

As Webster shows, Paracelsus went beyond the Protestant reformers, yet was prudent enough to avoid persecution and possible execution, as when he did not pursue publishing his *De Septem Punctis Idolatriae Christianae*, whose message echoed that of the peasant leaders. Nevertheless, his social critiques were withering and applied not only to the clergy but also to professions such as medicine and the law. Such critiques are especially well contextualised by Webster, who shows how they related to the maelstrom of religious, social and medical conflicts, ideas and writings of the time.

The theme running through the book is Paracelsus' rejection of new as well as old elites, whether of the confessional groups, humanists, the professions, etc. Yet a grouping of sorts was in Paracelsus' mind, the community of the believers or saints leading an ascetic life and enlightened by the light of God could be the true reforming congregation. Such believers would practise the true medicine consisting of philosophy, alchemy and astronomy based upon magic and the kabbalah. Yet this magic was not to be limited to a small elite group possessed of esoteric knowledge. Rather, as Webster points out, it was to be universal knowledge in principle open to all, just as the 'Radical Reformation' was to be open to all. The link to Neoplatonism was there but it was transmuted from being the possession of the small group of humanists and put into the service of the new world to come.

There is much to admire in this book. The violent controversies, their tangled dimensions, the world of the *Flugschriften*, are all vividly conveyed and the recent scholarship on Paracelsus is lightly, but with good effect, brought into play. Paracelsus' ideas are explained with brilliant clarity whether it is the concept of plenitude in the macrocosm and microcosm, disease as part of the contest between good and evil, the link between poisons and medicines, or Paracelsus' conception of the Light of Nature.

There are a few caveats, sometimes Webster, like Pagel, paraphrases Paracelsus in

such a way that it is unclear if we are reading Paracelsus or Webster. But that is because of the emphatic link between Webster and Paracelsus. There is no doubt that Paracelsus, the man and his politics, is a hero figure for Webster. If this book had been written by a conservative historian about a conservative hero-figure it is likely that I and many historians of medicine would have been making critical remarks about outmodish Whig history. But the brilliance, deep scholarship and clarity of this book show that it is possible to write enthusiastically and empathetically about someone and produce a major historical work. The caveat is really about the current values held in common by historians of medicine.

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**Antònia Carré** (ed.), *'Libro llamado el Porque' de Girolamo Manfredi: Regimen de Salud y Tratado de Fisionomía, traducción castellana de Pedro de Ribas (1567)*, Instituto Biblioteca Hispánica, Serie básica 2, (San Millán de la Cogolla: Cilengua, 2009), pp. 585, paperback, ISBN: 978-84-937654-0-8.

Girolamo Manfredi (c.1430–93), a master of medicine and astrology at the University of Bologna for some thirty years, produced, in the second half of the fifteenth century, a didactic compilation of 568 questions and answers related to two main topics: the human body and the preservation of its health, and causal explanations regarding human behaviour. This encyclopaedic *summa*, dedicated to his patron Giovanni II Bentivoglio and entitled *Liber de Homine* (also known as *Il Perché*) belongs to the genre of *Problems* literature, which has a long history that, in the mediaeval Latin West, starts with the Salernitan questions in the

twelfth century. These were normally produced in Latin, by and for natural philosophers or physicians. Yet targeting a more general readership, Girolamo opted for transmitting his ideas in Italian. In this respect he was not unique: Évrart de Conty (c.1330–1405), the physician of King Charles V of France, produced a French translation of and a commentary on Aristotle's *Problemata* almost a century earlier. Girolamo's *Liber de Homine* unfolds the dynamics of diffusing medical knowledge to the broader sectors of society, and provides ample evidence for the vernacularisation of scientific knowledge in the fifteenth century. The pressure and drive to reach out to society and expose it to scientific knowledge has thus a long history.

The work is divided into two books. The first is a *regimen sanitatis*, following the traditional rules of this genre of medical writing with some idiosyncratic touches. The second links man's bodily composition to various behavioural patterns (*de causis in homine circa compositione eius*). Though the word physiognomy appears in the text only once (in the title of the first chapter), the present editor, like many historians before, regards it as a physiognomy text-book, the first of its kind to be composed in a vernacular language and structured as a series of questions largely selected from Pseudo-Aristotle's *Problems*. The book became a best seller in Italy and was printed there three times in the fifteenth century, and eleven times in the sixteenth century. There are also a further eleven manipulated Italian editions throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the latest in 1678 Venice. The first edition from 1474 was one of the first books to be printed in Bologna, and the 1512 Ancona edition is the first book printed in this city. Leonardo had a copy on his bookshelf. All this suggests that Girolamo's *Liber de Homine* had a significant and lasting presence in Renaissance and early modern Italy and thus deserves our attention.

