
Summa doctrina et certa experientia. Studi su medicina e filosofia per Chiara Crisciani edited by Gabriella Zuccolin

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Anyone undertaking research in the fields of medieval science, scholastic medicine (its institutional and epistemological aspects), alchemy, and the history of medicine will inevitably compare Chiara Crisciani's work and the doctrines set forth in these *studia*, especially with regard to matters of everyday practice. This hefty volume is dedicated to Crisciani as a birthday gift in recognition of her outstanding, tireless work and generosity, as shown by her frequent involvement in research by colleagues and students. Edited by her colleague and friend, Gabriella Zuccolin, it is published by SISMEL (Società Internazionale per lo studio del Medioevo Latino) as part of the Micrologus Library series. Having published many of Crisciani's works, SISMEL is the ideal promoter of this project, given the international character and excellence of its output and, in particular, the interdisciplinary nature of the Micrologus Library series.

The importance of the book is immediately reflected in the calibre of the contributing scholars, who are among the best known in their respective disciplines. The subject matter combines (mostly natural) philosophy with various aspects of medical science, and the topics chosen are related to the areas covered by Crisciani's research. In many cases, the contributions take shape as the ideal continuation of her studies. For example, Marilyn Nicoud focuses on the medical *consilia*, whose structure was outlined by Crisciani as a new literary genre that became established between the 13th and 14th centuries, while Agostino Paravicini Bagliani examines a 16th-century text on the prolongation of life, which Crisciani has studied extensively. Similarly, Michela Pereira concentrates on alchemy, a cornerstone in Crisciani's research.

The volume consists of 20 essays divided into four thematic areas:

- (1) Medicine and philosophy in the Middle Ages;
- (2) Authors and the transmission of medical texts in the Middle Ages;
- (3) Interdisciplinary studies: biological knowledge, practical philosophy, and theology in the Middle Ages; and
- (4) Beyond the Middle Ages: medicine, alchemy, and philosophy from the 16th to the 19th century.

The tone of the volume is set by Luca Bianchi's opening essay, which emphasizes immediately the link between medicine and philosophy. Bianchi attempts to uncover the origins of the axiom 'Ubi desinit physicus, ibi medicus incipit' ('Where the philosopher ends, there begins the physician'), which is also the title of his chapter, a summary with commentary on the subordination of medicine to philosophy observed by Aristotle in *De sensu et sensato*. This axiom became so fashionable in philosophical thought during the Renaissance that the majority of historiographers have wrongly assumed that its origins lay in the same period. By researching citations of the axiom in Aristotelian anthologies, Bianchi manages to date it back to the work of the Oxford Franciscan Adam of Buckfield (mid 13th-century) and, thus, to the beginning of the exegetic tradition of *De sensu et sensato*. Tracing an axiom back to the era in which it was coined is not a mere philological exercise; it locates a way of thinking in the very cultural climate that produced it.

The volume offers the reader the opportunity to access previously unpublished documents through the manuscript transcriptions accompanying some of the essays. For instance, Pietro B. Rossi's essay ('La *Summa super 4 libro Metheororum* attribuita a Guglielmo Anglico') previews a future edition by transcribing a section on minerals and metals from the *Tractatus de metheoris* that is attributed to the little-known author, William of Marseille, and transmitted in ms Paris, BnF, lat. 6552 (13th century). The transcription is preceded by an analysis of the content of this previously unpublished treatise, focusing on its relation to meteorological knowledge at the time, including notions derived from astronomy.

Andrea Tabarroni transcribes another document in his essay '*Medicina est philosophia corporis. Un sermo in principio studii* di Bartolomeo da Varignana'. The text in question is contained in ms BAV lat. 4452 (a composite codex on medical matters pertaining to the teaching of medicine in Bologna in the first half of the 14th century), and it introduces a commentary on

Galen's *De interioribus* (*De locis affectis*) by the physician Bartolomeo da Varignana from Bologna University (who died before 1328). Tabarroni offers excellent reason to question the assumption that the text is the preface to the commentary, as previous studies have maintained. For Tabarroni, given the structure of the text, it is instead a *sermo in principio studii*, the inauguration speech for courses in medicine that was delivered by Bartolomeo at Bologna University on October 18, the feast of St Luke, at some time probably between 1290 and 1310. There is increased interest in the document due to the fact that it is the oldest surviving official speech produced by the university.

