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The circulation and transmission of pseudo-hippocratic lunaries in Middle English

Abstract: The aim of the present study is to localise the language of five copies of the pseudo-Hippocratic lunary *Þe Booke of Ypocras* according to the methodology of *LALME*, which will show the circulation and textual transmission of the treatise. Lunaries were a well-known prognostic genre in Middle English when they were translated from Latin (Taavitsainen 2012: 93). Nonetheless, many of them are unexplored thus far, because their brevity and transmission along with other prestigious medical writings have made them invisible. Firstly, we have transcribed the five parallel texts – BL Additional MS 12195, BL Sloane MS 73, GUL Hunter MS 513, BL Harley MS 2378 and Royal College of Physicians MS 384 – and secondly examined the language of each one. Finally, we have collated and compared them to identify their language of provenance. This research is part of a project that aims to identify the English versions of the treatise and to group the manuscripts genetically in relation to the original texts.

Keywords: *Þe Booke of Ypocras*, BL Additional MS 12195, BL Sloane MS 73, GUL Hunter MS 513, BL Harley MS 2378, Royal College of Physicians MS 384

1. Introduction

Hippocratic medical treatises represent one of the earliest examples of scientific writing (Siraisi 1990: 1). The Hippocratic corpus, which dates to the late fifth or early fourth century B.C., contained about sixty medical writings "all in the Ionic dialect, but very different in length, content and style" (Craik 2015: xx). The Hippocratic collection contains pieces of diverse nature: formal treatises, aphoristic compilations, summaries, drafts, notes and rough amalgamations of material" (Craik 2015: xx). One of the works wrongly attributed to Hippocrates is a lunary. According to Means (1992: 378), "the lunary is by far the most popular and widely circulated prognostic genre of the Middle Ages".

But what are lunaries? "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" (Taavitsainen 1987: 18). They were used as prognostic texts "for various ailments and recommendations for phlebotomy and surgery" (Means 1992: 383). Likewise, they provide information on the most likely diseases to be experienced by a person depending on their zodiac sign. Thus, according

to lunaries, if your sign is Aries your weakest point will be your head. If you happen to be Cancer you will suffer from dropsy and fever. As such, there are conditions associated to every zodiac sign. The connection of each sign with particular organs and limbs is closely related to the animals associated to them, and constructed "upon the idea of shared virtues or characteristics" (Rawcliffe 1995: 86).

As lunaries were widely used, there are numerous copies of them. Nonetheless, the great majority of lunar prognostic texts have "largely escaped the attentions of scholarship" due to their brevity (Voigts 1994: 123). They are usually incorporated into medical codices which contain more extensive and well-known works. This explains why they have remained comparatively unknown, and the only way to identify parallel copies is by consulting different catalogues, and by checking the original codices (Taavitsainen 1987: 20). An important hindrance is the fact that even specialised catalogues are rarely comprehensive and do not include cross-references to other catalogues (Kibre 1977 & 1978; Voigts – Kurtz 2000), which makes the identification of parallel texts and, consequently, their edition and study, an arduous task.

In this chapter, we deal with a pseudo-Hippocratic lunary, known as *Þe Booke of Ypocras*, and concentrate on five copies of it – British Library Additional MS 12195, British Library Sloane MS 73, Glasgow University Library Hunter MS 513, British Library Harley MS 2378, and Royal College of Physicians MS 384 – since they present a particularly similar layout, structure and content. This pseudo-Hippocratic treatise was translated from Latin into English in the late Middle English period (Taavitsainen 2012: 93). Our aim is to study the language of these five copies according to the methodology of the *Linguistic atlas of late mediaeval English* (henceforth *LALME*) in terms of regional language use, in order to throw light on the circulation and textual transmission of the treatise and to provide clues for the identification of the original text behind the English translation.

