directio significatoris cum fuerit in medio celi cuiuslibet regionis, hoc erit per ascensiones circuli directi. Et quando fuerit in gradu ascendentis, per ascensiones ipsius regionis. Cum fuerit inter illos, per ascensiones gradus secundum longitudinem illorum, et eorum duo loca opposita, secundum hoc. Et directiones partium retrorsum, quia quando augmentatur eorum initium ipsi retro erunt [“Mundanorum”].

When we now turn to the Greek version of the text, we notice that the last section, in which the advice is given to examine also the direction from the lot of fortune in retrospect, is altogether lacking.

Ποίησον τὸν περίπατον τοῦ ἐπικρατήτορος, ὅτε ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ μεσουρανήματι, διὰ τῶν ἀναφορῶν τῆς ὀρθῆς σφαίρας, ὅτε δέ ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ὠροσκόπῳ, διὰ τῶν ἀναφορῶν τοῦ κλίματος.

Make the progression of the master, when it is in the mid-heaven, through the ascensions of the right sphere [*circuli directi* in the Arabo-Latin], but when it is in the horoscope, through the ascensions of the elevation of the pole.

¹¹ A similar observation is made in the commentary ad v. 77. However, the commentator seems to refer to what he found in v. 25. “Et directio est sicut diximus: quod fuerit in medio celo diriges per ascensiones circuli directi, et quod fuerit in ascendente per ascensiones regionis tue. Quod vero non fuerit in aliquo istorum, per ascensiones istarum duarum ascensionum” (Tiburtinus translation).

The Greek version is notably shorter than the Arabic. What is lacking is the rule applying to the third case when the signifier (or master) is “between the two positions.” It is precisely for that section that the rule is given to consider the direction also in retrospect. Although Bate does not quote “the correct translation from the Greek,” it is obvious that he must have noticed, as we do, that the advice to consider the planet’s position *retrorsum* was lacking. Yet, as he says, many scholars attribute such a view to Ptolemy.¹²

Here again we see how Bate uses his erudition to deal with problematic authorities. Another interesting case is found in the Preface to his translation of Ibn Ezra’s treatise *De mundo*, a work Bate completed in the same year (1281) as his *Nativitas*.¹³ To counter a claim Ibn Ezra made about Ptolemy, Bate compares three different versions of Ptolemy’s *Quadripartitum*, II.11. He first quotes an anonymous translation which circulated around 1250–1260 in Paris, then he gives the translation of Plato of Tivoli (or Tiburtinus). The third, which has the greatest authority, is the translation made directly from the Greek (“*tertia uero translatio, que scilicet immediate de Greco interpretata*”).¹⁴ Although Bate, as is usual, does not mention the name of the translator, it is undoubtedly the work of William of Moerbeke, from whom Bate may have received a personal copy.¹⁵

¹² As Shlomo Sela told me, this may be a reference to what Ibn Ezra says at the end of *Reshit Hokhmah (Initium sapientiae)*: “The direction of the lots is the opposite of the <direction> of the signs, as mentioned by Ptolemy in *Sefer ha-Peri*” (SH. SELA, *Abraham Ibn Ezra’s Introductions to Astrology*, Leiden: Brill, 2017, p. 270–271).

¹³ See my work on this preface: “A discussion on Ptolemy’s Authority: Henry Bate’s Prologue to his Translation of Ibn Ezra’s *Book of the World*,” *Ptolemy’s Science of the Stars in the Middle Ages*, edited by D. Juste, B. van Dalen, D.N. Hasse, C. Burnett, (Ptolemaeus Arabus et Latinus, Studies 1), Turnhout: Brepols, forthcoming.

¹⁴ On Bate’s preference for the immediate translation from the Greek over Arabo-Latin translations, see HENRICUS BATE, *Speculum divinatorum et quorundam naturalium. Parts XIII–XVI. On Thinking and Happiness*, edited by G. Guldentops, Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2002, p. XXXI, n. 21 with many references from the *Speculum divinatorum*; G. GULDENTOPS, “Arabic Sciences in the Mirror of Henry Bate’s Philosophical Encyclopedia,” *Wissen über Grenzen. Arabisches Wissen und lateinisches Mittelalter*, edited by A. Speer, L. Wegener, (Miscellanea Mediaevalia, 33), Berlin: De Gruyter, 2006, p. 521–541, esp. 539. See also Bate’s comment in his treatise *De diebus creticis*, c. 9 (edited by G. Dell’Anna, p. 111–112): “oportet igitur litteram que de Arabico intelligi per translationem que de Greco in qua magis confidendum est cautius.”

