

# The authorship of the Galenic compendium *de interioribus*, «Quoniam diversitas...»

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Over a decade ago Juan A. Paniagua called attention (1) to a remark made by Arnald of Villanova in his *Speculum medicine* of 1308:

«Such consequences or effects of illnesses are subsumed under four things *contra naturam*, namely pain, unnatural fear, impairment of activity, and a change in bodily excretions... Lovers of truth can be satisfied as to the specific meaning of these four things by Galen's treatise *de interioribus* in our translation, by his books on the pulses and on ills of the breathing and voice and his remarks *de accidentibus morborum*, and by the *Urines* of Isaac» (2).

Arnald is well known as a translator of medical works from the Arabic, including one by Galen (the *Liber de rigore, tremore, ictigatione et spasmo*), so that the idea of his having translated *De interioribus* (= *De locis affectis*) is not at all impossible; but in that case, with which of the existing medieval translations (none of which bears his name in any manuscript) is it to be identified? The version beginning «Loca autem nominant» was prepared from the Greek by Burgundio of Pisa in the twelfth century, while the version beginning «Medicorum non solum», translated from the Arabic, was already widely diffused in the thirteenth century at the time when Arnald's career was just getting under way (3).

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(1) Juan A. PANIAGUA (1969) *El Maestro Arnau de Vilanova médico*, Valencia, pp. 3-4.

(2) «Tales autem impressiones vel effectus morborum sub quattuor rebus contra naturam comprehenduntur, que sunt dolor, timor innaturalis, et lesio operationis, et immutatio exeuntium a corpore... De specifica vero significatione predictorum quattuor generum tractatus G. de interioribus secundum nostram translationem et libri eius de pulsibus et de malicia anhelitus et bocis et considerationes eius de accidentibus morborum et urine Ysaach satisfaciunt amatoribus veritatis.» *Speculum medicine* cap. 100, in *Opera Arnaldi de Villanova* (Venice, 1505), fol. 41rb-va.

(3) On these versions, see Richard J. DURLING (1967) *Corrigenda and Addenda to Diels' Galenica, Traditio*, 23, 466-67.

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DYNAMIS

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A third version of *De interioribus* is that beginning «Quoniam diversitas», found only in three manuscripts of the fourteenth century, and remarkably it is closely associated with Arnaldian texts in all three cases. In MS Munich, CLM 3520, it occupies fols. 57v-61v, immediately following Arnald's translation of Avicenna's *De viribus cordis* (fols. 44v-48v) and his own *Aphorismi de gradibus* (fols. 49-57). In MS Venice, S. Marco lat. Z. 314 (= 1644), it is the one unidentified intruder in an otherwise all-Arnaldian codex: the contents are Arnald's *Speculum*, the *De interioribus*, Arnald's translation of *De viribus cordis*, and his *Parabole medicacionis*. Finally, our text appears in MS Oxford, Merton College 230, which is a manuscript of considerable interest for Arnaldian studies. At fols. 33-99 this manuscript contains the texts of seven of Arnald's most important compositions and translations, in versions that are invariably of high quality, and it seems not unlikely that these derive from an early collection of Arnald's works prepared in some sense for publication. Immediately following these seven compositions (and in fact bringing the codex to an end) appears the text «Quoniam diversitas» under the title «Doctrina G. de interioribus secundum stilum latinorum», written in the same hand as the preceding works. (Richard Durling has made a preliminary collation of all three manuscripts of «Quoniam diversitas» and has determined that the best text is provided by this Merton College copy.) (4). Given the fact of this early and invariable association of «Quoniam diversitas» with the heart of the Arnaldian oeuvre, it is attractive to believe that the association is by design and not by chance, and that the work is in fact his «de interioribus secundum nostram translationem».

One major difficulty with this identification is that «Quoniam diversitas» is not, strictly speaking, a *translation* of *De interioribus*. On the basis of his collation of the text, Durling has found that «Quoniam» is not

«a version of this treatise [but] turns out to be a compendium based largely on books 1-2 of *De locis affectis* and is clearly incomplete. It is based on the Arabo-Latin version, and shows no signs of Burgundio's influence. Compare the rendering of Choerilus frg. 10. In the Arabo-Latin version this runs: *Assidua guttarum aque distillatio lapidem perforat*. Cf. the compendium: *Constat enim quod assidua distillatione gutte perforatur lapis*» (5).

(4) Personal communication, 6 March 1981. I am extremely grateful to Dr. Durling for his helpful comments and for his willingness to allow me to consult his collation of this text.

(5) Personal communication, 6 March 1981; the quotation is from an article forthcoming in *Traditio*.

Because the text of «*Quoniam diversitas*» is, as Durling says, merely a reworking of a part of *De interioribus*, it would seem impossible for it to be Arnald's «translation».

Yet some further evidence remains to be considered. First, the subjects discussed in the abbreviated compendium «*Quoniam diversitas*» do still correspond well to the subjects Arnald said were treated in his «translation» of *De interioribus*. The topics considered by the compendium (and by the first two books of the Arabo-Latin translation) are in fact pain, impairment of activity, and bodily excretions considered as possible symptoms of disease—three of the four subjects identified in Arnald's remark, treated in the order in which he enumerated them. The abbreviated compendium is actually more to the point of his allusion than the longer, more diffuse treatise would have been.

Second, the compendium format allowed the author of «*Quoniam diversitas*» to introduce something of his own interests into his organization and presentation of Galen's teachings, and there is at least one passage in the compendium that shows a remarkable congruence with Arnald's own concerns. In his reworking of lib. I cap. 3, the author digresses long enough to argue for the unimportance of terminological distinctions to the actual practice of medicine, thus making a point not to be found in the Arabo-Latin original.

