

How is a University born? Montpellier before Montpellier

¿Cómo nace una universidad? Montpellier antes de Montpellier

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Abstract: In 1220, the first statutes referring to the “University of Physicians of Montpellier” indicate that a collective organization already existed there. These statutes followed on at least a century of medical teaching and practice. We study the origins of this “birth” in conjunction with an analysis of the physicians’ backgrounds, an identification of their knowledge, the development of their reputation and the changes in their cultural, economic, social and political surroundings – all in the very unique circumstances making Montpellier a pioneering institution.

Keywords: University of Montpellier, medicine, medical professions, heresy, Arabic translations, Middle Ages.

Resumen: en 1220, los primeros estatutos referidos a la “Universidad de Médicos de Montpellier” indican que ya existía allí una organización colectiva. Estos estatutos siguieron al menos un siglo de enseñanza y práctica médica. En el presente texto estudiamos los orígenes de este “nacimiento” junto con un análisis de los antecedentes de los médicos, la identificación de sus conocimientos, el desarrollo de su reputación y los cambios en su entorno cultural, económico, social y político. Todo bajo circunstancias únicas que hacen de Montpellier una institución pionera.

Palabras clave: Universidad de Montpellier, medicina, profesiones medicas, herejía, traducciones árabes, Edad Media.

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“Whereas for a long time, medical science has shone under the glorious sign of progress in Montpellier, whereas it has flourished and spread its fruits in a salutary abundance over the various parts of the world, we have deemed it necessary to preserve the studies of medicine and the expenses they incur, thinking of the general interest and of each student at this faculty. All the more as its exercise makes the nature of things familiar, makes those who practise it wiser men and is warranted by the healing of human weakness. Certainly, the words of the Wise Man convince us no less to honour this science, attesting that the most High created medicines out of the earth; and he that is wise will not abhor them.”¹

This lengthy preamble to the first statutes of the “University of Physicians, both Doctors [Masters] and Students” of Montpellier refers to an already-existing tradition and memory of medical science there. This memory is a constant that has been cultivated throughout the history of the University of Montpellier. From Riolan in the 17th century to Jean Astruc in the 18th century, or from Alexandre Germain, a prolific scholar and erudite editor of the University’s cartulary in the 19th century, up to the engravings that decorate the modern-day vestibule of the Faculty, the ancient origins of the Montpellier medical school have been constantly celebrated – at the risk of becoming a myth.

How can we understand this need, connected ontologically to the institutional emergence of a collectively organized body of teaching, endowed with its own legal existence, governed by its own statutes and placed under a specific jurisdiction? How can we grasp the processes and issues at stake? How can we verify its foundations and its scope?

As such, without wanting to make sacrifice to the “idol of origins” (in the words of Marc Bloch), following on certain recent research, it seems necessary to take a fresh look at Montpellier’s pre-history and its justification during the period when its statutes were written – an integral part of its formation².

These first statutes, dispensed on 17 August 1220 by Conrad of Urach, the legate of Pope Honorius III, marked both the birth and the consecration

¹ *Cartulaire de l’université de Montpellier*, I, 1181-1400, ed. Alexandre Germain (Montpellier: Ricard Frères, 1890), 180, no. 2; Marcel Fournier, *Les statuts et privilèges des universités françaises depuis leur fondation jusqu’en 1789* (Paris: Larose et Forsel, 1891), II, 4: *De communi consensu et consilio... universitatis medicorum tam doctorum quam discipulorum Montispessulani...*

² Jacques Verger, “Les statuts de l’Université de médecine de Montpellier”, in *L’université de médecine de Montpellier et son rayonnement (XIIIe-XVe siècles)*, *Actes du colloque international de Montpellier (Université Paul-Valéry-Montpellier III)*, 17-19 mai 2001, ed. Daniel Le Blévec (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 13-28; Laurence Moulinier, “L’originalité de l’école de médecine de Montpellier”, in *La Scuola Salernitana e le altre* (Salerno, Laveglia, 2006), 101-126; Geneviève Dumas, *Santé et société à Montpellier à la fin du Moyen Âge* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2014).

of an institution of a new kind.³ However, the practice and teaching of medicine, as well as the city's reputation in this field, were already well established. Thus, as for Paris – studied in Nathalie Gorochov's magistral book – the question of origins reveals the “genesis of the university phenomenon”,⁴ in an attempt to understand the shift from the “school” stage, where learning possibly took place in a scattered or individual context, to the structuring or organization of an “intellectual” group (through a voluntary or forced movement?).⁵ This entailed, to borrow from Jacques Verger, “an institutional mutation”,⁶ beginning with its organization as a collective or common institution and with its name: *universitas*.

