The Aristoteles Latinus project
A survey

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The Aristoteles Latinus is a project of the International Union of Academies, which aims at providing critical editions of all medieval Greek-Latin translations of the Corpus Aristotelicum.\(^1\) Since 1973, when Gérard Verbeke took over the direction of the project from the illustrious Lorenzo Minio-Paluello, the seat of this project is situated at the De Wulf-Mansion Centre for Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance Philosophy at the Catholic University of Leuven (K.U.Leuven). The Aristoteles Latinus collection meets the highest standards for critical editions of medieval texts. An international board is responsible for its scientific value; the members of this board are (in alphabetical order): P. De Leemans (secretary), S. Ebbesen, C. Leonardi, J. McEvoy, A. Oliva, M. Rashed, C. Steel (director), L. Sturlese, A. Van Oppenraay, G. Vuillemin-Diem, and O. Weijers.

The editions are based on extensive collations of the manuscripts. Each volume contains a detailed descrip-

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\(^1\) The original intention was to publish also the Arabic-Latin translations of the Corpus Aristotelicum. These editions are now being published by the Aristoteles Semitico-Latinus, a project of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Sciences and the International Union of Academies in 1971 (directors: H. Daiber and R. Kruk).
tion of the manuscript tradition of the edited text, together with a study of its origin, its Greek model, and its medieval reception. The relation between the Greek text and the Latin translation, as well as the textual variants within the Latin tradition, is evidenced in the double critical apparatus. The correspondence between the Greek and Latin terminology is demonstrated by means of a complete Greek-Latin and Latin-Greek index.

The present contribution gives a short overview of the progress of the *Aristoteles Latinus*. A survey of the editions that have already been published is found in the first section. In a second section, we will pay attention to the *Aristoteles Latinus Database* and shed light on its particularities. We will end with some remarks on a few editions that are in progress.

1. Published volumes


This volume contains five Latin versions of Aristotle’s *Categories*. Numbers 1 and 2 both stem from Boethius, who is responsible for the Latin translations that were most widespread. One of them is more literal, the other
more elegant. William of Moerbeke, on the other hand, was the author of a Latin version not only of Aristotle’s work (3), but also of Simplicius’s commentary, which contains the abbreviated lemmas of the Aristotelian text (4). Moreover, Aristotle’s work was known by means of a Roman paraphrase attributed to Augustin and influenced by Themistius (5).


This volume constitutes a supplement to the Latin versions of the Categories. It contains Porphyry’s famous Introduction to Aristotle’s Categories in Boethius’s translation (6) and an extract of an anonymous 12th century Latin writing, which was widespread under the title Liber sex principiorum (7): it deals mainly with the last six categories, treated more briefly in Aristotle’s work. The volume also contains the fragments quoted by Boethius.
from an older Latin version of Porphyry's *Introduction*, done by Marius Victorinus.


This volume contains the vulgate text of the *Perihermeneias*, which goes back to Boethius (1), and the version composed with the lemmas of the Aristotelian text in William of Moerbeke's translation of Ammonius' commentary (2).


Boethius composed a double Latin version not only of the *Categories*, but of the *Prior Analytics* as well (1-2). However, the two versions have not been edited separately except for certain parts, the second version having been displayed, for the other parts, in the critical apparatus. Apart from these widespread texts, a good, but not quite successful anonymous 12th century translation of Aristotle's logic has come down to us (3). Special attention is paid to a set of Latin scholia to the *Prior Analytics* (4), the origin of which is disputed. According to L. Minio-Paluello and J. Shiel, they were translated by Boethius along with the Aristotelian text; according to recent research, however, they might go back to a translation by James of Venice.²


The authorship of James of Venice for the medieval vulgate text of the Posterior Analytics is undisputed (1). Curiously enough, the manuscript tradition of this text also reveals the presence of two versions, which present the same kind of variants as those of Boethius’s translations. However, the two versions have not been edited separately. Secondly, an anonymous 12th century translation has been preserved, which is attributed to a certain ‘Ioannes’ (2). Thirdly, the volume also contains, in accordance with the original – but rather ambitious – Aristoteles Latinus programme, the Arabic-Latin version by Gerard of Cremona (3), and finally, the revision of James’s translation by William of Moerbeke is included (4).


