

HUMANISM AND MEDICINE IN THE EARLY MODERN ERA

20-22 SEPTEMBER 2006

UNIVERSITY CLUB, THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

CONVENORS:

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR YASMIN HASKELL, UWA

DR SUSAN BROOMHALL, UWA

This symposium explores the complex, and sometimes troubled, relationship between humanism and medicine from the fourteenth through eighteenth centuries. The father of humanism, Francesco Petrarca, famously attacked the medical profession in *Against the Doctors* (1352). Humanism spoke a new language – theoretically a natural, classical Latin, as opposed to the ‘barbaric’ scholastic idiom of the philosophers and the Galenist gobbledygook of the doctors. But the cultures of humanism and medicine inevitably enriched one another: doctors and humanists shared a professional interest in the ancient texts (from Dioscorides to Lucretius), and a vested interest in preserving Latin as a professional argot. Humanism had its own healing pretensions through poetry and moral philosophy. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, doctor and humanist sometimes co-existed in the same person such as Girolamo Fracastoro, Girolamo Cardano, Julius Caesar Scaliger, François Rabelais, and Pierre Petit.

Keynote speakers include Professor Ian Maclean (All Souls College, Oxford) and Professor Vivian Nutton (Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine, University College, London).



Woodcut

Titlepage of Bartholomeo Eustachius's *Tabulae Anatomicae* (Rome, 1783)

Image courtesy of the History of Medicine Division of the National Library of Medicine (USA)



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FONDAZIONE CASSAMARCA
Morti Musorti porto dominiqueque Naorti

PROGRAM

Wednesday 20 September

- 10am
-2pm Prof. Ian Maclean (All Souls College, Oxford)
IAS/NEER Masterclass on Early Modern Philosophy in Europe
See last page for more information
- 3pm Registration at University Club
- 3.15pm Symposium Welcome
- First Session: Analogies*
- 3.30pm Dr Monica Azzolini (University of New South Wales)
Astrology and the Body: Girolamo Mercuriale (and his contemporaries) on the Influx of the Stars and the Legitimacy of Astrological Medicine
- 4pm Prof. Randall Albury (University of New England, Armidale)
Vernacular Humanism, Medicine and Political Philosophy in The Book of the Courtier
- 4.30pm Dr Nicole Sully (University of Western Australia)
Architecture and the Anatomy of Memory
- 5pm Discussion
- 5.30pm Break
- 6pm Annual Cassamarca Lecture
Prof. Vivian Nutton (University College, London)
"It's the patient's fault": Simone Simoni and the Plague
- 7.30pm Opening Reception at the University Club

Thursday 21 September

- Second Session: Anatomies*
- 9am Prof. Manfred Horstmanshoff (University of Leiden)
Analogy versus Anatomy: Petrus Petitus' De Lacrymis In Context
- 9.30am Ms Baige Smith (University of Western Australia)
Humanists, Doctors and Dissection
- 10am Ms Natalia Lizama (University of Western Australia)
Anatomy in Vitro: The Resurrection of Early Modern Anatomical Practice
- 10.30am Discussion
- 11am Coffee
- Third Session: Continuities*
- 11.30am Prof. Sergio Starkstein (University of Western Australia)
Treating Tyche with the Tetrpharmakon
- 12pm Prof. George Weisz (University of New South Wales)
Medico-Artistic Phenomena: Humanism and Medicine in the Renaissance and in the Twentieth Century
- 12.30pm Discussion
- 1pm Lunch

- Fourth Session: Comedies*
- 2pm Dr Ursula Potter (University of Sydney)
Greensickness, Physicians and Chastity in Early Modern Drama
- 2.30pm Dr Susan Broomhall (University of Western Australia)
Humanism, Medicine, God and Mother Nature: Medicine through the Lens of Early Modern French Comic Drama
- 3pm Discussion
- 3.30pm Coffee
- 4-5pm ARC Network for Early European Research Lecture
Prof. Ian Maclean (All Souls College, Oxford)
The Medical Republic of Letters in Europe before the Thirty Years War
- Free time
- 7pm Symposium Dinner at Matilda Bay Restaurant