Roberto Lambertini transcribes and analyzes another treatise by Bartolomeo, 'Un medico-filosofo di fronte all'usura. Bartolomeo da Varignana'. As we know, Bartolomeo, who was also the author of many medical texts, was a member of the group of physicians in Bologna headed by Taddeo Alderotti. The original aspect of Lambertini's essay is that he has brought to light and transcribed another kind of text, a commentary on the pseudo-Aristotelian *Oeconomica* (or *Yconomica*), in which the Bolognese physician addressed the topic of usury. Found in a single 15th-century source, the treatise is indicative of the way in which the subject of usurious loans could be addressed in faculties other than theology (where it was generally studied) because of its ethical implications.

The first thematic section concludes with an essay by Gianfranco Fioravanti, 'Due *Principia* di Maino de' Maineri'), which transcribes two previously unpublished sermons by Maino de' Maineri (active in the first half of the 14th century). After studying the Averroist branch of Aristotelian philosophy in Paris, de' Maineri was drawn to medicine and became the personal physician of members of the Visconti court in Milan, his native city, while focusing later on treatises in practical medicine. The two sermons (one of which is transmitted by collating two manuscripts) were opening speeches for university courses at the Faculty of Philosophy in Paris.

The second thematic section opens with an essay by Danielle Jacquart, 'Hippocrate. Le maître lointain et absolu des universitaires médiévaux'. With great clarity, she analyses how much was known about the life of Hippocrates in the Middle Ages, above all, in the university environment. As the title explains, Hippocrates was the absolute master of western medicine, together with Galen, but also a distant master inasmuch as he was misunderstood, being variously seen as the founder of a medical sect of logicians (as recounted by Isidore of Seville in his *Etymologies*), the son of Euclid, the

ancient geometer *par excellence*, as well as a philosopher, and the teacher of Plato and Aristotle. Jacquart observes the ways in which Hippocrates was profiled until the 16th century, by analyzing commentaries by such writers as Mondino de' Liuzzi, Ugo Benzi, and Giacomo da Forlì, who are paradigmatic in the university tradition of the *Aphorisms*, a text that was a cornerstone for teaching medicine and part of the so-called *Articella* collection.

Iolanda Ventura's essay, 'Ps. Galenus, *De medicinis expertis*. Per un *état des lieux*', is in perfect harmony with Chiara Crisciani's seminal studies on the nature of the literary genre of medical recipe books. Although the study focuses on one particular work, the pseudo-Galenic *De medicinis expertis*, which, as Ventura points out, has not received much attention from academics, it offers a broader reflection on the varied structure and flexibility of the genre in question and on the method of classification used for the texts constituting the genre. The interest in the pseudo-Galenic work, which Ventura describes as 'of scant scientific and medical value', derives from the uncertainty about its origins (Greek or Arabic), the reference works used by the compiler (who shares some similarities with Rhazes), the history of its transmission, and its translation from Arabic into Latin by a translator still unidentified but probably in the entourage of Gerard of Cremona. Ventura's meticulous investigation clarifies the content of the work, explains its author's ethos and objectives, and uncovers its Arabic origins. She then suggests further paths for studying the work by analyzing the Arabic texts that transmit it, and by considering more general issues highlighted as a result of our better knowledge of the work, issues such as the presence of the unknown translator from Arabic and the convergence in the transmission of the translations of works by Rhazes and Galen.