¹⁵ On Bate’s use of Moerbeke’s translation of the *Quadripartitum*, see G. VUILLEMIN-DIEM, C. STEEL, *Ptolemy’s Tetrabiblos in the Translation of William of Moerbeke. Claudii Ptolemaei “Liber Iudicialium,”* (Ancient and Medieval Philosophy. Series 1, 19), Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2015 (esp. p. 39–44).

BATE AND MOERBEKE: A LEARNED FRIENDSHIP

Bate came into contact with William of Moerbeke at the council of Lyon in 1274, where they both were present. On his return to Mechelen, Bate composed “at the request” (“ad petitionem”) of Moerbeke a treatise on an astrolabe he had himself designed.¹⁶ As is clear from the dedicatory preface, Bate must have recognized a scholar in Moerbeke who shared his own passion for astrology and philosophy.

May God, the Root and Origin of all beings, bless the most noble and worthy beings with perpetual life of eternal happiness, brother William. As I am connected with you with a firm bond of true friendship, I am ready to satisfy your goodwill, as much as my very weak forces allow. See, I am now prepared to fulfil what I promised when I was with you in Lyon, i.e. <to write about> the composition and the use of my astrolabe such as I on my own have designed it.¹⁷

In his conclusion, he turns again to his learned friend:

May this little work of a childish invention please your philosophical discernment, brother William. I tried to make the exposition so concise that it does not become boring. Yet I hope that you will know in your great and illustrious intellect that I understand much better than I am capable to express myself. Moreover, you should know without doubt that if I turn out to be a man <capable> for this <job>, you will find me prepared for things greater than this, owing to my love for your goodwill. May your love always fare well and with God’s assent never forget me.¹⁸

Even if one sets aside rhetorical exaggerations, one can learn from these passages that Bate had discussed astrological issues with Moerbeke and had mentioned that he had designed and constructed a very practical astrolabe. As Moerbeke was interested, Bate promised to send him a description of the instrument.

¹⁶ Bate’s treatise *Magistralis compositio astrolabii* is known through the edition of Erhard Ratdolt, Venice 1485, sigs. [C5]r–[D4]r. All manuscripts depend upon this edition.

¹⁷ “Universorum entium radix et origo deus [qui] nobiliora entia et digniora eterna felicitatis vita perpetue beatificet, frater Vuilhelme, quia vestro beneplacito tanquam vere amicitie internexu firmo pernexus secundum meum posse parvulum satisfacere sum paratus, quod vobis promiseram cum apud vos essem Ludgduni, ecce me promptum adimplere, compositionem videlicet et usum mei astrolabii quemadmodum per me ingeniatus fueram” (*Comp. astr.*, sign [C5]r).

¹⁸ “Placeat ergo vestre philosophice discretioni, frater Vuilhelme, istud mee puerilis excogitationis tantillum quod ne vobis esset fastidio ita succincte precindere studui sperans in vestro magno intellectu et preclaro quod melius me sciretis intelligere quam ego memetipsum exprimere valerem. Porro sciatis absque dubio quod si me ad hoc [Guldentops: adhuc *ed.*] virum fore contingeret ad his maiora amore vestre benivolentiae me promptum invenietis. Valeat semper vestra dilectio que deo annuente mei nequaquam obliviscatur” (*ibidem*, sign. [D4]r).

In the concluding paragraph, he declares that he remains ready to offer Moerbeke other contributions in the field of astronomy (and astrology). During these conversations in the wings of the council at Lyon Moerbeke may have told Bate that he had just finished a translation from the Greek of Ptolemy's *Quadripartitum* and that it was different and much better than the Tiburtinus version. On Bate's request he must have given (or sent) him a copy of the text. Apart from a quotation by Thomas Aquinas, Bate is the only medieval scholar to know and use this extremely rare translation. William of Moerbeke was much older than Bate and the holder of a prestigious ecclesiastical office. That the young yet unknown scholar from Mechelen would have become so close in friendship to the penitentiarius of the pope is remarkable. It may be because the senior person recognized in Bate a kindred soul. Moreover, it was not a one time encounter between the two. Bate must have remained in contact through letters with Moerbeke until the end of the latter's life (around 1286). For in the *Speculum* he informs us that Moerbeke had promised to send him his translation of the *Parmenides*, a promise he was unable to fulfil since he had died:

However, Plato's *Parmenides*, a book that is not commonly known among us, probably contains more about these issues, as I understood some time ago from the translator of that book, who promised me to send it, but as he was prevented by death, he did not send it.¹⁹