Friday 22 September

- Fifth Session: Melancholies*
- 9am Dr Monica Calabritto (City University of New York)
Girolamo Mercuriale's Consilium on "Melancholic Humors" Between Medical and Legal Traditions
- 9.30am Assoc. Prof. Yasmin Haskell (University of Western Australia)
The Intellectual Diary of a Hypochondriac, Niccolò Giannettasio: Humanism versus Medicine?
- 10am Discussion
- 10.30am Coffee
- Sixth Session: Boundaries*
- 11am Dr Karen Jillings (Massey University, NZ)
Humanism and Medicine in Sixteenth Century Aberdeen
- 11.30am Dr Jane Southwood (University of New England, Armidale)
Why Galen's Teeth Fell Out: Shifting Medical Attitudes Among Nicolas Baudin's Doctors
- 12pm Prof. Michael Bennett (University of Tasmania)
Grafting the Old onto the New: Smallpox Inoculation and Classicism in the Long Eighteenth Century
- 12.30pm Discussion
- 1pm Lunch
- Seventh Session: Anomalies*
- 2pm Dr Jenny Spinks (University of Melbourne)
Monstrous Births and Demonic Offspring in the 1550s: The Case of the Zurich Physician Jacob Rueff
- 2.30pm Dr Cathy McClive (University of Durham)
The Moons of Pregnancy: Measuring Legitimacy in Sixteenth-Century France
- 3pm Discussion

ABSTRACTS

Randall Albury

Classics, History and Religion, University of New England
Vernacular Humanism, Medicine and Political Philosophy in

The Book of the Courtier

The Book of the Courtier (Il libro del cortegiano, 1528), by Baldessar Castiglione, was one of the most widely translated and frequently republished books of the Renaissance. Drawing explicitly on the models of Plato, Xenophon and Cicero, the book presents the discussions of a group of cultivated gentlemen and ladies at the Court of Urbino who, over four evenings, seek to describe the perfect courtier and the perfect court lady. While Castiglione's work is usually regarded as a conduct manual for courtly behaviour, or as escapist literature celebrating in idealised form a court environment that had already disappeared forever by the time the book was published, I propose to treat it as a political document. More specifically, I shall argue that it articulates, under the cover of its eloquent speeches and witty repartee, a version of classical political philosophy adapted for the new political circumstances developing in western Europe during Castiglione's lifetime. I shall also argue that a key to our understanding of Castiglione's political teaching is his use of the ancient philosophical analogy between medicine and statecraft. In humanist circles this analogy was of course a rhetorical commonplace. But my contention will be that in *The Book of the Courtier* it plays more than just an ornamental role. When understood in the specific historical context of the Duchy of Urbino, and when taken together with the other apparently unrelated references to medicine and physicians scattered throughout Castiglione's book, the analogy between medicine and statecraft ceases to be merely a conventional oratorical formula and becomes instead the basis of a political doctrine that is both normative and realistic – charting a middle course between the moralising idealism of Erasmus (*The Education of a Christian Prince*, 1516) and the amoral pragmatism of Machiavelli (*The Prince*, 1532).

Monica Azzolini

History, University of New South Wales

Astrology and the Body: Girolamo Mercuriale (and his contemporaries) on the Influx of the Stars and the Legitimacy of Astrological Medicine

Astrological practices of various kinds were common both in antiquity and the Middle Ages, and the influence of the stars on the human body was largely uncontested. What was much more vexed was the question of the influence of the stars over the human soul and the human will. The astrological debate reached its peak in the Renaissance with the publication of Pico della Mirandola's *Disputationes adversus astrologiam divinatricem* in 1495-96; the following years saw a vigorous reform of astrology and astronomy that eventually led to the almost total demise of the former by the late seventeenth century. How did the debate affect the field of astrological medicine? Across the centuries, medical astrology was arguably the least contested branch of astrological practice together with meteorology. This paper addresses the reception of Pico's ideas within the medical and humanistic circles of late sixteenth-century Italy by focusing on the work of the antiquarian and physician Girolamo Mercuriale (1530-1606), a friend of Galileo who was certainly acquainted with the terms of the astrological and astronomical debate. I will seek to demonstrate that the astronomical reform did not undermine completely astrological practice and particularly astrological medicine, and that Mercuriale himself (much like Galileo), employed astrology both for personal and professional ends.

