

2970 North Lake Shore Drive 11B
Chicago, Illinois 60657

tel. 1-773-929-5986
fax. 1-773-528-3976
chicago@lesenluminures.com

Le Louvre des Antiquaires
2 place du Palais-Royal
75001 Paris

tél : 33 1 42 60 15 58
fax : 33 1 40 15 00 25
info@lesenluminures.com

[ANONYMOUS], *Fünff Bücher Bewerter Leibs Arznei* [*Five Books on Medication*]
In German, manuscript on paper
[Germany, Saxony, circa 1560]

[3] blank leaves + [XXXIII] non foliated leaves + [1] blank leaf + 349 foliated leaves (paginated on first recto of each leaf), mostly in quires of 8, alphabetical quire signatures on first folio of each quire, on paper with multiple watermarks ("Crosse protégée sur la poitrine d'un Aigle," similar to Briquet 1366 or 1367: [Basel, 1585 or 1576]; "Crosse isolée," similar to Briquet 1273 or 1278 [Basel]; "Armoiries. Bande," close to Briquet 991 or 992 [Strasbourg]), text complete, written on up to 29 long lines (justification: 110 x 150 mm), in black ink in a German gothic cursive script for the chapter titles and rubrics and a different tight cursive hands for the text, chapter headings in red often decorated with elegant calligraphic flourishes of rinceaux and foliate extensions. Bound in a CONTEMPORARY BLIND STAMPED PIGSKIN BINDING, over wooden boards, spine sewn on four thongs, remains of brass clasps, front cover: triple blind-rolled frame composed of triple filets, outer frame with frieze of busts set in medallions alternating with acanthus leaves, middle frame with repeated impressions of columns of leaves and rinceaux, central compartment with stamp of female Allegory of Justice, below which the inscription reads: "Justiciae quisquis picturam lumine cernis" and back cover: same multiple roll-tooled borders as described for front cover with central compartment with stamp of Lucretia plunging her husband's dagger into her heart, below which the inscription reads: "Casta tulit magnam forme Lucretia laudem" (Binding close in style to the one described in Goldschmidt, *Gothic & Renaissance Bookbindings*, London, E. Benn, 1928, n° 244, p. 311-312: "Justice and Lucrece. Nürnberg (or Saxony), about 1575"); clasps missing, upper joint split at foot, corners worn, else in overall good condition. Dimensions: 110 x 215 mm.

Anonymous and evidently unedited, the present manuscript includes medical recipes for and practical advice on diverse bodily ailments and a treatise on the plague. It merits further study for its relationship to the medieval and Renaissance history of pharmacology and the Black Death. Preserving a fine original Saxon binding with notes on individuals in the Saxon court, the manuscript may originate in the milieu of the ducal court, where there was notable interest in pharmacology.

PROVENANCE

1. The Saxon binding, the watermarks, and the contemporary notes in the second part of the manuscript suggest that it originates in the milieu of the Saxon court around 1560.

TEXT

f. I, Title: Fünff Bücher. Bewerter Leibs Artzney zür gesundheit und grossem trost des Menschlichen Leibs dienende etc. mit Iren ordenlichen Tractaten und Kapitteln sampt dem vorangehenden Register ;

ff. Iv-V, Register dieser nachüotgenden_Fünff Bücher bewerter Leibs Artzney. Register des ersten Buchs unnd seiner zwen Tractat. [I] Vom Häupt unnd seinen Krackheiten. – [II] Zum Haar und für desselben unziffer. – [III] Zum Angesicht. – [IV] Von den Ohren. – [V] Vom Schlaff. – [VI] Von den Zenen und dem Mündt. – [VII] Von gebresten der züngen hals und dem Husten. – [VIII] Zü dem Magen. – [IX] Zü der Leber. – [X] Zü dem Hertzen. – [XI] Vom Bäuch. – [XII] Von dem Stulgang. – [XIII] Von dem Stein. – [XIV] Von Weibern, Kindern geben und Ihrer blödigkeit. – [XV] Vom Kaltenweke. – [XVI] Zur Gebsucht. – [XVII] Allehand Beschwer und Gift. – [XVIII] Wunden und Schäden. – [XIX] Zü der Nasen. – [XX] Zün Beynen und Füssen;

ff. Vv-XV, Register des andern Buchs nach Inhalt seiner Titül;

ff. XVv-XXIIIv, Register des dritten Buchs über seine 3 Tractat fo[lio] 217;

ff. XXIV-XXVIIIv, Register des vierten Buchs über seine 73 kapitel;

ff. XXIX-XXXIII, Register des fünften Buchs von proeservationem unnd bereytung mancherley Artzneyen wider die grausam Pestilenz unnd allerhautt Biff im der scheiden im zwen Tractat mit sampt einem Beschlutz folio 251;

ff. 1- 291v, Zwey schöner Bücher Bewerter Artzney von Leiblicher Kranckheit unnd ist das erste aüfgetheilt Inn zwen Tractat, as follows; f. 35, Das ander Büch Bewerter Artzney der leiblichen Kranckheit; f. 161, Das dritte Büch von vielen Herzlichen Bewaltigen unnd probierten Artzneyen nach Paracelsischer Künst und Lehre zü Nütz unnd Trost der Krancken und sclrachen Menschen; f. 217, Das vierte Büchbewerter Leibs Artzney ist aüsgetheit in 3 Traktat; f. 251, Das fünffte Büch. Von Proeservativen unnd bereytung manncherley Artzneyen wider die gräusam Pestilenz;

