



First page of *De vita* 3 from MS Plut. 73, Cod. 39, fol. 77 (80)^r [our MS L]. In the initial P of the text, Ficino is represented. Reproduced with permission from Pl. XVII, p. 125 of C. Csapodi, et al., *Bibliotheca Corviniana*.

MARSILIO FICINO

three Books on Life

A Critical Edition and Translation
with Introduction and Notes

by

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commentarium composuisse, inter cetera in eum nostra commentaria numeratum, id quidem seligere nunc, Laurentio quidem ipso probante, atque maiestati tuae potissimum dedicare decrevi. Spero equidem dum vitae tuae prosperitatique consulam, vitae interim et splendori saeculi nostri et humani generis consulturum. Atque ut valetudini prosperitatique regiae validius haec nostra prodessent, per Valorem ipsum mittenda putavi. Hunc tu igitur Valorem nostrum, clementissime rex, complectere, precor. Tantum enim natura, virtus, auctoritas tua valet, ut absque te nequeat vel Valor ipse valere. X. Iulii, MCCCCLXXXIX Florentiae.

*Verba Marsilius Ficini
ad lectorem sequentis libri*

Salve, hospes ingeniose. Salve iterum, quisquis es salutis avidus qui nostra ad limina tendis. Vide, precor, hospes cupide, primum quam hospitalis sim. Intrans erat certe salutem statim hospitio dicere, ego vero salute praeveniens mox prospectum salvere te iussi. Intrans et adhuc ignotum perliberenter excepti. Trahentem apud me moras promissa, si Deus aspiraverit, salute donabo. Hospitium ergo nactus es amicum quidem omnibus et amoris nunc erga te plenum. Si quid forte fers tecum amori contrarium, si quid habes odii, prius ponito, precor, quam medicinas hic vitales attingas. Vitam enim tibi dedit amor voluptasque parentum. Vitam vicissim demit odium atque dolor. Quem igitur odiosus vexat dolor, huic nullus usquam medicinae vitali relictus est locus. Quamobrem deinceps te non ut hospitem tantum iam alloquor, sed amicum.

Officina Marsilius tui aliquanto est amplior, quam his cancellis duntaxat quos hic vides coercentur. Non enim solo hoc libro sequente, sed duobus etiam praecedentibus circumscribitur. Tota vero summatim medicina quae-dam est pro viribus opitulatura vitae, ut valida tibi vita sit, ut longa; idque ubique medicorum ope coelitus adiuta molitur. Varia sane pro diversis hominum ingeniis atque naturis nostra haec officina antidota, pharmaca, fomenta, unguenta, remedia profert. Si qua tibi fortasse minus placeant, mittito quidem ista; cetera propterea ne respinto. Denique si non probas imagines astronomicas, alioquin pro valetudine mortalium adinventas, quas et ego non tam probo quam narro, has utique me concedente ac etiam (si vis) consuente dimittito. Medicinas saltem coelesti quodam adminiculo confirmatas,

27 id quidem id equidem *M* 29-30 prosperatique — valetudini *om. M* 34 MCCCCLXXXVIII *M* Florentiae *om. M* X. Iulii MCCCCLXXXIX Florentiae *deest in L*; Marsilius Ficini Florentini Liber de vita celitus ad Serenissimum Regem Panoniae Mathiam semper invictum add. *L* Verba ad lectorem *desunt in L*; *M* tantum habet Salve hospes etc.

Verba *om. xyz* Libri *om. z*; Exhortatio *add. xyz* 5 aspiravit *z* 7 erga te ante nunc *transp. z* 7-8 odii *ante habes transp. z* 11 iam *om. z* 19 mitto *x*

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heavens.⁵ With all this in mind, I have just decided to extract that one (with the approval of Lorenzo himself) and dedicate it especially to your Majesty. For my part, while I am taking care of your life and prosperity, I hope that I will indeed at the same time be taking care of the life and glory of our generation and of the human race. And so that this work of ours might be more strongly [“validius”] beneficial to the king’s health [“valetudo”] and prosperity, I judged that they ought to be sent by Valor itself. I beg you, gentle King, to embrace this our friend Valori.⁶ For your natural disposition, virtue, and authority are so strong, that without you even Valor itself can have no strength. The 10th of July, 1489, at Florence.

*The Words of Marsilio Ficino
to the Reader of the Following Book*

Hail, intellectual guest! Hail to you, too, whosoever you are who approaches our threshold desiring health! See, eager guest, first of all, how hospitable I am. For certainly it was the role of the visitor, to first salute the hostelry; but I, before you could salute me, have saluted you as soon as I saw you. I have gladly welcomed you while you were entering and as yet unknown. And if you stay with me awhile, I will give you, please God, the health [*salute*] I promised you. You have gained a lodging friendly to all and now full of love towards you. If by chance you bring with you anything contrary to love, if you have any hate, please dispose of it first, before you approach the life-giving medicines here. For it was the love and pleasure of your parents that gave you life. Conversely, hate and displeasure take away life. Therefore the person who harbors disagreeable resentment, has no share in life-giving medicine. So from now on I address you not only as my guest but as my friend.

The shop of your friend Marsilio is a bit larger than what you see here, enclosed only in these boundaries. For it is defined not only by the book to come, but also by the two preceding. The whole forms an epitome of Medicine which will assist your life as much as possible, that it may be both healthy and long; and it employs at every point the resources of doctors, aided by the heavens. This shop of ours displays various antidotes, drugs, fomentations, ointments, and remedies, according to the differing mental capacities and natures of men. If in some way they happen to displease you, pass over these, by all means, but do not for that reason repudiate the rest. Finally, if you do not approve of astronomical images, albeit invented for the health of mortals — which even I do not so much approve of as report — dismiss them with my complete permission and even, if you will, by my advice.¹ At least do not neglect medi-

nisi forte vitam neglexeris, ne negligito. Ego enim frequenti iamdiu experientia compertum habeo tantum interesse inter medicinas eiusmodi atque alias 25
 absque delectu astrologico factas, quantum inter merum atque aquam, ut etiam infans octavo a conceptione mense natus Florentiae mense Martio, nocte ascendentे Saturno retrogrado, semivivus eiusmodi diligentia videatur a nobis, immo a Deo, quasi vitae redditus potius quam servatus; trienniumque validus ferme iam impleverit. Iam vero si praeter ea generis eiusdem 30
 plura narravero, vera loquar, nec gloriabundus (quod est a philosopho penitus alienum), sed exhortabundus potius afferam. Verum satis iam partim quidem conciliantes, partim etiam exhortantes allocuti te sumus. Deinceps igitur cum Plotino loquamur, ita demum tibi diligentius consulturi.

In omnibus quae hic aut alibi a me tractantur, tantum assertum esse volo, quantum ab ecclesia comprobatur.

cines which have been strengthened by some sort of heavenly aid, unless perhaps you would neglect life itself. For I have found by long and repeated experience that medicines of this kind are as different from other medicines made without astrological election as wine is from water. For example, there was an infant who was born half dead in the eighth month from conception² at Florence in the month of March, at night when Saturn, retrograde, was ascending; by this sort of care the child seemed almost to be brought back to life rather than preserved by me, or rather, by God; and he has lived in good health now for nearly three years. Moreover, if I told you more cases of this sort besides, I would be speaking the truth, and I would report them, not to boast, which is totally out of place in a philosopher, but to persuade. But we have addressed you enough already, partly to gain your good will, partly also to persuade you. From now on, then, let us speak with Plotinus, but in such a way that we will still be taking even greater care of you.

In all things which I discuss here or elsewhere, I intend to assert only so much as is approved by the Church.

24 ne] haud *z* 25 inter *om.* *z* huiusmodi *ye* 26 delicto astrologo *z* atque] et *z*
 ante In *xy* habent Protestatio catholici auctoris In omnibus — comprobatur *desunt in Lz* post com-
 probatur add. Capitulorum tertii libri De vita coelitus comparanda Annotatio etc. *y*

Marsili Ficini Florentini
Liber De Vita Coelitus Comparanda compositus
ab eo inter Commentaria eiusdem in Plotinum

*In quo consistat secundum Plotinum virtus favorem coelitus
 attrahens, scilicet in eo quod anima mundi et stellarum daemonumque
 animae facile alliciuntur corporum formis accommodatis.*

Cap. I.

Si tantum haec duo sint in mundo, hinc quidem intellectus, inde vero corpus, sed absit anima, tunc neque intellectus trahetur ad corpus—immobilis enim est omnino caretque affectu, motionis principio, tanquam a corpore longissime distans—neque corpus trahetur ad intellectum, velut ad motum per se inefficax et ineptum longeque ab intellectu remotum. Verum si interponatur anima utriusque conformis, facile utrinque et ad utraque fiet attractus. Primo quidem ipsa omnium facillime ducitur, quoniam primum mobile est et ex se et sponte mobile. Praeterea cum sit (ut dixi) media rerum, omnia suo in se modo continet et utrinque ratione propinqua; ideoque conciliatur et omnibus, etiam aequaliter illis quae inter se distant, ab ea videlicet non distantibus. Praeter enim id quod hinc quidem conformis est divinis, inde vero caducis, et ad utraque vergit affectu, tota interim est simul ubique.

Accedit ad haec quod anima mundi totidem saltem rationes rerum seminales divinitus habet, quot ideae sunt in mente divina, quibus ipsa rationibus totidem fabricat species in materia. Unde unaquaeque species per propriam rationem seminalem propriae respondet ideae, facileque potest per hanc saepe aliquid illinc accipere, quandoquidem per hanc illinc est effecta. Ideoque si quando a propria forma degeneret, potest hoc medio sibi proximo formari rursum perque id medium inde facile reformari. Ac si certe cuidam rerum speciei vel individuo eius rite adhibeas multa quae sparsa sunt, sed eidem ideae conformia, mox in materiam hanc ita opportune paratam singulare munus ab idea trahes per rationem videlicet animae seminalem; non enim intellectus ipse proprie, sed anima ducitur. Nemo itaque putet certis mundi materiis trahi numina quaedam a materiis penitus segregata, sed dae-

The Book "On Obtaining Life from the Heavens"
by Marsilio Ficino of Florence,
Which He Composed among His Commentaries on Plotinus¹

*In What, According to Plotinus, the Power of Attracting Favor from the
 Heavens Consists, Namely, That Well-adapted Physical Forms Can
 Easily Allure the World-soul and the Souls of the Stars and the Daemons.*

Chap. I

If there were only these two things in the universe—on one side the Intellect, on the other the Body—but no Soul, then neither would the Intellect be attracted to the Body (for Intellect is absolutely motionless, without affect, which is the principle of motion, and very far away from the Body), nor would the Body be drawn to the Intellect (for Body is in itself powerless, unsuited for motion, and far removed from the Intellect). But if a Soul which conforms to both were placed between them, an attraction will easily occur to each one on either side. In the first place, Soul is led most easily of all, since she is the Primum Mobile and movable of herself, of her own accord. Moreover, since, as I have said,² she is the mean of things, in her own fashion she contains all things and is proportionally [Intellect: Soul: Body] near to both. Therefore she is equally connected with everything, even with those things which are at a distance from one other, because they are not at a distance from her. For besides the fact that on the one side she conforms to the divine and on the other side to the transient, and even turns to each by desire, at the same time she is wholly and simultaneously everywhere.³

In addition, the World-soul possesses by divine power precisely as many seminal reasons of things as there are Ideas in the Divine Mind. By these seminal reasons she fashions the same number of species in matter. That is why every single species corresponds through its own seminal reason to its own Idea and oftentimes through this reason it can easily receive something from the Idea—since indeed it was made through the reason from the Idea. This is why, if at any time the species degenerates from its proper form, it can be formed again with the reason as the proximate intermediary and, through the Idea as intermediary, can then be easily reformed. And if in the proper manner you bring to bear on a species, or on some individual in it, many things which are dispersed but which conform to the same Idea, into this material thus suitably adapted you will soon draw a particular gift from the Idea, through the seminal reason of the Soul:⁴ for, properly speaking, it is not Intellect itself which is led, but Soul. And so let no one think that any divinities wholly separate from matter are being attracted by any given mundane materials, but that dae-

¹ Marsili — Plotinum desunt in L compositum z eo] eodem yz post Plotinum add. incipit y secundum Plotinum — attrahens] virtus magici operis et imaginum P Cap. XI. P 5 ab intellectu om. LP 6 animam P conformem P 7 ducimur z 8 sit ut] sicut z 12 ad om. z 21 eidem] etiam z

mones potius animatique mundi munera stellarumque viventium. Nemo rursum miretur per materiales formas animam quasi allici posse, siquidem escas eiusmodi sibi congruas ipsamet, quibus alliceretur, effecit, et semper libenterque habitat in eisdem. Neque in mundo vivente toto quicquam reperitur tam deforme, cui non adsit anima, cui non insit et animae munus. Congruitates igitur eiusmodi formarum ad rationes animae mundi Zoroaster divinas illices appellavit, quas et Synesius magicas esse illecebras confirmavit.

