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Ancient Philosophy at Salerno in the twelfth century, by Paul Oskar
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I know only too well that this paper can be at best but of indirect interest to the members of this Society, and that it is not likely to produce a lively discussion. All I can say is that I do not present it to you on my own initiative, but at the express invitation of the President and Secretary of this Society. I shall try to keep at a minimum those aspects of my topic that are mainly of interest to medieval historians, and to emphasize those that connect the school of Salerno with the heritage of ancient thought. Yet the main starting point of my paper is a group of previously unknown medical texts from the twelfth century, which I discovered in a group of manuscripts during the last few years, and I must first describe the historical setting in which these texts acquire whatever significance they may possess.

When we try to attach a precise meaning to the term "scholastic method" which is so frequently used to characterize medieval philosophy and science, we really mean a method of reasoning and of arguing which appears in its full development in all branches of learning during the thirteenth century, and which centers around two types of learned literature, the Question and the Commentary. Both types of literature originated in the practices of the newly founded universities, the Question in the disputation on a proposed thesis, the Commentary in the lecture course. For the curriculum of the universities and other medieval schools prescribed for each branch of learning the reading and explanation of certain authoritative texts, and the extant commentaries usually are the more or less edited products of these lecture courses. In the field of philosophy, the works of Aristotle were adopted as the chief texts during the thirteenth century, and this was made possible by the fact that between the twelfth and thirteenth century all, or most, of the Aristotelian writings had been translated from Greek or Arabic into Latin. Thus Aristotelianism became the dominant trend of later medieval philosophy, and retained much of its importance far into early modern times. This Aristotelianism was by no means a unified phenomenon; it varied according to place and time, and according to the individual thinkers, in its emphasis and doctrinal content, as well as in the other interests and theories with which it was combined. In Italy where Aristotelian philosophy flourished from the late thirteenth to the early seventeenth century, especially at Padua, Bologna and other universities, this philosophy was linked with medicine rather than with theology, and consequently shows a markedly secular and naturalistic character. This link between philosophy and medicine means that for that period the history of medicine acquires an indirect importance for the historian of philosophy. Ever since the twelfth century, the academically trained doctor was called *physicus* (hence our word "physician") because he had received a training in natural philosophy, and at least since the thirteenth century he was supposed to study Aristotle's writings on logic and natural philosophy. Moreover, much of the strictly medical instruction, at least since the thirteenth century, was based on standard Greek and Arabic medical writers such as Galen and Avicenna whose writings contained a good deal of ancient philosophical, and especially of Aristotelian doctrine. All these developments can be easily traced back to the thirteenth century, especially at Bologna and Padua. The question arises what role, if any, in this development belongs to the

medical school of Salerno which originated and flourished much earlier than the North Italian schools, and which differed from them in many ways. For Salerno existed as a medical center as early as the tenth century, and during the height of its development, in the twelfth century, the fame of its cures, the number of its students, and the volume of its literature was so impressive that historians of medicine refer to that period as to the period of Salernitan medicine. Yet Salerno originated as a center of medical practice rather than of learning. Much of its literature even in the twelfth century is devoted to medical practice rather than to theory, and for a long time it was the fashion among medical historians to praise the school of Salerno for its lack of philosophical interests and of scholastic learning. Yet some time ago scholars came to realize that two important Salerno masters active around 1200, Maurus and Urso, were interested in natural philosophy as well as in medicine, and were acquainted with the teachings, and probably with the writings, of Aristotle. Moreover, Maurus composed a commentary, or a gloss, on a Corpus of standard medical texts by Johannitius, Hippocrates, Galen and others, a Corpus that was used for medical instruction down to the sixteenth century under the name of Articella. The existence of this commentary proves, and its method and content confirm, that the tradition of medical teaching, as known from the later medieval universities, and the alliance between medicine and Aristotelian philosophy that was an important feature of that tradition, were actually cultivated in Salerno around 1200, and that the example of Salerno must have exercised some influence on the other younger centers of medicine and philosophy that were soon to surpass it in fame and importance. It is against this background that I wish to discuss the texts which I found a few years ago and which form the main subject of this paper. These texts consist in a group of commentaries on the same Articella, composed by two other Salerno masters, Bartholomaeus and Petrus Musandinus, who were active, respectively, around the middle and second half of the twelfth century. The very existence of these commentaries seems to prove that all the developments which I have been trying to describe, may be traced back in Salerno to the middle of the twelfth century, that is, half a century earlier than had been possible up to now. Since the twelfth century was the formative period in which the scholastic method, the organization and curriculum of the universities, and more specifically the reception of Aristotle in the West, and the alliance between medicine and philosophy began to take shape, we are now entitled to assign to medicine and to Salerno a greater share in these developments than had been possible before, as compared with theology, canon and civil law, or with Paris, Oxford, and Bologna.