Boethius’ rendering of the Topics has been carried out, once more, in two versions (1-2), one of which has not been preserved but partly. Moreover, a 12th century version is extant: it stems from the anonymous translator of the Prior analytics (3).

The vulgate text of the *De sophisticis elenchis* stems from Boethius (1). Fragments of another version have been attributed to James of Venice (2), and William of Moerbeke did a revision of Boethius’ translation (3).


The first Latin translation of the *Physics* stems from James of Venice (1). As in the case of the *Posterior Analytics*, the manuscript tradition of the text reveals the presence of two versions, which again have not been edited separately, the second version having been displayed in the critical apparatus. The first volume of the edition, which contains the preface, includes a reprint of the edition of the so-called *Translatio Vaticana* (2). The provenience of this anonymous and fragmentary version is puzzling: as has been suggested recently, it might have had its origins in the circle of Stephen of Antioch.

The first Latin translation of the De generatione et corruptione has been edited anonymously. The presence of two versions within the manuscript tradition of this text is clearly attested in the critical apparatus of the edition. Recent research, however, has demonstrated that both versions stem from the same translator, i.e. Burgundio of Pisa. Moreover, the translator's Greek model has been identified in the present manuscript Laurentianus graecus 87.7.


This is most recent edition in the *Aristoteles Latinus* series. It consists of two volumes. The first volume of more than 400 pages contains an elaborate introduction in which the author analyzes, among other things, the text tradition of the translation, its relation to the Greek sources, and its first reception. Three chronologically distinct versions are distinguished. The first version, which is preserved in a small group of manuscripts, is based on the Greek ms. Vindobonensis Phil. gr. 100 (*J*). Most manuscripts, among which those descending from the university *exemplaria*, contain the second version. Here, Moerbeke revised a very limited number of passages on the basis of another Greek manuscript. The third version is preserved in ms. Toledo, Bibli. Capitular, 47.11 (*Tk*) as well as in corrections in a Ravenna manuscript (*RäC*). For this final and more thorough revision, Moerbeke used again the *Vindobonensis* as well as Alexander of Aphrodisias’s commentary (or his translation of it). It is this third version which is published in the second volume.


This is the only Pseudo-Aristotelian work thus far making part of the *Aristoteles Latinus* edition. Curiously enough, the volume was the first to have been published in that series. It contains two medieval translations, one by Bartholomew, the famous translator working at the court of Palermo (1), and one by Nicholas of Sicily, probably the scholar who helped Robert Grosseteste with his translations of Greek texts (2). The chronological order of both versions, however, is uncertain.

The serial number XVII 2 refers to the whole collection of Aristotle’s *Books on Animals* in William of Moerbeke’s translation. It consists of 21 books, the first 10 of which are known under the title *History of animals* (I). The first part (1 = books I-V) of this extensive zoological encyclopaedia, with a general introduction to the entire text, has been published recently. The remaining books are available on the *Aristoteles Latinus Database* (see below).


This volume contains the fifth part (V) of Aristotle’s *Books on Animals* in William of Moerbeke’s translation. It comprises books XVII-XXI of the collection, and deals with generation of animals. The editor has revealed the existence of two chronologically distinct versions of this text. The variant readings of the earlier version are displayed in the critical apparatus.


This volume contains two closely related versions of the *Metaphysics*, both partially preserved (books I-IV.4). The first version, called *Translatio Vetustissima*, is ascribed to James of Venice (1), whereas the second, called *Translatio Vetus*, is presented as being a revision of the former translation (1a). The volume also contains some scholia which accompany James of Venice’s text; at least some of them must go back to marginal notes in the manuscript used by the translator.

This almost complete *Translatio Media* of the *Metaphysics* is anonymous; it has been demonstrated, however, that it stems from the same translator as the *Translatio Vaticana* of the *Physics*.