2. Methodology

One of our tasks was to identify the Middle English lunar texts attributed to Hippocrates. To this end, several sources were used. According to Kibre (1977: 107) extant copies were found in five manuscripts: Cambridge: Trinity College, MS R.14.52; London: British Library, Additional MS 12195 and Sloane MS 73; Oxford: Bodleian Library, Ashmole MS 210 and MS 393. Means (1993: 245) identifies six more copies of the zodiacal treatise: London: British Library, Harley MS 2378; Cambridge: Gonville and Caius College MS 336/725 and MS 475/395; Oxford: Bodleian Library, Ashmole MS 1405 and Selden Supra

MS 73 and, finally, Glasgow: Glasgow University Library Hunter MS 513. In the online catalogue of the Digitised Manuscripts of the British Library, another English copy was found in Harley MS 1736. Nevertheless, the most useful resource so far has been the catalogue by Keiser (1998: 3779) which, besides the aforementioned manuscripts, refers to Cambridge Trinity College MS 1404, London British Library, Sloane MS 340 and Royal College of Physicians MS 384 as well as Durham University MS Cosin V.IV.7. Finally, Voigts – Kurtz (2000) included other related texts in their catalogue, which are not, however, parallel to this specific text but other versions of it. As a result, these manuscripts have not been taken into consideration for this research.

We have consulted the manuscripts from Glasgow and London libraries and acquired digitised images of those in Oxford, Cambridge and Durham. It was when transcribing this corpus that we realised that Ashmole MS 210 is not a copy of the treatise under consideration. Furthermore, Ashmole MS 393 and Selden Supra MS 73 contain incomplete copies, with some of the zodiac signs omitted. For the present study, we have focused on five copies of the treatise – BL Additional MS 12195, BL Sloane MS 73, GUL Hunter MS 513, BL Harley MS 2378 and Royal College of Physicians MS 384 – as they present a very similar layout, structure and content.

The only transcriptions that have been published so far are those produced by Means (1993) of Harley 2378 and the transcription by Taavitsainen *et al.* (2005) of Additional 12195. However, these transcriptions were unsuitable for our purposes, since the lineation, word boundaries and original capitalisation are not always respected, and the punctuation has been silently modernised. Because of this, all five versions were transcribed especially for the present study.

Once the texts were ready for analysis, we proceeded to examine the language of the five manuscripts according to the *LALME* criteria. Before explaining the methodological grounds of this work, a word of warning should be said with regard to the use of *LALME*. Taavitsainen – Pahta (1997: 214–215) give 1375 as the initial date for the presence of medical writings in vernacular English. This means that the main medical Middle English texts date from the end of the fourteenth century and throughout the fifteenth century. All manuscripts under scrutiny in this study are fifteenth-century copies, although no dating is available for two of the manuscripts: Sloane 73 and Royal College of Physicians 384. Means (1993: 17) dates Hunter 513 to 1450, though it is also dated 1470 by the Glasgow University Library catalogue; Harley 2378 dates to 1480 (Means 1993: 16) and Additional 12195 dates to 1475 (Means 1993: 9). This implies that two important caveats should be borne in mind. On the one hand, *LALME* covers the years 1350–1450, which places our documents right at the end,

if not beyond the temporal limits of this work. On the other, the texts reveal prominent regional features, but also instances where local elements might have been replaced with items with a wider currency. Finally, Taavitsainen (2004: 209) claims that the growth of centres of education "was instrumental in changing the patterns: regional spellings which had hitherto varied from parish to parish became less specific to given places and appear in combination in the spelling systems of individual writers". All in all, our aim is to localise the provenance of the language found in the manuscripts and, having no extralinguistic evidence, *LALME* seems the most reliable source to localise the language of the texts.

