

THE SOURCES OF THE SECRET DES SECRETS OF JOFROI DE WATREFORD

A French version of the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secretum Secretorum*, made in the second half of the thirteenth century by the Dominican Jofroi de Watreford, assisted in some way by Servale Copale,¹ has attracted more attention than it would have otherwise done owing to a statement of the principal author in the dedicatory introduction. The passage containing the statement is as follows:

Et por ce moi priastes que cel liure, ki fu translatei de griu en arabic, et derechief de arabic en latin, vos translataisse de latin en franchois. Et ie, a vous prieres, al translater ai mise ma cure, et auoiques le plus grant trauail, k'en autres hautes et profondes estudes sui enbesoingniés. D'autre part, sauoir devez ke les Arabiens trop ont de paroles en corte ueritei, et les Grigois ont obscure maniere de parler; et il me conuient de l'un et de l'autre langage translater: et por chou le trop de l'un escourcirai, et l'oscuritei de l'autre esclarcirai, solonc ce ke la matire puet soffrir; car lur entente sieurai, ne mies lur paroles. Saichiés derechief que souent i metterai autres bones paroles, les ques töt ne soient mis en cel liure, al mains sunt en autres liures d'autoritei, et ne sunt pas mains profitables ke celles ki en cel liure sunt escrites; et quanque ie i metterai, a la matire acordant sera. A la parfin saichiés que les liures ki de arabic en latin furent translatei furent fausement translatei; et por ce lairai ie plusors choses ki ne sunt ueritez nē profitables, et prendrai la meule et la ueritei cortement.²

This general statement upon the sources of the work has been misunderstood, and has called forth unnecessary explanations, because more specific statements in other parts of the work have not been noted. The passage cited above was probably the only authority on which the historian of the Dominican order³ based his assertion that Jofroi knew both Arabic and Greek, and Knust⁴ believed it sufficient evidence for the existence of a Greek *Secretum Secretorum*.

Steinschneider⁵ discredited the existence of a Greek text, and suggested that the "autres liures d'autoritei" were other works

¹ Cf. P. Meyer, *Romania*, XV, 188.

² *Hist. litt. de la France*, XXI, 218.

³ Echard, *Scriptores ordin. Praedicator.*, I, 467.

⁴ *Jahrbuch für romanische und englische Literatur*, X, 160-1.

⁵ *Ib.*, XII, 367. For new arguments for an original Greek text cf. Gaster, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1908, 1076 ff.

⁶ *La littérature française au moyen-âge*, 3d ed., 159-160.

translated from the Greek. Gaston Paris⁶ summarises Jofroi's statement with "il dit rédiger d'après l'arabe et le grec." An examination of this passage in the light of others, published and unpublished, will show that Jofroi neither made a new translation of the Arabic text of the *Secretum*, nor laid claim to having made use of a Greek version.

Up to the present the version of Jofroi has been noted only in a manuscript of the Bibliothèque Nationale, fonds français 1822.⁷ It has never been published; only brief notices of it have been written by Echard,⁸ Lebeuf⁹ and de la Rue;¹⁰ and Le Clerc's analysis and extracts in an article in the twenty-first volume of the *Histoire littéraire de la France*¹¹ are not extensive, any more than are the extracts printed by Gidel.¹² Fortunately for the present purpose this lack is supplied by the publication of an English translation of this version, which was made in the English Pale of Ireland, probably at Waterford,¹³ by James Yonge in 1422.¹⁴ There are two manuscripts of this work, one in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, MS. Rawlinson B. 490,¹⁵ and the other in the Library of Lambeth Palace, MS. Carew 596,¹⁶ although only the first of these was known to the editor of the translation. Although the English translator

⁷ References to other manuscripts made by R. Reinsch (*Herrig's Archiv*, LXVIII, 9) and R. Förster (*Centralblatt für Bibliothekswesen*, VI, 62, n. 63) are due to misunderstandings of various kinds. Cf. Gröber, *Grundr. d. rom. Phil.*, II, 1, 1023, n. 5.

⁸ *L. c.*, 467-8.

⁹ *Mém. de l'Acad. des Inscr.* (XVII, 736 (1751)).

¹⁰ *Essais sur les bardes*, III, 211 (1834).

¹¹ Pp. 217-225.

¹² *Annuaire de l'Association pour l'encouragement des études grecques en France*, 303 ff.; reprinted in *Nouvelles études sur la littérature grecque moderne* (1878), 351 ff.

¹³ Orpen, *Song of Dermot and the Earl* (1892), xxv, xxxi.

¹⁴ *Three Prose Versions of the Secreta Secretorum*, ed. R. Steele, 1898 (E. E. T. Soc. Publ., Extra Ser. LXXIV), 119-248. Referred to in this article as T. P. V.