The present elegantly produced volume provides an edition of the Zaragoza, 1567 Castilian translation by Pedro de Ribas, accompanied by a lucid and learned

introduction that places the original Italian book and its Castilian translation in context. Neither for the regimen of health, nor for the physiognomy is there any attempt by the editor to unearth the sources of the information divulged by Girolamo. The critical apparatus is limited to the relationship between the translation and the original Italian text (even references to uncontested sources such as the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Problemata* and the *Secretum Secretorum* are not identified, not to mention Pietro d'Abano's influential commentary on the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Problemata*, which was possibly known to the author). For a discussion of the regimen an important and relevant secondary source, Marilyn Nicoud, *Les régimes de santé au Moyen Âge: naissance et diffusion d'une écriture médicale en Italie et en France (XIIIe–XVe siècle)* (Rome: École française de Rome, 2007) could have enriched the introductory debate and situated the first part of the text in the longer history of this genre of medical writing.

The Castilian translation is an expurgated version of the original Italian text and contains only 494 of the questions. It includes the two letters of dedication by Antonio de Furno, the book-dealer who was behind the project, and the original sixteenth-century alphabetical index of subjects and themes. The editor, Antònia Carré, has added the missing seventy four questions (in the Italian original) in an appendix, enabling us to reconstruct the rationale for omitting the questions and exposing the prudish world-view of Pedro the translator (most questions concerning coitus were omitted) and the general dynamics of self-censorship. In his largely literal and accurate translation, Pedro avoids the use of technical terms, opts for simple language, refrains from excessive references to authorities, and adds simplifying and concluding remarks at the end of more complex responses. This may explain the popularity of the text.

Antònia Carré edited in 2004 the anonymous Catalan translation (Barcelona, 1499) of *Liber de Homine*, and the two

independent Iberian translations (together with the 1988 edition of the Italian original text) now constitute an important and welcome cluster of texts for anybody interested in the vernacularisation of scientific knowledge, the history of medical books, the emergence of medical terminology in sixteenth-century Iberia, and the complex impact of translations on a core text.

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**Teresa Huguet-Termes, Jon Arrizabalaga and Harold J. Cook** (eds), *Health and Medicine in Hapsburg Spain: Agents, Practices, Representations, Medical History Supplement No. 29* (London: The Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine at UCL, 2009), pp. vi + 158, £35.00/€40.00/\$60.00, hardback, ISBN: 978-0-85484-128-8.

Anyone wishing to take the pulse (so to speak) of the history of early modern Spanish medicine would do well to start with this slim but valuable book. Its half-dozen essays provide a well-rounded sample of recent work in a field that, as Harold Cook stresses in his introduction, still remains largely unnoticed in the English-reading world.

María Luz López Terrada opens the collection by reviewing the efforts of various institutions to police the health sector in sixteenth-century Valencia. She highlights the lively diversity of this marketplace, and suggests that competition and confusion among different authorities – city and viceregal governments, guilds, and the *Protomedicato*, or special royal tribunal – wound up encouraging medical pluralism. That one of the physicians whom King Philip II (1556–98) named *Protomédico* proved to be a committed Paracelsian leads appropriately to the next chapter, Mar Rey Bueno's overview of alchemical activities in Philip's court. She

argues that, while the King showed little interest in the occult (unlike his relative Rudolf II), he was certainly willing to employ such chemists for their skills in distilling waters and devising other remedies. From this markedly therapeutic (and Lullian) alchemy one moves on to witches, or rather, the *saludadores* or folk healers, whose many attributes included the ability to detect witches, along with other innate skills, such as the power to cure rabies with their saliva. María Tausiet has unearthed numerous intriguing references to these ambiguous figures, who, not surprisingly, were often accused of practising the same sort of black magic they claimed to offer protection against.

Teresa Huguet-Termes then focuses on efforts to reorganise the medical sector of Madrid following its designation as capital of the Hispanic empire in 1561. While the runaway growth of the city's population predictably frustrated these reforms, she joins a larger historiographic consensus in finding little to distinguish Counter-Reformation initiatives in public healthcare from those which prevailed in the Protestant north. Mónica Bolufer also keeps the broader European picture in mind while tracing the changing representations of women within a series of texts which ranged from Juan Huarte de San Juan's best selling *The Examination of Wits* of 1575, to the enlightened cleric Benito Feijoo's essay 'The Defence of Women', published in 1726. She discerns a few important shifts amid underlying continuity in views of women within learned culture, and suggests that Iberian discourse on sexual difference evolved closely in tandem with medical writing outside the peninsula. Jon Arrizabalaga closes the volume with a portrait of Rodrigo de Castro (c.1546–1627), a Portuguese physician of Jewish background who re-converted to the faith of his ancestors after moving to Hamburg. There he achieved prominence for two publications, a handbook on female diseases and a weighty guide to medical ethics. Arrizabalaga places particular emphasis on the latter, which he sees as marking an important step forward in the self-