Nemo denique credat ad propriam quandam materiae speciem et tempore certo hauriri omnia prorsus ex anima dona, sed pro opportunitate dona dun-
taxat seminis, quo talis species pullulavit, seminumque conformium. Itaque
hic homo, humanis tantum adhibitis, non proprias piscium vel avium dotes
inde sibi vendicat, sed humanas atque consimiles. Adhibitis autem quae ad
stellam talem pertinent atque daemonem, stellae daemonisque huius pro-
prium subit influxum, velut lignum per sulphur paratum ad flammam ubi-
que praesentem. Atque hunc non modo per ipsos stellae daemonisque radios,
sed etiam per ipsam mundi animam ubique praesentem, in qua et cuiuslibet
stellae daemonisque ratio vigeat, partim quidem seminalis ad generandum,
partim etiam exemplaris ad cognoscendum. Haec enim secundum Platonicos
antiquiores rationibus suis aedificavit ultra stellas in coelo figuras partesque
ipsarum tales, ut ipsae quoque figurae quaedam sint; impressitque his om-
nibus proprietates. In stellis autem, figuris, partibus, proprietatibus, omnes
rerum inferiorum species continentur et proprietates earum. Universales vero
figuras octo posuit atque quadraginta, scilicet in zodiaco duodecim, extra
vero sex atque triginta; item in zodiaco triginta sex ad numerum facierum;
rursus ibidem ter centum atque sexaginta ad numerum graduum, in quovis
enim gradu sunt stellae plures, ex quibus ibi conficiuntur imagines. Similiter
imagines extra zodiacum in plures divisit figuras pro facierum ibidem
graduumque suorum numero. Constituit denique ab imaginibus his universalibus
ad universales imagines habitudines et proportiones quasdam, quae ipsae
quoque imagines illic existunt. Eiusmodi vero figurae continuitatem quaeque
suam habent ex radis stellarum suarum in se invicem peculiari quadam pro-
prietate coniectis. A quibus formis ordinatissimis dependent inferiorum for-
mae, illinc videlicet ordinatae. Sed et coelestes illae tanquam et inter se dis-
iunctae procedunt a rationibus animae coniunctis invicem, et quodammodo
mutabiles a stabilibus. Sed hae quatenus se ipsas non comprehendunt, refe-
runtur ad formas in mente vel animali vel eminentiore sese comprehendentes,
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mons rather are being attracted and gifts from the ensouled world and from the living stars.⁵ Again, let no man wonder that Soul can be allured as it were by material forms, since indeed she herself has created baits of this kind suitable to herself, to be allured thereby, and she always and willingly dwells in them. There is nothing to be found in this whole living world so deformed that Soul does not attend it, that a gift of the Soul is not in it. Therefore Zoroaster called such correspondences of forms to the reasons existing in the World-soul "divine lures" and Synesius corroborated that they are magical baits.⁶

Finally, let no one believe that absolutely all gifts are drawn from the Soul to any one particular species of matter at a specific time, but rather at the right moment only those gifts of that one seed from which such a species has grown, and of seeds that are similar to it. Accordingly, the person who has employed only human things, will thence claim for himself not the gifts proper to fish or to birds but the human gifts and similar ones. But if he employs things which pertain to such and such a star and daemon, he undergoes the peculiar influence of this star and daemon, like a piece of wood treated with sulfur for a flame that is everywhere present. And he undergoes this influence not only through the rays of the star and the daemon themselves, but also through the very Soul of the World everywhere present. For the reason of any star and daemon flourishes in her. It is partly a seminal reason so that she can generate, and partly an exemplary reason so that she can know.⁷ For according to the more ancient Platonists, from her reasons, the World-soul constructed in the heavens besides the stars, figures⁸ and such parts of them as are also themselves figures of a sort,⁹ and she impressed properties on all these. In the stars, moreover—in their figures, parts and properties—are contained all the species of things below and their properties. She arranged 48 universal figures: 12 in the zodiac and 36 outside it; likewise she placed 36 more figures in the zodiac according to the number of its faces.¹⁰ Again she arranged in the Zodiac 360 more figures according to the number of its degrees—for in each degree whatsoever there are many stars that make up images there. Similarly the images [constellations] outside the zodiac she divided into many figures [paranatalonta] according to the number of the Zodiacial faces and degrees. Finally, she established certain relations and proportions of the latter universal images to the former universal images—relations and proportions which themselves are also images out there. Figures of this kind each have their own coherence from the rays of their stars directed toward each other by their own special property. On these well-ordered forms the forms of lower things depend; they are ordered by them. But even those celestial forms, being [spatially] set apart from each other, proceed from reasons of the Soul that are joined together; and being forms somewhat changeable, they proceed from the reasons which are stable. But the reasons, insofar as they do not make up a unity, are traced back to the Forms in the Intellect—the intellect in Soul and the higher Intellect—

32 Nemo] Nempe *z* speciem] spem *P* 33 haurire *z* 37-39 proprium subit-ubique praesentem] velut paratum vas proprium subit influxum *LP* 44 siet *z* 46 Universale *z* 50-51 Similiter imagines om. *L* 51 divisis *P* 56 conjecturis *z* 57 Sed om. *z* et² om. *LaP* 59 quatenus post ras. *L*; quia *P* 60 vel animali vel eminentiore add. in marg. *L*; om. *P*

quae tanquam multiplices rediguntur ad simplicissimum unum atque bonum, sicut figurae coelestes ad polum.

Sed redeamus ad animam. Quando igitur anima gignit speciales inferiorum formas viresque, eas per rationes efficit proprias sub stellarum formarumque coelestium adminicul. Singulares vero individuorum dotes, quae saepe non nullis insunt tam mirabiles quam in speciebus esse solent, exhibet per seminales similiter rationes, non tam sub adminicul formarum figurarumque coelestium quam situ stellarum et habitu motionum aspectuumque planetarum, tum inter se, tum ad stellas planetis sublimiores. Anima quidem nostra ultra vires membrorum proprias communem ubique promit in nobis vitae virtutem, maxime vero per cor, tanquam ignis animae proximi fontem. Similiter anima mundi ubique vigens per Solem praecipue suam passim explicat communis vitae virtutem. Unde quidam animam et in nobis et in mundo in quolibet membro totam potissimum in corde collocant atque Sole.

Semper vero memento sicut animae nostrae virtus per spiritum adhibetur membris, sic virtutem animae mundi per quintam essentiam, quae ubique viget tanquam spiritus intra corpus mundanum, sub anima mundi dilatari per omnia, maxime vero illis virtutem hanc infundi, quae eiusmodi spiritus plurimum hauserunt. Potest autem quinta haec essentia nobis intus magis magisque assumi, si quis sciverit eam alii elementis immixtam plurimum segregare, vel saltem his rebus frequenter uti, quae hac abundant puriore praesertim; ceu electum vinum et saccharum et balsamum atque aurum pretiosique lapilli myrobalanique et quae suavissime redolent et quae lucent, maxime vero quae in subtili substantia qualitatem habent calidam humidamque et claram; quale praeter vinum est albissimum saccharum, praesertim si huic adhibueris aurum odoremque cinnami atque rosarum. Praeterea sicut alimenta rite in nobis assumpta per se non viva rediguntur per spiritum nostrum ad vitae nostrae formam, sic et corpora nostra rite accommodata corpori spirituque mundano, videlicet per res mundanas et per nostrum spiritum, hauriunt ex vita mundana quam plurimum.

Si volueris ut alimentum rapiat prae ceteris formam cerebri tui vel iecoris atque stomachi, simile quantum potes accipe alimentum, id est, cerebrum et iecur et stomachum animalium ab humana natura non longe distantium. Si optas corpus tuum atque spiritum ex aliquo mundi membro, videlicet ex Sole, virtutem accipere, quaere quae ante alia sunt Solaria inter metalla lapilloque, magis autem inter plantas, sed inter animalia magis, maxime inter

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which do make up a unity; and these Forms, being multiples, are reduced to the perfectly simple One and Good, just as the celestial figures diminish to a point at the Pole.¹¹

But let us return to the Soul. When, therefore, the Soul gives birth to the specific forms and the powers pertaining to the species of things below, she makes them through their respective reasons with the aid of the stars and the celestial forms. But she produces the endowments peculiar to individuals (which are often in some individuals as marvelous as they habitually are in the species themselves) likewise through the seminal reasons, but not so much with the aid of celestial forms and figures as by the location of the individual stars and the relation of the motions and aspects of the planets both among themselves and with respect to the stars which are above the planets. Now our own soul beyond the particular forces of our members puts forth a general force of life everywhere within us—especially through the heart as the source of the fire which is the nearest thing to the soul. In the same way the World-soul, which is active everywhere, unfolds in every place its power of universal life principally through the Sun. Accordingly, some thinkers say the entire Soul, both in us and in the universe, dwells in any member but most of all in the heart and in the Sun.¹²

Always remember, though, that just as the power of our soul is brought to bear on our members through the spirit, so the force of the World-soul is spread under the World-soul through all things through the quintessence, which is active everywhere, as the spirit inside the World's Body, but that this power is instilled especially into those things which have absorbed the most of this kind of spirit.¹³ This quintessence can be ingested by us more and more if a person knows how best to separate it, mixed in as it is with other elements, or at least how to use those things often which are filled with it, especially in its purer form. Such things are: choice wine, sugar, balsam, gold, precious stones, myrobalans, and things which smell most sweet and which shine, and especially things which have in a subtle substance a quality hot, moist, and clear; such, besides wine, is the whitest sugar, especially if you add to it gold and the odor of cinnamon and roses. Then too, just as foods we eat in the right way, although not themselves alive, are converted through our spirit to the form of our life, so also our bodies rightly accommodated to the body and spirit of the world (that is through cosmic things and through our spirit) drink in as much as possible from the life of the world.

If you want your food to take the form of your brain above all, or of your liver, or of your stomach, eat as much as you can of like food, that is, of the brain, liver, and stomach of animals which are not far removed from the nature of man. If you want your body and spirit to receive power from some member of the cosmos, say from the Sun, seek the things which above all are most Solar among metals and gems, still more among plants, and more yet

61 ante rediguntur transp. ad simplicissimum z unum atque om. LP 67 rationales z 77 viget] L post ras. L; latet P 79 post essentia add. ayz 82 atque] et P 88 ritae z corpore z 91 ut om. L

homines; similiora enim tibi magis proculdubio conferunt. Haec et extra sunt adhibenda et intus pro viribus assumenda, praesertim in die et hora Solis et Sole in figura coeli regnante. Solaria vero sunt omnia ex lapillis et floribus quae heliotropia nominantur, quia vertuntur ad Solem; item aurum et auripigmentum aureique colores, chrysolitus, carbunculus, myrrha, thus, muscus, ambra, balsamum, mel flavum, calamus aromaticus, crocus, spica nardi, cinnamomum, lignum aloes, ceteraque aromata; aries, astur, gallus, olor, leo, cantharis, crocodillus, homines flavi, crispi, saepe calvi, magnanimi. Superiora partim cibariis, partim unguentis suffumigationibusque, partim usui accommodari possunt. Haec sentienda et cogitanda frequenter et imprimis amanda; et luminis plurimum est quaerendum.

Si dubites ventrem ab iecoris fomento destitui, trahe ad ventrem iecoris facultatem tum frictionibus, tum fomentis per ea quae iecori congruant: per cichoream, endiviam, spodium et eupatorium et hepaticam atque hepata. Similiter ne destituatur tuum corpus ab Iove, move corpus in die horaque et regno Iovis, et utere interim Iovialibus: argento, hyacintho, topazio, corallo, crystallo, berillo, spodio, sapphyro, viridibus aeriisque coloribus, vino, saccharo, albo melle, et cogitationibus affectibusque plurimum Iovialibus, id est, constantibus, aequis, religiosis atque legiferis; et inter homines eiusmodi sanguineosque et pulchros venerabilesque versabere. Sed memento primis illis rebus frigidis inserendum esse aurum et vinum mentamque et crocum et cinnamomum atque doronicum; animalia vero Iovialia esse agnum pavonemque et aquilam et iuvencum.

Quomodo vero virtus Veneris attrahatur turturibus, columbis et motacillis et reliquis, non permittit pudor ostendere.

De concordia mundi.

De natura hominis secundum stellas.

Quomodo fiat attractus ab unaquaque stella.

Cap. II.

Neque vero diffidere debet quisquam nos atque omnia quae circa nos sunt praeparamentis quibusdam posse sibi vindicare coelestia. Nam coelitus haec facta sunt assidueque reguntur et illinc imprimis praeparata

98 exhibet *z* 101 aurique *x* post chrysolitus *add.* et *P* 103 aromata] arbuta *P* austur *x* 104 cantharis *yz*; cantharus *LPux* 104-105 post partim *transp.* superiora *P* 105 suffumigationibus *z* 108 destrui *x* 110 spodium *add.* in *marg.* *L*; *om.* *P* hepaticum *z* 111 tum] tum *x* *etj* in *z* 112 topazio *add.* in *marg.* *L*; *om.* *P* 113 viridibus aeriisque post ras. *add.* *L²* aeriisque] celestibusque *P* 113-114 saccharo, albo melle] saccharo albo, melle *z* 116 versantos *z* 117 mentamque *add.* in *marg.* *L*; *om.* *P* 117-118 et cinnamomum atque doronicum *om.* *z* atque doronicum] *add.* in *marg.* *L*; *om.* *P* 118 pavonemque post ras. *L²*; *om.* *P* 119 iuvencam *P* 120 attrahitur *x* post turturibus *add.* et *L^{ac}P* post mundi *add.* et *z*

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among animals, especially human beings; for surely things which are more similar to you confer more of it. These must both be brought to bear externally and, so far as possible, taken internally, especially in the day and the hour of the Sun and while the Sun is dominant in a theme of the heavens.¹⁴ Solar things are: all those gems and flowers which are called heliotrope because they turn towards the Sun, likewise gold, orpiment and golden colors, chrysolite, carbuncle, myrrh, frankincense, musk, amber, balsam, yellow honey, sweet calamus, saffron, spikenard, cinnamon, aloe-wood and the rest of the spices; the ram, the hawk, the cock, the swan, the lion, the scarab beetle,¹⁵ the crocodile, and people who are blond, curly-haired, prone to baldness, and magnanimous. The above-mentioned things can be adapted partly to foods, partly to ointments and fumigations, partly to usages and habits. You should frequently perceive and think about these things and love them above all; you should also get a lot of light.

If you suspect that your belly is being deprived of the heat of the liver, draw the power of the liver to the belly both by rubbing and by fomentations made from things which agree with the liver, namely from chicory, endive, spodium, agrimony, hepatica, and livers. In the same way, so that your body may not be deprived of Jupiter, take physical exercise in Jupiter's day and hour and when he is reigning; and in the meantime use Jovial things such as silver, jacinth, topaz, coral, crystal, beryl, spodium, sapphire, green and aery colors, wine, sugar, white honey; and entertain thoughts and feelings which are especially Jovial, that is, steadfast, composed, religious, and law-abiding; and you will keep company with men of the same kind—men who are sanguine, handsome, and venerable. But remember to mix those first things on my list, since they are cold, with gold, wine, mint, saffron, cinnamon and doronicum; remember too that the lamb, the peacock, the eagle, and the young bullock are Jovial animals.

But how the power of Venus may be attracted by turtle-doves, pigeons, white water wag-tails, and the rest, modesty forbids me to reveal.¹⁶

On the Harmony of the World.

On the Nature of Man according to the Stars.

How to Attract Something from Some One Particular Star.

Chap. II

No one should doubt that we ourselves and all things which are around us can, by way of certain preparations, lay claim to celestial things. For these lower things were made by the heavens, are ruled continually by them,

idque in *Alcibiade* significat Socrates et Proculus explicat. Quod sane Pythagoras animadvertisens ipsum bonum perfectionemque rerum opportunitatem cognominavit. Primum namque principium sic apud Pythagoram et Platonem omnium est mensura, ut aliis corporibus actionibusque alia loca distribuerit atque tempora. Unde sicut res quaedam non alibi quam hic nec alias quam tunc proprie nascuntur feliciter et coalescent atque servantur, sic et materialis actio, motus, eventus talis aut talis non alias efficaciam sortitur effectumque perfectum quam quando coelestium harmonia ad idem undique consonat. Quae sane harmonia tantam habere potestatem existimatur, ut non solum agricolarum laboribus atque medicorum artificiis per herbas aromataque conatus, sed etiam imaginibus quae apud astrologos ex metallis lapidibusque fiunt, virtutem saepe mirificam largiatur.