The only complete Medieval Latin text of the *Metaphysics* has been composed by William of Moerbeke, partly as a revision of the *Translatio Media* (books I-X and XII-XIII.2) and partly as an original translation (books XI and XIII.2-XIV). In both parts of the text, the editor has revealed the existence of two chronologically distinct versions. As in the edition of the *De generatione animalium*, the variant readings of the earlier version are displayed in the critical apparatus. The preface to the edition covers the entire first volume of the publication: it clears up the intricate situation of the manuscript tradition, describes the translation process and method, and discusses the translator’s Greek copies of – and other information on – Aristotle’s text. It should be mentioned, in particular, that the present manuscript *Vindobonensis graecus 100* has been identified as one of Moerbeke’s Greek models for his translation of the *Metaphysics*.

The edition of the *Nicomachean Ethics* is published in five volumes, the first of which contains a general preface, and the fifth the comprehensive indexes. The second volume contains two early fragmentary versions, which are presented as anonymous, but chronologically distinct: the so-called *Ethica Vetus*, consisting of only books II and III (1), and the *Ethica Nova*, comprising book I as well as some excerpts from the other books (2). The third and fourth volumes contain two closely related versions of the entire work, presented as the pure text and the revised version of the *Liber Ethicorum* by Robert Grosseteste (3). The revision is attributed, once more, to an unknown translator. However, recent research has identified the anonymous authors of the translations of the *Nicomachean Ethics*: both the two early versions are the work of Burgundio of Pisa⁵, and the revisor of Grosseteste’s *Liber Ethicorum* is William of Moerbeke⁶. It has to be mentioned, moreover, that Burgundio’s Greek model has been identified in the present *Laurentianus graecus 81.18⁷*.


This volume contains a partial version of the *Politics* (books I-II.11), which precedes William of Moerbeke’s translation of the entire work. The editor’s guess about

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⁵ See BRAMS, ‘The Latin Aristotle’, p. 16.
its author has been confirmed by recent scholarship: this partial version is Moerbeke's first rendering of the beginning of Aristotle's work, which was all he could find in the Greek manuscripts available to him at the moment; when he afterwards came across a copy of the entire text, he revised his version of the first two books and proceeded translating the rest of the work as well.


This volume contains the two medieval translations of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. The *Translatio Vetus* is anonymous (1); it seems, however, that its author belonged to the circle of Bartholomew of Messina. The most widespread translation of this work stems from William of Moerbeke (2). Once more, the editor has revealed the existence of two chronologically distinct versions in William's text, and the variant readings of the earlier version are displayed in the critical apparatus. The introduction in this volume is
limited, as a more thorough analysis of the translations was published in a separate book\textsuperscript{8}.


The only medieval version of the *Poetics* stems from William of Moerbeke. However, it seems to have been unknown throughout the whole Middle Ages. Instead, Aristotle’s work was known through Herman the German’s version of Averroes’ paraphrase. The text of this Arabic-Latin *Poetria* is also included in the volume.

2. Aristoteles Latinus Database

One of the major realizations of the *Aristoteles Latinus* over the past years has been the release of the *Aristoteles Latinus Database*, produced in collaboration with the Centre Traditio Litterarum Occidentalium (Director: P. Tombeur) and Brepols Publishers. The first release (2003) contains a digitalized version of all the texts that had been published in the printed *Aristoteles Latinus* series\textsuperscript{9}. To these were added editions of various texts that had been prepared for this series but which up to that date had not yet been published – each text is preceded, between brackets, by the number that is reserved for it in the *Aristoteles Latinus* project:

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{8} B. Schneider, *Die mittelalterlichen Griechisch-Lateinischen Übersetzungen der Aristotelischen Rhetorik* (Peripatoi 2), Berlin – New York, 1971.
\end{itemize}
In the second release (2006), the content of ALD1 was augmented with various kinds of texts\textsuperscript{11}. First of all, the database contains four critical texts that have been prepared for the printed series but are not yet published:

\begin{itemize}
  \item [\textbf{[XVII 2.I]}] \textit{De historia animalium} VI-X. Translatio Guillelmi, ed. \dagger F. Bossier – P. Beullens.
  \item [\textbf{[XVII 2.II]}] \textit{De progressu animalium}. Translatio Guillelmi, ed. P. De Leemans
  \item [\textbf{[XVII 2.III]}] \textit{De motu animalium}. Translatio Guillelmi de Morbeka, ed. P. De Leemans
  \item [\textbf{[XXVII]}] \textit{Magna Moralia}. Translatio Bartholomaei de Messana, ed. Ch. Pannier
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{10} This edition is currently being revised for publication by Dr. Griet Galle (K.U. Leuven)