Our methodology is based on the *LALME* grounds with a slightly modified application of the 'fit' technique. Firstly, the questionnaire was filled for each manuscript and the linguistic profiles assigned to each specific form were included. We have made use of the electronic version (*eLALME*) where the questionnaire is made up of 424 items which stand for the most significant and frequent words recorded in the Late Middle English corpus, and which represent an important source for linguistic comparison. Then, we gathered information on some diagnostic forms. We have concluded that when a specific realisation is assigned to twelve or fewer counties, that form will be diagnostic. For instance, the form *wech* for WHICH is found in the following Linguistic Profiles: Ely 625, Gloucestershire 7151, Herefordshire 7450 and Leicestershire 432; similarly, the form *xalt*, as a second person singular of SHALL, can only be found in Norfolk 4279, 4621, 8870 and Suffolk 4768. Thus, these realisations of WHICH and SHALL will have a higher distinctive value, which will help to localise the text more accurately, in comparison to more widespread forms such as *any* or *many*, as these forms might belong to a large number of areas. Finally, the use of a concordance programme allows us to establish the actual frequencies of occurrence within each county and linguistic profile. The counties with most frequent attestations are easily found by the use of the *AntConc* programme (Anthony 2014). The number of occurrences is used to account for the most common forms found in the text in order to make decisions about the possible provenance of specific linguistic items. Likewise, the Linguistic Profiles showing the greatest frequencies of the diagnostic forms are retrieved. A combination of both procedures will be used to localise the area of production of the manuscript.

When a county ranks high in total forms and includes a high number of diagnostic forms, the profiles within that county are examined in detail. Subsequently, if the county appears in the most frequently found, but it is absent in the five most salient counties regarding diagnostic forms, it will not be scrutinised (see Table 1). Thus, in the case of Additional 12195, the Warwickshire and the West Riding of Yorkshire Linguistic Profiles, whose total number of forms is fifty-nine,

Tab. 1: Counties and Linguistic Profiles agreeing with Additional 12195

Manuscript	Highest frequency of overall forms		Highest number of diagnostic forms		Highest number of diagnostic forms by LP		
	County	Frequency	County	Frequency	County	LP	Frequency
Additional 12195	NFK	71	NFK	14	NFK	4279	26
						4280	38
	NHT	65	SFK	12	NHT	4003	33
						4005	27
	LIN	63	NHT	10	LIN	69	22
						669	22
						4289	23
	SFK	61	LIN SOM	8	SFK	4231	31
	WRK YWR	59	ESX NOT	7			

will not be further examined, as they do not seem to rank high in the number of distinctive forms. Likewise, although Essex and Nottinghamshire show seven distinctive forms each, they do not rank high in the number of overall forms. Consequently, neither Essex nor Nottinghamshire Linguistic Profiles are studied. Once the counties have been identified, the most frequent Linguistic Profiles within these counties – Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire and Suffolk – are retrieved to check the matches with the data found in the lunary texts.

Table 1 shows the correlation between both parameters in the case of Additional 12195. For the present study, the five counties that rank highest in terms of total frequency and in the number of diagnostic forms are selected. For illustration purposes we have designed a table where both criteria are met: The left column shows the five counties with the highest frequency of appearance in total; the middle column displays the frequency of diagnostic forms within the counties, while the right column combines both parameters and identifies the Linguistic Profiles with both the highest frequency of forms and the highest number of diagnostic items.

3. Findings: interpretation of the data

The results of the analysis of the language of the five manuscripts under consideration following the *LALME* criteria have been organised in a detailed table offered as an Appendix at the end of this chapter. There, it is possible to see the findings according, firstly, to the most frequent counties; secondly, the most

recurrent counties taking into account the number of diagnostic forms; and finally, the Linguistic Profiles associated to each of the texts.