This remark shows that Bate must have been in regular contact with Moerbeke, asking him, for instance, if he knew of other dialogues of Plato in which the problem of participation is discussed. Moerbeke may have told him that he was working on a translation of the *Parmenides* (in fact it must have been a translation of Proclus' commentary on that dialogue) and that he would send it to him once it was finished, which alas did not happen. However, in the meantime, Bate had received from Moerbeke many rare texts, such as his translations of Simplicius' commentary on *De Caelo*, of Philoponus' commentary on the third book of the *De Anima*, and of excerpts from Proclus' commentary on the *Timaeus*. Furthermore, as Helmut Boese has demonstrated, Bate had a particular version of the translation of Proclus' *Elements of Theology*.²⁰ If he received a personal copy of the *Quadripartitum*, it is possible that Moerbeke also sent him

¹⁹“Verum in *Parmenide* Platonis, qui liber nondum apud nos communiter habetur, plura forsitan de his continentur, prout ab interprete illius libri seu translate dudum intellexi, qui mihi promiserat eum transmittere, sed morte praeventus non transmisit” (*Speculum divinarum*, pars XI, c. 12, 53–57, ed. H. Boese, p. 44).

²⁰See H. BOESE, *Wilhelm von Moerbeke als Übersetzer der Stoicheiosis theologike des Proclus. Untersuchungen und Texte zur Überlieferung der Elementatio theologica*, Heidelberg: Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1984.

a translation of the *Centiloquium* he had made (after the *Quadripartitum*?), at least if Moerbeke is indeed the translator of the aphorisms quoted by Bate.

MOERBEKE, THE TRANSLATOR OF THE *CENTILOQUIUM*

My arguments thus far have been external and only make a plausible case. Let us now examine whether there are internal arguments, based on an examination of the translation style and vocabulary that point to the famous translator. There are eight passages in which Bate quotes verbatim from the *Centiloquium*. In what follows, I will present these quotations, compare them to the Greek text and two Latin translations from the Arabic Bate used, the “Mundanorum” (M) and that by Plato of Tivoli (T). In all eight cases it is obvious that Bate’s translation corresponds closely to the Greek, even if he does not say that he uses a translation from the Greek. As can be seen, the Greek text is often very different from the Arabic text that was the model of the Latin translations T and M. As Bate’s quotations never share the particularities of the Arabo-Latin versions, but correspond exactly to the Greek, they must have been made directly from the Greek. What remains to be demonstrated is that the translation was made by Moerbeke.

VERBUM 5

Nat. 1870–1872: iuxta illud Ptolomei in
CENTILOQUIO: *potest qui scit multas auertere operationes astrorum quando fuerit sciens naturam ipsorum*

δύναται ὁ ἐπιστήμων πολλὰς ἀποστρέψαι ἐνεργείας τῶν ἀστέρων, ὅτε ἐστὶν εὐδήμων τῆς φύσεως αὐτῶν

T: Astrologus optimus multum malum prohibere poterit quod secundum stellas venturum est cum eius naturam presciverit.

M: Potest astrologus plurimum avertere de operatione stellarum cum fuerit sciens nature agentis in eo.

For *auertere* as translation of ἀποστρέψαι see Moerbeke’s translations of Proclus, *Tria opus.*, D 23,20; *In Parm.* 300,48; *Simpl.*, *In DC* 34,46.

VERBUM 8

Nat. 2709–2711: Nam ut dicit Ptolomeus in
CENTILOQUIO: *anima sapiens cooperatur celesti effectui, sicut optimus agricola cooperatur nature per arationem et purgationem.*

ἡ σοφὴ ψυχὴ συνεργεῖ τῇ οὐρανίᾳ ἐνεργείᾳ ὡσπερ ὁ ἄριστος γεωργὸς συνεργεῖ τῇ φύσει διὰ τῆς ἀροτριάσεως καὶ ἀνακαθάρσεως

T: Anima sapiens ita adiuuabit opus stellarum quemadmodum seminator fortitudines naturales.

M: Anima sapiens potest adiuuare celestem operationem quemadmodum seminans virtutem naturalem per cultum et purgationem.

Cooperari is the usual translation in Moerbeke for συνεργεῖν. One may be surprised about *effectus* as a translation for ἐνέργεια (usually rendered as *actus* or *operatio*). However, as Ptolemy speaks here about the effect of the celestial configurations, the term *effectus* fits much better. Moreover one finds the same translation in *Quadr.* I.1224 and 1258.

VERBUM 12

Nat. 7–9: *amor autem et odium prohibent procedere recta iudicia iuxta Ptolemeum 12° uerbo CENTILOGII (cf. Nat. 1283–1284: Amor enim et odium prohibent recta iudicia).*

ἡ φιλία καὶ ὁ μῖσος κωλύουσι τὸ προβαίνειν ἀληθῆ τὰ ἀποτελέσματα

T: Amor et odium remouent hominem a rectitudine.