«To investigate whether this or that ought properly to be called *nocumentum* rather than *morbus*, or vice versa, or *passio*, or *accidens*, and so forth, is of no value for a cure. It is enough to use the names we have according to the practice of the learned ancients, who regularly used the terms *dolor* and *nocumentum* and *accidens* to indicate the condition of some activity, namely its affliction or lesion; and to call *morbus* the unnatural condition or disposition of [the activity's] member, since it is an effect imposed on the member by a motion *extra naturam*. For not every change or alteration of a member constitutes a *morbus*, only that by which a member is so disturbed or corrupted that it perceptibly exceeds the limits of its natural disposition or condition... Such investigations are entirely useless to the physician, because he cannot gain a correct understanding of illness through them, nor is it [sic] useful to a cure or to knowledge of future things» (6).

- (6) «Investigare vero, utrum hoc aut illud debeat proprie vocari nocumentum et non morbus, aut e converso, sive passio aut accidens et similia, non prodest curacioni. Sufficit autem nominibus inventis uti secundum consuetudinem sapientum antiquorum, qui nomine doloris et nocumenti et accidentis utuntur ut plurimum ad signandum habitum quandam accionis, scilicet eius maliciam vel lesionem, et appellare morbum innaturalem habitum, vel dispositionem illius membri, cum sit effectus illatus membro per motum extra naturam. Non enim omnis mutacio vel alteracio membri constituit morbum, set illa solum qua membrum confunditur vel corrumpitur taliter, ut sensibiliter egrediatur terminos naturalis dispositionis aut habitus... Que investigaciones penitus sunt inutiles

This insistence that dialectical niceties are unimportant in comparison with the doctor's real task is a commonplace in Arnald's writings, and in his *Tractatus de amore heroico* of the 1270's or 1280's is expressed in a context and in language surprisingly close to that of «Quoniam diversitas»:

«*Morbus* is a *mala dispositio* and is contrary to the nature of the body; but a *nocumentum* consequent upon this disposition, affecting the activity of some faculty operating in an organ disposed contrary to nature, is called by the convenient term of *accidens morbi*... But the physician [sometimes] names the *morbus* by the *accidens*..., especially since this brings about no impediment to his work; for since the physician struggles to understand the essence of a *morbus* to perfect his work (and naming a *morbus* in whatever way you please does not affect the manner of working rightly, since the name is only used for the instruction of the young and of those to be introduced to these matters), studying the weakness from those things that reveal themselves most obviously in the *morbus*, he accepts the imposition of the name» (7).

Whoever the author of «Quoniam diversitas» was, his medical values agreed remarkably well with Arnald's.

That this similarity is not merely coincidence is established beyond much doubt by a passing remark in Arnald's commentary upon the first of the Hippocratic *Aphorisms* («*Vita brevis, ars vero longa*»), written probably in the first decade of the fourteenth century at Montpellier:

«the first two parts *de interioribus* contain a useful doctrine, absolutely necessary to the physician, which the understanding could not master in the common translation because of the difference of renderings (*differentia reductionum*); it was rendered (*reducta*) last year in the fashion of the Latins, so that every student could perfect himself in them...» (8).

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medico, quia nec per has acquirit cognitionem rectam morborum, nec prodest curacioni, nec providencie futurorum» (ed. R. Durling). Nothing of this is to be found in the text of «*Medicorum non solum*» (*Opera Galeni* [Venice 1490], fol. 331vA).

- (7) «*Morbus* etenim est *mala dispositio* et contra naturam membri existit; *nocumentum* autem quod ex *mala dicta dispositione* sequitur ad actionem virtutis operantis in organo sic contra naturam disposito convenienti nomine morbi *accidens* appellatur... Medicus vero... morbum hic ab accidente denominat, maxime cum hoc nullum procuret impedimentum in opere; cum etenim ad operis rectitudinem morbi essentiam medicus laboret agnoscere (et hoc etiam recte operationes formam non curat morbum quomodolibet nominare, cum solum utatur nomine ad doctrinam minorum et introducendorum in hoc), debilitatem considerans ab eis que in morbo manifestiora patescunt, nominis impositionem assumit.» I am in the process of editing the *Tractatus de amore heroico*: the text given above is based primarily upon Ms Vatican Palat. lat. 1180, fol. 197v. A less satisfactory text is in *Opera Arnaldi* (Venice, 1505), fol. 249rB.
- (8) «... Prime due particule de interioribus utilem continent doctrinam et valde necessariam medico, nec per communem traslationem poterat intellectus elici propter differentiam reductionum; et reducta fuerit anno preterito ad statum latinorum, ita quod omnis studens potest in eis modo proficere, et notabiliter defectus est medici qui caruit scientia illarum duarum particularum.» I reproduce without emendation the text in *Repetitio super can. Vita brevis, Opera Arnaldi* (Venice, 1505, fol. 321vB).

This passage can scarcely be misunderstood in the light of what has already been discussed. The text to which Arnald refers here as composed in the previous year is clearly the compendium, «Quoniam diversitas», a reworking (not really a «translation») of the first two books of *De interioribus* that, as we have seen, still bears in MS Merton 230 the heading «secundum stilum latinorum». Inescapably, I think, we must acknowledge that it was «Quoniam diversitas» to which Arnald referred as «nostram translationem», despite the inaccuracy of that term, and must date its composition to Montpellier in the early years of the fourteenth century.