Sed imagines caput iam proprium exigunt. Quantum vero ad horas pro actionibus et operibus eligendas pertinet, plurimum confirmatur a Ptolemaeo ubi ait in *Centiloquio*: "Qui eligit quod melius est, nihilo differre videtur ab eo qui habet hoc ex natura." Quibus in verbis tum coelestium tum arbitrii electionisque nostrae potestatem confirmare videtur. Albertus quoque Magnus inquit in *Speculo*: "Non enim libertas arbitrii ex electione horae laudabilis coeretur, sed potius in magnarum rerum inceptionibus electionem horae contemnere est arbitrii praecipitatio, non libertas."

*De virtute imaginum secundum antiquos
atque medicinarum coelitus acquisita.*

Cap. XIII.

Ptolemaeus ait in *Centiloquio* rerum inferiorum effigies vultibus coelestibus esse subiectas, antiquosque sapientes solitos certas tunc imagines fabricare, quando planetae similes in coelo facies quasi exemplaria inferiorum ingrediebantur. Quod quidem Haly comprobat, ibi dicens utilem serpentis imaginem effici posse, quando Luna Serpentem coelestem subit aut feliciter 5 aspicit. Similiter scorpionis effigiem efficacem, quando Scorpis signum Luna ingreditur ac signum hoc tenet angulum ex quattuor unum. Quod in Aegypto suis temporibus factum ait seque interfuisse, ubi ex sigillo scorpionis in lapide bezaar ita facto imprimebatur thuri figura dabaturque in potum ei quem scorpius ipse pupugerat, ac subito curabatur. Quod quidem utiliter ef- 10 fici Hahamed physicus affirmat, confirmante Serapione. Praeterea narrat

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*On the Power Acquired from the Heavens Both in Images,
according to the Ancients, and in Medicines.*

Chap. XIII

Ptolemy says in the *Centiloquium* that images of things here below are subject to the celestial images; and that the ancient wise men used to manufacture certain images when the planets were entering similar faces of the heavens, the faces being as it were exemplars of things below.¹ Haly confirms this, saying in his commentary on this text that a useful image of a serpent can be formed when the Moon enters the celestial Serpent or aspects it favorably. Similarly an effective image of a scorpion can be formed when the Moon enters the sign Scorpio and this sign is occupying one of the four cardines. This he says was done in Egypt in his time, and he was present; in this case a figure was imprinted in frankincense from a signet of a scorpion made under these conditions from the stone bezoar; it was given in a drink to a person whom a real scorpion had stung, and right away he was cured.² Hahamed the physician affirms that this was effectively performed, and Serapion confirms

106 perfectionumque L 111 metus z 112 harmoniam L 113 consonant x 121 potestatum z
5 affici z 11 Hahameth z

Haly notum illic sibi virum sapientem industria simili fecisse imagines quae moverentur, qualem effectam nescio quomodo legimus ab Archita. Quales et Trismegistus ait Aegyptios ex certis mundi materiis facere consuevisse, et in eas opportune animas daemonum inserere solitos, atque animam avi sui Mercurii, item Phoebi cuiusdam et Isidis Osyridisque sic in statuas descendedisse profuturas hominibus vel etiam nocituras.

Huic illud simile: Prometheum figmento quodam luteo vitam rapuisse lumenque coelestem. Magi quinetiam, Zoroastris sectatores, ad evocandum ab Hecate spiritum utebantur aurea quadam pila characteribus insignita coelatum, cui et sapphyrus erat insertus, et scutica quadam facta tauri corio vertebatur, atque interim excantabant. Sed cantiones equidem libenter omitto, nam et Psellus Platonicus eas improbat atque deridet. Hebraei quoque in Aegypto nutriti struere vitulum aureum didicerunt, ut eorundem astrologi putant, ad aucupandum Veneris Lunaeque favorem contra Scorpionis atque Martis influxum Iudeis infestum. Porphyrius quoque in *epistola ad Anebonem* imagines efficaces esse testatur, additque certis quibusdam vaporibus qui a propriis suffumigationibus exhalabant, aeros daemons insinuari statim consuevisse. Iamblichus in materiis quae naturaliter superis consentaneae sint et opportune riteque collectae undique conflataeque fuerint, vires effectusque non solum coelestes, sed etiam daemonicos et divinos suscipi posse confirmat. Idem omnino Proculus atque Synesius.

Opera quidem ad salutem mira, quae a medicis in astrologia peritis per res ex multis compositas, id est pulveres, liquores, unguenta, electuaria fieri possunt, probabiliorem in se rationem et notiorem quam imagines habere videntur, tum quia pulveres, liquores, unguenta, electuaria opportune confecta coelestes influxus facilius citius suscipiunt quam materiae duriores ex quibus imagines fieri consueverunt; tum quia vel assumuntur intus affecta iam coelitus et in nos convertuntur, vel saltem admota foris inhaerent magis et denique penetrant; tum etiam quoniam ex uno quodam duntaxat aut per paucis imagines construuntur, illa vero ex quam plurimis conflari pro arbitrio possunt. Ut si centum Solis Iovisve dotes per centum plantas et animalia similiaque sparsae fuerint, componere simul haec centum tibi comperta possis et in unum conficere formam, in qua Solem ferme Iovemque totum iam videaris habere. Scis profecto naturam inferiorem non posse uno quodam capere cunctas superioris naturae vires, ideoque illas per plures apud nos

it.³ Besides, Haly tells of a wise man who in a similar endeavor made images which moved; we read that this was also effected somehow by Architas.⁴ Trismegistus says the Egyptians also used to make such images of specific cosmic materials and used to insert into them at the right time the souls of daemons and the soul of his ancestor Mercury. Likewise the souls of a certain Phoebus and of Isis and Osiris thus descended into statues to help people or even to harm them.⁵

That myth is similar to this one: that Prometheus stole life and celestial light by means of a clay figure.⁶ Yes, and the magicians who were disciples of Zoroaster, when they wanted to summon a spirit [rare use of *spiritus* in normal sense] from Hecate, would use a golden ball on which characters of heavenly bodies were engraved and in which also a sapphire had been inserted: they would whirl it around in a strap made of bull's hide while they chanted.⁷ But the incantations I gladly omit; for even Psellus the Platonist disapproves of incantations and makes fun of them.⁸ The Hebrews, from having been brought up in Egypt, learned how to construct the golden calf, as their own astrologers think, in order to capture the favor of Venus and the Moon against the influence of Scorpio and Mars, which was inimical to the Jews. Porphyry also in his *Letter to Anebo* testifies that images are efficacious; and he adds that by certain vapors arising from fumigations proper to them, aerial daemons would instantly be insinuated into them.⁹ Iamblichus confirms that in materials which are naturally akin to the things above and have been both collected from their various places and compounded at the right time and in the proper manner, you can receive forces and effects which are not only celestial, but even daemonic and divine.¹⁰ Proclus and Synesius absolutely agree.¹¹

Certainly those wonderful therapies which doctors trained in astrology are able to perform through medicines composed of many things—i.e., powders, liquids, unguents, electuaries—seem to have in themselves a more probable and obvious explanation than do images: first, because powders, liquids, unguents, and electuaries, made at the right time, receive celestial influences more easily and quickly than the harder materials from which images usually are made; second, because once impregnated with celestial influences, they are either taken internally and converted into our very selves, or at least when applied externally they stick closer and finally penetrate; third, because images are constructed of only one or a very few materials, but medicines can be made of as many as you like. For instance, if a hundred gifts of the Sun or Jupiter were scattered throughout a hundred plants, animals, etc., and you discovered them and were able to compound them and work them up into one form, in this you would actually seem already to possess completely the Sun or Jupiter. Certainly you know that the lower nature cannot hold all the forces of the higher nature in one subject; and, therefore, that these forces are dispersed in our world through many natures; and that they can be collected more easily through

18 Prometheo P 19 Zoroastri z 27 vaporibus] temporibus z 34-36 fieri possunt—electuaria
om. P 39 forez z 41 constari z

naturas esse dispersas, commodiusque per opera medicorum atque similia quam per imagines colligi posse.

Proinde imagines ex ligno confectae vim forte parvam habent. Nam lignum et forsitan durius est ad coelestem influxum facile capiendum et minus tenax, si acceperit, retinendum; et omnino postquam ex matris terrae visceribus est evulsum, paulo post ferme totum amittit mundanae vitae vigorem et facile in qualitatem aliam transmutatur. Lapilli vero atque metalli 50 etsi ad accipiendum coeleste munus duriora videntur, diutius tamen retinent (quod confirmat Iamblichus), si acceperint. Sua nempe duritia vestigia quoque do- naque vitae mundanae post evulsionem diutissime continent, quae quondam haerentia terrae possederant. Quamobrem ob hoc saltem aptae materiae ad capienda tenendaque coelestia iudicantur. Est et probabile quod libro superiore dixi, res adeo speciosas non posse sub terra conflari, nisi maximo quodam conatu coeli, atque durare in eis impressam semel ex conatu virtutem. 55 Nam in his coquendis cogendisque diutissime coelum elaboravit. Verum cum nequeas facile eiusmodi plura componere, cogeris diligenter exquirere quod metallum inter cetera in ordine sit alicuius stellae potissimum, quive lapis in ordine summus, ut saltem in uno quodam totius generis ordinisque supremo reliqua pro viribus comprehendas, atque eiusmodi susceptaculo coelestia huic consentanea mutueris; ceu si exempli causa in ordine Solari sub homine Phoebeo summum inter animalia teneat astur aut gallus, inter plantas balsamum aut laurus, inter metalli aurum, inter lapides carbunculus vel pantaura, inter elementa fervidus aer (nam ignis ipse Martius esse censetur). Quod autem diximus influxum Solis vel Iovis aut Veneris augendum, intel- 60 ligimus ratione communi, non tamen illi in cuius genesi aliquis horum inter- fector appearat.

*Ordines rerum a stellis pendentium, ut Solarium
aque similium; et quomodo spiritus fiat Solaris.*

Cap. XIV.

Dixi equidem alibi desuper ab unaquaque stella (ut Platonice loquar) seriem rerum illi propriam usque ad extrema pendere. Sub ipso Scorpionis Corde post eiusmodi daemonas atque homines scorpiumque animal collocare possumus etiam herbam asterion, id est stellarem, figura stellae similem, nocte fulgentem, quam medici tradunt qualitatem habere rosae vim- 5

53 etsi om. P 55 acceperit z 58 iudicatur P 63 quisve z 67 balsamus P
De ordinibus yz

medical procedures and the like than through images.

Similarly, images made of wood have little force. For wood is both perhaps too hard to take on celestial influence easily and less tenacious, if it does receive it, in retaining it; and it soon loses almost any vigor of cosmic life at all and is easily transmuted into another quality after it is rooted out of the bowels of its mother earth. But gems and metals, although they seem too hard for accepting a celestial influence, nevertheless retain it longer if they receive it, as Iamblichus confirms.¹² That is to say, by their hardness they also retain the vestiges and gifts of the life of the world, which they had once possessed while embedded in the earth, for a very long time after being rooted out. On this score, at least, they are judged to be apt materials for capturing and holding celestial things. Also it is probable, as I said in the preceding book,¹³ that things so beautiful cannot be fused under the earth without a consummate effort of the heavens, and that the power impressed in them once and for all from that effort remains. For the heavens have labored an immense length of time in concocting and assembling these things. But since you cannot easily compound several things of this kind, you are forced to inquire diligently what metal among others is most powerful in the order of any given star, what stone is highest in that order, so that at least in some one thing, supreme in its entire genus and order, you may, insofar as possible, comprehend the rest, and that you may borrow in a receptacle of this kind celestial things that are in sympathy with it; as, for example, in the Solar order, below a Phoebean man, the hawk or the cock holds the highest place among the animals; among the plants, balsam or laurel; among metals, gold; among stones, carbuncle or pantaura;¹⁴ among elements, hot air (for fire itself is agreed to belong to Mars). But our advice to increase the influence of the Sun, of Jupiter, or of Venus [3.5 ff.], we understand as a general rule, not, however, for that patient in whose horoscope one of these planets appeared as a Signifier of death.

*The Orders of Things Depending on the Stars, as of Solar Things,
and So Forth; and How Our Spirit May Be Made Solar.*

Chap. XIV

I have said elsewhere that down from every single star (to speak Platonically) there hangs its own series of things down to the lowest.¹ Under the very Heart of the Scorpion, after daemons and men of its kind, and the scorpion, the animal, we can place also the aster, whose name means "stellar," similar in shape to a star shining at night, which doctors tell us has the quality of the

ita progradientibus aspirare, merito diffidunt plerique imagines eiusmodi coelestem aliquam virtutem habere. Ego quoque ambigo saepius ac, nisi et omnis antiquitas et omnes astrologi vim mirabilem habere putarent, habere negarem. Negarem equidem non omnino, opinor enim, nisi quis aliter persuaserit, ad prosperam valetudinem saltem aliquam habere virtutem, electae 105 praelestern ratione materiae; tametsi multo maiorem inesse pharmacis arbitror et unguentis sidereo favore conflatis. Quid vero voluerim, ubi modo dicebam electae ratione materiae, in sequentibus declarabo.

Quae vero ex Magorum vel astrologorum opinione ad Plotinum interpretandum pro imaginibus allegari possunt, deinceps breviter afferam, si te prius hic admonuero, ne putas probare me usum imaginum, sed narrare. Ego enim medicinis ad coelum temperatis, non imaginibus utor, atque ita ceteris quotidie consul. Tu vero si concedis Deum rebus infra Lunam mirabiles inseruisse virtutes, mirabiliores concede coelestibus. Praeterea si licere iudicas homini ad prosperam valetudinem inferioribus uti, iudica superioribus quoque licere, atque inferiora ad superiorum normam sic medicorum artificio temperare, sicut etiam a Deo sunt ab initio temperata.

*De potestate coeli. De viribus radiorum,
unde vim sortiri putentur imagines.*

Cap. XVI.