Marilyn Nicoud's essay, 'Alla ricerca degli autori cosiddetti «minori»: un percorso nella tradizione manoscritta del *consilium*', also examines a subject in which Chiara Crisciani conducted pioneering studies, the medical literary genre of *consilia* which became established between the 13th and 15th centuries. As the expression of a professional medical act relating to a specific case or as a reply to a request for consultation from a colleague or patient, the *consilium* took shape in a heterogeneous tradition, which Nicoud illustrates clearly with a wide array of examples. The author suggests a path of study—work currently in progress—within the manuscript tradition that traces the origins of works by lesser known authors in the vernacular who

made the *consilium* an important tool in the relationship between physician and patient. Her examples demonstrate how profitable such research can be, and not just because it increases our knowledge of physician-patient interactions in the Middle Ages. In order to understand this relationship, we must use different types of sources. I would also emphasize that such research can be important as well for our knowledge of medical language, since physicians were forced to adopt a 'more popular' lexicon that was familiar to their patients.

Another path for research is suggested by Massimo Parodi, whose essay, 'Un percorso tra esperienza e cultura in Giovanni di Salisbury', opens the third thematic section on interdisciplinary studies (biological knowledge, practical philosophy, and theology). In this case, the use of language is offered as a perspective for reading the reflections of John of Salisbury (†1180) on the organization of human knowledge. Parodi observes that the Latin term 'compendium' and certain derived forms were used metaphorically in the *Metalogicon* to refer to processes of knowledge and art (seen as one of the disciplines in which knowledge is organized). Given that 'compendium' also featured in the same work as a synonym of 'metaphor', it follows that readers were encouraged to interpret art itself as a metaphor along with the organization of knowledge.

A study at the intersection of philosophical, medical-biological, and theological knowledge in the Middle Ages must also pay attention to the most significant authors who helped to develop a naturalistic philosophy on the basis of the debate and commentaries on Aristotle. Thus, Luciano Cova's essay, 'Seme e generazione umana nelle opere teologiche di Alberto Magno', refers to the work of one such author, Albertus Magnus, in focusing on the subject of human generation and embryology, which featured widely in his output. Cova provides an overview of the medieval philosopher and theologian's thinking on the subject in his *De animalibus*, where he attempted to reconcile Aristotelian philosophy with Galen's medical theories. The main aim of the essay is to highlight how, and to what extent, the issue had already been outlined in theological writings such as the so-called *Summa parisiensis* (from the 1240s), given that the Christian dogma of incarnation entailed a series of questions regarding generation.

The other leading protagonist in the deliberations on Aristotelian philosophy is Thomas Aquinas, the focus of the contributions by Silvana Vec-

chio, 'Passioni umane e passioni animali nel pensiero medievale', and Carla Casagrande, 'Tommaso d'Aquino. Onori e virtù'. Casagrande concentrates on a philosophical-theological issue with political repercussions: while affirming that Aquinas did not specifically deal with the subject of honor, she points out that we can speak of a structured and coherent Aquinian ethics of honor (owed to God, prelates, rulers, authorities, and so on), the features of which she duly identifies, since he frequently addressed the issue in his *Sententia libri ethicorum*, which comments on passages from Aristotle, and in some sections of his *Summa theologiae*.

Silvana Vecchio's essay is a fascinating reflection on the psychology of Aquinas' theory of the passions, which, following the assimilation of Aristotelian philosophy, differed from most of the medieval cultural output on the matter. As Vecchio explains, this culture saw passions as irrational and natural movements in animals, movements which man is subjected to as a mark of a disorder that emerges when reason is no longer dominant. These passions were related in turn to sins. The analysis of the different faculties of the soul in Aristotle's *De anima* and his zoology, mainly conducted using the commentary by Albertus Magnus, identified a constant physical structure underlying affective movements that unites the animal world, including man. Starting from these reflections, Aquinas embarked on an analysis in the *Summa theologiae* of passionate movements that leads to the removal of the association between passion and sin. All passions are seen as common to men and beasts, with the exception of those that involve the rational appetite or will. For Aquinas, since the latter imply a choice, they must be human; the difference between man and other animals, thus, lies in this dual passionate nature.