ff. 292–337v, Der ander Tractat von den XX Pestilenz Wurkeln unnd kreuter Welche einer solchen grossen wunderbarlichen tugent Wirckung unnd krafft seint wider die grausam Pestilenz unnd alle gifft das sichdarab zuerwunderen ist Darumben mann pillich Gott den schopffer aller Creaturen darfür hochlichen dancken loben und Preisen soll unnd ist solcher tractat ausgetheilet in XXI capitel;

f. 338, blank ;

ff. 339–343, Zum Beschluss volgen etliche gewaltige recept fur die Pestilenz;

ff. 344–349, Vor allerhand giffit unnd giffitige thier, unnd biss etc.

Intended for practical use, this medical compendium addresses bodily diseases from the head to the foot (ff. 1–34v), illnesses suffered by young and old alike. Divided into two parts, the first treatise includes hundreds of prescriptions for all kinds of illnesses, or even practical advice one would classify as “Curiosa”: “to attain love” (f. 117v); “amazing adventures with women and virgins” (f. 118). It includes remedies for diseases and ailments of the head, the hair, the face, the ears, on sleep, on the teeth and the mouth, on the neck, throat, and coughs, on “females,” [menstruation, etc.], on the liver, on the heart, on the belly, on the bowels, on women and child birthing, on chills, on poisons, on wounds and breaks, on the nose, on the legs and feet. Its numerous prescriptions offer interesting insight into the history of herbalism and pharmaceutical practices.

The work appears to be anonymous and unedited. Authorities quoted therein include not only Origenus and Paracelsus, but also contemporary men of science such as Pierandrea Mattioli (1500–1577) (fol. 347v), Italian doctor to Maximilian II, and Girolamo Ruscelli, (1500?–1566) (fol. 87).

Likewise anonymous and evidently unedited, the second treatise on the Plague comprises numerous annotations by an anonymous practitioner. It can be identified as an abbreviated and modified copy of a work with the same title by the Dortmund physician named Tarquinius Schnellenberg [see bibliography below], and constitutes an interesting source on the Plague in Europe. The Black Death is one of those momentous events in Europe that touched every feature of life, from economics and wage labor to art history and hopes for the after life, from concepts of social alliance to new forms of hospital architecture. The pamphlet literature it inspired is one of the most interesting of the end of the Middle Ages and the early modern period.

The appendix to the treatise on the Plague provides some indication as to the time and place of composition of this medical compendium. The appendix records that of the 15 children born to August of Saxony Wettin (1526–1586), only 5 survived: the three oldest were Elizabeth (1552–1590), Alexander (1554–1565) and Christian (1560–1591). The appendix does not mention the Duke’s daughter Dorothea, born in 1563 (f. 339v: “Den kleinen Kindern das sie es nit bekommen, als Hertzog Alexander und frewlin Elisabet, unnd Herzog Christian”). The manuscript could thus have been copied circa 1560, in the vicinity of the Saxon ducal court.

The Saxon binding strongly suggests that the work originated in this milieu, and it is thus tempting even to see the manuscript as a reflection of the contemporary interests of an important figure in the Saxon court. Duchess Anna or “Mutter Anna” (1532–1585) was known for her varied activities in agriculture, herb remedies and medicine and was responsible for establishing a pharmacy at the Dresden court in 1581

LITERATURE

Haberling, Wilhelm. *German medicine*, New York, AMS, 1978.

Haferlach Torsten. *Die Darstellung von Verletzungen und Krankheiten und ihrer Therapie in mittelalterlicher deutscher Literatur unter gattungsspezifischen Aspekten*, Heidelberg, 1991.

Mattioli, Pietro Andrea. *Petri Andreae Matthioli Senensis, medici caesarei, et serenissimi principis Ferdinandi, archiducis Austriae & c. Commentarij in VI. libros Pedacij Dioscoridis Anazarbei de medica materia, ab ipso auctore recogniti, et locis plvs mille acvt: Adiectis magnis, ac nouis plantarum, ac animalium iconibus, supra priores editiones longè pluribus, ad viuum delineatis. Accesserunt quoque ad margines Graeci contextus quàm plurimi, ex antiquissimis codicibus desumpti, qui Dioscoridis codicibus desumpti, qui Dioscoridis ipsius deprauatam lectionem restituunt. Cvm locvpletissimis indicibus, tum ad rem herbariam, tum medicamentariam pertinentibus ... Venetijs: apud Felicem Valgrisium, MDLXXXIII [1583].*

Mattioli, Pietro Andrea. *New Kreütterbuch [Herbal]*. Gedruckt zu Prag, G. Melantrich, 1563.

Schnellenberg, Tarquinius. *Experimenta von XX. Pestilentz Wurtzeln vnd Kreutern, wie sie alle und ein jeglichs besonder für Gifft vnd Pestilentz gebraucht mögen werden*, Franckfurdt am Mayn, Wygand Han, [1546].

ONLINE RESOURCES

Medical misconceptions of the Middle Ages
http://www.the-orb.net/non_spec/missteps/ch4.html

Bibliography of medieval medicine
<http://www.umm.maine.edu/medica/biblio.html>

Medieval manuscripts in the National Library of Medicine
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/hmd/medieval/medievalhome.html>