

Recipes for the Treatment of Horses, Oxen, and Other Animals, including twenty-five recipes attributed to TOMMA, a Franciscan, and twenty-two to GUIDACCIO (a soldier?)

In Italian, manuscript on paper

Italy, c. 1470-1490

16 folios on paper, watermarks similar to Briquet no. 3390, Chapeau, Florence, 1487 and 1490, and to no. 3373, Chapeau, Florence, 1474/83, Florence, 1476, Fabriano, 1475, and Naples, 1468-1471, contemporary foliation in Arabic numerals, upper outer recto, 158, 145-157, 164, 163, and, on lower outer rectos on ff. 2-7, 1-6, modern foliation in pencil, upper outer recto, 1-16 (collation, i^{iv} [+two leaves, a bifolium following 13]), faint ruling visible in hard point with full-length vertical bounding lines (justification 180-196 x 125-131 mm.), written in a rapid and somewhat variable mercantesca script on thirty-one to thirty-four long lines, one-line paraps, pointing hand drawn in the margin of f. 14, some smudging on f. 2, damp-staining at the top of f. 14, but otherwise in very fine condition. Bound in pasteboards with slight tear along the top of the upper board. Dimensions 221-222 x 148-150 mm.

This practical collection of forty-seven medical recipes for the treatment of horses, oxen, and other animals is attributed to two otherwise unknown practitioners writing in a proto-humanist rather than strictly medieval tradition. Collections of veterinary recipes are uncommon; only seven of over four hundred compilations of recipes in the Schoenberg Database are for veterinary medicine. These recipes do not appear to be from the well-known *Liber marescalciae equorum* of Lorenzo Rusio, although the first practitioner, here identified as Tomma, may have been familiar with Rusio.

PROVENANCE

1. Evidence of watermarks indicates that this manuscript was copied in the late fifteenth-century, most likely c. 1470-1490, possibly in the vicinity of Florence. Since it was common for recipe books to draw heavily on ingredients that were more likely to be readily available to their intended users, further study of the text of these recipes may provide additional evidence as to where in Italy this booklet originated.

Contemporary foliation is evidence that this was once part of a longer manuscript and may have been compiled over a period of years. The present ff. 2-13 were formerly a complete quire of twelve leaves, then foliated ff. 145-156; this was followed by the four leaves, now ff. 1 and 14-16, which were the two outer bifolia of the next quire, then foliated ff. 157-158 and 163-164. This second quire was copied continuously with the first and in the same hand, but on different paper with a later watermark. It was not completed. The bottom of f. 14v (formerly f. 157v) and all of ff. 1rv (formerly f. 158rv) and 15-16v (formerly ff. 163-164v) are blank, suggesting that the scribe had space to spare when he had copied this manuscript's contents, or that he intended to leave space for the addition of further recipes.

TEXT

f. 1rv, blank;

ff. 2-9v, *Ricette di frate Tomma de frati di santo[?] francesco obseruante[?]* [with "Per Caualli" added in a sixteenth-century hand], incipit, "Bagnuolo a uoler cauare doglie di bestie dogni luogo facciendo vno lactio a pie della doglia [Bath for wishing to take away the pangs everywhere of beasts ...] ..."; f. 3, incipit, "A vno cauallo caualla o altra bestia che fussi bolsa o auero auessi il fiato grosso [For a horse, mare, or other beast that might be winded or panting] ..."; f. 5, incipit, "Rimedio a doglie di cauagli e di buoi nelle spalli [Remedy for pains of horses and oxen in the back/shoulders] ..."; f. 5v, incipit, "Rimedio al dolore de neruj [Remedy for the pain of nerves] ..."; f. 8v, incipit, "A chauagli spallati o altre bestie e doglie a percusse le doue fussino fa questo bagnuolo qui di sotto iscritto [For broken-backed horses or other animals and pangs where beatings might be, make this bath that is written below] ... Et se farai queste cose sanera questo e arare[?] honore[?]"

Twenty-five recipes attributed to a friar Tomma, an Observant Franciscan. Many include extensive lists of ingredients, to be combined in equal measure. To take a relatively brief example, a recipe for a "Rimedio a doglie di cauagli e di buoi nelle spalli [Remedy for pains of horses and oxen in the back/shoulders]" (f. 5) calls for *morca d'olio* (oil scum), *trementina* (turpentine), *vernice liquida* (liquid varnish), *grasso di volpe* (fox fat), *sevo di becco* (tallow), and *olio laurino fine* (fine laurel oil) and specifies that two ounces of each be combined, heated, and applied to the area where the animal feels pain. At the other end of the spectrum, a recipe on f. 1rv contains twenty-four ingredients, listed down the page, all to be combined and dissolved over heat into an *impiastro* (poultice).

Many of the same ailments and recipe ingredients included among Friar Tomma's recipes also appear in the *Liber marescalciae equorum* of Lorenzo Rusio, one of the principal medieval *mascalcia* treatises, written in Latin in the fourteenth century and translated into Italian twice in the early fifteenth century, once by a Dominican friar, Antonio Dapera. Rusio's treatise discusses these ailments at greater length, and the cures for the ailments common to Rusio's and Tomma's texts are different in every instance we have examined, nonetheless, Tomma's inclusion of ailments and ingredients found in Rusio's treatise may indicate his familiarity with this important work.