Immensa ferme coelestium magnitudo, virtus, motio facit, ut omnes omnium siderum radii terrae molem, quae quasi punctum est ad coelum, momento facillimeque usque ad centrum recti penetrent, quod omnes astronomi contentur. Ibique, ut placet Pythagoreis atque Platonis, fortissimi sunt, tum quia recti undique centrum tangunt, tum quia in angustum collecti sunt cuncti. Quorum vehementia materia ibi terrae sicca, procul ab humore remota, prorsus accenditur accensaque extenuatur atque dispergitur per meatus undique et efflat incendia pariter atque sulphur. Sed ignem hunc putant valde caliginosum esse et quasi incendium quoddam luminis expers, sicut in coelo extat expers incendii lumen; ignis autem inter coelestem atque infer-

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101 diffundunt x 113 consulto z 114 mirabiliore P
ferme post ras. P; formae *Lw^{ac}* 4 Ibi z tum] cum x

*On the Power of the Heavens. On the Powers of the Rays
from Which Images Are Thought To Obtain Their Force.*

Chap. XVI

Assuredly, as all astronomers confess, the immense size, power, and motion of celestial things brings it about that all the rays of all the stars penetrate in a moment the mass of the earth (which is as a point in relation to the sky) and with consummate ease straight to the center. In the center, as the Pythagoreans and Platonists would have it, the rays are the strongest, both because they touch the center perpendicularly on all sides and because they are all collected in a confined space. By the rays' intensity, the material of the earth there—being dry and far from any moisture—is immediately kindled and, once kindled, is vaporized and dispersed through channels in all directions and blows out both flames and sulfur. But they think that this fire is very dark and, as it were, a sort of flame without light, just as in the heavens light is without flame, whereas the fire between the celestial and the infernal combines light

num lumen cum fervore coniungit. Putant autem ignem e centro flantem ignem esse Vestalem, siquidem Vestam esse terrae vitam numenque putabant. Ideoque Vestae templum veteres in mediis urbibus construebant, ignemque in medio perpetuum collocabant.

Sed ne ulterius pervagemur, concludamus iam si stellarum radii totam mox terram penetrant, negari non facile posse metallum atque lapillum, quando caelantur imaginibus, subito penetrare, eisque miras vel saltem qualescunque imprimere dotes, quandoquidem et in alvis terrae pretiosissima generant. Sed quis neget per haec radios penetrare? Siquidem aer et qualitas eius et sonus minus efficax solida transit subito et sua quadam afficit qualitate. Iam vero si duritia radii obsisteret penetrantibus, lumen multo citius aerem quam aquam pertransiret, et hanc ocius multo quam vitrum, et vitrum similiter quam crystallum. At cum eodem momento solida, quo liquida cuncta transverberet, perspicue constat duritiam radiis nullo modo resistere. Atque idcirco dicent non esse negandum metalla coelestium radios influxusque suscipere, atque etiam conservare ad tempus tunc sibi coelitus destinatum — conservare, inquam, virtutem quandam ex radiorum concurrentium contactu creatam. Quid vero, si materia durior hoc ipso, quod videtur obsistere causae praepotenti, magis ictibus se exponit? Sic ensis lignum sub lana incidit non incisa lana. Sic radius ille fulmineus corio quandoque non laeso dissolvit in eo metallum.

Cum vero natura coelestis nostro hoc igne incomparabiliter sit praestantior, non est putandum radii coelestis officium esse duntaxat quale opus ignei radii maniferte videmus — scilicet illuminare, calefacere, exsiccare, penetrare, extenuare, dissolvere, quae nostris sensibus notissima sunt — sed multo plures mirabilioresque vires et effectus habere. Alioquin et materia inferior et caducus sensus cum divinitate coeli penitus aequaretur. Sed quis nesciat virtutes rerum occultas, quae speciales a medicis nominantur, non ab elementali natura fieri, sed coelesti? Possunt itaque (ut aiunt) radii occultas et mirabiles ultra notas imaginibus imprimere vires, sicut et ceteris inserunt. Non enim inanimati sunt sicut lucernae radii, sed vivi sensualesque tanquam per oculos viventium corporum emicantes, dotesque mirificas secum ferunt ab imaginationibus mentibusque coelestium, vim quoque vehementissimam ex affectu illorum valido motuque corporum rapidissimo; ac proprie maximeque in spiritum agunt coelestibus radiis simillimum. Agunt insuper in corpora vel durissima, omnia enim haec ad coelum infirmissima sunt. Sunt autem in variis

and heat. They believe the fire that breathes out of the center to be Vesta's, since indeed they thought Vesta was the life and patron deity of the earth. And therefore the ancients used to construct the temple of Vesta in the middle of the cities and place a perpetual fire in the middle of it.¹

But lest we wander too far afield, let us now conclude that if the rays of the stars quickly penetrate the whole earth, it cannot easily be denied that they quickly penetrate metal and precious stone when they are engraved with images, and imprint in them wonderful gifts, or at least gifts of some kind, since indeed they generate supremely precious things in the womb of the earth. But who would deny that rays penetrate through these things? For indeed air and its quality and sound — a less powerful thing — passes right away through solid things and influences them with a quality of its own. Now if hardness stood in the way of penetrating rays, light would pass through air much more quickly than through water, water much more swiftly than glass, and glass much more swiftly than crystal. But since in the same moment it strikes through everything, solid as much as liquid, clearly it is established that hardness offers no resistance whatever to rays. And in this regard, they say, it is undeniable that metals take on rays and influences of the celestials, and even that they conserve them for the time destined for them then by heaven — conserve, I say, a power created by the contact of converging rays. What if, moreover, a harder material by this very fact that it seems to resist a more powerful cause, exposes itself to more impacts? Thus a sword cuts wood under a fleece and the fleece is not cut. Thus that ray which is lightning sometimes melts the metal in a piece of leather while leaving the leather unharmed.

But since celestial nature is incomparably more excellent than this our fire, it should not be supposed that the function of the celestial ray is only such work as we sensibly perceive a ray of fire doing — namely, to illuminate, warm, dry, penetrate, rarefy, melt, which are well known to our senses — but that it has much more and more wonderful powers and effects. Otherwise, inferior matter and transitory senses would be completely equated with the divinity of the heavens. But who does not know that the occult virtues of things, which are called "specific virtues" by natural philosophers, are made not by the elemental nature, but by the celestial? And so the rays can (as they say) imprint in images forces occult and wonderful beyond those we know, just as they introduce them into all things. For they are not inanimate like the rays of a lamp, but living and perceiving, since they shine forth through the eyes of a living body [see *Apologia* below and 3.11, ad init. and note ad loc.], and they bring with them marvelous gifts from the imaginations and minds of the celestials, also a very intense force from their strong mental disposition and from the very rapid motion of their bodies; and they act in particular and to the greatest extent on the spirit, which is most similar to the celestial rays. They act besides on even the hardest bodies, for all these things are very weak before the heavens.

18 dotes] potes z 22 et vitrum om. z 23 momenta z 26 etiam] et x 27 contractu z
36 caducis z 38-39 quae speciales — occultas om. P 45 simillimum P

stellis variae quoque vires, et idcirco in radiis earum inter se variae. Praeterea in radiorum ictibus aliter aliter incidentibus virtutes diversae nascentur. Denique in concursibus radiorum mutuis aliter atque aliter, et hic aut ibi, et tunc aut alias effectis diversae subito vires suboruntur, multo magis atque citius quam in aliis atque aliis elementorum qualitatumque elementalium mixtionibus, multo etiam citius quam in tonis et numeris apud musicum aliter et aliter concinentibus. Si haec diligenter consideraveris, forsitan non diffides, dicent, subito quodam radiorum iactu vires imaginibus imprimi atque ex diverso iactu diversas.

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Numquid ergo tam cito? Mitto fascinationes repentinae quodam intuitu factas et amores acerrimos statim accensos radiis oculorum, qui et ipsi sunt fascinamenta quaedam, quod in libro *De amore* probamus. Mitto quam cito rubens oculus inficiat intuenter, et speculum intuens femina menstruosa. Nonne et familiae quaedam apud Illyricos et Triballos iratae intuitu homines interemisse feruntur, et feminae quaedam in Scythia idem facere consueverunt? Et catoblepae regulique serpentes radiorum ex oculis iactu homines perimunt. Torpedo quoque marina tactu etiam procul per virgam manum subito stupefacit. Echinus praeterea pisciculus grandem solo tactu navem sistere fertur. Phalangia quinetiam in Apulia ictu quopiam vel occulto spiritum animumque repentinae stupore permutant. Quid rabiosus canis facit vel non apparente morsu? Quid scopula? Deinde quid arbutus? Nonne levissimo tactu venenum concitant atque rabiem? An ergo negabis coelestia oculorum suorum radiis, quibus nostra contuentur simul atque contingunt, statim miranda perficere? Iam vero gravida mulier tactu statim signat membrum hominis nascituri rei desideratae nota. An vero dubitabis radios aliter aliter tangentes diversa conficere? Cum et tu, helleborum herbam colligens, sive folium deorsum trahas sive sursum, hoc subito tactu causa sis helleboro, ut deorsum educat humores aut sursum. Nonne ab initio rei cuiusque generandae coelentes influxus concoctione materiae digestioneque perfecta non tam tempore quam momento dotes mirificas largiuntur? Nonne suffragante coeli vultu innumerabiles saepe ranae similesque animantes ex arenis momento prossiliunt? Tanta est in materiis praeparatis potentia coeli, tanta celeritas. Denique si ignis hoc habet, ut tempore quam brevissimo faciat quae cetera longo ob id praecipue quod est coelo simillimus, quisnam dubitet coelum magna quasi 80

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There are also in various stars various forces; and they differ among themselves in just this respect of their rays. Besides, from the impacts of the rays falling in one way and another, diverse powers arise. Finally, diverse powers come into being in the combinations of rays with each other of one sort or another, here and there, effected at this time or that; they arise right away much more and faster than in such and such mixtures of elements and elemental qualities, much faster even than in tones and rhythms in music combining in this way or in that. If you would diligently consider these things, perhaps you will not doubt, they will say, but that instantly with an emission of rays forces are imprinted in images, and divers forces from a different emission.

But is it so quick as all that? I pass over fascinations achieved by a sudden glance and very passionate loves instantly kindled by rays from the eyes, which also are fascinations of a sort, as I prove in the book *De amore*.² Nor will I mention how quickly an inflamed eye afflicts whoever looks at it and how a menstrual woman affects a mirror by looking in it.³ Isn't it said that certain families among the Illyrians and Triballi, when they were angry, killed people by looking at them and that certain women in Scythia did this habitually?⁴ And down-lookers and the serpents called reguli kill people by shooting rays from their eyes.⁵ Also the marine torpedo-fish numbs instantly the hand that touches it even at a distance with a rod. In addition, the little fish echinus is said to stop a great ship, and only with a touch. Furthermore, by a bite, even if invisible, the phalangium-spiders in Puglia suddenly transmute the spirit and mind into a stupor.⁶ What can a mad dog accomplish even without an apparent bite? What the broom? What the wild strawberry tree?⁷ Doesn't their lightest touch excite poison and madness? In the light of all this, are you going to deny that the celestials with the rays of their eyes with which they both look at us and touch us, achieve wonders in an instant? But now a pregnant woman instantly by touch stamps a bodily part of the person who is about to be born with a mark of something she desires [alludes to a birthmark resembling a strawberry, a fruit pregnant women are said to crave]. Are you then going to doubt nevertheless that rays touching in this way or that accomplish diverse things? — since even you yourself, when in collecting the herb hellebore you pull the leaf either downwards or upwards, by this sudden touch are the cause determining whether the hellebore evacuates the humors downwards or upwards. From the beginning of any thing that is to be generated, do not celestial influences bestow wonderful gifts in the concoction of the matter and in its final coming together, not so much during a period of time as in an instant? Do not innumerable frogs and similar animals often, when the face of the heavens favors it, leap forth out of the sand in a moment? Such is the power of the heavens in well-disposed material, such the swiftness. Finally, if fire has this property, that it can do in the briefest time ever what other things do in a long time chiefly because it is most similar to the heavens, who would

47 in om. L 53 et] atque z 54 ictu P 55 ictu P 57 post statim add. in marg. et oportune P
sunt om. z 58 quod] quae z 64 praeterea] quoque z pisculus z post solo add. praeterea z
71 dubitavit z 79 ignis] signis P

momento perficere etiam in materia minus parata, sicut flamma solet ingentior? Quid ergo dubitas, inquiunt, in imagine construenda ferme similiter agere coelum?

Dices, opinor, sicut et ego dicebam, naturales hic alterationis gradus abesse. Qui sane defectus minuit quidem coeleste donum, nec tamen penitus 85 auferre videtur. Nolunt enim physici ex quolibet metallo vel lapide imaginem fabricari, sed certo, in quo quidem natura coelestis virtutem olim ad hoc ipsum quod optatur naturaliter incohaverit, et quasi iamiam perfecerit, ut in sulphure flammam. Quam sane virtutem tunc demum perficiat, quando materia haec per artem sub simili quodam influxu coelesti vehementer agitatur, 90 et agitata calescit. Itaque ars suscitat incohatum ibi virtutem, ac dum ad figuram redigit similem suaे cuidam coelesti figurae, tunc suaे illic ideae prorsus exponit, quam sic expositam coelum ea perficit virtute, qua cooperat, exhibens quasi sulphuri flammam. Sic potentia quaedam ad rapiendas paleas 95 coelitus data succino, quodammodo debilis, saepe per frictionem calefactio- nemque facta validior, subito rapit. Similem virtutem Serapio scribit datam lapidi albagedi quasi hyacintho simili, sed non prius trahere paleas quam capilli hoc lapide perfricentur.

Sic item lapis ille Iovius bezoar, id est a morte liberans, quem descripsimus in libro *Contra pestem*, vim ab initio contra venenum accepit ab Iove, sed 100 non usque adeo validam, ut eandem tradere possit materiis aliis exercendam. At vero cum primum sub Scorpionis coelestis influxu figuram superni illius acceperit, perfectam contra scorpiones subito vim reportare putatur, quam mastici communicare valeat aut thuri. Eadem quoque de hyacintho, topazio, 105 smaragdo ceterisque ratio est habenda, ut fabrica figurarum non alibi efficaciam habeat, quam ubi materia cum stella congruit et effectu, a qua hunc faber exoptat accipere; ac praeterea ubi haec ipsa materia quasi iam talis est ab initio, qualem affectas reddere per figuram. Nullis ergo materiis ad imagines uti consulunt, nisi his ipsis quae tibi notae sunt hanc ipsam ferme iam vim habere quam cupis. Lapillorum itaque vires atque metallorum diligenter 110 perscrutari iubent, intereaque meminisse inter lapillos quidem carbunculum in tenebris coruscantem atque pantauram praecipue Soli subesse, sapphyrum Iovi, smaragdum Veneri, Mercurio, Lunae. Praeterea metalla praeter aurum et argentum vix ullam ad haec habere virtutem. Tutioremque in his rationem fore, si aurum quidem purum ad Solem referas atque Iovem: 115 ad illum quidem propter colorem, ad hunc autem propter temperatam commixtionem, nihil enim Iove et auro temperatius. Purum vero argentum ad

doubt that the heavens can accomplish great things almost in a moment, even in unprepared material, such as a larger fire generally does? In the light of all this, why do you doubt, they say, that the heavens act in practically the same way during the construction of an image?