Thus, the data reveal that the language of Additional 12195 shows a clear affinity to the texts localised in the counties of Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire and Suffolk. Although Warwickshire and the West Riding of Yorkshire are also two of the counties with a high number of occurrences (fifty-nine), the most distinctive forms associated with these two counties are not relevant when concentrating on the analysis of the diagnostic forms. Some forms show a wide currency and can be ascribed to a vast area, such as *the*, *is* or *man*. Nevertheless, other forms, such as *xalt* for the second person singular, mainly corresponds to the profiles in Norfolk; *wyll* for WILL and *abowt* for ABOUT point to Norfolk and Northamptonshire; and *qwat* for WHAT is commonly localised in Norfolk and Suffolk. Finally, some diagnostic forms can be found both in Norfolk and Suffolk, as is the case of *hyth* for HEIGHT. Likewise, the analysis of these and other diagnostic forms also points to the above-mentioned counties, as it can be illustrated by *whyll* for WHILE, a spelling mainly associated with Linguistic Profiles from Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire and Suffolk. However, it is important to mention the presence of some characteristic features from Somerset, Essex and Nottinghamshire, although in the end, these counties are not among the ones that show a higher frequency within the text and, as a result, they should not be taken into consideration when narrowing down the dialectal provenance of the language of the text. The Linguistic Profiles that define the language of this specific text cannot be reduced to one, since the forms are akin to those found in Norfolk 4280 (thirty-eight occurrences), Northamptonshire 4003 (thirty-three occurrences) and Suffolk 4231 (thirty-one occurrences). The other possible Linguistic Profiles associated to these three counties or to Lincolnshire show a lower number of occurrences and have therefore been disregarded.

With regard to Sloane 73, Northamptonshire, Norfolk, Warwickshire, Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire are the five counties which rank highest in the total number of shared forms as well as in the number of diagnostic ones. Nonetheless, Northamptonshire is not only the county with more overall occurrences (seventy-five), but also the one which shows a higher number of diagnostic features (fifteenth), among which it is possible to find the following words: *clepid* for CALLED (singular), *deþ* for DEATH, *fleisch* for FLESH and *ӡeue* for GIVE (infinitive). Thus, the language of Sloane 73 is consistent in displaying forms found in the county of Northamptonshire and, within this county, Linguistic Profile 4273 is the one with the highest number of shared forms (forty-five occurrences). However, the Linguistic Profile which ranks

highest of all is 4708 (fifty-seven occurrences), which is localised in the county of Bedfordshire. It is again unfeasible to narrow down the localisation of the treatise to one single Linguistic Profile, since the other three most frequent counties also present a high number of occurrences in specific Linguistic Profiles: Norfolk 4066, Warwickshire 4686 and finally, Cambridgeshire 4230.

As for Hunter 513, it can be observed that Northamptonshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Warwickshire and the West Riding of Yorkshire appear as the counties which rank highest in the overall number of forms, as was the case with the results obtained in the analysis of Additional 12195. Also, Somerset, Staffordshire and Shropshire present the same frequency as Warwickshire with seventy-six occurrences. As in the case of Sloane 73, Northamptonshire is the county with the highest number of distinctive forms (twelve). However, there is a considerable presence of forms from the county of Somerset, such as *beth* for IS, *worch* for WORK or *hyght* (from OE *hátan*) for CALLED. The salience of forms associated to this county, which it is geographically so distant from the others, can be explained with the fact that in the late Middle Ages there were some specific routes that were followed by merchants, traders, patrons and estate owners, among others, and could also be used by scribes. These roads were marked in the well-known Gough map. Salter (1983: 54) mentions how the literary map of the time can be explained by having a look at the roads drawn on it and confirms that the English society was highly mobile and interconnected. That may be why, regarding the main Linguistic Profiles associated to Hunter 513, it is possible to find not only Somerset 5173 (fifty occurrences), but also Northamptonshire 4003 (fifty-two occurrences), Norfolk 4276 (forty-five occurrences) and Suffolk 4568 (thirty-eight occurrences). It is also worth mentioning that Middlesex has a frequency of sixty-eight hits, although it does not rank among the five most frequent counties regarding both overall and diagnostic forms. Furthermore, there is one specific Middlesex Linguistic Profile (6445) which shows fifty-two hits, that is, the same number of occurrences as the Profile associated to Northamptonshire, which ranks the highest. Therefore, the salience of this Linguistic Profile is undeniable, and this county ought to be included within the possible area of provenance of the language of Hunter 513.