The gloss or commentary on the Articella by Bartholomaeus and Musandinus presents a number of technical problems which I shall not discuss in detail. After having encountered it for the first time in a manuscript in 1952, I have found all or part of it in many other manuscripts. I now know twenty manuscripts containing it, and am on the track of another manuscript. This large number of manuscripts is sufficient to prove that the work had a fairly wide diffusion and influence for several centuries after its composition. Aside from the date and geographical distribution of these manuscripts, there is a question of authorship. Several manuscripts are anonymous, and a few

attribute the work to different authors who for various reasons cannot have written it. Most manuscripts give the name of Bartholomaeus, several identify the work as a lecture course, and at least one good manuscript indicates his pupil Petrus Musandinus as editor of the work. A further complication arises from the fact that several manuscripts offer versions of the gloss that differ from that of the chief manuscript. Yet I am confident that it can be shown that these variants do not touch the substance of the work, and that it may be assigned in its extant forms to Salerno and to the middle or second half of the twelfth century. This proves that the school of Salerno at that time was no longer concerned with practical medicine alone, but had begun to introduce into its curriculum the oral exposition of standard Greek and Arabic texts, and especially of the Articella, and cultivated the form of the commentary as a main branch of its medical literature. A closer reading of the commentaries, and especially of their prologues, disclose further points that are of special interest to us: there is a conscious effort to establish a link between medicine and philosophy; the teachings and writings of Aristotle are repeatedly cited and used on significant issues; finally, Galen who was to remain one of the chief medical authorities, is also utilized for the philosophical and methodological ideas contained in his writings. I shall try to illustrate these points with a few examples, and shall append to my paper the relevant texts, both in order to document my assertions, and to encourage a further discussion of these texts, independently of the points I am trying to emphasize.

The first point which I should like to stress concerns the link between medicine and philosophy. This link that was to characterize the Italian university tradition down to the sixteenth century and later, is consciously emphasized and, we might say, formulated as a program at the very beginning of our text, that is, in the prologue to Johannitius. We find here a very characteristic and probably unique answer to a highly conventional question. The question is to which part of philosophy the present text belongs, and this question is found in the prologues of most medieval commentaries, regardless of subject matter. In answering this question, magister Bartholomaeus develops a highly complex division of philosophy in which conventional and novel elements are combined in a curious way (text 1). He divides philosophy into natural science, ethics and logic, roughly following a tripartite division that probably goes back to Xenocrates. He then divides natural science into metaphysics or theology, mathematics and physics, using a scheme that appears in Aristotle (*Metaph.* XI 7, 1064 b2). (I). He thus compromises between two conventional divisions of philosophy, and uses the device of artificially distinguishing between natural science and physics. Finally, he divides physics into three parts one of which is medicine, and defines medicine in a manner that emphasizes its theoretical aspect and facilitates its subordination under physics and philosophy. That the author attaches importance to this curious scheme which was probably his own handiwork, we may gather from the fact that in all his other commentaries he regularly refers to this passage in order to prove the definition of medicine as a part or subdivision of philosophy.

This basic attitude that medicine should be treated as a part of philosophy is confirmed in the course of the work by a number of

philosophical quotations and reflections. I shall illustrate this with a few quotations from Aristotle because they show that the importance of Aristotle for later medieval thought was anticipated in these early texts, especially since these Aristotelian quotations and ideas, though elementary, are important and correctly rendered. They gain in historical significance because they presumably belong to a period when the respective writings of Aristotle were not yet available in Latin translations; and they confirm and even help to broaden a statement once formulated by Birkenmajer, namely that the medical tradition had an important share in the reception of Aristotle during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Magister Bartholomaeus, to give specific examples, defines God as unmoved mover (text 2, end). He is not only familiar with the distinction of four causes, but he stresses that the natural philosopher is primarily concerned with efficient causes, and criticizes those who substitute final for efficient causes (text 3), thus hinting at an important methodological problem that was to remain alive for many centuries. He knows Aristotle's definition of moral virtue as a mean between excess and deficiency, and even cites examples in accordance with Aristotle's Ethics, and then he applies this doctrine to medicine, stressing that health is also a mean between excess and deficiency (text 4). Finally, he cites Aristotle for the concept of nature and of motion (text 2), showing an adequate understanding, if not of the details, at least of the basic outline of Aristotle's concepts.