Moreover, ALD2 contains provisional editions of two texts that were prepared for the database on the basis of some selected manuscripts:

[XIV 1] *De memoria et reminiscencia.* Translatio Jacobi, ed. S. Donati

[XVI 2] *De longitudine et brevitate vitae.* Translatio Guillelmi, ed. P. De Leemans

A third category of texts consists of critical editions prepared within contexts other than the Aristoteles Latinus:

[XII 2] *De anima.* Recensio Guillelmi, ed. R.-A. Gauthier

[XIII 2] *De sensu et sensato.* Recensio Guillelmi, ed. R.-A. Gauthier

[XIV 2] *De memoria et reminiscencia.* Recensio Guillelmi, ed. R.-A. Gauthier

[XV 1] *De somno et vigilia, De insomniis, De divinazione.* Translatio vetus, ed. J. Drossaart Lulofs

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12 In the secondary literature, this text is stated to be a revision of James of Venice’s translation. Recently, P. De Leemans, “Preliminary Remarks on the Text Tradition of Aristotle’s *De longitudine et brevitate vitae*, tr. Guillelmi”, in: C. Burnett - J. Glucker (eds.), *Greek into Latin* (Warburg Institute Studies and Texts) (in preparation) has argued that, apart from one problematic phrase, it is most likely an original translation by Moerbeke.


15 See previous note.

Also, one non-critical text, a transcription of a text as it is found in a 1482 Venice edition, was included:

[XXII] Problemata Physica, translatio Bartholomaei

In 2007, ALD2 was made available online; at the same time, it was connected to the Database of Latin Dictionaries (DLD). By means of this connection it is possible to search first the ALD and go immediately from the search results in ALD to the DLD.

It should be noted that the database does not replace the printed editions, as it offers only the naked texts, without introduction, critical apparatus, or indices. This implies, among other things, that those variants that stem from the translator himself but are reported in the apparatus are not included. Secondly, the insertion of not-published, less-critical or even non-critical texts in the database is not definitive; all of the provisional texts will be replaced by the critical editions after their publication in the printed series, in future releases of the Database.

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17 See previous note.
3. Future editions

Several *Aristoteles Latinus* editions are presently in progress. We mention here briefly the edition of the anonymous *translatio vetus* of *De sensu et sensato* by Griet Galle (K.U.Leuven), of Henricus Aristippus’s translation of the *Meteorologica* by E. Rubino (Lecce), and of the translations of the *Economica* by Christoph Fluëler (Freiburg), for which considerable progress has been made. Moreover, the following editions, which will hopefully be published in 2009, must be mentioned:


This volume contains fragments of an anonymous translation of *De motu animalium*. This translation is known only indirectly, through Albert the Great’s paraphrase *De principiis motus processivi*. Albert had based this paraphrase on a translation he had found during one of his travels ‘in Campania iuxta Graeciam’. This translation has since been lost. The edition will attempt a reconstruction, based on a comparison of Albert’s text to the Greek: by typographical means, words that are believed to stem from the translation will be indicated in the integral text of the paraphrase. In the introduction, the author underlines the peculiarities of the translation and argues that the translator’s Greek model was closely related to the thirteenth century ms. Firenze, Bibl. Laurenziana, 87.21.

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This volume will contain the second and third parts of Aristotle’s Books on Animals in William of Moerbeke’s translation. It comprises Books XI and XII of this collection, dealing respectively with the progression and movement of animals. The editor shows that Moerbeke’s translations were widely spread at the University of Paris not only as a part of the zoological works, but also, and even more, as a part of a collection of short Aristotelian and pseudo-Aristotelian treatises. The text tradition of De progressu animalium suggests that Moerbeke continued to work on his translation, yet never in a thorough way. As to De motu animalium, the editor has revealed the existence of three chronologically distinct versions. For this revision, he had access to an exceptional Greek text witness. Both for De progressu and De motu animalium, the published text will correspond with the text that circulated at the University of Paris.