Michael Bennett

History and Classics, University of Tasmania
Grafting the Old onto the New:

Smallpox Inoculation and Classicism in the Long Eighteenth Century

The new virulence of smallpox in the seventeenth century and the rise of inoculation (first variolation and then vaccination) as a prophylactic in the eighteenth century served to increase the gulf opening up between the ancient and modern worlds of medicine. Smallpox was unknown to the ancients, and presented challenges to learned medicine. Inoculation had no other warrant than folklore and empirical observation. This paper seeks to explore the manner in which a number of physicians nonetheless sought to give smallpox a classical history, and the promoters of inoculation, especially in continental Europe, sought to invest the practice with the cultural authority of the classical world through the use of Latin, classical myth and history, the writing of poetry and the manipulation of symbols.

Susan Broomhall

History, University of Western Australia

Humanism, Medicine, God and Mother Nature:

Medicine Through the Lens of Early Modern French Comic Drama

This paper examines the distinct influence of humanism in the treatment of medicine in early modern drama. It compares Marguerite de Navarre's play *Le Malade*, composed between 1530 and 1543, with Moliere's comedy-ballet *Le Malade imaginaire*, first performed in 1673. On the surface these plays both treat the theme of the hypochondriac whose female servant critiques the value of university medicine and helps to reveal other paths to health. However, these initial similarities belie marked differences in the playwrights' perceptions of learned medicine and its alternatives. Read in the light of Moliere's play, what did the sixteenth-century playwright Marguerite de Navarre, imbued with the spirit of Christian humanism, make of medicine? How had the dividing lines between popular and learned medical theory and practice changed over the course of almost 150 years between humanism and a rising sense of enlightenment values, as they are played out by Marguerite and Moliere?

Yasmin Haskell

Classics and Ancient History, University of Western Australia

The Intellectual Diary of a Hypochondriac, Niccolò Giannettasio:

Humanism versus Medicine?

The Jesuit poet and professor of mathematics, Niccolò Giannettasio, suffered from a chronic depressive illness which he identified as 'hypochondria'. Early modern 'hypochondria' was not, however, hypochondriasis in our modern popular or even medical sense of the word: 'preoccupation with fears of having, or the idea that one has, a serious disease based on the person's misinterpretation of bodily symptoms' (DSM IV, 465). The Neapolitan Jesuit knew very well the serious disease from which he suffered: it was 'hypochondria', which was at the time generally reckoned to have a real physical basis, producing symptoms from the gastric and respiratory to the depressive and delusional. In 1689, Giannettasio gave a chilling account of a recent 'plague' of this illness in the course of his long Latin poem on fishing; his Neapolitan confratello, Tommaso Strozzi, did the same, in the third book of a poem on the medicinal benefits of chocolate. I am currently investigating the wider medical and humanist contexts for these poetic plagues. In today's paper I propose to focus on Giannettasio's ideas about mental and physical health and his strategies for 'self help' as revealed in the *Annus eruditus* ('Academic year'), a work comprising four Latin dialogues, purportedly a record of the author's meetings, dinners, and learned discussions with friends and students at the Jesuit country villa of Cocomella, on the Sorrentine coast. The *Annus academicus*, which has never been the subject of a modern scholarly commentary, is replete with erudition on topics from seismology to ethnography to diet and disease, as well as poetry, politics, and personal anecdote. I shall scrutinise these dialogues from a new, and I hope illuminating, perspective: as the 'intellectual diary of a hypochondriac'.