Finally, I should like to call attention to a passage which is of considerable interest for the history of thought, and which is taking its start, not from Aristotle, but from Galen (text 5). In discussing the manner of teaching, the genus doctrine, of his text, Bartholomaeus cites Galen for the distinction between three manners of teaching, by definition, by division and by composition. He also tries to harmonize this scheme with a similar one found in an Arabic treatise translated by Constantinus Africanus. The terms of the discussion are rather simple, but the theme was to occupy almost all writers on method down to the sixteenth century. Especially the distinction between division and composition (analysis and synthesis), although frequently defined along different lines, was to remain important down to the time of Galileo and afterwards. It seems evident that aside from Aristotle and Euclid, Galen was the most important ancient source of this distinction in later medieval thought. Our passage does not merely confirm this influence of Galen, but it is, to my knowledge, the earliest medieval discussion of the problem, and perhaps the starting point of a discussion that was to remain alive for centuries in the schools of medicine, of philosophy and of other academic disciplines.

I hope these examples are sufficient to illustrate the general point which I have been trying to make: the impact of Greek philosophy and science, and especially of Aristotle, upon medieval Western thought appears in the work of the medical school of Salerno as early as the middle of the twelfth century, and this impact is strong and specific. The Aristotelian notions used and emphasized by our authors may appear to be rather elementary or even badly selected from our own point of view, yet they acquire great historical significance, it seems to me, from the novelty they had in their own time, and from the development they

received in the following centuries. What we witness in these texts are the first timid beginnings of what was to become a broad and powerful philosophical tradition, medieval Italian Aristotelianism. It is apparent, in this initial phase as in its later stages, that this movement owed much, though not all, of its impetus, to the renewed influence, both direct and indirect, of Greek philosophy and science, and especially of Aristotle and of Galen.

Text 1

Glossa in Johannitium.

Spectat autem hoc opus ad phisicam per medicinam, per phisicam ad naturalem scientiam, per naturalem scientiam ad philosophiam, quod per ipsius philosophie divisionem facilius patebit. dividitur namque philosophia in tres partes in naturalem scientiam moralem et rationalem que sic dicuntur a grecis theoricam ethica et logica. et quoniam ad theoricam spectat hoc opus, ponenda est theorice diffinitio et eius divisio, ut appareat secundum quam theorice speciem liber iste ad phisicam pertineat. Est igitur theoricam scientia naturam vel principium nature contemplans. Huius autem tripartita est divisio in metaphisicam et mathematicam et phisicam, quarum prima de principio nature sine motu, secunda de principio nature cum motu, tertia de ipsa rerum natura pertractat. Metaphisica vero a quibusdam auctoribus theologia dicitur. Sic igitur naturalis scientia non solum de natura, sed de principiis nature pertractat, phisica vero tantum de natura pertractat. Dividitur autem phisica in tres partes, prima quidem cum toto idem nomen sortita phisica dicitur que et physiologia dicitur, secunda metheora, tertia medicina. Istarum autem trium prima de elementis pertractat hec autem pars phisice per excellenciam phisica dicitur Metheora vero dicitur scientia de elementorum actionibus vel passionibus in mundi constructione pertractans Tercia pars huius scientie medicina dicitur. hec quidem de actionibus et passionibus elementorum in commixtis corporibus pertractat. Licet enim gratia humani corporis inventa fuerit, nichilominus tamen de omnibus humanum corpus immutantibus agit et disserit. Hoc ergo opus per medicinam spectat ad phisicam, per phisicam ad naturalem scientiam et sic ad philosophiam.

Text 2

Glossa in Johannitium.

Naturam sic diffinit Aristoteles in Phisicis. Natura est principium motus et quietis rei per se mobilis (Phys. II 1, 192 b21 f.) (II). Sub motu igitur comprehendit Aristoteles illas VI species motus que in libro Cathégoriarum ab eodem distinguuntur videlicet generatio corruptio augmentum diminutio alteratio secundum locum mutatio. Et bene per motum diffinivit naturam. Natura enim est efficiens causa omnium eorum que fiunt vel facta sunt in tempore. Sine vero motu nichil fit. ut enim fiat generari necesse est. Principium vero motus duplex est, causa scilicet efficiens et materialis. ut enim motus fiat duo necessaria concurrunt quod moveat et quod moveatur, idest quod motum efficiat et quod motum efficientis suscipiat. Cum igitur tam efficiens causa quam materialis possit dici principium motus, primum tamen principium motus dicitur causa efficiens utpote que precedit materialem. agens enim naturaliter prius est paciente. Cum ergo duplex sit motus principium, in descriptione nature illud est intelligendum quod est causa efficiens. huius autem principii idest cause efficientis duo genera sunt, intrinsecus

scilicet et extrinsecus. Extrinsecus motus dicitur principium quod extra terminos rei et ambitus existens eam tamen movet quodam mediante principio intrinseco hoc autem extrinsecus principium dividitur in duo, aliud enim cum motu aliud sine motu. Sine motu unum est tantum ut ipsa prima omnium causarum causa que deus ets. Deus enim manens immobilis principium et causa est omnium motuum. . . .

Text 3

Glossa in Johannitium.

Quoniam ad phisicam efficientium causarum spectat assignatio, imperiti tamen phisici de causis interrogati quandoque finales tantum loco efficientium assignant. . . .