I suppose you will say, just as I too used to do, that here the natural steps of change are absent. Certainly this lack diminishes the celestial gift, but it seems not to take it away completely. For natural philosophers do not intend the image to be made of just any metal or stone, but of a certain one in which the celestial nature has initiated some time ago the power for what is desired and already almost perfected it, as it does the flame in the sulfur. It then finally perfects this power when this material is violently agitated by art under a similar celestial influence and begins to get warm from the agitation. And so art arouses inchoate power there, and when it has reduced it to a figure similar each to its own celestial figure, then forthwith it exposes it there to its own Idea [see 3.1]; when the material is thus exposed, the heavens perfect it by that power with which they had also begun it, tendering as it were the flame to the sulfur. Just so a somewhat weak power to snatch up straws, given to amber by the heavens, after it has been strengthened by friction and heating suddenly snatches them up. Serapion writes that a similar power is given to the stone albagedi, similar to a jacinth; but that it will not attract the straws until it has been rubbed over hair.⁸

So likewise, that Jovial stone bezoar (which means "liberating from death") which we have described in our book *Against the Plague*, initially got from Jupiter its power against poison, but a power not strong enough to be communicable to other materials.⁹ But as soon as under the influence of the celestial Scorpion it receives the figure of that one above, it is said to obtain forthwith a perfect force against scorpions which it can communicate to mastic or to frankincense. The same rule holds also in the case of jacinth, topaz, emerald, and the rest, that the making of figures has no efficacy except in cases where it is similar in material and effect to some star from which the maker wants to receive this effect; and, in addition, where the material itself is already from the beginning of almost such a quality as you desire to render it through the figure. Hence they counsel you to use no materials for images but those which you know to possess already almost that very force which you desire. And so they order you to scrutinize most diligently the forces of gems and metals, and in the meantime to call to mind the following: that among gems, the carbuncle sparkles in darkness and pantaura particularly belongs to the Sun, the sapphire to Jupiter, the emerald to Venus, Mercury, and the Moon; in addition, that metals, aside from gold and silver, have scarcely any power for images. It will be a safer rule in these matters if you refer pure gold to the Sun and Jupiter—to the Sun on account of its color, to Jupiter on account of its temperate makeup, for nothing is more temperate than Jupiter and gold. Refer

Lunam, sed ad Iovem simul atque Venerem aurum argento permixtum. Praeterea imaginem efficaciorem fore, si virtus in materia eius elementalis conveniat cum speciali eiusdem virtute naturaliter insita, atque haec insuper cum virtute altera speciali per figuram coelitus capienda. Denique figurae inferiores et formas coelestibus conformari, inde perdisces (ut aiunt) quod Perseus truncato Medusae capite futuram nonnullis obtruncationem portendere consuevit multaque similiter, et Lunam aliasque planetas sub certis signis certa in nobis membra movere non dubitant.

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Quam vim habeant figurae in coelo atque sub coelo.

Cap. XVII.

Sed ne figuris nimium forte diffidas, meminisse iubebunt in regione hac sub Luna elementalii elementarem quoque qualitatem posse quam plurimum, in transmutatione videlicet ad aliquid elementale tendente: calorem scilicet et frigus et humorem atque siccitatem. Qualitates autem quae minus elementares materiales sunt, scilicet lumina, id est colores, numeros quoque similiter et figurae ad talia forsitan minus posse, sed ad coelestia munera (ut putant) valere permultum. Nam et in coelo lumina et numeri et figurae sunt ferme omnium potentissima, praesertim si nulla sit ibi materia, quod Peripatetici plerique putant. Sic enim figurae, numeri, radii, cum non alia sustineantur ibi materia, quasi substantiales esse videntur. Atque cum in ordine rerum mathematicae formae physicas antecedant, tanquam simplices quidem magis et minus egenae, merito in antecedentibus mundi gradibus, id est coelestibus, auctoritatem sibi maximam vendicant, ut non minus inde fiat numero, figura, luce quam elementari quadam proprietate. Huius quidem auctoritatis habetur etiam sub Luna signum. Qualitates enim valde materiales plurimis rerum speciebus sunt communes, eisque quodammodo permutatis non usquequa species commutantur. Figurae autem numerique partium naturalium proprietatem cum specie inseparabilem peculiaremque possident, utpote quae coelitus una cum speciebus destinata fuerunt. Immo et cum ideis maximam habent in mente mundi regina connexionem. Atque cum ipsae numerique species quaedam sint ideis ibi propriis designatae, ni-

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125 memora z

2 Luna yz; Lunam LPwz

4 Qualitas z

8 si om. z

10 quali z

15 etiam add. in marg. L

pure silver to the Moon, but gold mixed with silver to Jupiter together with Venus. Besides this, the image will be more efficacious if the elemental power in its material agrees with the specific power naturally inherent in the same material, and this, in addition, with the other specific power to be seized from the heavens through the figure. Finally, they say that the lower figures and forms conform to the celestial ones; from this you will learn, so they say, that Perseus [the constellation] when he has cut off Medusa's head usually portends a beheading in store for some people, and so forth; and they do not doubt that the Moon and the other planets under certain signs move certain parts of our bodies.

What Power Is in Figures — Those in the Sky and Those beneath the Sky.

Chap. XVII

To keep you from distrusting figures too much, astrologers will order you to remember that in this elemental region beneath the Moon, a quality that is likewise elemental can do a great deal in a transmutation that is directed toward some end that is itself elemental. (Elemental qualities are, of course, heat, cold, moisture, and dryness.) Qualities, however, which are less elemental or material, such as lights (that is, colors), similarly also numbers and figures, are perhaps less powerful for such ends; but to obtain celestial gifts (as they think) they are very powerful. For in the heavens, lights, numbers, and figures are practically the most powerful of all, especially if, as many Peripatetics believe, there is no matter up there. For thus figures, numbers, and rays, since there they are sustained by no other material, seem practically to constitute what things are made of [“quasi substantiales”].¹ And since, in the order of being, mathematical forms precede physical ones, being more simple and less defective, then deservedly they claim the most dignity in the primary—that is, the celestial—levels of the cosmos, so that consequently as much comes about from number, figure, and light as from some elemental property.² Of this dignity there is evidence even here beneath the Moon. For the extremely material qualities are common to most species of things; and if you change these qualities somewhat, the species are not everywhere altered. But the figures and numbers of natural parts possess a property peculiar to a given species and inseparably linked to it; they have been appointed in the heavens along with the species. Indeed, they have the greatest affinity with the Ideas in Mind, the Queen of the world. And since figures themselves and numbers are species of a sort, represented in Mind by their own Ideas,³ they indisputably get their

mirum vires inde proprias sortiuntur. Ideoque tum species naturalium certis figuris, tum motus et generationes et mutationes certis numeris astringuntur.

De lumine vero quid dicam? Est enim actus intelligentiae vel imago. Colores autem sunt lumina quaedam. Quamobrem ubi lumina, id est colores, figurasy et numeros astrologi dicunt in materiis nostris ad coelestia praeparandis posse quam plurimum, non temere (ut aiunt) debes ista negare.

Non ignoras concentus per numeros proportiones suas vim habere mirabilem ad spiritum et animum et corpus sistendum, movendum, afficiendum. Proportiones autem ex numeris constitutae quasi figurae quaedam sunt, velut ex punctis lineisque factae, sed in motu. Similiter motu suo se habent ad agendum figurae coelestes. Hae namque harmonicis tum radiis, tum motibus suis omnia penetrantibus spiritum indies ita clam afficiunt, ut musica praepotens palam afficere consuevit. Nostri praeterea quam facile multis misericordiam moveat figura lugentis, et quantum oculos imaginationemque et spiritum et humores afficiat statim atque moveat amabilis personae figura. Nec minus viva est et efficax figura coelestis.

Nonne principis in urbe vultus quidem clemens et hilaris exhilarat omnes? Ferox vero vel tristis repente perterret? Quid ergo coelestium vultus, dominos omnium terrenorum, adversus haec efficere posse putas? Quippe cum etiam coeunt ad prolem plerunque vultus, non solum quales ipsi tunc agunt, sed etiam quales imaginantur, soleant filiis diu postea nascituris imprimere, vultus eadem ratione coelestes materias confestim suis notis inficiunt, in quibus si quando diu latitare videntur, temporibus deinde suis emergunt.

Vultus autem coeli sunt figurae coelestes. Potes vero facies illic appellare figuras ceteris ibi stabiliores; vultus autem figurae quae magis ibi mutantur. Aspectus quoque inter se stellarum motu quotidiano confectos vultus appellare potes similiter et figuras, nam hexagoni, pentagoni, tetragoni nominantur.

* Esto, dicet quispiam. Sint, ut placet, potentissimae ad efficiendum figurae coelestes. Verum quid hoc ad figurae imaginum artificio factas? Respondebunt non id potissimum contendere, ut potentissimae per se ad agendum sint nostrae figurae, sed ut paratissimae ad actiones et vires figurarum coelestium capiendas, quatenus opportune flunt dominantibus illis atque examusim ad illas configurantur. Exigit enim figura illa figuram. Nonne sonante cithara quadam altera reboat? Ob id tantum, si et ipsa similem figuram habeat atque e conspectu sit posita, et fides in ea positae et intentae similiter. Quidnam hic efficit, ut cithara subito patiatur a cithara, nisi situs aliquis

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29 post movendum add. et z 45-46 Vultus autem—stabiliores om. P 57 subito om. P patitur z

48 pentagoni om. z

distinctive forces from up there. And therefore not only are natural species delimited by particular figures, but also natural motions, generations, and mutations are delimited by particular numbers.

What shall I say about light? For it is the action, or, if you will, the image, of the Intellect.⁴ And colors are particular lights. On which account (so astrologers say), you should not rashly deny their statement that lights—that is, colors, figures, and numbers—can do a great deal towards preparing our materials for celestial things.⁵

You are not unaware that harmonious music through its numbers and proportions has a wonderful power to calm, move, and influence our spirit, mind, and body. Well, proportions constituted out of numbers are almost figures of a sort, made, as it were, out of points and lines, but in motion. And similarly celestial figures by their own motion dispose themselves for acting; for by their harmonious rays and motions penetrating everything, they daily influence our spirit secretly just as overpowering music generally does openly. Besides, you know how easily a mourning figure moves pity in many people, and how much a figure of a lovable person instantly affects and moves the eyes, imagination, spirit, and humors; no less living and efficacious is a celestial figure.

In a city, does not the countenance of a prince, if mild and cheerful, cheer everybody up, but if fierce or sad, instantly terrify them? What then do you think the countenances of the celestials, the lords of all earthly things, are able to effect in comparison to these?⁶ I think that inasmuch as even people uniting to beget offspring often imprint on children to be born long afterwards not only the sort of countenances they then wear but even the sort of countenances they are merely imagining, in the same way the celestial countenances rapidly impart to materials their characteristics. If sometimes the characteristics seem to lie hidden there a long time, eventually in their season they emerge.

The countenances of the sky are the celestial figures. You may call “faces” those figures there which are more stable than the others; but “countenances” those up there which change more. You may also call the aspects composed by the daily motion of the stars in relation to each other, “countenances” and likewise “figures”; for aspects are called hexagons, pentagons, and tetragons.

“So be it,” someone will say, “let celestial figures be as powerful in operation as you like, but what does this have to do with the figures of images made artificially?” Astrologers do not especially argue, they will respond, that our figures are the most powerful agents in themselves, but that they are the best prepared for catching the actions and forces of the celestial figures, insofar as they are made at the right time when the celestial ones are dominant and are made to conform exactly to them. For that figure perfects this figure. When one lute sounds, does not another echo it? It only does so if it has a similar figure, and is placed opposite, and the strings in it are similarly placed and tuned. What do you think causes lute to respond instantly to lute, but their

et quaedam figura conformis? Figura speculi lenis, concava, nitens, coelo congrua ob hoc ipsum proprie munus tantum coelitus accipit, ut radios Phoebi in se cumulatissime complectatur, et solidissimum quodque ad centrum 60 suum e conspectu locatum repente comburat. Ergo ne dubites, dicent, quin materia quaedam imaginis facienda, alioquin valde congrua coelo, per figuram coelo similem arte datam coeleste munus tum in se ipsa concipiat, tum reddat in proximum aliquem vel gestantem. Non solum vero figura, sed etiam dispositio pervia, quam diaphanam vocant, inefficax quiddam est et 65 passivum suapte natura. Verumtamen quoniam pervia dispositio est in coelo proprium luminis susceptaculum, ideo ubicunque sub coelo haec vel est naturalis, vel modo aliquo comparatur, subito praesens coeleste lumen acquiritur; atque etiam conservatur, ubi una cum hac vel calor est igneus, ut in nocti flamma, vel est aliquid aerium aqueumve simul et glutinosum, ut in nocti lucis et nocticernis et carbunculis atque forsan quodammodo in camphora. 70 Quid inde sequatur pro imaginibus ipse reputa.

*Quales coelestium figurae antiqui imaginibus imprimebant;
ac de usu imaginum.*

Cap. XVIII.