Ramon Llull (1232–1316) is another major figure in medieval culture whose work embraced a variety of disciplines from philosophy to theology, mysticism, literature, and linguistics. Alessandro Ghisalberti's essay, 'Il metodo dialogico nella *Disputatio fidei et intellectus* di Raimondo Lullo (1303)', discusses his output, which has been assessed in different ways—even critically—over time, especially in regard to the originality of his plan for a universal science, since it generated an important tradition, Lullism, which was most active between the 15th and 17th centuries. Ghisalberti explains the still ongoing debate on the interpretation of texts by Llull that addressed more specifically theological issues and the difference between the philoso-

pher's thinking, expressed in *Disputatio fidei et intellectus*, and the positions adopted by the masters of the prevailing Latin theology.

The subject of longevity, extensively studied by Chiara Crisciani, is the meeting point between philosophical-medical, alchemical, and theological-religious branches of knowledge. Although presented in different ways, it provides a common thread between the essays by Joseph Ziegler and Agostino Paravicini Bagliani. In his essay, 'Engelbert of Admont and the Longevity of the Antediluvians c. 1300', Ziegler approaches the issue with regard to the *Tractatus de causis longaevitatis hominum ante diluuium*, a work which was drafted in the early 14th century by Engelbert of Admont, a Benedictine from Styria, Austria, but had limited distribution. Starting from the 18th-century transcription in the *Thesaurus anecdotorum novissimus*, Ziegler analyzes different passages of the work in which Engelbert used theology and natural philosophy to provide reasons for the extreme longevity of the antediluvian Biblical patriarchs and, inversely, for the relative brevity of the lives of men who lived thereafter.

The third thematic section concludes with Stefano Simonetta's essay, "Ex fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos". John Fortescue *alle origini del corporativismo costituzionale e giuridico*, on the interweaving of philosophy and politics. The author focuses on John Fortescue (*ca* 1395–*ca* 1477), the most eminent 15th-century English jurist and Chief Justice of the King's Bench under Henry VI, and places special emphasis on the matter of the different types of *regimina* found in Fortescue's various works (*De natura legis naturae*, *The governance of England*, *De laudibus legum Angliae*). This leads to a contrast between the model of absolute monarchy embodied—in Fortescue's eyes—by France at the time and the English system with a mixed regime (*dominium politicum et regale*). The jurist offered his personal interpretation of the succession of political regimes throughout history, reaching the conclusion that England at the time boasted the most advanced achievement of joint equal action between the monarch and the representatives of the political community.

The final thematic section is dedicated to the modern age and features studies of texts that continue to analyze, albeit with modifications, subjects and branches of knowledge first addressed in the Middle Ages (such as the issue of *prolongatio vitae* (the prolongation of life) discussed by Agostino

Paravicini Bagliani or the flux of alchemical thinking examined by Michela Pereira), or of texts that represent new medical and philosophical thinking. Agostino Paravicini Bagliani approaches the subject of longevity in his essay, “Vives igitur, beatissime pater, ni fallor, diutissime”. La prolongevità dei papi nel *De vita hominis ultra CXX annos protrahenda* di Tommaso Giannotti Rangoni [1493-1577], by commenting on a little-known work, *De vita hominis ultra CXX annos protrahenda*, by Tommaso Giannotti Rangoni (1493–1577), a physician from Ravenna. The work and its originality are analyzed from within the tradition, in which Paravicini Bagliani is a leading expert, of treatises about how to extend life that were normally dedicated to popes (or emperors). In the wake of earlier works, starting from the *De retardatione accidentium senectutis* by a still unidentified author that is dedicated, in two different versions, to Pope Innocent IV (1243–1254) and to Emperor Frederick II (1194–1250), Rangoni suggested how it was possible to live to over 120. This also led to exceeding the duration of Peter’s pontificate, which tradition had established at 25 years. The matter was first discussed by Peter Damian, who used it to generate an element of moral reflection: a limit desired by God.