These conditions for the emergence of the university have been more frequently described than analysed in detail, and such descriptions have often taken on a teleological perspective. A detailed analysis of the teaching of medicine in Montpellier before the university's creation requires an in-depth crossing of local and general data: the transmission of knowledge and practices, indeed, but also a look at the contents and participants, not to mention the legal, economic, political and religious circumstances. The social – or even “societal” – dimension cannot be avoided, especially in this case since medicine is involved. Alongside other fields of study that remain in the shadows, the case of a single university dedicated to medicine is unique and warrants greater emphasis. Why did it emerge, and which challenges was it to contend with? What were its specific features, and which models did it follow? This process entails a two-pronged “professionalization”, linked to a twofold “clientele”: on the one hand, the students who were training to become both

³ Translation: see Document 2 at the end of this paper.

⁴ Nathalie Gorochov, *Naissance de l'université. Les écoles de Paris d'Innocent III à Thomas d'Aquin (v. 1200-v. 1245)* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 2012), here 21; 214 for the oldest occurrence of the word *universitas* to refer to this association in Paris in Innocent III's letter *Ex litteris vestris*, in 1208-1209.

⁵ The comparison of university “origins” has drawn researchers' attention since the foundational, and unparalleled, works by Hastings Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1936); for Montpellier, vol. II, 116-139. For example, in the same era (1218) for Salamanca: Antonio García y García, “Los difíciles inicios (siglos XIII-XIV)”, in *La Universidad de Salamanca, I, Trayectoria histórica y Proyecciones*, dir. Manuel Fernández Álvarez, ed. Laureano Robles Carcedo, Luis Enrique Rodríguez-San Pedro Bezares (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 1989), 13-34. Epistemological aspects worth being expounded upon: Antonio García y García, “As Universidades Ibéricas do Século XIII: considerações metodológicas”, *Revista da Faculdade de Direito da Universidade de Lisboa*, vol. 38, no. 1 (1997), 7-23.

⁶ Jacques Verger, “Des écoles à l'université: la mutation institutionnelle”, in *La France de Philippe Auguste. Le temps des mutations*, ed. Robert-Henri Bautier (Paris: CNRS, 1982), 817-846.

masters (i.e. teachers in turn) and practitioners; on the other hand, the patients whose destinies would be shaped by the applied use of this knowledge and these skills.

An ancient centre for the teaching and practice of medicine

An overabundance of sources attests to the practice and teaching of medicine in Montpellier as early as the 12th century. The documentation refers by name to more than fifteen physicians (not just the “half-dozen” generally cited). Their career paths are perhaps more significant than has been noted so far.

While we must definitely rule out the name of a certain Dulcianus, Louis VII’s physician in 1141 to whom the king apparently remitted a portion of the *cens* to pay for a house on the Grand-Pont in Paris – most likely confused with a “lawyer from Montpellier” by the same name recorded between 1122 and 1139 by Peter the Venerable, the Abbot of Cluny,⁷ we note two men named Andrew, the first who was initially the physician at the Abbey of Aniane in 1123, and who is not necessarily a different person from another Andrew, attested to between 1146 and 1165, with close ties to the Counts of Melgueil and the Bishop of Agde, as well as Peter, also a physician in 1159-1161, and another Peter in 1211.⁸ We can add to the list a man named Stephen, a relation of the Canons of St Ruf, near Valence, between 1197 and 1199; he is commemorated in the hall of honour of the Faculty of Montpellier, as is Bérart.⁹ In 1173, William Pons – along with his fellow physician Raymond – frequented the Canons of Béziers, serving as a witness in 1161.¹⁰ These physicians, who had ties with the men of power, were numerous in the entourage of the Lords of Montpellier. Another physician named Raymond signed the deed for a donation made by the Count of Comminges to Mary of Montpellier; this was in Muret between 1199 and 1201, and he probably spent his final days in the service of the Sire of Castelnau¹¹. A physician na-

⁷ Ernest Wickersheimer, *Dictionnaire biographique des médecins en France au Moyen Âge* (Geneva-Paris: Droz-Champion, 1979²), 124; André Gouron, “Deux universités pour une ville”, in *Histoire de Montpellier*, dir. Gérard Cholvy (Toulouse: Privat, 1984), 106.

⁸ Alexandre Germain, dir., *Liber instrumentorum memorialium: cartulaire des Guillemes de Montpellier*, ed. A. Germain (Montpellier: Société archéologique, 1884), 525 and 772; Wickersheimer, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 22 and 605.

⁹ Wickersheimer, 133-134 (two entries be combined) and 68.

¹⁰ Wickersheimer, 260 and 672; *Liber instrumentorum*, 110 and 457; *Cartulaire de Béziers: Livre noir*, ed. Julien Rouquette (Paris-Béziers: Picard, 1918), 271 and 386.