Aliquis autem quaeret, quas potissimum coeli figurae imaginibus impri-
mere soleant. Sunt enim ibi formae oculis valde conspicuae et a multis
quales sunt quasi depictae, ut Aries, Taurus similesque figurae zodiaci et
quae sunt extra zodiacum manifestae. Sunt ibi praeterea formae quam plu-
rimae, non tam visibles quam imaginabiles per signorum facies, ab Indis 5
et Aegyptiis Chaldaeisque perspectae vel saltem excogitatae: velut in prima
facie Virginis virgo pulchra sedens, geminas manu spicas habens, puerumque
nutriens. Et reliquae quales describit Albumasar ceterique nonnulli. Sunt
denique characteres quidam signorum et planetarum ab Aegyptiis designati.
Volunt igitur imaginibus omnia haec insculpi. Ut si quis exspectet proprium 10
a Mercurio beneficium, collocare eum in Virgine debeat vel saltem ibi Lu-
nam cum aspectu Mercurii, et imaginem tunc ex stanno conficere vel argen-

58 figura¹] forma *z*
10 insculpsi *P*

60 complectitur *z* 67 vel *om. z* 68 aliquando *x* 69 construatur *Lw^{ac}*

placement and the fact that they share a like figure? The figure of a mirror—smooth, concave, shining, and shaped like the heavens—receives because of this in particular such a great gift from the heavens, that it gathers to itself most abundantly the rays of Phoebus and instantly burns a very solid thing which is located opposite its center.⁷ Therefore you should not doubt, they say, that the material for making an image, if it is in other respects entirely consonant with the heavens, once it has received by art a figure similar to the heavens, both conceives in itself the celestial gift and gives it again to someone who is in the vicinity or wearing it. The same rule holds not only for figure but also for transparent, so-called diaphanous constitution. It is by its own nature something ineffectual and passive. Yet since a transparent constitution is in the heavens the proper receptacle of light, so wherever under the heavens it either exists naturally or is obtained by some means, the celestial light then available is instantly acquired, and also may be stored up,⁸ in cases where there is along with this light either fiery heat as in flame, or where there is something airy or watery and at the same time glutinous, as in lanterns, lamps, carbuncles, and perhaps, in a way, in camphor. Ponder for yourself what consequence for images follows from that fact.

Quomodo per inferiora superioribus exposita
deducantur superiora, et per mundanas materias
mundana potissimum dona.

Cap. XXVI.

Sed ne longius digrediamur ab eo quod interpretantes Plotinum instituimus ab initio, breviter ita collige: mundus ab ipso bono (ut Plato una cum Timaeo Pythagorico docet) quam optimus effici poterat, est effectus. Est igitur non solum corporeus, sed vitae insuper et intelligentiae particeps. Quamobrem praeter corpus hoc mundi sensibus familiariter manifestum latet in eo spiritus corpus quoddam excedens caduci sensus capacitatem. In 5 spiritu viget anima; in anima fulget intelligentia. Atque sicut sub Luna nec miscetur aer cum terra, nisi per aquam, nec ignis cum aqua, nisi per aerem, sic in universo esca quaedam sive fomes ad animam corpori copulandam est ille ipse quem spiritum appellamus. Anima quoque fomes quidam est in spiritu corporeo mundi ad intelligentiam divinitus consequendam, quemadmodum summa quaedam in ligno siccitas ad penetraturum oleum est parata. Oleum huic imbibitum pabulum est ad ignem; ad calorem dico proxime. 10 Calor ipse luminis est vehiculum, ac si lignum hoc eiusmodi sit, ut igne praesente fulgeat, non uratur, qualia quandoque vidimus. Iam hoc exemplo videbimus, utrum vel homo vel aliud quiddam sub Luna certis quibusdam praeparamentis, partim quidem naturalibus, partim arte quae sitis, vitalia atque etiam forte intellectualia quaedam bona opportune quodammodo desuper accipere possit.

Verum quod hic ad religionem spectat discutiemus alibi, ubi Plotinus in 20 medium haec adducet. Quod vero ad naturales spectat influxus, qualescunque sint, desuper venientes, scito eos in nobis materiisque nostris ita demum per artem comparari posse, quando fomenta nobis nostrisque ad illos natura suggesterit, coelumque ad eosdem opportunius conspiraverit. Nonne in ipso fetu natura, fetus ipsius artifex, cum certo quodam pacto corpusculum affererit figuraveritque hoc ipso statim praeparamento, velut esca quadam spiritum ab universo deducit? Perque hunc velut fomitem vitam haurit atque animam? Ac denique per certam animae speciem dispositionemque corpus ita vivens dignum est praesentia mentis tandem donatae divinitus.

Ubique igitur natura maga est, ut inquit Plotinus atque Synesius, videlicet certa quaedam pabulis ubique certis inescans, non aliter quam centro

How by Exposing Lower Things to Higher Things,
You Can Bring Down the Higher,
and Cosmic Gifts Especially through Cosmic Materials.

Chap. XXVI

But lest we digress too long from what we initially started to do, interpreting Plotinus, let us review it briefly as follows. As Plato teaches, echoing Timaeus the Pythagorean, the world has been produced by the Good itself the best it could possibly have been.¹ It is therefore not only corporeal but participating in life and intelligence as well. Accordingly, besides this body of the world, manifest habitually to our senses, a body that is spirit hides within it which escapes the capacity of our weak senses. In this spirit flourishes a soul; and in this soul shines an intelligence. And just as in this sublunar realm air is not mixed with earth except through water, nor fire with water except through air, so in the universe a sort of bait or kindling for linking soul to body is that very thing which we call spirit. Soul too is a sort of kindling in both the spirit and the body of the world so that they can attain to a divinely given intellect just as extreme dryness in wood prepares it to be penetrated by oil; and oil imbibed by this wood is fuel for the fire (I mean, for the heat in the first instance); and the same heat is the vehicle for light, as if this wood were of the sort which we sometimes see, a sort which when set on fire, glows but is not consumed. Now we will see by this example whether something beneath the Moon, be it a person or something else, can somehow receive by certain well-timed preparations (partly natural, partly sought out by art) certain vital and even perhaps intellectual goods from above.

But what in this concerns religion we will discuss in another and later place [in the commentary of which *De vita* was originally a part] where Plotinus will bring it up. But concerning natural influences coming from above, whatever they may be, you should know that art can only obtain them in ourselves and our materials thus: when nature shall have supplied to us and our materials the fomentations for them and when the heavens shall have seasonably arranged themselves for them. Is it not true that Nature in the foetus, as the artificer of the foetus, when she has disposed the little body in a certain way and shaped it, straightway by means of this very preparation, like a bait, leads down the spirit from the universe? And does the foetus not through this spirit as another fomentation absorb life and soul? And finally through a particular species and disposition of soul, the body thus animated is worthy at last of the presence of a divinely given mind.

Yes, everywhere nature is a sorceress, as Plotinus and Synesius say,² in that she everywhere entices particular things by particular foods, just as she attracts

9 sive] si P 20 ubi] ut z 22 scitu z 23 artem] aetatem z 24 celum P 29 post tandem add. iam z

terrae gravia trahens, Lunae concavo levia, calore folia, humore radices, ceteraque similiter. Quo quidem attractu secum ipso devinciri mundum testantur sapientes Indi, dicentes mundum esse animal passim masculum simul atque feminam, mutuoque membrorum suorum amore ubique coire secum, atque ita constare; vinculum vero membrorum inesse per insitam sibi mentem, quae totam infusa per artus agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet. Hinc Orpheus naturam ipsam mundi Iovemque mundanum marem appellat et feminam. Usque adeo mutui partium suarum coniugii ubique mundus est avidus. Esse vero masculinum sexum feminino ubique commixtum, declarat illinc quidem ordo signorum, ubi praecedens perpetuo deinceps ordine masculinum est, subsequens femininum; hinc vero arbores atque herbae, quae etiam sicut animalia utrunque sexum habent. Mitto quod ignis ad aërem, aqua ad terram masculi vicem tenet ad feminam; ut non mirum sit membra inter se mundana et omnes eius articulos mutuum coniugium concupiscere. Quod et planetae conciliant, partim quidem mares, partim vero feminae, praecipue vero Mercurius masculus atque femina, Hermaphroditi pater.

Quod sane animadvertis agricultura praeparat agrum seminaque ad coelestia dona, et in sitionibus quibusdam vitam plantae propagat, et ad speciem alteram melioremque perducit. Similia quaedam efficit medicus et physicus et chirurgicus in corpore nostro tum ad nostram fovendam, tum ad universi naturam uberius comparandam. Idem quoque philosophus naturalium rerum astrorumque peritus, quem proprie Magum appellare solemus, certis quibusdam illecebris coelestia terrenis opportune quidem nec aliter inserens quam in sitionis studiosus agricola veteri recentem stipiti surculum. Quod et Ptolemaeus valde probat, affirmans eiusmodi sapientem sic astrorum opus adiuvare posse, quemadmodum agricola terrae virtutem. Subicit Magus terrena coelestibus, immo inferiora passim superioribus, ut proprias ubique feminas suis maribus fecundandas, ut ferrum magneti trahendum, ut camphoram aeri ferventi sugendam, ut crystallum Soli illuminandum, ut sulphur et sublimem liquorem accendendum flammae, ut ovi testam vacuam et impletam rorē Soli elevandam, immo ut ovum ipsum gallinae fovendum.

Praeterea sicut nonnulli foventes ova, etiam sine animalibus vitam illis ex universo conciliant, et saepe materias quasdam opportune parantes, absque ovis manifestisque seminibus animalia procreant, ut ex ocimo scorpionem, apes ex bove, ex salvia avem merulae similem, vitam videlicet a mundo ma-

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36 verum *L* 38 Hic *P* 45 articuli *Lw^{ac}x* 49 animadvertisentes *z* 51 medicus *post et transp.*
z 52 chirurgus *z* 54 astrorum *x* 55 ne *x* 60 foecundas *x* 67 avem] autem *z*

heavy things by the power of the earth's center, light things by the power of the Moon's sphere, leaves by heat, roots by moisture, and so on. By means of this attraction, the wise men of India testify, the world binds itself together; and they say that the world is an animal which is masculine and at the same time feminine throughout and that it everywhere links with itself in the mutual love of its members and so holds together;³ moreover, the bond of the members inheres through the ingrafted "Mind, which is blended through the limbs and moves the whole bulk and mixes itself with the great body."⁴ Hence Orpheus called the very nature of the cosmos and the cosmic Jupiter masculine and feminine.⁵ So eager is the world everywhere for the mutual union of its parts. That the masculine sex is truly everywhere mingled with the feminine, the order of signs testifies from up there, where successively in that unending order the preceding one is masculine, the subsequent one, feminine. Trees and plants testify it from down here: just like animals, they have one sex or the other. I pass over the fact that fire to air plays the role of masculine to feminine and so does water to earth, so that it is no wonder that the members of the cosmos and all its limbs yearn for mutual union among themselves. And this union is brought about by the planets, some of which are masculine, some feminine, but especially by Mercury, because he is masculine as well as feminine and the father of Hermaphroditus.

With this in mind, Agriculture prepares the field and the seed for celestial gifts and by grafting prolongs the life of the shoot and refashions it into another and better species. The doctor, the natural philosopher, and the surgeon achieve similar effects in our bodies in order both to strengthen our own nature and to obtain more productively the nature of the universe. The philosopher who knows about natural objects and stars, whom we rightly are accustomed to call a Magus, does the very same things: he seasonably introduces the celestial into the earthly by particular lures just as the farmer interested in grafting brings the fresh graft into the old stock. Ptolemy also strongly argues this, affirming that a wise man of this sort can help the work of the stars just as the farmer does the power of the earth.⁶ The Magus subjects earthly things to celestial, lower things everywhere to higher, just as particular females everywhere are subjected to males appropriate to them for impregnation, as iron to a magnet to get magnetized, as camphor to hot air for absorption, as crystal to the Sun for illumination, as sulfur and sublimed liquor to a flame for kindling, as an egg-shell, empty and full of dew, to the Sun for elevation, or rather the egg itself to the hen for hatching.

Besides, some people by warming eggs even without animals win over to them life from the universe; and often, by seasonably preparing certain materials, they procreate animals even without any eggs or perceivable seeds, for example, the scorpion from basil, bees from an ox, a bird like a blackbird from sage,⁷ that is, they supply them with life from the universe by particular

teris certis opportunisque temporibus adhibentes; sic et ille sapiens ubi cognovit quae materiae sive quales partim incohatae natura, partim arte perfectae, etsi sparsae fuerint congregatae, qualem coelitus influxum suscipere possint, has eo regnante potissimum colligit, praeparat, adhibet sibique per eas coelestia vendicat. Ubiunque enim materia quaedam sic superis exposita est, sicut speculare vitrum vultui tuo pariesque oppositus voci, subito superne patitur ab agente videlicet potentissimo a potestate vitaque mirabili ubique praesente, virtutemque passione reportat, non aliter quam et speculum imaginem repraesentat ex vultu et ex voce paries echo.

His ferme exemplis ipse Plotinus utitur, ubi Mercurium imitatus ait, veteres sacerdotes sive Magos in statuis sacrificiisque sensibilibus divinum aliiquid et mirandum suscipere solitos. Vult autem una cum Trismegisto per materialia haec non proprie suscipi numina penitus a materia segregata, sed mundana tantum, ut ab initio dixi et Synesius approbat — mundana, inquam, id est, vitam quandam vel vitale aliquid ex anima mundi et sphaerarum animis atque stellarum, vel etiam motum quendam et vitalem quasi praesentiam ex daemonibus. Immo interdum ipsos daemonas eiusmodi adesse materialis Mercurius ipse, quem Plotinus sequitur, inquit — daemonas arios, non coelestes, nedum sublimiores — statuasque Mercurius ipse componit ex herbis, arboribus, lapidibus, aromatis naturalem vim divinitatis (ut ipse ait) in se habentibus. Adiungit cantus coelestibus similes, quibus ait eos delectari, statuasque sic adesse diutius et prodesse hominibus vel obesse. Addit sapientes quondam Aegyptios, qui et sacerdotes erant, cum non possent rationibus persuadere populo esse deos, id est, spiritus aliquos super homines, ex cogitasse magicum hoc illicum, quo daemonas allicientes in statuas esse numina declararent. Sed Iamblichus damnat Aegyptios quod daemonas non solum ut gradus quosdam ad superiores deos investigandos acceperint, sed plurimum adoraverint. Chaldaeos vero daemonibus non occupatos Aegyptiis anteponit — Chaldaeos, inquam, religionis antistites, nam astrologos tam Chaldaeorum quam Aegyptiorum quodammodo tentavisse daemonas per harmoniam coelestem in statuas fictiles trahere suspicamur. Quod significare videtur astrologus Samuel Hebraeus auctoritate Davidis Bil astrologi fatus, antiquos videlicet factores imaginum fecisse statuas futura pronuntiantes. Harmoniam vero coelestium his accommodatam esse tradit; metallum fundere ad hominis pulchri formam die Mercurii, hora tertia scilicet Saturni,

70 qualem] qua- x 78 post sacrificiisque add. in z 79 autem om. x 87 arboribus om. P
88 Adiungunt x 91 hominibus z 92 illicitum z 98 suspicemus z 102 ab z

materials at the right times. Like all these, our wise man — when he knows what or what sort of materials (partly begun by nature, partly completed by art and, although they had been dispersed, grouped together) can receive what or what sort of influence from the heavens — assembles these materials when that influence is most dominant, he prepares them, he brings them to bear, and he wins through them celestial gifts. For whenever a material is thus exposed to the celestials, as a glass mirror to your face and as an opposite wall to your voice, immediately it experiences something from above from a most powerful agent, namely, the wonderful power and life everywhere present; and it gains power from that experience, just as from the face the mirror reproduces an image and from the voice the wall reproduces an echo.