As far as Harley 2378 is concerned, Means (1993: 245–252) edited the texts containing *Þe Booke of Ypocras*, but did not carry out any linguistic analysis of it. As in the previously discussed manuscripts, Norfolk (sixty-three), Northamptonshire (sixty-one) and Suffolk (sixty) are among the counties ranking highest with regard to the frequency of the overall number of forms. It is also worth mentioning that the Isle of Ely, Lincolnshire, Warwickshire, Cambridgeshire, Somerset, Staffordshire and the West Riding of Yorkshire are

among the counties with most frequent shared items, although they show between fifty-five and fifty-three occurrences. With regard to the frequency of diagnostic forms, Northamptonshire shows the highest number together with Essex (nine), and including forms such as *theyse* for THESE, a characteristic spelling of these two counties. Somerset and Derbyshire (eight), Norfolk (seven), the West Riding of Yorkshire (six), and Suffolk, Surrey and Warwickshire (five) are also relevant counties to consider, with shared forms such as *wyt* for WITH, *wyl* for WHILE, *herthe* for EARTH or *herte* for HEART. Regarding the possible Linguistic Profiles that share forms with the language of this text, the ones presenting higher number of occurrences are Northamptonshire 4003 (twenty-nine occurrences), Suffolk 4231 (twenty-nine occurrences) and Norfolk 4280 (twenty-eight occurrences). It is interesting to note that there is no Linguistic Profile showing more than twenty-nine occurrences, which sets this manuscript apart from the other four manuscripts under consideration, for which the numbers are much higher.

Finally, the exploration of the language of RCP 384 also reveals Northamptonshire (ninety) and Norfolk (eighty-seven) as the counties presenting the highest frequency regarding overall forms. They are followed by the West Riding of Yorkshire (eighty-six); Lancashire and Warwickshire (eighty-five); and Shropshire and Staffordshire (eighty-three). When assessing the counties which rank highest regarding the diagnostic forms found within the text, Northamptonshire presents eleven forms and Somerset appears again with ten occurrences. It is also possible to find Middlesex with the forms *hert* for HEART or *yere* for YEARS found within the text; Norfolk with *þe-same* for THE-SAME; and finally Suffolk and the West Riding of Yorkshire with *haue* for HAS (3rd person singular). All these counties present six occurrences while the other counties are below this number. The combination of the counties with the highest frequency of overall forms and the counties with the highest number of diagnostic forms finally produces the following group of Linguistic Profiles: Northamptonshire 313 (forty-nine occurrences) and 4003 (forty-seven occurrences); Warwickshire 4684 and Norfolk 4663 (both Linguistic Profiles with forty-five occurrences), while Norfolk 4280 and 4063 and Warwickshire 4683 appear forty-four times.

By examining the data from a qualitative point of view, it is worth mentioning that in RCP 384 the county of Somerset was not included in the table (see Appendix), because it did not qualify according to our criteria for the analysis. That is to say, it showed ten distinctive forms, but it is not present in the counties with the highest frequency of overall shared forms, because it is number thirteen in this list. However, Linguistic Profile 5173 from Somerset with forty-six hits is third after Northamptonshire 313 and 4003. Once again, the presence of this
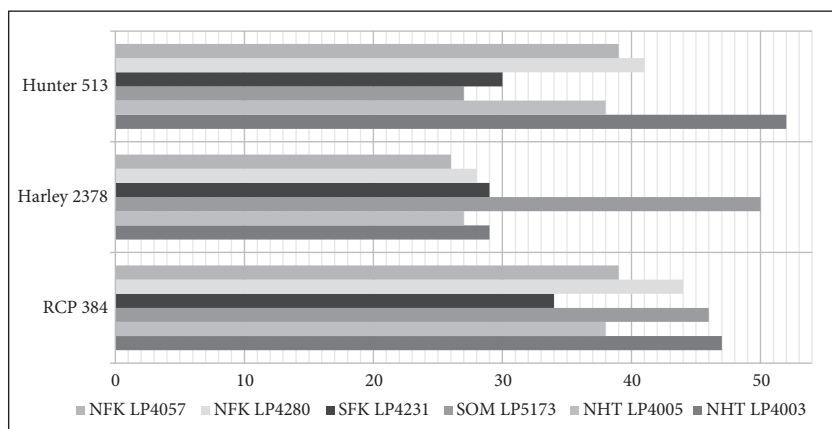
Fig. 1: The affinities of Hunter 513, Harley 2378 and RCP 384 with LALME Linguistic Profiles