¹¹ Wickersheimer, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 672; *Liber instrumentorum*, 358; *Archives*

med Bernard is attested to in a wide range of documents between 1171 and 1193¹²; in 1191, Bertrand – perhaps the same one – was present for the final moments of William VIII, and in 1202, alongside his colleagues Bérenger and Pons.¹³ It might be tempting to identify him with another Bertrand, also a physician, who became a Consul of Montpellier in 1208¹⁴.

Of course, other men described as *medici* are mentioned in local or regional documents, such as the Knights Hospitaller domiciled at Saint-Gilles-du-Gard (St Giles), for example: Peter Pons in 1184, who may have been the brother of the aforementioned William Pons; Bernard of Melgueil, present in 1186 for a donation bequeathed to the hospital and leper's colony of Beaucaire, or Tassilus in 1207¹⁵. There is no evidence of where these men trained as physicians, but their names and their geographic proximity suggest that they may very well have studied in Montpellier.

These physicians had earned an especially noteworthy reputation. In 1153, St Bernard reported how Heraclius of Montboissier, the Archbishop of Lyon, after falling ill on a pilgrimage to St Gilles, went to Montpellier to be treated, spending “what he had and what he didn't have” for the physicians' care¹⁶. Does this mean, as it is commonly interpreted, that the skill of these physicians was guided by greed? In a famous passage of his *Metalogicon* (1159), John of Salisbury harshly criticized the students who abandoned true philosophy and hurried to Salerno or Montpellier to become physicians!¹⁷ This sharp barb was probably aimed at Heraclius's family – more specifically his brother Peter the Venerable, the famous Abbot of Cluny, whose spendthrift ways were, according to St Bernard, the Cistercian of Clairvaux, shared by his entire monastic order!

historiques du Rouergue, V (1925), 380 (the three entries with the same names should be considered together).

¹² Wickersheimer, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 70; *Liber instrumentorum*, 90, 160, 192, 609 and 745-748.

¹³ Wickersheimer, 81 (two separate entries), 68 and 667; *Liber instrumentorum*, 205-206.

¹⁴ Wickersheimer, p. 82.

¹⁵ *Cartulaire du prieuré de Saint-Gilles de l'Hôpital de Saint-Jean de Jérusalem (1129-1210)*, eds. Daniel Le Blévec and Alain Venturini (Paris-Turnhout: CNRS-Brepols, 1997), 175, no. 215; 286, no. 339; 315, no. 368. We can add Brémond and Raoul in the entourage of the Viscountesses of Narbonne in the second half of the 12th century, Pierre de Montolieu in 1216, Jacqueline Caille, “Recherches sur les professions médicales à Narbonne du XII^e au XV^e siècle”, *Homénatge a la Professora Dra Carme Battle i Gallart, Acta historica et archaeologica mediaevalia* (Barcelona: Facultat de Geografia i Història, 2005), 233-234 [221-241].

¹⁶ *Epistola* 307, *Patrologia latina* 182, col. 512 B.

¹⁷ *Metalogicus*, I, 4, *Patrologia latina* 199, col. 830-831. See Pierre Riché, “Jean de Salisbury et le monde scolaire du XII^e siècle”, in *The World of John of Salisbury*, ed. Michael Wilks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 39-61.

Moreover, examples abound in Montpellier of masters of medicine who abandoned their profession to take religious vows: Reginald, who became a monk at the end of the 12th century, or the Englishman John of St Giles, who left for Paris and Oxford to study theology in 1222, then later joined the Dominicans.¹⁸ He was nevertheless solicited later on to treat patients including Robert Grosseteste (the Bishop of Lincoln) and the Count of Gloucester. He also left a substantial body of writings in the medical field: his *Experimenta* and *Pronostics* were probably inspired by the lessons he received in Montpellier, which was also an early centre for passing on medical knowledge. Contrary to what is commonly believed, Adalbert (the son of the Count of Saarbrücken) did not carry out his study trip in 1137, the year he became Archbishop of Mainz, but earlier during his adolescence, as clearly told by his biographer Anselm of Havelberg. After travelling through Reims and Paris, Adalbert went to the sanctuary of St Giles (in Saint-Gilles-du-Gard), then on to Montpellier

“to learn there the things of nature that we call *phिसica* (medicine) which he had not known until then. The city offered medicine a home and a temple; doctrine and precepts were taught there by physicians who, meditating on the nature of things, devoted to the sick the resources to heal their ills and to the healthy their counsel and experience to avoid sickness”¹⁹.

This attests to the fact that medicine was being taught in Montpellier in the early 12th century.