¹⁵ First noted by Tanner, *Bibliotheca Britannico-Hibernica* (1748), 787; then by J. Holmes in a MS. (B. M. Add. 20772) "Bibliographical Notes on the Secretum Secretorum" (Förster, *op. cit.*, 3, n.) to whom Steele was indebted for his acquaintance with this manuscript (*Lydgate and Burgh's Secrees of old Philisoffres*, p. xiii); then by J. T. Gilbert, *Nat. MSS. of Ireland*, III, p. xiv; Pl. xxxvi, and *App.* Orpen was the first to note its French source (*l. c.*, xxxi, n.).

¹⁶ Tanner (*l. c.*) was the first to note this copy. It is mentioned merely as "James Yonge's Essay" by Brewer, in his *Calendar of the Carew Papers*, 296. Cf. Orpen, *op. cit.*, xxv, xxxi; Förster, *l. c.*, 70.

at times rearranged his original text, and introduced material and moralizations consonant with the events of his own time and the lesson he wished to teach, he made a translation which was closely literal of substantial portions of his original. This translation and a few extracts from the French text, found in Le Clerc's article, or noted by myself, will be enough to prove all the points I wish to make.

That the translation of the *Secretum Secretorum* made by Philip of Tripoli was the basis of Jofroi's version is at once evident from a comparison of a few phrases in the two texts:

Et qui habet grossam vocem et sonoram, est belliocosus et eloquens. cuius vox est mediocris in subtilitate et grossitie, est sapiens, providus, verax et iustus, qui vero est velox in verbis et praecipue si habet gracilem vocem, est improbus, stolidus, importunus et mendax, si vero vox sua fuerit grossa, erit iracundus et praecipitans, malae naturae.

elevatio vero humerorum signum est asperitatis naturae et infidelitatis. Quando vero brachia protenduntur in tantum, quod manus proveniant ad genua, significat audaciam et probitatem cum largitate, quando vero decurtantur brachia, signum est amantis discordiam et ignorantis.¹⁷

Who-so hath the Voyce grete and Plesaunt and wel hardyn, he is chyualerous plesaunt, and eloquente. Who-so hath the voice meene betwen grete and smale, he is wise, Purueyaunt, veritable, and ryghtfull. Whoso hath the worde hasty, yf he haue a smale voyce, he is angri, fole, Enuyous, and a liere: And yf his voice be grete, he is angri and hasty.

Whan the shuldres bene moche vprerid, thei tokenyth orribill kynde and vntrouthe; whan the armys bene longe and rechynge to the kneis whan thay ben straght, tokenyth hardynesse, proesse, and fraunchise. and whan the armes bene ful shorte thay tokenyth lowe of dyscorde, and vncunynge.¹⁸

Yet he dissents from "les liures ki de arabic en latin furent fausement translatei"; he omits certain parts, not consonant, according to his opinion, with the scientific reputation of Aristotle:¹⁹ "entendons nos que quant qu'est bien dit et solonc raison en cest liure, Aristotles dit ou escrit, mais quant qu'est faus ou desordeneement dit, fu la coupe des translatoirs."²⁰ He only used one Latin version of the Arabic work, even if he refers to several books and translators in the passages cited.

¹⁷ *Scriptores physiognomonici*, ed. R. Förster, II (1893), 208-9, 213-214. Förster has printed on the same pages in parallel columns a Latin translation of the Arabic original, and of the Epitome of the work, neither of which could have been the source of Jofroi's text; cf. Förster, I, clxxviii ff. On the possibility of another complete translation of the *Secretum* cf. M. Steinschneider, *Sitzungsber. der Wien. Ak. Phil.-Hist. Klasse*, CXLIX, Part IV, 42; CLI, P. I, 6, 79.

¹⁸ T. P. V., 234, 28-33, 235, 18-22.

¹⁹ *Hist. litt.*, XXI, 221; Gidel, *Nouv. études*, 359.

²⁰ The plural "translatoirs" could refer to those by whom the *Secretum* "fu translatei de griu en arabic, et derechief de arabic en latin."