ABSTRACTS

H.F.J. (Manfred) Horstmannshoff

Classics, University of Leiden

Analogy versus Anatomy: Petrus Petitus' De lacrymis in context

In 1661 the French physician, philosopher and poet Petrus Petitus (Pierre Petit 1617-1687) published a Neo-Latin treatise, *De lacrymis*. In book 1 he treated systematically according to Aristotelian rules the *causa materialis* of tears; in book 2 the *causae efficientes* (*tristitia-gaudium*) and *causa finalis*, whereas book 3 deals with separate *problemata*. His work is a cornucopia of erudition, collected from Greek and Latin sources, Hippocrates and Galen included. It may serve very well to reconstruct an ancient theory of tears and weeping. In the same period, however, Thomas Warton and Nicolaus Steno discovered the system of glands that explained the physiology of weeping. Two explanatory models, one by analogy, the other based on anatomical observation and experiment, stood side by side. After some introductory remarks on early, pre-scientific ideas on human physiology, as far as they dealt with tears and weeping, I will present ancient testimonia on tears and weeping in ancient medical literature, observed as symptoms, using Petitus as 'Fundgrube'. I will conclude this section by giving an overview of the most common 'physiological' theories of tears and weeping in ancient medicine, based on analogy. After discussing ancient anatomical knowledge of the eye, I will try to put the discovery of the functioning of the lachrymal glands in the 17th century, in context, followed by the invention of Bowman's probe and Weber's knife ca. 1860, as the starting point of modern dacryology. My aim is to highlight Petitus' *On Tears* as a culminating point of ancient analogical thinking, next to the emerging science of anatomy, based on observation and experiment.

Karen Jillings

History, Philosophy and Politics, Massey University, New Zealand

Humanism and Medicine in Sixteenth-Century Aberdeen

The rise of humanism played a significant role in the founding of Scotland's third university, King's College, at Aberdeen in 1495. The establishment there two years later of a Chair of Medicine - celebrated as the earliest post of its kind in the British Isles - meant that Aberdeen became, in theory at least, a centre of humanistic medical education. This paper will discuss the careers of the incumbents during the century after the establishment of the Chair and evaluate the extent to which humanist thought influenced medical theory and practice both at the university and in the wider community. This influence found expression in the city government's control of plague and in the production by the third medical professor at King's of the first vernacular medical treatise to be printed in Scotland.

Natalia Lizama

English, University of Western Australia

Anatomy in Vitro: The Resurrection of Early Modern Anatomical Practice

This paper will explore the relationship between humanism and medicine in relation to contemporary resurrections of early modern anatomical practice. Rather than offering an interpretation of the historical relationship between humanism and medicine, this paper will rather elucidate how such traditions are resurrected and reinterpreted in contemporary culture, and examine ways in which the humanism is re-evoked in current medico-anatomical discourse. This paper will discuss the work of Gunther von Hagens, referring to both his performance of a televised public autopsy, and his exhibition, *Body Worlds*. Von Hagens' work provides a useful means for examining and elucidating the ways in which the early modern relationship between humanism and medicine is rearticulated and re-enacted in contemporary culture. In 2002, Von Hagens performed a televised public autopsy at the Atlantis Gallery in London. Despite being banned by British authorities, the autopsy went ahead, and was subsequently televised, thereby rendering the autopsy visible to a wide

televisual audience. This paper will consider the way in which von Hagens' resurrection of the public autopsy recalls that of the early moderns' revival of ancient anatomical practices of human dissection, and thus incorporates the humanist tradition. Von Hagens' *Body Worlds* exhibition involves the display of plastinated cadavers, which are presented semi-dissected and fixed in animated poses, ostensibly for the purposes of anatomical education. The display of corpses in *Body Worlds* explicitly refers to seminal texts of early modern anatomy, with many of the plastinated corpses fixed in poses taken from Vesalius' *De humani corporis fabrica*. The exhibition thus incorporates a humanist element through its revival of public human dissection and exposition as a means for developing knowledge about functional human anatomy.

Ian Maclean

History, All Souls, Oxford

The Medical Republic of Letters in Europe before the Thirty Years War

After a brief history of the Republic of Letters as a concept and a practice in the Early Modern Period, I shall turn to one intellectual group in particular, the learned medical profession, and concentrate on one manner of transmitting knowledge which it actively developed between about 1500 and 1630: the published collection of medical letters. I shall investigate their importance by asking the following questions: how self-aware and self-critical was the world of learned doctors? how did it regulate itself? how free was it? how open? how universal? how collaborative? Finally, how 'scientific' was its approach to nature?