The medical school develops and is granted its freedom

Given the large number of physicians in Montpellier, unparalleled at the time except in the Loire Valley or in Bologna²⁰, it is unsurprising to note that the

¹⁸ According to Giles of Corbeil, *De virtutibus et laudibus compositorum medicaminum*, ed. Mireille Ausécache (Florence: Sismel-Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2017), III, v. 17-43; Pierre Pansier, “Les maîtres de la faculté de médecine de Montpellier au Moyen Âge: XIIe siècle”, *Janus*, 9 (1904), 443-451; Wickersheimer, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 692, 478-479 and *Supplément* by Danielle Jacquart, p. 180.

¹⁹ *Vita Adelberti II*, ed. Ph. Jaffé, *Bibliotheca rerum germanicarum*, III (Berlin, 1867), 592-593: *Hinc adolescenti succeditur advenienti/ Mons Pessulanus, cui presidet incola sanus,/ phisica qua sedes medicis concessit et edes./ Hic et doctrina preceptaque de medicina/ a medicis dantur, qui rerum vim meditantur,/ sanis cautelam; lesis adhibendo medelam./ Ergo manens dididit breviter, quod phisica dicit,/ perspiciens causas naturae, res sibi clausas;/ non ut lucra ferat vel opes hoc ordine querat/ set quia de rerum voluit vi noscere verum.*

²⁰ François-Olivier Touati, *Yves de Chartres (1040-1115). Aux origines de la révolution hospitalière médiévale* (Paris: Les Indes savantes, 2017); François-Olivier Touati, “Le renouveau

Lord of Montpellier, William VIII (1157-1202), gave his support to the development of medical teaching. In January 1181, he issued an edict granting full freedom to anyone wishing to establish a school in “the art of physick” (*scolas in facultate fisice discipline*).²¹ Similar provisions would be made later in other places, notably in Avignon for grammar schools or in Padua, but the Montpellier edict was the first of its kind. By undertaking, before the population and the “upright men” (the *probis viris*, i.e. the city magistrates) of Montpellier, not to grant any privileges to individuals, this edict appears to respond to a request made on a collective level. Was the purpose to ward off the temptation to place restrictions on the permission to teach (the *Licentia docendi*, or licence), as was apparently handed down in the decisions of the Third Council of the Lateran, just two years earlier?²² To counter suspicions of favouritism about seeking to hold onto a monopoly? To grant a request that reflected the growing influence of the bourgeoisie and the “people” of the city, “for the public good and the common profit”, anticipating the freedom that would be granted to all “trades” when the communal bodies and statutes were established twenty years later (1204-1205)?²³ In any case, this edict appears both to consecrate the success of this medical practice and to foster its teaching.

Montpellier’s reputation as a medical centre was carried beyond the Alps or the Rhine thanks to successful novels of chivalry: *Poor Heinrich* (*Der arme Heinrich*) by Hartmann von Aue and *The Crown* (*Der Abenteurer der Krone*) by Heinrich von dem Türlin, between 1200 and 1220, tell of the recom-

médical du XIe au XIIIe siècle: quel impact au centre de la France?”, in *La santé au Centre de la France, du Moyen Âge à la Renaissance*, ed. Concetta Penutto, forthcoming. The maps presented by Danielle Jacquart, *Le milieu médical en France du XIIe au XVIe siècle* (Geneva-Paris: Droz-Champion, 1979), 394-395, establish knowledge of the names of 49 physicians in the 12th century in the Île-de-France region and the Loire Valley, vs. 43 in the south of France (+3, after research by J. Caille, “Recherches sur les professions médicales à Narbonne”), of course not including the effects of sources favourable to the “royal domain”. The number of 31 physicians is asserted for 12th century Bologna, Frédéric Fabrège, *Histoire de Maguelone*, III, *Les écoles et l’université de Montpellier* (Paris-Montpellier: Picard-Louis Valat, 1911), 346.

²¹ *Cartulaire de l’université de Montpellier*, 179-180, no. 1; Marcel Fournier, *Les statuts et privilèges des universités*, 3, no. 879. See our translation in Document 1 at the end of this paper.

²² *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta*, ed. Joseph Alberigo (Fribourg-Rome: Herder, 1962), 193, c. 18; Raymonde Foreville, *Latran I, II, III et Latran IV, Histoire des conciles œcuméniques*, 6 (Paris: Éditions de l’Orante, 1965), 219. The term *facultate* refers here to a field of knowledge, not yet to a subdivision of the university organization, according to Jacques Le Goff, “Les universités du Languedoc dans le mouvement universitaires européen au XIIIe siècle”, in *Les Universités du Languedoc au XIIIe siècle. Cahiers de Fanjeaux*, 5 (Toulouse: Privat, 1970), 317.