Text 4

Glossa in artem Galeni.

Anime quidem virtus ex eisdem secundum Aristotelem servatur et corrumpitur. ex operationis enim mediocritate non solum fit virtus sed etiam servatur et augetur, ex earum autem indigentia et superfluitate corrumpitur. Verbi gratia quicumque audet terribilia quelibet et nichil timet et timenda et non timenda in audendo superhabundat, in timendo deficit. Similiter qui omnia timet et timenda et non timenda in timendo superhabundat in audendo deficit. Et utriusque est vitium, superfluitatis scilicet et indigentie. Unde et hic dicetur audax, ille vero timidus. Medius inter utrumque est fortis. Similiter qui omnes voluptates sequitur et a nulla semotus incontinens dicitur, qui vero aspernatur omnes et nullam affectat insensibilis dicitur ut ruricola. medius autem inter utrumque dicitur continens sive castus (cf. Eth. Nic. II - III). Secundum Aristotelem ex similibus operationibus similes habitus fiunt, scilicet virtutes et vitia. Operationes enim domine et magistre sunt habituum. sicut enim in artibus apparet, quoniam fabricantes bene vel male boni vel mali fabri fiunt, citarrantes cithariste, sic in virtutibus apparet et viciis. longo enim tempore iusta vel iniusta facientes iusti vel iniusti fiunt, casta autem casti, forcia fortes (cf. Eth. Nic. II 1, 1103 a 31 ff.)(III) Unde secundum Aristotelem non parvum est a iuventute vel sic vel sic assuesci. assuetudo enim operationum virtutes vel vicia tradit. . . . (cf. Eth. Nic. II 1, 1103 b 23 ff.)(IV). Sic eadem ratione que circa animam attenditur virtus corporis et eius sanitas ex superfluitate eorundem et indigencia corrumpitur ex quorum mediocritate salvatur.

Text 5

Glossa in Artem Galeni.

Doctrina est brevis et integra rei propositae demonstratio substantiam vel partes aperiens, substantiam per diffinitionem, partes per divisionem. qui enim aliquod totum in partes suas dividit, breviter et integre totius habitudinem ad partes demonstrat, sicut et per diffinitionem breviter et integre esse totius rei declarat, et ideo doctrina non minus per divisionem fit quam per diffinitionem. . . . tria genera doctrinae notantur, ex substantia diffinitivum, ex partibus divisivum et compositivum. In utroque enim partium notitia diffinitur, sed converso ordine. Divisivum enim a toto ad partes ultimas procedit, compositivum a partibus ultimis ad totum redit. Ecce quot sunt genera doctrinae, tria scilicet quae sic a Galeno dicuntur, secundum dissolutionem, secundum compositionem, secundum termini dissolutionem. . . . (cf. Galen, *Ars parva*, Ch. 1)(V).

I
τρία γένη τῶν θεωρητικῶν ἐπιστημῶν ἐστί, φυσική, μαθηματική,
θεολογική.

II
ὡς οὔσης τῆς φύσεως ἀρχῆς τινος καὶ αἰτίας τοῦ κινεῖσθαι καὶ
ἡρεμεῖν ἐν ᾧ ὑπάρχει πρῶτος καθ' αὐτὸ καὶ μὴ κατὰ συμβεβηκός.

III
τὰς δ' ἀρετὰς λαμβάνομεν ἐνεργήσιν τε πρότερον, ὥσπερ
καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων τεχνῶν· ἅ γὰρ δεῖ μαθόντας ποιεῖν, ταῦτα
ποιούντες μνησθάνομεν, οἷον οἰκοδομοῦντες οἰκοδόμοι γίνονται
καὶ κιθαρίζοντες κιθαρισταί. οὕτω καὶ τὰ μὲν δίκαια ~~κινεῖσθαι~~
πράττοντες δίκαιοι γινόμεθα, τὰ δὲ σώφρονα σώφρονες, τὰ
δ' ἀνδρεῖα ἀνδρεῖοι.

IV
οὐ μικρὸν οὖν διαφέρει τὸ οὕτως ἢ οὕτως εὐθὺς ἐκ νέων
ἐθίζεσθαι, ἀλλὰ πάμπολυ, μᾶλλον δὲ τὸ πᾶν.

V
τρεῖς εἰσὶν αἱ πᾶσαι διδασκαλῖαι τάξεως ἐχόμεναι. πρώτη μὲν
ἡ ἐκ τῆς τοῦ τέλους ἐννοίας κατ' ἀνάλυσιν γινόμενη, ἕξῃ
δευτέρα δὲ ἡ ἐκ συθέσεως τῶν κατὰ τὴν ἀνάλυσιν εὐρεθέντων.
τρίτη δὲ ἡ ἐξ ὅρου διαλύσεως....