ff. 10-14v, *Ricette di guidaccio bo[?] darne*, incipit, "A uoler guarire JI palatino a uno chauallo o mulo [For wanting to heal the palatine bone/hard palate for a horse or mule] ..."; f. 10, incipit, "A uoler Jngrassare vno chauallo [For wanting to fatten a horse] ..."; f. 12, incipit, "Rimedio a uno chauallo restio che non uolesse alchuna uolta andare piu oltre [Remedy for a reluctant horse that did not want any time to go over more] ..."; f. 12v, incipit, "A uoler saldare con presteza vna ferita o altra malattia che la piaga fussi purgata bene [For wanting to join with rapidity a wound or other malady that the sore may be well purged] ..."; f. 13, incipit, "A saldare nervi tagliati duna bestia [To join severed nerves of an animal] ..."; f. 13v, incipit, "A vna bestia che gli fussi infiato il corpo chome vna palla grossa o piu o meno per vna percossa o altro [For a beast swollen in the body like a big ball or more or less through a blow or otherwise] ..."; f. 14v, incipit, "Item a uoler liberare vno chauallo da dolori [Likewise for wishing to liberate a horse from pain] ... et dagli 3 uoler per lato in sul fiancho da ciaschuno lato";

Twenty-two recipes attributed to Guidaccio, possibly a soldier. Some also employ visually distinct lists of ingredients (generally shorter than those in the recipes attributed to Tomma), but most incorporate ingredients into their description of the procedure by which any given ailment is to be treated. For example, the first recipe in this section, "A voler guarire JI palatino

a uno chauallo o mulo [For wanting to heal the palatine bone/hard palate for a horse or mule] (f. 10), calls for heating *una fetta di pane* (a slice of bread) and then rubbing the animal's palate, first with this hot bread and then with *salvia* (sage), all before washing its mouth.

ff. 15-16v, blank.

Although in the modern world we usually think of recipes as instructions for preparing food, in the Middle Ages and well into the early modern era a "recipe" was understood in a much broader sense as a how-to instruction, usually brief, related to various crafts (including disciplines such as alchemy and medicine), as well as guides to making various things related to the household and agriculture.

This booklet contains forty-seven recipes for the treatment of equine and bovine ailments. Veterinary recipe collections do not appear to be common; there are only seven collections of veterinary recipes out of a total of more than four hundred medical recipe books listed in the Schoenberg Database. It should be noted, however, that since collections of recipes were often included in volumes containing many additional texts – whether additional recipe collections, tables, or medical treatises (see Brunori Cianti and Cianti, 1993) – it can be difficult to assess exactly how common they were. The contemporary foliation in this manuscript suggests it was once part of a larger volume, possibly a more extensive collection of recipes or, more broadly, other texts related to the care and study of horses or other animals.

The recipes here are medical, dealing with different parts of the bodies of horses, oxen, and mules and treating a very wide range of maladies, from problems with the feet, ears, back, thighs, joints, neck, and head to specific ailments like bony growths, swelling, puncture wounds, worms, distemper, mange, and fever. There are also recipes to treat unspecified pain. In some recipes the recipient (say, an ox or a mare) is specified, while others do not appear to be intended for a particular species or gender. One recipe is specifically intended for an unwilling horse ("*una chauallo restio*," f. 12). A number of recipes offer means of fattening animals or of treating them when they have sustained blows. There are recipes for baths, poultices, ointments, and so forth, using various vegetal and mineral ingredients, as well as some animal derivatives, like pork and goose fat. Some of the recipes conclude with affirmations that they are "*prouato*," that they have been proven to work.

In her typology of *mascalcia* manuscripts (that is, veterinary manuscripts associated particularly with horse medicine), Lia Brunori Cianti (1993, p. 207) identifies three distinct types: practical, courtly, and didactic manuscripts. Treatises on the physical characteristics and medical treatment of horses did circulate in very luxurious copies produced for aristocratic owners, as well as in manuscripts intended for teaching or for practical use. Unlike other practical manuscripts identified by Brunori Cianti, this manuscript has virtually no annotation and it shows relatively little sign of wear. That said, the present manuscript was likely produced to be used. Its relatively unadorned pages and rapid cursive suggest its practical nature, as does its focus on recipes whose named sources cannot readily be identified with a known practitioner or writer of *mascalcia*. It may be that both sources were local and known to the producer or user of the book. As the discussion above suggests, most of these recipes address what were presumably fairly common ailments of horses and oxen. Moreover, the recipes largely draw on ingredients that would have been readily obtainable, like onions, honey, and olive oil. Indeed, in

its concentration on recipes largely built on vegetal, and, in many cases, local, ingredients this collection fits most closely within the traditions of fifteenth-century and proto-Renaissance humanist veterinary recipe books, rather than on earlier medieval treatments.

LITERATURE

Brunori Cianti, Lia and Luca Cianti. *La pratica della veterinaria nei codici medievali di mascalcia*, Bologna, 1993.

Coco, Alessandra. "Cortesi e cavalleria: la tradizione ippiatrica in volgare nelle corti italiane tra Trecento e Quattrocento," *Micrologus 16: I saperi nelle corti: The Knowledge at the Courts* (2008), pp. 125-152.

Coco, Alessandra and Riccardo Gualdo. "Problemi di ricostruzione e di edizione del testo in un'opera di veterinaria medievale: il trattato di mascalcia dello Pseudo-Aristotele," in *Atti del III convegno nazionale di storia della medicina veterinaria: Lastra a Signa, 23-24 settembre 2000*, ed. Alba Veggetti, Brescia, 2001, pp. 327-339.

Delprato, Pietro and Luigi Barbieri. *La Mascalcia di Lorenzo Rusio, volgarizzamento del secolo XIV messo per la prima volta in luce ... aggiuntovi il testo latino ...*, 2 vols., Bologna, Romagnoli, 1867-1870.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Rusio, Lorenzo. *Liber marescalcie*, Speyer, 1489 (Herzog August Bibliothek, Wolfenbüttel)
<http://diglib.hab.de/inkunabeln/80-5-quod-1/start.htm>

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