²³ Le Goff, “Les universités du Languedoc”, 319-320.

mentations given to their heroes, in desperate straits, to go consult “some of the best physicians possible, those of Montpellier”²⁴. At the same period, similar references can be found in works of religious edification, such as the very famous *Dialogue on Miracles* by the Cistercian monk Caesarius of Heisterbach, who was quite familiar with the affairs of the Languedoc region and who declared that the “source of the medical art” (*fons artis physicae*) could be found there. Nevertheless, in the same text, he also emphasizes the numerous healings at the sanctuary of Notre-Dame-des-Tables, in the centre of Montpellier, which the physicians themselves recommended – not without a touch of irony!²⁵ Yet nobody was shocked that this teaching was granted a freedom that amounted to removing it from the traditional setting of cloisters or cathedral chapters in which medical knowledge had prospered until then, for example in Chartres or even in Salerno. Was the isolated location of the episcopal and canonical seat, on an isthmus in Maguelone and not in the urban centre, one factor for this?²⁶

We should avoid applying any sort of determinism in order to justify, in hindsight, the favourable circumstances and location of a “wealthy city, very prosperous, [and] the location of a veritable to-and-fro...” described between 1154 and 1158 by the Arab geographer (and physician) Al-Idrīsī, who lived at the court of King Roger of Sicily²⁷. Nevertheless, we must acknowledge the key location on the Via Domitia linking the Alps and the Pyrenees and thus opening the way to the Iberian Peninsula, on the Way of St James, the route of the *Reconquista*, the traditional route for access to the knowledge preserved in the abbeys of Catalonia or further south, on the other side of the Tagus, in Muslim territory. Where the lower Rhône valley meets the Mediterranean in the Gulf of Lion, Montpellier is at the centre of this crossroads.

²⁴ Gerhard Eis, “Salernitanisches und Unsalernisches im Armen Heinrich des Hartmann von Aue”, in *Hartmann von Aue*, eds Hugo Kuhn and Christoph Cormeau (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1973), 135-150; Scott E. Pincikowski, *Bodies of Pain. Suffering in the works of Hartmann von Aue* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2002); Gernot Rath, “Montpellier im Urteil des deutschen Mittelalters”, in *Fachliteratur des Mittelalters. Festschrift für Gerhard Eis* (Stuttgart: Metzler, 1968), 307-310; Hans Schadewaldt, “Les relations de l’école médicale de Montpellier et la médecine allemande”, in *Histoire de l’École médicale de Montpellier, 110^e Congrès national des sociétés savantes, Histoire des Sciences et des techniques*, II (Paris: C.T.H.S., 1985), 227-228.

²⁵ *Caesarii Heisterbacensis monachi ordinis cisterciensis Dialogus Miraculorum...* (Cologne-Bonn, 1851), vol. I, *distinctio* VII, *cap.* 24; <http://gahom.ehess.fr/document.php?id=721>.

²⁶ On the situation in the region, Jacques Verger, “Les écoles cathédrales méridionales. État de la question”, in *La cathédrale (XIIIe-XIVe siècle)*, *Cahiers de Fanjeaux*, 30 (Toulouse: Privat, 1995), 245-268.

²⁷ *La première géographie de l’Occident*, translation by Chevalier Jaubert, presentation by Henri Bresc and Anlièse Nef (Paris: GF Flammarion, 1999), 371.

The Jewish traveller Benjamin of Tudela, who visited Montpellier from Spain in 1174, gave a vivid description of this teeming place:

“a favourite spot for trade neighbouring the sea, where crowds of Christians and Saracens mingle, where Arabs flock from Gharb, Edom, Ismael or the Algarve, merchants from Lombardy, from the Kingdom of New Rome [Byzantium], from the whole country of Egypt, from the country of Israel, from Greece, France, Spain and England. From everywhere, everyone comes to trade via the people of Genoa and Pisa. In Montpellier one finds *the most famous learned men of this generation...* they have academies intended for study. [In Lunel] Rabbi Judah the physician, the son of Tibbon the Spaniard...”²⁸

This expansion was also the result of policies actively implemented by the various Williams who were the successive Lords of Montpellier throughout the 12th century. These policies were negotiated with the neighbouring counts (the powerful issuers of the famous deniers minted in Melgueil and Anduze), and, supported by popes, with the surrounding dioceses of Septimania, as far as Genoa and Pisa – the two great maritime powers that held permanent trading posts and colonies, and collected cargo duties.