specific profile is remarkable, as happened in the case of the language of Harley 2378 with twenty-seven hits and Hunter 513 with fifty hits. Furthermore, the language of these three manuscripts also presents great similarity to each other. The three of them show clear affinities with texts localised in Northamptonshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. The distribution profiles with which forms are shared can be seen in Figure 1, where the sequence of the different Linguistic Profiles in each text follows the same order as the one in the legend:

These three manuscripts, consequently, share the affinity to six particular *LALME* Linguistic Profiles: Northamptonshire 4003 and 4005, Norfolk 4057 and 4280, Somerset 5173 and Suffolk 4231. This similarity poses the question whether they could have shared a common exemplar or whether there are other reasons that account for the presence of forms from these countries. Taavitsainen (2004: 237) concludes her study on medical texts considering that the 'house-styles' of specialised scriptoria, as well as the scribe's upbringing and instruction are likely causes for uniformity, which could be the case here.

Even if Hunter 513, Harley 2378 and RCP 384 show obvious linguistic coincidences, the other two texts, Additional 12195 and Sloane 73, are clearly related to the other three, as they seem to have been produced in a similar area. However, here each version presents particular similarities to one or more Linguistic Profiles which are not shared by the other texts. The common Linguistic Profiles with affinities to the language of the five analysed manuscripts can be seen in Graph 2.
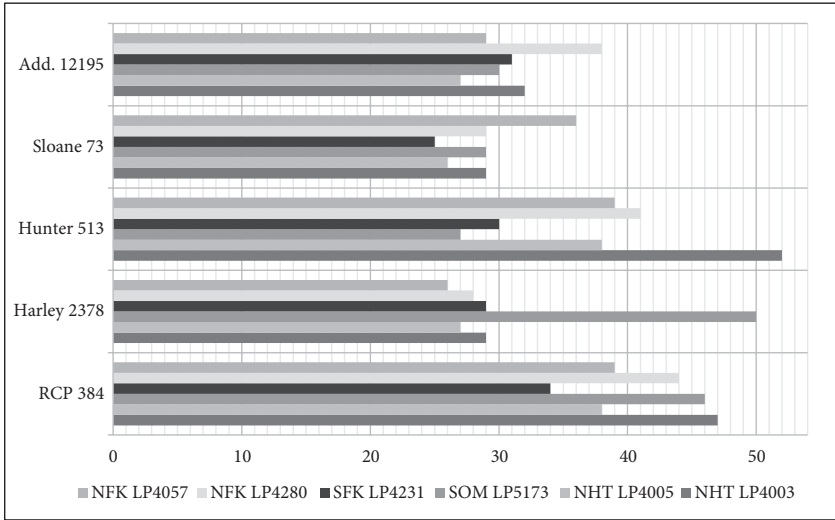
Fig. 2: The LALME Linguistic Profiles sharing most forms with the five manuscripts

Tab. 2: Summary of the counties and Linguistic Profiles with the most frequent matches with the lunary manuscripts

Manuscript	Highest frequency of overall forms	Highest number of diagnostic forms	*LALME* Linguistic Profile
Additional 12195	NFK 71	NFK 14	NFK 4280
	NHT 65	NHT 12	NHT 4003
Sloane 73	NHT 75	NHT 15	BED 4708
	NFK 66	BED/NFK 8	NHT 4273
Harley 2378	NFK 63	ESX 9	NHT 4003
	NHT 61	NHT 9	SFK 4231
Hunter 513	NHT 88	NHT 12	NHT 4003
	NFK 85	SOM 12	SOM 5173
RCP 384	NHT 90	NHT 11	NHT 313
	NFK 87	SOM 10	NHT 4003