Plotinus uses almost the same examples in that place where, paraphrasing Hermes Trismegistus, he says that the ancient priests or Magi used to capture in statues and material sacrifices something divine and wonderful.⁸ He holds, moreover, with Hermes Trismegistus that through these materials they did not, properly speaking, capture divinities wholly separate from matter but deities who are merely cosmic [13.38], as I said from the beginning and as Synesius demonstrates⁹ — cosmic, I say, that is, a life or something vital from the Anima Mundi and the souls of the spheres and of the stars or even a motion and, as it were, a vital presence from the daemons [8.24a, 13.37]. Indeed, the same Hermes, whom Plotinus follows, holds that daemons of this kind — airy ones, not celestial, let alone any higher — are themselves present all along in the materials and that Hermes himself put together statues from herbs, trees, stones, and spices, which had within themselves, as he says, a natural force of divinity [13.38]. He added songs resembling the heavenly bodies [as in 3.21]; he says the divinities take delight in such songs and so stay a longer time in the statues and help people or harm them. He adds that once the wise men of Egypt, who were also priests, since they were unable to persuade the people by reasoning that there were gods, that is, certain spirits [in the ordinary sense] superior to mankind, thought up this magical lure¹⁰ through which they could allure daemons into the statues and thereby show that divinities exist [13.37]. But Iamblichus condemns the Egyptians because they not only accepted daemons as steps in the search for the higher gods but frequently also worshiped them. Rather than the Egyptians he prefers the Chaldeans, who were not preoccupied with daemons — the Chaldean priests of religion, I say, for I suspect the astrologers, both Chaldean and Egyptian, somehow tried to draw daemons through celestial harmony into earthen statues.¹¹ This is what the astrologer Samuel Hebraeus, leaning on the authority of David Bil the astrologer, seems to signify, namely, that ancient makers of images made statues which foretold the future. He says that the harmony of the heavenly bodies was accommodated to the statues. He says that they cast metal according to the form of a handsome man in the day of Mercury [Wednesday] in the third hour (i.e., that

quando Mercurius Saturnum in Aquario subit, in nona coeli plaga vaticinium designante; ascenditque Geminorum sidus, significans prophetas (ut aiunt), Mars a Sole comburitur, nec Mercurium intuetur; Sol tamen aspicit coniunctionis illius locum; Venus interea aliquem obtinet angulum, occidentalis est et potens; Luna ex trigono gradum aspicit ascendentem, similiterque Saturnus. Haec illi.

Ego autem primo quidem ex beati Thomae sententia puto, si modo statuas loquentes efficerint, non simplicem ipsum stellarum influxum ibi formavisse verba, sed daemonas. Deinde si forte contigerit eos in eiusmodi statuas ingredi, non arbitror hos ibi per coelestem influxum fuisse devinctos, sed sponte potius suis cultoribus obsecutos, denique decepturos. Nam et natura superior ab inferiore conciliatur quidem aliquando, sed cohiberi nequit. Et dispositio illa siderum paulo ante descripta concurrere forte non potest. Quamvis autem daemones astronomica ratione statuis non includantur, tamen ubi per cultum eis exhibitum praesentes extiterint, Porphyrius ait eos regulis astronomicis oracula reddidisse, atque ideo frequenter ambigua — et merito, quoniam Iamblichus probat prophetiam veram atque certam nec malis daemonibus convenire, nec humanis artibus vel natura, sed spiratione divina purgatis mentibus provenire.

Sed ad Mercurium, immo ad Plotinum iam revertamur. Mercurius sacerdotes ait accepisse virtutem a mundi natura convenientem, eamque miscuisse. Secutus hunc Plotinus putat totum id anima mundi conciliante confici posse, quatenus illa naturalium rerum formas per seminales quasdam rationes sibi divinitus insitas generat atque movet. Quas quidem rationes appellat etiam deos, quoniam ab ideis supremae mentis nunquam destituntur. Itaque per rationes eiusmodi animam mundi facile se applicare materiis, quas formavit ab initio per easdem, quando Magus vel sacerdos opportunis temporibus adhibuerit formas rerum rite collectas, quae rationem hanc aut illam proprie spectant, sicut magnes ferrum, reubarbarum cholera, crocus cor, eupatorium spodiumque iecur, spica muscusque cerebrum. Fieri vero posse quandoque, ut rationibus ad formas sic adhibitis sublimiora quoque dona descendant, quatenus rationes in anima mundi coniunctae sunt intellectualibus eiusdem animae formis, atque per illas divinae mentis ideis. Quod et Iamblichus approbat, ubi de sacrificiis agit. Qua de re alibi nos opportunius

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of Saturn), when the heavens were disposed as follows: Mercury draws near to Saturn in Aquarius in the ninth mundane house which signifies prophecy; Mars ascends the constellation Gemini signifying prophets (as they say) and is combust by the Sun and does not aspect Mercury; the Sun aspects the place of the aforementioned conjunction [i.e., of Mercury and Saturn in Aquarius]; Venus meanwhile occupies a cardine and is west of the Sun and powerful; and the Moon is in a trine aspect with the degree of the Ascendant, and so is Saturn. This is what they say.¹²

But I think, in the first place, in accordance with the opinion of the blessed Thomas [Aquinas] that if they made speaking statues at all [8.24a, 13.37], it was not the mere influence of the stars itself that formed the words within, but daemons. Secondly, if by chance it happened that these daemons did enter into statues of this kind, I think they were not bound there by celestial influence but rather deliberately indulged their worshippers, intending to deceive them in the end. To be sure, a superior nature of this kind is sometimes won over by an inferior, but it cannot be constrained.¹³ And that astrological arrangement described just above probably cannot happen all at one time.¹⁴ And although daemons cannot be enclosed in statues by any astronomical principle, nevertheless where through worship proffered to them they have been present, Porphyry says they have rendered oracles by astronomical rules and therefore frequently ambiguously. Porphyry is right to say "ambiguously," since Iamblichus demonstrates that true and certain prophecy cannot come from such evil daemons, nor is it produced by human arts or by nature; it is only produced in purified minds by divine inspiration.¹⁵

But now let us get back to Hermes, or rather to Plotinus. Hermes says that the priests received an appropriate power from the nature of the cosmos and mixed it [i.e., its materials in the statues, 13.37]. Plotinus follows him and thinks that everything can be easily accomplished by the intermediation of the Anima Mundi, since the Anima Mundi generates and moves the forms of natural things through certain seminal reasons implanted in her from the divine. These reasons he even calls gods, since they are never cut off from the Ideas of the Supreme Mind. He thinks, therefore, that through such seminal reasons the Anima Mundi can easily apply herself to materials since she has formed them to begin with through these same seminal reasons, when a Magus or a priest brings to bear at the right time rightly grouped forms of things — forms which properly aim towards one reason or another, as the lodestone toward iron, rhubarb toward choler, saffron toward the heart, agrimony and spodium toward the liver, spikenard and musk toward the brain. Sometimes it can happen that when you bring seminal reasons to bear on forms, higher gifts too may descend, since reasons in the Anima Mundi are conjoined to the intellectual forms in her and through these to the Ideas of the Divine Mind.¹⁶ Iamblichus too confirms this when he deals with sacrifices,¹⁷ on which subject we

103 Saturno L 104 designare z ascendit P 108 ille z 112 ibi] tibi x 116 non om. z
124 id] in z post conciliante add. facile xx 128 anima Lw^{ac}x 132 vero om. P

disputabimus, ubi etiam apparebit quam impura superstitione populi gentilis extiterit, contra vero quam pura pietas evangelica fuerit, quod magna ex parte in libro *De religione Christiana* iam fecimus.

FINIS

will dispute more seasonably at another place, where also it will appear how impure was the superstition of the heathen but how pure was the piety of the Gospel — which for the most part we have already done in our book *De religione Christiana*.

THE END

*Apologia quaedam, in qua de medicina,
astrologia, vita mundi; item de Magis qui
Christum statim natum salutaverunt.*

Marsilius Ficinus Florentinus dilectissimis suis in veritatis studio fratribus, tribus Petris, Nero, Guicciardino, Soderino, ter quaterque salutem. Rectius modo Tripetro quam tribus Petris fortasse dixisset. Sicut enim ubi palma est una, non faciunt plures in ea digitii manus ibi plures, sic vestra, amici, corpora tria nihil prohibere videntur, quominus unum efficiat Petrum una voluntas. Faber ille coelestis patriae Christus tam ingentem procreavit petram, ut immenso huic aedificio ecclesiae sua una haec petra fundando sufficeret. Ego quoque tam grandes nactus sum divina quadam sorte petras, ut tres nunc meo vel arduo satis aedificio faciant. Nunc vobis, amici, nunc, si nescitis, arx illa Palladis necessaria fore videtur, qua procul a nobis saevum impiorum gigantum impetum arceamus. Quamobrem vestra primum arce tribus constructa Petris trium liberorum meorum vitam vitae publicae succurrentium munire decrevi.

Scitis (ut arbitror) me *De vita librum* composuisse, in libellos tres divisum. Quorum primus *De vita sana*, secundus *De vita longa*, tertius *De vita coelitus comparanda* inscribetur. Igitur esca tituli tam suavis quam plurimos allicit ad gustandum, sed in numero tanto ignorantes plerique futuri sunt (ut arbitror), maligni quoque non pauci. Alius ergo dicet: Nonne Marsilius est sacerdos? Est profecto. Quid igitur sacerdotibus cum medicina? Quid rursum cum astrologia commercii? Alius item: Quid Christiano cum magia vel imaginibus? Alius autem et quidem indignus vita vitam invidebit coelo. Cuncti denique sic affecti beneficio in eos nostro ingratii nimis erunt, atque adversus caritatem nostram, qua vitae prosperitatique publicae pro ingenii facultate consulimus, non pudebit esse crudeles. Communis igitur erit vobis iste labor, sed ut quodammodo levior sit, tres enim estis adversum tres hostes, 25 distributum subite certamen. Nec invectiva (novi enim ingenium vestrum) confutabis invectivam, sed alieni fellis amaritudinem (quae vestra suavitas est mirifica) vestri mellis dulcedine superabit.

*An Apologia Dealing with Medicine,
Astrology, the Life of the World, and the Magi
Who Greeted the Christ Child at His Birth.*

Marsilio Ficino of Florence sends greetings again and again to his most beloved brothers in the pursuit of truth, the three Pieros: Nero, Guicciardini, and Soderini.¹ But perhaps I should more properly have said the tripartite Piero than the three Pieros. For just as when there is but one palm, the many fingers in the palm do not make many hands there, so, friends, your three bodies do not seem to prevent one will from making one Piero. Christ, that architect of the heavenly homeland, created a rock so great that this one rock was able to provide a foundation for the vast edifice of his church. I also have met, by some divine luck, with rocks so great that three are now sufficient for even this lofty edifice of mine. Now, friends, now, if you do not know it, it seems you need that citadel of Pallas, so that we may keep far from us the savage attack of impious giants.² For this reason, I have decided to fortify the life of my three children/books who are of service to everyone's life first with your citadel constructed upon three rocks.³

You know, I think, that I have written a book, *On Life*, divided into three little books. The first book will be entitled *On a Healthy Life*, the second, *On a Long Life*, and the third, *On Life from the Heavens*. The title will act as a pleasant bait, then, and will attract as many as possible to taste of it; but in such a great number, a good many will be ignorant, as I think, and not a few malicious to boot. Someone therefore will say: Marsilio is a priest, isn't he? Indeed he is. What business then do priests have with medicine or, again, with astrology? Another will say: What does a Christian have to do with magic or images? And someone else, unworthy of life, will begrudge life to the heavens. Finally, all who feel this way will be quite ungrateful for my service toward them; and they will not be ashamed to be cruel in the face of my charity, with which I looked to the life and prosperity of all citizens to the best of my ability. That labor of yours will, then, be a common one, but in order that the load may be somewhat lighter—for there are three of you against three enemies—fight an apportioned battle. You will not refute invective with invective, for I know your nature; but you are so charming that you will overcome the bitterness of another's gall with the wondrous sweetness of your honey.

Principio, candidissime Nere, respondeto primis antiquissimos quondam sacerdotes fuisse medicos pariter et astronomos. Quod sane Chaldaeorum, Persarum, Aegyptiorum testificantur historiae. Ad nullum praeterea magis quam ad pium sacerdotem pertinere singularis caritatis officia, quae quidem in maximo omnium beneficio quam maxime lucent. Officium vero praestantissimum est proculdubio, quod et maxime necessarium et imprimis ab omnibus exoptatum, efficere videlicet, ut hominibus sit mens sana in corpore sano. Id autem ita derum praestare possumus, si coniungimus sacerdotio medicinam. At quoniam medicina sine favore coelesti, quod et Hippocrates Galienusque confitentur et nos experti sumus, saepius est inanis, saepe etiam noxia, nimirum ad eandem sacerdotis caritatem astronomia pertinet, ad quam attinere diximus medicinam. Eiusmodi (ut arbitror) medicum honori sacrae litterae iubent, quoniam propter necessitatem hunc Altissimus procreaverit. Et Christus ipse, vitae largitor, qui discipulis mandavit languentes toto orbe curare, sacerdotibus quoque praecipiet, si minus verbis, ut illi quondam, mederi possint, saltem herbis et lapidibus medeantur. Quae si minus ipsa sufficient, opportuno quodam afflatu coeli conflare haec et aegrotis admoveare iubebit. Nam et ipse eodem afflatu coeli animalia passim ad suam quaeque concitat medicinam, usque adeo vitae omnium abundantissime providet. Sic instinctu coelesti divinitus instigante, serpentes quidem marathro, hirundines autem chelidonia oculis medicantur; aquilae vexatae partu aetitem lapidem divinitus invenerunt, quo feliciter ova statim eniterentur. Itaque Deus ipse, qui per coelum animalia quaevis ad medicinas instigat, sacerdotes certe permittit, non mercede, inquam, sed caritate, medicinis coelitus confirmatis morbos expellere. His vero tu deinceps plura etiam, si expedierit, ingenii tui aculeis addes.