This was the landscape behind the medical school provisions handed down in 1181, just as a number of major medical works were being translated from Arabic to Latin or Hebrew, mainly at the Abbey of Monte Cassino or in Salerno, to the east, and in Toledo, to the west. These works included Galen’s *Pantegni*, combined with numerous practical treatises (*Practicae*), and Avicenna’s *Canon*. Between Italy and Spain, with Montpellier coming under the control of the Crown of Aragon in 1204, this confluence may have been decisive for the reception and redistribution of these medical works. Certain historians have claimed that the first medical book published in the city dates back to 1025 and was written by a disciple of Abbon of Narbonne²⁹. Without reopening the debate and the tradition of an Arabic or Hebrew origin to medicine in Montpellier, the combination of these factors illustrates the lineaments that fed into the historiography of the 17th and 18th centuries³⁰. Montpellier had a long-standing Jewish community, which may have

²⁸ *Livre des voyages*, French trans. by Comte L. De Mas Latrie, *Relations et commerce de l’Afrique septentrionale ou Maghreb avec les nations chrétiennes au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Firmin Didot, 1886), 118; Joseph Shatzmiller, in *Croisades et pèlerinages. Récits, chroniques et voyages en Terre sainte, XIIIe-XVIe siècle*, dir. Danielle Régner-Bohler (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1997), 1304-1305. See also Marcus Nathan Adler, *The Itinerary of Benjamin of Tudela, Critical Text, Translation and Commentary* (London: H. Frowde, 1907).

²⁹ Fabrège, *Histoire de Maguelone*, III, 331-333.

³⁰ Ernest Wickersheimer, “La question du judéo-arabisme à Montpellier”, *Janus*, XXXI (1927), 465-473; Isidore Simon, “Les médecins juifs et la fondation de l’École de médecine

grown with the arrival of refugees from Al-Andalus under the rising intolerance of the Almoravids and the Almohads. Alongside Arab residents (or inhabitants from Arab countries), this Jewish presence is fully supported by written accounts and archaeological evidence; the famous Medieval *mikveh* (synagogue bath) as well as funeral engravings are vestiges that can still be seen today³¹. The Jewish community was especially open to exchanges, including also the trade in Moorish slaves, whose physical condition was valuable. Accustomed to travel and open to scientific knowledge, this community gladly fostered care and attention for the sick through groups that organized visits (*bikur holim*) or watched over the infirm (*shomrei holim*). The Jewish presence was felt throughout the region, from Aragon to Catalonia, from Narbonne to Avignon, and even as far as Marseille. We are familiar with a few renowned members of the community from the second half of the 12th century, such as the Tibbon family, attested to in Lunel but whose Hebrew translations were published in Montpellier³². They were also associated with Benvenutus Grapheus (or Graffeo), who was a Jew or a convert, and whose travels led him to Jerusalem and to several places in Italy. Grapheus was the author of *De oculis*, a treatise on eye disorders similar to the treatise by Zacharias of Salerno. Broadly distributed, this book was translated into Latin, Provençal, and even from Hebrew into Old French³³.

The physicians and masters of Montpellier took part in this major scientific revival. For example, a man named William, from Congénies (a town

cine de Montpellier”, *Revue d’histoire de la médecine hébraïque*, 68 (July 1965), 79-93; Louis Dulieu, *La médecine à Montpellier* (Avignon : La Pensée universelle, 1975), 86-97 (with no references).

³¹ For the most recent publication on this topic: Michaël Iancu, “La synagogue médiévale de Montpellier”, in *L’archéologie du judaïsme en France et en Europe*, dirs Paul Salmona and Laurence Sigal (Paris: La Découverte-Inrap, 2011), 169-176 and 331-334. Embarking in Genoa to seek refuge in Montpellier in the spring of 1162, Pope Alexander III made a solemn entry to the city, and was hailed in the name of his master by a Saracen prince who kneeled before him: Henri Vidal, “Au temps des Guilhems (984-1204)”, in *Histoire de Montpellier*, 20 and 28. *Islam et chrétiens du Midi (XIIe-XIVe s.)*, *Cahiers de Fanjeaux*, 18 (Toulouse: Privat, 1983), especially Jacques Jomier, “Note sur les stèles funéraires arabes de Montpellier”, 59-63; Paul Amargier, “Discussion”, in *Les Universités du Languedoc*, 309.

³² *Des Tibbonides à Maïmonide. Rayonnement des juifs andalous en Languedoc médiéval*, eds Danièle Iancu-Agou and Élie Nicolas (Paris: Cerf, 2009); David Romano, “La transmission des sciences arabes par les juifs en Languedoc”, in *Juifs et judaïsme de Languedoc*, *Cahiers de Fanjeaux*, 12 (Toulouse: Privat, 1977), 363-385.