By putting all the five manuscripts into relation (Table 2), the presence of some counties can easily be concluded: all five show affinities with Northamptonshire and Norfok profiles according to the higher number of overall forms. However, only Northamptonshire profiles appear as matches for all five texts when looking at the counties with the highest number of shared diagnostic forms. It

is necessary to include Essex in the case of Harley 2378, Bedfordshire in Sloane 73, and Somerset in both, Hunter 513 and RCP 384. Finally, looking at specific Linguistic Profiles, Northamptonshire 4003 appears as a match for all the manuscripts except for Sloane 73, which instead shows Northamptonshire 4273. Also for RCP 384, there is a second Linguistic Profile related to the same county that needs to be taken into consideration: Northamptonshire 313.

The coincidence of some Linguistic Profiles found as matches for the five manuscripts can be the result of scribes trained at specific schools carrying their practices to different places. This idea links to the plasticity of scribes that would have assimilated their previous experience and would have introduced incompatible forms to the variation found in a given area.

4. Conclusions

Lunaries, being the most widely used prognostic texts of the Middle Ages, have attracted little attention, probably because of their brevity. In the present study, we have discussed the provenance of the language of several parallel texts of a zodiacal lunary known as *Þe Booke of Ypocras*. Once the extant copies of the treatise were identified, the search was narrowed down to deal with tracts that were clearly copies of the same version. In doing so, we concentrated on five texts that have the same layout, contents and similar length.

Our aim was to try to identify the provenance of the language of *Þe Booke of Ypocras* in the manuscripts Additional 12195, Sloane 73, Hunter 513, Harley 2378 and RCP 384. We have analysed the five texts in terms of the dialectal features mapped in *LALME*, some of which are localisable with considerable precision, but others are found in a large area. In order to localise the texts, the fit-technique established by the team working on the *Linguistic atlas of late mediaeval English* was used. The analysis was carried out by a combination of quantitative and qualitative criteria. Thus, the counties showing a higher number of overall forms along with the counties that display the higher number of diagnostic forms were scrutinised to narrow down the Linguistic Profiles that could correspond to the specific language of each manuscript. Very often, the analysis of the forms and features makes the language compatible with several Linguistic Profiles. Some of the items show forms with a wide currency and therefore cannot be used to identify the dialect of a given manuscript. Nonetheless, some conclusions can be drawn from the combination of these general forms and more diagnostic forms.

Regarding manuscript Additional 12195 the analysis reveals a clear predominance of linguistic similarities with texts localised in the counties of Norfolk, Northamptonshire, Lincolnshire and Suffolk, although the study of the data

makes it impossible to identify the exact provenance of the language of the text. On the contrary, the *LALME* examination casts further light in the case of Sloane 73. The language of the text seems to be consistent with that of the texts localised in Northamptonshire, both in terms of the overall number of forms as well as the number of diagnostic items, although there are also similarities with texts localised in other counties. In fact, Bedfordshire is the county that ranks highest in the total number of forms. The presence of numerous similarities with texts localised in other counties, such as Norfolk, Warwickshire and Cambridgeshire, makes precise localisation unfeasible.

With regard to Hunter 513, the analysis shows that many of the counties suggested by the shared forms coincide with the ones attested for Sloane 73; namely Northamptonshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Warwickshire and the West Riding of Yorkshire. What is peculiar about this text is the presence of some Somerset features which may reflect the high mobility of patrons and scribes, who would have integrated in their original repertoire forms from other areas because of their own previous experience. As for Harley 2378, the language of the treatise also shows a wide variety of linguistic forms. Unlike the other manuscripts, the frequency of forms corresponding to one single Linguistic Profile is low, as none of them shows more than twenty-nine occurrences. Finally, in the case of RCP 384, the exploration of the language used in this text reveals great similarity with Harley 2378 and Hunter 513, even if no single ascription to a Linguistic Profile can be provided.