Cathy McClive

History, University of Durham, UK

The Moons of Pregnancy: Measuring Legitimacy in Sixteenth-Century France

In 1535 François Rabelais' tale of Gargamelle's gargantuan eleven-month pregnancy enabled him to highlight an important contemporary debate concerning the possible minimum and maximum limits to the length of pregnancy. Michael Screech has convincingly unpicked Rabelais' borrowings from his friend and fellow jurist André Tiraqueau on this matter and demonstrates Rabelais' use of the topic to draw attention to the corruption of ancient texts by medieval glossators and translators and the very real threat to the patri-line caused by the lack of agreed limits, allowing for usurpation, infant substitution and general fornication. As Screech amply shows this was very much a Renaissance debate drawing on natural philosophy, jurisprudence and medical disciplines. But, it was also, and perhaps above all, a question of medical uncertainty underpinned by an ambiguous understanding of reproduction and the link between the menstrual cycle and pregnancy. During the sixteenth century French physicians and jurists attempted to fix 'normal' limits to the term of pregnancy. They did this with recourse to ancient texts and judicial precedents from antiquity, but also using a case-by-case approach which attempted to harness female biological time to their understandings of socio-cultural time. Close observation of individual menstrual cycles and pregnancies was advocated, although this was complicated by the multitude of available ways of measuring time and particularly 'months'. Jurists and physicians negotiated the limits of legitimacy according to the moral and humoral habits of an individual woman and tried to reconcile this with the constraints of a particular socio-cultural context. Theory and practice coincided as physicians and jurists were called to pronounce judgement in life and death situations. As a result legitimacy was often open to interpretation and appears more flexible than has previously been recognised by historians. In this paper I will draw upon medical texts, the literature of jurisprudence, printed judicial memoranda, literature and archival records, to chart the evolution of the medical and judicial quandary surrounding eleven-month pregnancies in sixteenth-century France.

ABSTRACTS

Vivian Nutton

The Wellcome Trust Centre for the History of Medicine

University College London

"It's the patient's fault": Simone Simoni and the Plague

Physician, philosopher, moralist, and spy, Simone Simoni of Lucca (1532-1602) spent most of his life in exile as a doctor in Northern Europe. In 1575, when plague broke out in Leipzig, he was the personal physician of the Elector of Saxony, involved also in the medical life of the town and its university. His *'Artificiosa curandae pestis methodus'*, 1576, not only defends his, far from creditable, role in the outbreak, but develops in unusual ways the theories put forward in 1546 by Girolamo Fracastoro to explain contagion and contagious diseases. Simoni's treatise introduces to Northern Europe new Italian ideas, while at the same time revealing many of the tensions, both public and private, that were caused by the arrival of plague.

Ursula Potter

English, University of Sydney

Greensickness, Physicians and Chastity in Early Modern Drama

In 1554 a German physician, Johann Lange, published a case history in the form of a letter of advice to a father concerned at his daughter's sickness. Lange identified her condition as the disease of virgins, citing a short treatise by Hippocrates, *On the Disease of Virgins*, as his precedent. Lange's diagnosis set in motion a wave of greensickness diagnoses (or chlorosis as it became known) in England. The cause was thought to be the virgin's thickened blood and the first stirrings of the womb at menarche, and the symptoms were many and ill-defined. Treatment involved either controlling the unruly womb with purges, bloodletting, fasting and herbal remedies, or rushing the patient into marriage. Greensickness reached epidemic proportions in following centuries, and then disappeared from medical records early in the 1900s almost as rapidly as it had first appeared. In Helen King's recent study of the history of greensickness (*The Disease of Virgins*, Routledge 2004), she queries whether the condition ever truly existed, or whether it was a concept initially embraced by the medical profession and parents alike to explain puberty and regulate sexuality in girls. There is some evidence in early modern drama to support this hypothesis. A disease afflicting virgins and which is cured by male virility, lends itself so well to satire that it is hard to find any serious treatment, but greensickness also acts as a vehicle for the satirical treatment of physicians, and suggests a widespread mistrust by the public of their diagnostic skills and the authority they exert as family physician. Where the drama and the medical treatises concur however, is in the high levels of fear generated over the onset of puberty in girls. One of the most influential voices in this debate was that of Juan Luis Vives, prominent humanist and colleague of Erasmus. Vives's popular treatise, *The Instruction of a Christian Woman*, may have been a contributory factor in the rise in greensickness, with its rigorous focus on containing a daughter's sexuality through diet, fasting, pious instruction, and isolation, and its obsession with the preservation of chastity at all costs. This paper will provide an overview of the dramatic treatment of greensickness in several early Jacobean plays, together with the accompanying representation of physicians, and will compare attitudes to chastity by Vives with those of Shakespeare.