According to his own statement, he translated a Latin translation of a Greek work on physiognomy, as well as the treatise on the subject which formed a part of the *Secretum*:

"Cest la prueue Aristotele al comencement de sa phisonomie translatei de grieu en latin, a prouer que la science de phisonome est posible et necessaire. Ore nos volons sieure cest propre liure translatei de grieu en latin, et non pas celui qui fu translatei d'arabic en latin."²¹

"La phisonomie Aristotele solonc la translation de griu en latin, avons en romans translatee, solonc les exemplaires de Paris. Mais por ce que le livre qui est apellez secrez de secrez Aristotele à Alexandre empreismes a translater, si comme nos deismes al comencement de cest liure, et cest liures fait une brieuve phisonomie a sa fin chi la metteons nos, que chascuns qui cest liure list, puisse l'un et l'autre lire et du quel que plus li plaist eslire."²²

That this Latin translation from the Greek text of the pseudo-Aristotelian *Physiognomica* was that of Bartholomew of Messina, made by order of Manfred, king of Sicily, 1258-1266, is quite evident from another comparison of the English text of Jofroi's work and of Bartholomew's translation:

Qui magna vociferantur graviter iniuriosi, referuntur ad asinos. Quicunque autem vocant a gravi incipientes et finiunt in acutum, iracundi, planctivi, referuntur ad boves et ad decentiam vocis. Quicunque autem vocibus acutis et mollibus ruptis loquuntur, cinedi, referuntur ad mulieres et ad decentiam.

Tho that haue a grete voice and orible and not ful hey, done gladly wronges, and bene likenyd to assis. Tho that haue the voice atte the begynnyng of the word grete and lowe, and aftyr that endyth hit al smale and hey, as kynde of oxen bene wrothy. And tho that haue the voyce hei, smale and and swete and plesaunt, bene neshé, and haue lytill of manhode, and i-likenyd to women.

Quibuscunque musculi eminentes et spatulae, fortes sunt secundum animam, referuntur ad masculinum. Quibuscunque musculi inbecilles inarticulati, molles sunt secundum animam, referuntur ad femininum. Haec dico quae dixi de coxis. Quibuscunque spatulae bene solutae sunt, liberales sunt secundum animam, referuntur ab apparenti formae liberalitas; quibus vero difficulter solubiles convulsae, illiberales, referuntur ad apparentem convenientiam.²³

Tho men whych haue shuldres heygh vpperid, the synnowes and braones aperperynge, they bene stronge and hardy aftyr the propyrteis of the male; And tho that haue the contrary bene aftyr the Propyrteys of women. And thay that haue the shuldres hangynge downward and welle tailed, bene fre and lyberall; And they whyche haue the contrary, bene harde and hungry.²⁴

²¹ Ms. B. N., f. fr. 1822, fol. 137, recto, col. 1. Only translated in part in T. P. V., 219, 22-4.

²² *Ib.*, fol. 142, recto, coll. 1-2; only translated in part in T. P. V., 232, 16-20. For suggestions in reading a difficult phrase in the manuscript "a sa fin . . . metteons" I am indebted to my friend, Professor Raymond Weeks. Le Clerc (H. L., XXI, 224) cites "les exemplaires de Paris" without noting that Jofroi was speaking of the Latin translation of the Greek. Gidel (263) although noting this statement, accepts the statement of the introduction, and ranks Jofroi among the medieval translators from Greek, and he is followed in this error by Sandys (*A History of Classical Scholarship*, I, 565).

²³ *Script. physiogn.*, I, 85, 63; cf. l-lxv.

²⁴ T. P. V., 231, 4-10, 227, 17-23.

With the close relations between the court of France and the kingdom of Sicily in the second half of the twelfth century it is not surprising to find at Paris, perhaps in the library of the great Dominican convent, one copy—to reduce the number used by Jofroi once more—of the work of Bartholomew, who is known as the translator into Latin of other works from Greek.²⁵ Jofroi's difficulties of translation were not in curtailing the original Arabic text, and in clarifying the Greek text, but in editing according to his own ideas Philip's translation of the *Secretum* by omitting certain sections, and abbreviating Bartholomew's translation, when he did not understand bits of technical Latin. At the same time his reference to the prolixity of the Arabic language, and the obscurity of Greek may be a consecrated phrase, as Vitellion in his work on perspective refers to the "taedium verbotitatis arabicae, implicationis graecae."²⁶

It is not necessary to suppose that "les autres liures d'autoritei" were Greek, although Jofroi does cite Hippocrates, Dioscorides and Galien,²⁷ any more than to suppose that the part of the work "translatez des Liures Issac qui sunt appelez Dietes universelles et particulieres"²⁸ was translated from the Arabic original by him. Comment must be made on another passage of the French work which refers to its sources: "Pluisors bonnes choses avons entees d'istories antives et de philosophie, et notre garant avons amenei fors pris de lus (*sic*)."²⁹ If some of these authorities are cited at first hand, as Eutropius, for a translation of which Jofroi and his assistant were responsible,³⁰ many are taken with the stories from a collection of *exempla*. Such, for instance, are his references to Vegetius as an authority for the answer—properly attributed to

²⁵ *Script. physiogn.*, I, lix, n.; A. Jourdain, *Recherches critiques sur l'âge et l'origine des traductions d'Aristote*, 2d ed., 71, 181, 440; O. Hartwig, *Centralblatt für Bibliothekswesen*, III, 184, 224; Sandys (*op. cit.*, 547) includes Bartholomew among translators from the Arabic. Cf. Steinschneider, *Sitzungsberichte d. Wiener Akademie*, Phil.-Hist. Klasse, CXLIX, Part IV, p. 7.