Despite the detailed analyses of the linguistic data found in each of the five versions there are some aspects that deserve comment. All of them show a combination of widespread forms, which is expected considering that this kind of treatises mostly proliferated in the fifteenth century, as well as regional forms from several parts of the country. The coincidence of some *LALME* Linguistic Profiles with linguistic similarities to all the five manuscripts may reflect the fact that they were copied in the fifteenth century, some of them even in the late fifteenth century. The attestation of sporadic forms with other affinities in the language of some texts may be due to the scribes' personal history, where their previous experience would have affected their repertoire and made it compatible with forms found in other parts of the country.

To conclude, it can be stated that the present analysis has shed light on the so far unexplored circulation process of *Þe Booke of Ypocras*, and contributed to the mapping of the transmission of medical and scientific texts. However, future research is needed in pursuing the study of other Middle English translations of *Þe Booke of Ypocras* in order determine the genetic affiliation of the English versions (see De la Cruz-Cabanillas – Diego-Rodríguez 2018).

Appendix

Tab. 3: *LALME* counties and Linguistic Profiles with the most frequent matches of dialectal forms in the five manuscripts

Lunary Manuscript	Highest frequency		Highest number of diagnostic forms		Highest number of diagnostic forms by LP		
	County	Frequency	County	Frequency	County	LP	Frequency
BL, Additional MS 12195	NFK	71	NFK	14	NFK	4279	26
						4280	38
	NHT	65	SFK	12	NHT	4003	33
						4005	27
	LIN	63	NHT	10	LIN	69	22
						669	22
						4289	23
	SFK	61	LIN SOM	8	SFK	4231	31
	WRK YWR	59	ESX NOT	7			
BL, Sloane MS 73	NHT	75	NHT	15	NHT	4273	45
						4276	41
						4707	43
	NFK	66	BED DBY NFK	8	NFK	4057	36
						4066	37
						4646	35
						4622	35
	WRK	65	CAM HUN LIN SFK SOM	7	WRK	4686	36
	BED	64	ESX MDX STF WRK	6	BED	4708	57
						9480	30
	CAM	63	BCK ELY LAN SAL SUR	5	CAM	4230	43
						4267	38
						4773	41

Tab. 3: (continued)

Lunary Manuscript	Highest frequency		Highest number of diagnostic forms		Highest number of diagnostic forms by LP		
	County	Frequency	County	Frequency	County	LP	Frequency
GUL, Hunter MS 513	NHT	88	NHT SOM	12	NHT	4005	40
						4003	52
	NFK	85	ESX MDX	10	NFK	4273	42
						4280	41
						4276	45
	WRK	80	NFK	9	SFK	4470	32
						4568	38
						4768	32
	SFK	77	HFR	8	SOM	5173	50
	SAL SOM STF YWR	76	CHS DBY SFK WLT	7			
BL, Harley MS 2378	NFK	63	ESX NHT	9	NFK	4057	26
						4280	28
	NHT	61	DBY SOM	8	NHT	4003	29
						4005	27
	SFK	60	NFK	7	SFK	4231	29
						4266	24
						4568	24
	ELY LIN WRK	55	YWR	6	WRK	4680	19
						4684	22
						4685	19
	CAM SOM STF YWR	53	SFK SUR WRK	5	SOM	5171	19
						5173	27
						5271	18
					YWR	70	17
						100	15
RCP MS 384	NHT	90	NHT	11	NHT	313	49
						4003	47
						4005	38
	NFK	87	SOM	10	NFK	4280	44
						4656	41
						4663	45

Tab. 3: (continued)

Lunary Manuscript	Highest frequency		Highest number of diagnostic forms		Highest number of diagnostic forms by LP		
	County	Frequency	County	Frequency	County	LP	Frequency
	YWR	86	MDX NFK SFK YWR	6	YWR	496 165	39 29
	LAN WRK	85	CHS ESX LAN LEI SUR WLT WRK	5	LAN	23 411	29 35
	SAL STF	83	BCK SAL WOR	4	WRK	4063 4680 4683 4684	44 40 44 45
					SAL	233 237	37 41

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