M: Amor et odium pervertunt iudicii veritatem.

ἀποτελεσμα is generally translated as *effectus* in *Quadr.*, so also in *Simpl.*, *In Cat.* However, to use *effectus* in this text makes no sense. The translator opts for *iudicia*, which is the exact meaning of the term in an astrological context. Note that Moerbeke translates in the *Quadr.* ἀποτελεσματικά as *iudicialia*. Unexpected is *rectus* as translation of ἀληθής, which Moerbeke always renders as *uerus*, keeping *rectus* for ὀρθος. Perhaps the translator was influenced by Tiburtinus version (*rectitudine*). Or the use of “iudicia” requires “iusta” rather than “uera” as epitheton (cf. the biblical phrase “recta iudicia”).

VERBUM 27

Nat. 1698–1700: Ptolomeus in LIBRO 100 VERBORUM dicens quod *Venus efficit nato delectationem in membro cui dominatur signum in quo est.*

ἡ Ἀφροδίτη περιποιεῖται τῷ γεννωμένῳ ἡδονὴν ἐν τῷ μορίῳ οὗ κυριεύει τὸ ζῴδιον ἐν ᾧ ὑπάρχει

T: Venus nato facit adipisci in membro quod ab eius signo significatur dilectionem vel delectationem.

M: Venus facit natum concupisci in membro quod significat signum in quo ipsa est.

Here again we notice a radical difference between the Greek text and the Arabo-Latin tradition. The vocabulary is similar again to what we find in Moerbeke’s

translations. *Delectatio* is his standard term for ἡδονή. μόριον is usually translated as *pars* or *particula*, but in this context the term refers to the male genital organ, and *membrum* is more appropriate. Moerbeke uses also *membrum* in *Quadr.* II.269 443 (see also τὰ -ια genitalia III.1056). For κυριεύω *dominor* see parallels in *Quadr.* III.350 383 1483 IV.886 889. *Efficit* is used here for περιποιεῖται. Moerbeke uses *efficio* to translate (ἐμ-)ποιέω. In *Quadr.* περιποιέω is translated as *imprimo* III.1303, *acquirō* IV.43, *procurō* IV.239; *acquirō* also in *In Cat.*, 441.91; *circumfacio* in *In Parm.* 336,96. However, *efficit* is much better in this context.

VERBUM 29

<p><i>Nat.</i> 2313–2315: Dicit autem Ptolomeus in <i>CENTILOQUIO</i>: quod <i>stelle fixe exhibent eufortunia insperata et inopinata sed ut ad plurimum inuoluunt hec infortuniis.</i></p>	<p>οἱ ἀπλανεῖς ἄστερες παρέχουσιν εὐτυχίας ἀνελπίστους [ἄλόγους]²¹ καὶ παραδόξους ἄλλ' ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον ἐπισφραγίζουσι ταύτας δυστυχίας</p>
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<p>T: Stelle fixe dant dona modum excedentia, sed multotiens finiuntur in malum.</p>	<p>M: Stelle fixe dant immensa munera sed sepius male finiunt.</p>
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Moerbeke often uses *fixus* to translate ἀπλανής. See *Quadr.* I.329 507 508 II.589 606 621 695 701 930 939 1044 1100 1103 III.878 (but *non errans* I.14 87 121 322 II.499, *non erraticus* II.501). In the same translation one finds *eufortunia* for ἐπιτυχία (*sic?* or εὐ-) II.776.

Throughout his work Moerbeke uses *ut ad plurimum* to translate ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πλεῖστον. Characteristic of Moerbeke is also *inopinatus* as translation of παράδοξος (seven instances in *Rhet.*, two in *In Parm.*). I could not find *insperatus* in other translations, but there are two instances of *desperatus* in *Rhet.* *Inuoluunt* is a free translation of the metaphorical ἐπισφραγίζουσι (“put a seal upon,” “impress upon”). As there are no instances of this Greek term in other texts translated by Moerbeke, it is difficult to find parallels. Note, however, that Moerbeke frequently uses *inuoluo* in *Quadr.* for περικυλίω III.290 303 1046 1099 1503 IV.286 558.