²⁶ *Hist. litt.*, XXI, 144.

²⁷ *Hist. litt.*, XXI, 220; cf. T. P. V., 195, 35. On Hippocrates and Galien as the favorite authors of the medical school of Salerno, and later of Paris, cf. C. Vieillard, *Gilles de Corbeil*, 165-6, 181-2, 194.

²⁸ *Hist. litt.*, l. c.; Gidel, *op. cit.*, 356. On the Latin translation of Constantinus cf. Steinschneider, *op. cit.*, 11; on its use, Vieillard, *op. cit.*, 48, 182-3, 194.

²⁹ Gidel, l. c., H. L., XXI, 218.

³⁰ H. L., XXI, 217, 225.

Manlius Curtius Dentatus—of Fabricius to the ambassadors of an enemy of Rome, offering him gold;³¹ and for the story of Alexander returning a beautiful captive to her husband with the proffered ransom.³² The use of the *Secretum* in the Spanish *Castigos é Documentos*,³³ wrongly attributed to King Sancho,³⁴ has been noted; that its nameless author incorporated into his work liberal portions of a translation of the *De regimine principum* of Gilles de Rome made in 1345 by a certain "frey Johan Garcia de Castrogeriz," has been also pointed out,³⁵ including the whole of the two chapters (lviii–lix)³⁶ in which the indebtedness to the *Secretum* is most apparent. There can be no possibility that Castrogeriz, in his additions to the Latin original³⁷ of Gilles, made use of Jofroi's French version of the *Secretum*, as far as it was a translation of the Latin text.³⁸ But for a number of his illustrative stories he was indebted, if not to Jofroi, to perhaps the same collection of *exempla* that was used by the French translator. Elsewhere I hope to show at length that the English poet Gower was also greatly indebted to the Old French version of the *Secretum*, of which I have tried to point out the various sources.³⁹

GEORGE L. HAMILTON

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN.

³¹ T. P. V., 173, 26; cf. 177, 16; *Tractatus de diversis historiis Romanorum, et quibusdam aliis*, No. 4; cf. p. 37.

³² T. P. V., 190, 24; *Libro de los Exemplos*, 12; *Dialogus Creaturarum*, 121.

³³ Knust, *op. cit.*, 155; W. Hertz, *Gesammelte Abhandlungen*, 168.

³⁴ P. Groussac, *Revue hispanique*, XV, 211 ff.; R. Foulché-Delbosc, *ib.*, 340 ff.

³⁵ Groussac, *op. cit.*, 321 ff.; Foulché-Delbosc, *op. cit.*, 357 ff.

³⁶ Foulché-Delbosc, *op. cit.*, 360.

³⁷ That he was not translating from the abridged French translation of Henri de Gauchi is at once apparent on comparing *Castigos*, ch. lvii, as far as *Mas aquí* with *Li Livres du Gouvernement des Rois*, ed. Molenaer, 92, 11–94, 28.

³⁸ Cf. *Castigos*, ch. lviii; *Mas aquí* to end; ch. lix, *Mas aquí* to end: T. P. V., 127, 34–128, 12; 130, 37–132, 10; 136, 5–12; 137, 28–34; 138, 5–9; 139, 9–140, 26; 138, 18–28; 140, 36–143, 22. Jofroi did not omit the poison maiden story (195, 15–26) even if it is not noted by Le Clerc (H. L., XXI, 216 ff.; Hertz, *op. cit.*, 164), but it was not the source of the detail found in the *Castigos*, "cuando le mandaste un home judgado á muerte, é ella mordióle, é luego morió á golpe," analogues for which are found in other versions of the story (Hertz, 172 ff.).

³⁹ Cf. T. P. V., 150, 7–19; 173, 14–32; 175, 37–176, 3; 177, 1–8; 190, 161–191, 3; *Castigos (Escritores en Prosa Anteriores al Siglo XV)*, ed. Gayangos), pp. 153a; 110a; and 140a; 154b; 156b; 140a. Elsewhere in the *Castigos*, where an indebtedness to the translation of the *De regimine* has not been pointed out, that work was probably the source of a number of stories which are also found in Jofroi's work (T. P. V., 128, 15–30; 130, 1–10; 174, 19–28; *Castigos*, 105b–106a; 116a).