Baige Smith

Fine Arts, University of Western Australia

Humanists, Doctors and Dissection

The professional interests of doctors and humanists frequently overlapped during the early modern era. One of the most important points of intersection was the human body. Scholars of the medical sciences and the humanities were fascinated with the human subject, and especially the 'anatomical body' which was increasingly visible due to the emergence of public anatomy theatres and illustrated anatomical books. For physicians, anatomy enabled the advancement of medical knowledge, whilst for humanists it was crucial to the development of humanist philosophies. This paper will address the intersection of medical and humanist concerns through the example of anatomical activities within Holland in the seventeenth century. Holland had become a centre for anatomical

investigation at this time, and the dissection theatres at the universities of Amsterdam and Leiden attracted many prominent intellectuals, including the great humanist philosopher Rene Descartes. Throughout the 1630s Descartes attended these theatres and performed private dissections, and these investigations were instrumental in the development of what is now considered one of the most important theories of western humanism – the theory of mind-body dualism, first published in the *Meditationes* of 1641. Another famous figure associated with the Dutch anatomy theatres was the painter Rembrandt van Rijn. Rembrandt produced two paintings of anatomy lessons – *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr Nicolaes Tulp* (1632) and *The Anatomy Lesson of Dr Joan Deyman* (1658) – and this paper will use both images as a reference point to discuss the "culture of dissection" which proliferated in Holland at this time.

Jane Southwood

French, University of New England, Armidale

Why Galen's Teeth Fell Out:

Shifting Medical Attitudes Among Nicolas Baudin's Doctors

The five-man medical team appointed to the Baudin expedition of 1800-1804, sent by Napoleon to explore the terres australes (the southlands) or New Holland, embodies some of the key differences in attitudes towards disease and its treatment prevailing in pre- and post-Revolution France. Educated in the last decade of the ancien régime, the two oldest members represent a tradition dating back to the ancient Greeks. The youngest member of the team, who received his training after the Revolution in the newly-constituted Ecole de Médecine in Paris, exemplifies the new emphasis on empirical medicine, what Michel Foucault has called the birth of the clinic. The divergence between this newer approach based on empirical observation and the older approach informed by a tradition built on the authority of classical texts is evidenced in the respective post-expedition writings of these men. By focussing on the theme of melancholia, a recognised symptom of scurvy, and the place melancholic states held for Baudin's doctors in their beliefs about the causation and cure of this and other diseases, the paper hopes to illuminate the transition between the old and the new world of medical thinking.

Jenny Spinks

History, University of Melbourne

Monstrous Births and Demonic Offspring in the 1550s:

The Case of the Zurich Physician Jacob Rueff

In 1554 the Zurich physician Jacob Rueff published a book concerned with pregnancy and birth, titled *Ein schon lustig Trostbüchle von den empfangnissen vnd geburten der menschen*. In the same year, a Latin translation of the text appeared under the title *De Conceptu et Generatione Hominis*. These were richly illustrated volumes that covered many aspects of conception, birth, and fertility, as well as notorious cases of monstrous births and an examination of the likelihood of the devil taking on human form in order to engender children. These last two topics distinguish Rueff from his most important roughly contemporary source, the 1513 *Der Swangern Frauwen und hebammen Resegarten* by the Worms physician Eucharius Rößlin. The Rosegarten was a short and very successful book aimed at midwives. Rueff evidently hoped for a wider market, as both the simultaneous Latin and German editions, as well as the subject matter, attest. This paper will examine Rueff's interest in the abnormal, and in particular monstrous births and demonic offspring. It will situate Rueff in relation to other publications, best described as books of wonders, that appeared in the 1550s and also took a special interest in both monstrous births and the workings of the devil in the world. These were the Zurich humanist Konrad Lycosthenes' *Prodigiorum ac ostentorum chronicon* of 1557 (simultaneously published in German until the title *Wunderwerck*), and the Jena physician Job Fincel's *Wunderzeichen*, the first volume of which was published in 1556. This paper will examine the connections between humanist and medical thought in these publications, and the significance of the fractured religious climate in which they appeared. It will suggest that monstrous births and demonic activity took on a new significance in this environment, and one reflected most strongly in a distinctive wave of publishing activity.