³³ Hermentaire Truc and Pierre Pansier, *Contribution à l’histoire de l’ophtalmologie française. Histoire de l’ophtalmologie à l’École de Montpellier du XIIe au XXe siècle*, foreword by L. Liard (Paris: H. Maloine, 1907), 62-73; Fabrège, *Histoire de Maguelonne*, 29 and 344; Wickersheimer, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 85-86; Dulieu, *La médecine à Montpellier*, 194-195.

located between Montpellier and Nîmes), described by a contemporary observer as a “burgher, married and educated, wealthy in movable goods and property”, wrote a commentary and a treatise named *Surgery* based on the treatise by Roger of Parma (nicknamed “Roger of Salerno” because he supposedly studied and taught in Salerno). William translated therapeutic formulae from Rhazes and was the physician of Simon de Montfort (†1218) during the Albigensian Crusade. He practised at the Hospital of the Holy Spirit, and one of his students was a certain Firmin³⁴. During the same period, between 1168 and 1209, Raymond of Avignon transposed this text by Roger of Salerno into Provençal verse for the Sire of Uzès³⁵. Before embracing theology circa 1220, John of St Giles wrote his *Experimenta* and a few pharmaceutical recipes; he is also considered the author of *Pronostica et Practicæ medicinales*³⁶. A more complex and debatable case is that of a certain Bartholomew, whose name may actually refer to two or even three different men. One man by that name corresponded on medical topics with Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny (1122-1153), and Louis VII, King of France (1137-1180). This correspondence has been compared with the *Practica* by Bartholomew of Salerno. Incidentally, a commentary on the latter treatise, dating back to the same period, is attributed to Bernard Provençal, an expert in the therapies of Montpellier. Originally from Arles, Bernard was quite admiring of the physicians of Salerno³⁷. Meanwhile, another Bartholomew, originally from north of the Alps, was also a long-time student in Salerno until he failed his examination for admission as a master and was forced to go to Montpellier. The sources state that he was “full of bitterness” (*dolore et verecundia attrictus*) towards his masters from Salerno³⁸.

³⁴ Wickersheimer, 235 and 149 and *Supplément*, 105.

³⁵ Wickersheimer, 673. Antoine Thomas, “La chirurgie de Roger de Parme en vers provençaux”, *Romania*, X (1881), 63-74 and XI (1882), 203-212.

³⁶ Wickersheimer, 478-479; Charles H. Talbot, Eugene Ashby Hammond, *The Medical Practitioners in Medieval England. A Biographical Register* (London: Wellcome Historical Medical Library, 1965), 179-181.

³⁷ Wickersheimer, 78 and *Supplément*, 46; *Commentarium magistri Bernardi Provincialis super tabulas Salerni*, ed. De Renzi, *Collectio salernitana*, V (Naples, 1859), 274, 276 and 317.

³⁸ Karl Sudhoff, “Salerno, Montpellier und Paris um 1200”, *Archiv für Geschichte der Medizin*, 20 (1928), 53 and 57-59; Wickersheimer, 57 and 58 (the two “Barthélemy” entries) and *Supplément*, 34-36 (important analysis and references by Danielle Jacquart); Faith Wallis, “The Articella Commentaries of Bartholomaeus of Salerno”, in *La Scuola Medica Salernitana. Glio autori e i testi*, eds Danielle Jacquart and Agostino Paravicini Bagliani (Florence, Sismel-Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2007), 125-163.

Attraction, identity and competition

For such was the competition in the race for knowledge: between the old and major “school”, Salerno in southern Italy, whose existence was attested in the 10th century and which was the main entry point for Arabic and Greek texts of the Hippocratic and Galenic traditions, and Montpellier. A number of writers compare the two institutions – offering proof of the growing success of Montpellier.

On a humorous note, Alexander Neckam (1157-1217), who studied in Paris between 1175 and 1182 before returning to England to teach at St Albans and Cirencester, in his encyclopaedia *De naturis rerum*, described the extraordinary ability of the weasel, “which knows the properties of plants without having needed to study medicine in Salerno or having begun his training in arms in the schools of Montpellier”!³⁹

However, Giles of Corbeil – a Parisian physician and a contemporary of Philip Augustus (1179-1223) – apparently had a much harsher experience, if we are to judge based on the recurrent criticism of Montpellier scattered through his writings. Whereas he heaps praise on his masters in Salerno, the prologue to his treatise *De urinis* sets the tone: compared to the masters of Salerno, everything in Montpellier “is nothing but filthy mud”, if not to say “a turd” (*alienis fecibus*); each doctor there is nothing but “unsatisfied and aggressive, mean, shrill, hollow, bloated with errors and self-serving, he feasts on barren weeds and indigestible fodder in lieu of science”. As for the pharmacists, “one should avoid them: verbose, vain, fake, greedy, ambitious, they are not seeking the love of art or renown, but only to make shameful profits”. In short, “this Montpellier ‘gang’ is the enemy [*contraria secta*]!”⁴⁰.