Mariacarla Gadebusch Bondio’s essay, ‘Il genio si racconta. Il *De vita propria* di Cardano e alcuni suoi celebri interpreti’, focuses on the important figure of Gerolamo Cardano (1501–1576). Adopting a long-term perspective, she reconstructs certain aspects of Cardano’s exceptional personality, starting with his autobiography *De vita propria*. She highlights the subject of genius—a favorite topic of positivist psychiatry, especially in the work of Lombroso (1835–1909)—with great effectiveness and demonstrates that even before the legend of Cardano’s brilliance entered the psychiatric context, both he and other eminent commentators offered grounds on which to construct the theory of genius. Cardano was stricken with physical abnormalities and phobias, but gifted with above-average perceptual sensitivity and imagination. His autobiography makes clear that he was aware of his exceptional nature in that it offers readers sections on genius, which then took shape in 17th- and 18th-century texts, culminating in mid-19th-century medical literature.

Franco Bacchelli’s contribution, ‘Una lettera inedita di Paolo Giovio a Gian Matteo Giberti’, is somewhat less in keeping with the issues covered in the volume. Apart from a short introduction, it consists entirely of the transcription of a previously unpublished letter—found in ms Bologna, Biblioteca

Universitaria, 400—from Paolo Giovio (†1552), an eclectic figure (bishop, physician, historian), to Bishop Gian Matteo Giberti. This letter was written during the period in which the latter was assisting his patron, Cardinal Giulio dei Medici, who was at the time behind closed doors at the conclave that started in December 1521 and led to the election of Adrian VI. Bacchelli also includes the transcription from the same codex of a short humorous text by Giovio ridiculing an obscure Latin poet, Pietro Donnola da Cascia, and an unknown short poem in Latin addressed to Giberti written by the humanist Girolamo Vida in opposition to Martin Luther and the German humanist Ulrich von Hutten.

The essay by Michael McVaugh and Nancy Siraisi, 'From the Old World to the New: The Circulation of the Blood', leaves European confines to focus on the 17th-century medical culture of the New Continent. The authors outline medical knowledge in mid-17th-century New England and the relations between the Old and New Worlds. They highlight in particular that American intellectual life was enriched by knowledge of European medical sources. The crux of the article is an attempt to explain how a student could defend a medical thesis at the recently founded University of Harvard in 1660 on the doctrine of blood circulation, a doctrine that had only been developed 32 years previously in Frankfurt by the physician William Harvey and distributed in his publication *De moto cordis*. As it happens, the doctrine had been criticized by Harvey's colleagues.

Michela Pereira's essay, "Vital experiment". *Alchimia, filosofia e medicina nel XIX secolo. Una divagazione*, serves as a perfect conclusion to the volume in that it concentrates on the long-term history of alchemy. After its emergence in the Middle Ages, alchemy underwent frequent transformations before featuring in the psychoanalytic works of Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961). The author highlights an original aspect in the 19th-century of the tradition of alchemy by analyzing *A Suggestive Inquiry into the Hermetic Mystery with a Dissertation on the More Celebrated of the Alchemical Philosophers*, a work from 1850 by the English writer Mary Ann Scott. This work was later withdrawn from sale by her father for revealing too many hermetic secrets. Fortunately, a few copies slipped by the family censor. Scott's work featured the re-emergence of a conception of alchemy that was previously expressed in the 14th-century idea of the *elixir*, the medication offering *longa vita* and the opportunity for humans to achieve the integral status of the *imago Dei*. Scott's

text bears witness to a 'spiritual' alchemy, in which alchemical transmutation is represented by the vital experiment, an inner experience that brings the mind into contact with the whole intimate structure of its own being.

Summa doctrina is a complex and erudite book in the topics that it covers, most of which are philosophical. Every subject considered is original, and each one is discussed and contextualized within the framework of the relevant discipline by authors who the most significant and up-to-date references, thus providing an extremely rich bibliography throughout the volume. The work is valuable not only because it informs the reader about previously unpublished aspects of variously intersecting subjects and disciplines, but also because it suggests new paths of future exploration.