Surge post haec et tu, Guicciardine vehemens, atque curiosis ingenii respondeto magiam vel imagines non probari quidem a Marsilio, sed narrari, Plotinum ipsum interpretante. Quod et scripta plane declarant, si aequamente legantur. Neque de magia hic prophana, quae cultu daemonum nittitur, verbum quidem ullum asseverari, sed de magia naturali, quae rebus naturalibus ad prosperam corporum valetudinem coelestium beneficia captat, effici mentionem. Quae sane facultas tam concedenda videtur ingenii legitime utentibus, quam medicina et agricultura iure conceditur; tantoque etiam magis, quanto perfectior est industria, terrenis coelestia copulans. Ex hac officina Magi omnium primi Christum statim natum adoraverunt. Quid igitur expavescis Magi nomen formidolose? Nomen evangelio gratiosum, quod non maleficum et veneficum, sed sapientem sonat et sacerdotem. Quidnam profitetur Magus ille, venerator Christi primus? Si cupis audire, quasi quidam agricola est, certe quidam mundicola est. Nec propterea mundum

29 primis om. M 33 vere z 34 hominibus z 47 provideret M 49 aetitem] echitem *Lw^{ac}x*
55 et] es z 58 haec z

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Reply first of all, whitest Nero, to the first, that the most ancient priests of long ago were doctors as well as astronomers, as indeed the histories of the Chaldeans, the Persians, and the Egyptians testify. Moreover, to no one more than to the pious priest did the duties of extraordinary charity pertain, which indeed shine forth as much as possible in the greatest service of all. The most outstanding duty without a doubt, most necessary and especially desired by all, is to see to it that men have a sound mind in a sound body.⁴ This we can accomplish only if we join medicine with the priesthood. But since medicine is quite often useless and often harmful without the help of the heavens—a thing which both Hippocrates and Galen admit and I have experienced—astronomy certainly pertains to this priestly charity no less than does medicine.⁵ The sacred Scriptures command us to honor such a doctor (as I think), “since for your need the Most High created him.” And Christ, the giver of life, who commanded his disciples to “cure the sick” in the whole world,⁶ will also enjoin priests to heal at least with herbs and stones, if they are unable to cure with words as those men did before. But if those things are not sufficient, he will command them to compound them with a seasonable breath of heaven and apply them to sick people. For with the same breath of heaven by which he incites animals everywhere, each to his own medicine, even so does he provide most abundantly for the life of all. Under the divine stimulus of such heavenly inspiration, snakes cure themselves with fennel;⁷ swallows cure their eyes with chelidonia;⁸ and eagles, when they have a hard time giving birth, have discovered by divine inspiration the eagle-stone with which they successfully bring forth their eggs right away.⁹ Therefore God Himself, who through the heavens impels all animals to his medicines, certainly permits priests to drive out diseases, not, I say, for gain but out of charity, with medicines which are strengthened by the heavens. In addition to these arguments, you will then add even more, if it is expedient, through the keenness of your mind.

After this, you too rise, O mighty Guicciardini, and reply to intellectual busybodies that Marsilio is not approving magic and images but recounting them in the course of an interpretation of Plotinus. And my writings make this quite clear, if they are read impartially. Nor do I affirm here a single word about profane magic which depends upon the worship of daemons, but I mention natural magic, which, by natural things, seeks to obtain the services of the celestials for the prosperous health of our bodies. This power, it seems, must be granted to minds which use it legitimately, as medicine and agriculture are justly granted, and all the more so as that activity which joins heavenly things to earthly is more perfect. From this workshop, the Magi, the first of all, adored the new-born Christ. Why then are you so dreadfully afraid of the name of Magus, a name pleasing to the Gospel, which signifies not an enchanter and a sorcerer, but a wise priest? For what does that Magus, the first adorer of Christ, profess? If you wish to hear: on the analogy of a farmer, he is a cultiva-

hic adorat, quemadmodum nec agricola terram, sed sicut agricola humani victus gratia ad aerem temperat agrum, sic ille sapiens, ille sacerdos gratia 70 salutis humanae inferiora mundi ad superiora contemperat; atque sicut ova gallinae, sic opportune terrena subicit fovenda coelo. Quod efficit semper ipse Deus, et faciendo docet suadetque facere; ut a superis infima generentur et moveantur atque regantur.

Denique duo sunt magiae genera. Unum quidem eorum, qui certo quodam cultu daemonas sibi conciliant, quorum opera freti fabricant saepe portenta. Hoc autem penitus explosum est, quando princeps huius mundi electus est foras. Alterum vero eorum qui naturales materias opportune causis subiciunt naturalibus mira quadam ratione formandas. Huius quoque artificii species duae sunt: altera quidem curiosa, altera necessaria. Illa sane ad ostentationem supervacua singit prodigia, ceu quando Persarum Magi ex salvia sub fimo putrefacta, dum Sol et Luna secundam Leonis faciem occuparent, eundemque gradum ibi tenerent, generabant avem merulæ similem serpentina cauda, eamque redactam in cinerem infundebant lampadi, unde domus statim plena serpentibus videbatur. Hoc autem tanquam vanum et saluti noxiun procul effugiendum. Tenenda tamen species necessaria, cum astrologia copulans medicinam. Si quis autem pertinax ulterius instet, morem huic ita gerito, Guicciardine, ut ne legat haec nostra, nec intelligat, nec meminerit, nec utatur homo, si homo est tanto beneficio prorsus indignus. Multa sunt praeterea quae tu adversus ingratam ignorantiam in medium affere tuo ingenio poteris.

Quidnam agis et tu, strenue Soderine noster? Tolerabis ne superstitiones caecosque nescio quos futuros, qui vitam in animalibus vel abiectissimis herbisque vilissimis manifestam vident, in coelo, in mundo non vident. Iam vero si homunciones isti vitam minimis concedunt mundi particulis, quae tandem dementia est, quae invidia, nec nosse, nec velle totum vivere in quo vivimus et movemur et sumus? Quod quidem canit Aratus, Iovem manifeste significans communem corporis mundani vitam. Peropportune nunc in haec Arati verba nescio quomodo videor incidisse. Memini Lucam evangelistam, memini Paulum apostolum his verbis libenter uti, in quibus mundi vitam sapientes illi non horrent. At vero superstitionis quidam his obiciet non facile convinci ex verbis eiusmodi, Paulum assentiri mundum habere animam, sed tantum subesse Deo ac nos in hoc ipso Deo vivere. Esto igitur. Ne nominemus in mundo, quando non placet, animam. Nomen anima sit prophæ-

74 regnantur *z* 75 eorum *om. M* 81 seu *z* 83 avem] autem *z* 86 tamen] tantum *M*
88 nostra *noxia z* 90 adversum *L* 93 quos futuros *om. z* 103 vivente *x*

tor of the world. Nor does he on that account worship the world, just as a farmer does not worship the earth; but just as a farmer for the sake of human sustenance tempers his field to the air, so that wise man, that priest, for the sake of human welfare tempers the lower parts of the world to the upper parts; and just like hen's eggs, so he fittingly subjects earthly things to heaven that they may be fostered. God himself always brings this about and by doing, teaches and urges us to do it in order that the lowest things may be produced, moved, and ruled by the higher.

Lastly, there are two kinds of magic. The first is practiced by those who unite themselves to daemons by a specific religious rite, and, relying on their help, often contrive portents. This, however, was thoroughly rejected when the Prince of this World was cast out.¹⁰ But the other kind of magic is practiced by those who seasonably subject natural materials to natural causes to be formed in a wondrous way. Of this profession there are also two types: the first is inquisitive, the second, necessary. The former does indeed feign useless portents for ostentation: as when the Magi of Persia produced a bird similar to a blackbird with a serpent's tail out of sage which had putrefied under manure, while the Sun and Moon occupied the same degree in the second face of Leo; they reduced the bird to ashes and poured it into a lamp, whereupon the house seemed as a result to be full of serpents.¹¹ This type, however, must be avoided as vain and harmful to health. Nevertheless the necessary type which joins medicine with astrology must be kept. If anyone obstinately insists further, however, gratify him, Guicciardini, to the extent that the man (if one wholly undeserving of such a benefit is a man) may never read these things of ours, nor understand, remember, or make use of them. There are many points besides which your own genius will be able to bring forward to oppose ungrateful ignorance.

Now, what are you to do, our vigorous Soderini? Will you tolerate it that there will be some men or other, superstitious and blind, who see life plain in even the lowest animals and the meanest plants, but do not see life in the heavens or the world? Now if those little men grant life to the smallest particles of the world, what folly! what envy! neither to know that the Whole, in which "we live and move and have our being," is itself alive, nor to wish this to be so. Aratus, indeed, sings this, showing clearly that Jupiter is the life which is common to the body of the world. Most fittingly I seem now to have lit somehow upon those words of Aratus. I remember Luke the evangelist, I remember Paul the apostle gladly using these words; those wise men do not fear the life of the world which they imply.¹² But some superstitious man will object that it is not easily shown from these words that Paul agrees that the world has a soul, but only that the world is subject to God and that we live in this God. Well, so be it. Let us not say that there is a soul in the world, since that is unacceptable. Let soul be a profane name. Will it not be permitted to say

num. Licebitne saltem vitam qualemcumque dicere? Quam Deus ipse, mundi faber, huic operi suo tam feliciter absoluto clementer inspiret, quandoquidem erga vilissima quaeque viventia non est avarus, et quotidie per coelum quam plurimis quae sunt in eo largissime praestat vitam. Dic amabo, nonne vides boves et asinos, o bos, o asine, qui tactu quodam ex se viventia generant, esse vivos? Si ergo haec praeterea ex se viva quaedam aspectu etiam 105 generarent, an non multo magis haec vivere iudicares, si quod modo ipse iudicium, si quam vitam habes? Coelum, terrae maritus, non tangit (ut communis est opinio) terram. Cum uxore non coit, sed solis siderum suorum quasi oculorum radiis undique lustrat uxorem; lustrando fecundat procreatque viventia. Num ergo vitam vel intuendo largiens, ipsum in se propriam nullam habet vitam? Et quod dedit avi strutho vitam aspectumque vivificum, longe est hoc ipso deterius. His tandem adductis in medium, nisi persuaseris superstitionis istum, mittito semivivum, immo vero non vivum.

Proinde ut pluribus causam nostram patronis agamus, addito, Petre mi Nere, Amphionem illum nostrum, Landinum Christophorum, oratorem pariter et poetam. Ille noster Amphion suavitate mira celeriter lapidea hostium nostrorum corda demolliet. Tu vero, Guicciardine, carissime compater, ito nunc, ito alacer, Politianum Herculem accersito. Hercules quondam ubi periculosis certandum foret, vocitabat Iolaum. Tu nunc similiter Herculem. Nosti profecto quot barbara monstra Latium iam devastantia Politianus Hercules invaserit, laceraverit, interemerit; quam acriter expugnet passim, quam tuto propugnet. Hic ergo vel centum hydrae capita nostris liberis minitantia statim contundet clava, flammisque comburet. Eia, mi dulcissime Soderine, surge age, Picum salutato Phoebeum. Hunc ego saepe Phoebum appello meum, ille me Dionysium vicissim atque Liberum. Fratres ergo sumus. Nuntia Phoebo meo venenosum contra nos pythonem ex palude iamiam emergentem. Tendat arcum obsecra, precor; confestim spicula iaculetur. Intendet ille protinus, scio quid loquar, venenumque totum semel una nece necabit.

Valete iam feliciter, amatissimi fratres mei, non valetudine tantum felici, sed ipsa etiam felicitate digni; liberorumque meorum in lucem iam prodeuntium valetudinem felicitatemque curate.

XV. Septembris, MCCCCLXXXVIII.

In agro Caregio

112 habet *z* 113 terra *z* 118 mitto *xz* 120 Laudinum *z* pariter *om.* *z* 124 vocitabant
z 125 quod *z* 126 lacerarit *z* 128 confundet *Lw^{ac}x* 129 Phoebeum] Phoebum *L^{ac}z* ergo
z Phoebeum *x* 130 Fratres] tres *M* 135 producentium *z* 137 post Caregio add. Apologiae
 finis *z*

that at least there is some sort of life? — a life which God himself, the maker of the world, so fortunately, perfectly, and gently breathes into this work of his, since he is not stingy towards the meanest of living things and daily through the heavens most bountifully bestows life on as many as possible of those things which it contains. Tell me, I pray, surely you see that oxen and asses are living, O ox, O ass,¹³ who beget living things from themselves by a touch. If, moreover, these things were to generate living things from themselves by a look, would you not judge all the more that these things are living, if only you yourself have any judgment, if you have any life? Heaven, the husband of earth, does not touch the earth, as is the common opinion. It does not have intercourse with its wife; but by the rays of its stars alone as if with the rays of its eyes, it illuminates her on all sides; it fertilizes her by its illumination and procreates living things. If, therefore, it bestows life even by its glance, does heaven have no life proper to itself? And the fact that it gave life and a vivifying look to the sparrow is a thing far lower than this. After having brought forward these points, if you should fail in the end to persuade the superstitious man, dismiss him as half-dead, or rather as not even living.

Then, my dear Piero del Nero, in order that we may plead our case with more defenders, bring in that Amphion of ours: Christoforo Landino, orator as well as poet.¹⁴ That Amphion of ours will quickly soften the stony hearts of our enemies with his wondrous sweetness. And you, Guicciardini, dearest godfather [of my books/children], go now, go quickly and summon Poliziano, our Hercules.¹⁵ In those days, when Hercules was about to engage in a rather dangerous struggle, he used to call out "Iolaus."¹⁶ Do you now similarly call out "Hercules." For you know how many barbarous monsters now devastating Latium Poliziano our Hercules has attacked, destroyed, and killed; how zealously he conquers everywhere, how securely he defends. This man, therefore, will immediately beat with his club and consume in flames even a hundred heads of the Hydra threatening our books/children.¹⁷ Up, then, my dearest Soderini, rise and greet Pico, our Phoebus. I often call him my Phoebus and he in turn calls me Dionysius and Liber, for we are brothers.¹⁸ Tell my Phoebus that the poisonous Python even now is rising from the swamp against us.¹⁹ Let him stretch his bow, beg him, I beseech you. Let him shoot his arrows without delay. He will immediately bend his bow, I know whereof I speak, and with a single slaughter will once and for all destroy all the poison.

Farewell now fortunately, my most loving brothers, worthy not only of fortunate health but of good fortune itself. Take care of the health and good fortune of my children/books now coming forth into the light.

September 15, 1489

at Careggi