ABSTRACTS

Sergio E. Starkstein

Psychiatry, University of Western Australia

Treating Tyche with the Tetrpharmakon

The *Tetrpharmakon* of Epicurus included the following ingredients: "God is not to be feared, death is nothing to us, good is easily acquired, pain is easy to endure". The *Tetrpharmakon* was aimed at treating fear, and above else, the fear of death. The Stoics suggested that the only way to achieve tranquility was the full acceptance of Fortune ("A man is like a dog tied to a cart. If he does not walk, he will be pulled"). The Hellenistic Schools of philosophy coined a variety of terms to refer to the state of emotional indifference (or happiness) (e.g., apatheia, ataraxia, euthumia, akataplexia, adiaphoria), and Epicurus exalted the galena, the smooth calm amid the disturbing gales of the storm. The alternative to Greek philosophy was oriental religion. To appease their fears, Greeks erected in the Agora at Athens a temple to Tyche (or Goddess Fortune). Tyche was considered to be even more powerful than Zeus. Euripides wrote that "he is a foolish mortal who thinks his luck secure and so rejoices; for Fortune, like a madman in her moods, springs towards this man, then towards that". Tyche's realm included beauty, good reputation, health, wealth, power, good marriage and lovely children. Tyche became associated with medicine through her Egyptian version, Isis, and her male companion, Sarapsis. The latter presided over the Alexandrian medical school, and was regarded a healer similar to Apollo and Asclepius. In medieval ages fear was commonly associated with epidemics, and religion replaced philosophy as the main therapy of the soul. During the past 30 years most developed countries witnessed a marked improvement in public health standards, and yet satisfaction with health at the personal level is declining. Could the Epicurean *Tetrpharmakon* be an answer to the current state of dissatisfaction?

George M. Weisz

History and Philosophy of Science, University of New South Wales

Medico-Artistic Phenomena:

Humanism and Medicine in the Renaissance and in the Twentieth Century

In the Renaissance the impact of recent epidemics of devastating diseases created the conditions for a medical awakening. Experiences such as repeated plague epidemics and the outbreak of syphilis showed that traditional medical theories and procedures were inadequate. At the same time there was an intense interest in the study of medical classics, with the aim of purifying them from Arabic and Scholastic misinterpretations. These circumstances led to a medical revolution based on new approaches to the study of human anatomy, physiology and pathology. The Renaissance also saw an unprecedented flourishing of artistic creativity, both in literature and in the visual arts, with the medical community being well-represented in this activity. Similarly, the conditions of the twentieth century produced extraordinary medical progress, and a parallel medico-artistic phenomenon with an outburst of literary and other aesthetic activity by medically trained artists. The list of late twentieth century medical artists is long, and deserves further analysis. It involves physicians from all parts of the globe, from all specialties of medicine, in all stages of their careers, and with various personal reasons for their artistic interests. None of these factors can explain the high levels of artistic activity by physicians, which is unique among the professions. Involvement in aesthetic activity, which is fundamental to human experience, helps keep alive the humane side of medicine at times of rapid scientific progress. In addition, the physician's elation at the recovery of a patient is akin to the artist's elation at the successful completion of a creative work. This feeling was confirmed by 27 out of 37 medico-artists surveyed in Sydney. It is postulated, therefore, that just as the cultural phenomenon of Humanism stimulated medico-artistic activity in the Renaissance, so too the legacy of Renaissance Humanism does so in modern medicine.

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