VERBUM 38

<p><i>Nat.</i> 1075–1076: <i>in domo autem Martis dabit facilem linguam et maxime in Ariete.</i></p>	<p>ἐν δὲ τῷ οἴκῳ τοῦ Ἄρεως δίδωσιν εὐγλωττίαν καὶ μάλιστα ἐν τῷ κριῷ</p>
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<p>T: in duobus signis Martis, dabit fortitudinem perfidie et stultitie, et fortior duobus locis est Aries.</p>	<p>M: in domibus Martis dabit ei acuitatem ingenii in astutia et maxime in Ariete.</p>
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²¹The translator read in his manuscript ἀνελπίστους and not ἀλόγους as in the edition.

The translation of the prefix εὐ- with *facilis/-le* is characteristic of Moerbeke.²² *Dabit* does not exactly correspond to δίδωσι. Did the Greek text have δώσει? Or was the translator influenced by the Latin-Arabic *dabit*?

VERBUM 61

Nat. 803–805: Ptolomeus in CENTILOGIO 61 propositione dicens quod *Luna significat ea que corporis tamquam assimilata sibi secundum motum.*

ἡ σελήνη δηλοῖ τὰ τοῦ σώματος ὡς ὁμοιοῦντα αὐτῷ κατὰ τὴν κίνησιν

T: Luna propria est corpori propter consimilitudinem eius in operatione.

M: Luna habet conformitatem in corpore propter hoc quod est similis in motu.

The phrase “ea que + genitivus” to translate Greek constructions “τὰ τοῦ + genitivus” is a peculiarity of Moerbeke’s translations. See *Quadr.* I.190 and II.193–194 (“ea que corporis”).

VERBUM 95

Nat. 1234–1236: Ptolomeus quoque dicit in LIBRO FRUCTUS uerbo 95: *que cooriuntur unicuique decano fere significant electionem nati et fortunam quam percurrat (an-rit scrib.?).*

κινδυνεύει τὰ παρανατέλλοντα ἐκάστῳ δεκανῶ δηλοῦν τὴν προαίρεσιν τοῦ γεννωμένου καὶ τὴν τύχην ἣν μετέρχεται.

T: Forme semper accidit ut id quod ascendit ex gradibus simile sit ei quod appetet natus. Et similiter id quod ascendit in omni facie harum figurarum simile est operi eius.

M: Sepius est quod quicquid ascendat in eo signo quo quis nascitur diligit plus ex ipsis ymaginibus.

Moerbeke translates in *Quadr.* συνανατέλλω as *simul orior* II.611, *coerior* III.877; one finds *coerior* also in Simplicius, *In DC.* 36.2, 118.84 and 219.49. *Electio* is his standard translation for προαίρεσις. See, for instance, *Quadr.* II.283 IV.456 461 486 494. γεννώμενος can be translated as *genitus*, but in an astrological context *natus* is preferable. See *Quadr.* III.595 983 1425 IV.27 62. Moerbeke uses in his translations *percurro* for ἐπέρχομαι, ἐπιτρέχειν and διέρχομαι.

A puzzle remains with “fere significant” as a translation of κινδυνεύει δηλοῦν. Moerbeke translates κινδυνεύει in other texts as *periclitatur*. Is “fere significant” a free translation?

²² See G. VUILLEMIN-DIEM, C. STEEL, *Ptolemy's Tetrabiblos in the Translation of William of Moerbeke*, p. 20.

CONCLUSION

It is evident that Bate uses a translation from the Greek text for his quotations of the *Centiloquium*. An analysis of the vocabulary and translation method used indicates that Moerbeke may have been the translator. Of course, the textual basis is too limited and fragmentary to substantiate this claim. However, this hypothesis is plausible because only Bate, who had close contact with Moerbeke, uses this translation. Moreover, Bate had also received a translation of Ptolemy's *Quadripartitum* from Moerbeke. If Moerbeke was not the translator, who else could have translated the text and sent a copy of the translation to Bate?

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HENRICUS BATE,
WILLIAM OF MOERBEKE AND THE
CENTILOQUIUM OF "PTOLEMY"

S U M M A R Y

The philosopher and astronomer Henry Bate of Mechelen (1246–1310?) became acquainted with William of Moerbeke at the Second Council of Lyons in 1274. He received translations of texts from William that he was particularly interested in, such as the rare translation of Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos*, which he uses as his reference text. In his *Nativitas* (1280–1281) Bate also quotes from a Greek translation of the *Centiloquium*. This pseudo-Ptolemaic work enjoyed an extraordinary fortune during the Middle Ages. No less than five different Latin translations were made from the Arabic. There is no manuscript of a translation from the Greek. An analysis of Bate's quotations from the *Centiloquium* reveals that this unknown translation from the Greek was most probably a work by William of Moerbeke.

KEYWORDS: William of Moerbeke; Ptolemy; Henry Bate of Mechelen (Malines)