In the same vein, Giles of Corbeil attacks the so-called physician Rigord: “that empiric to be absolutely rejected, damnable among all, a dishonour that blackens the profession, fit to be crucified, who, as a sedative, is only fit to give

³⁹ *De naturis rerum libri II*, ed. Th. Wright (London, 1863), cap. CXXIII, 201 (quoted but not translated by Laurence Moulinier, “L’originalité de l’école de médecine de Montpellier”, 103): *Virtutem herbarum novit, etsi nec Salerni in medicina studuerit, nec apud Montem Pessulanum in scholis militaverit*.

⁴⁰ *Aegidii Corboliensis Carmina medica*: ed. Ludvig Choulant (Leipzig, 1826), *De urinis*, 4, v. 20 and 18, v. 345-348; *De virtutibus et laudibus compositorum medicaminum*, ed. Mireille Ausécache, IV, v. 740-748; see also Camille Vieillard, *Essai sur la société médicale et religieuse au XIIe siècle. Gilles de Corbeil, médecin de Philippe-Auguste et chanoine de Notre-Dame, 1140-1224?* (Paris: H. Champion, 1908), 166-171; Stephen d’Irsay, “The Life and Works of Gilles of Corbeil”, *Annals of Medical History*, 8 (1925), 362-378. Entry in Wickersheimer, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 196-197.

eternal rest to the monks suffering from acute fevers"⁴¹. His caricature and the mocking of his name (Rigord or "*rigolo*", the "funny one") may not be entirely groundless on account of the personage who, at the top of his chronicle, emphatically calls himself "Master Rigord, Languedocian [*natione Gothus*], physician and chronicler of the king...". His career, from Montpellier to Saint-Denis, where in 1173 he followed his abbot William of Provence (or of Gap), also a physician and a Hellenist, was apparently the consequence of having failed to establish himself in Montpellier – even though he probably belonged to a powerful burgher family⁴². Nevertheless, did the cause of this harsh opposition lay in a mishap that Giles of Corbeil had lived through in Montpellier, as one of his commentators reports? A scholarly "dispute" with the masters that degenerated into a physical confrontation and insults, with Giles being beaten up and called a "boor or a clog-maker"?⁴³ Or was it merely a pose, a necessary positioning intended to promote Paris, whose medical teaching seemed to him "to suffer from a guilty silence" that his writings aimed to repair? Was it a demand from the masters of Paris at the time they were gradually forming a university, faced with the ascendancy of Montpellier? The contemporaneous satire by Guiot de Provins is hardly more amenable, accusing physicians in general of not always being "very proper": "too many are costly and are in business... and if they return from Montpellier, their electuaries are even more expensive, making a silk purse of a sow's ear!"⁴⁴.

Only the rich get richer! And so additional references to many other medical men who supposedly studied or wrote medical books in Montpellier reflect the city's unquestionable reputation. Otherwise, why would Giles of Corbeil have been led astray there? The appeal of the Languedoc, made stronger by its fairs, the major pilgrimage site of Saint-Gilles-du-Gard, combined with one of the earliest dependencies of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem in Western Europe (prior to 1113), its location along travel routes to the Mediterranean, the Holy Land, Italy or Spain, made it an immediate outlet with

⁴¹ *De virtutibus et laudibus compositorum medicaminum*, IV, v. 486-491.

⁴² François-Olivier Touati, "Faut-il en rire? Le médecin Rigord, historien de Philippe Auguste", *Revue historique*, 626 (2003), 243-265; Wickersheimer, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 243.

⁴³ Manuscript Paris Arsenal 1024, 33-34: *quia illi de Montepessulano verberaverunt fortiter Egidium. Postquam eum fortiter verberaverunt clamabant post ipsum ac si esset quidam rusticus vel calcifex*. P. Pansier, "Les maîtres de la faculté de médecine de Montpellier", 448-451; Émile Lesne, *Les écoles de la fin du VIIIe siècle à la fin du XIIe. Histoire de la propriété ecclésiastique en France*, V (Lille: Facultés catholiques, 1940), 54-55.

⁴⁴ *Bible* by Guiot de Provins, Œuvres, éd. J. Orr, (Paris, 1915), 91, v. 2613-2614 et 2627-2628; Fabrège, *Histoire de Maguelone*, 338.

Aquitaine, hence with the English domain on the Continent and in Britain, even before Henry Plantagenêt (Henry II of England, Duke of Aquitaine from 1152).⁴⁵ Are we to believe that Pedro Alfonso (1062-1140), a Jewish convert from Huesca in Aragon and supposedly a physician, studied in Montpellier before entering the service of the King of England and Duke of Normandy, Henry Beauclerc (Henry I, 1068-1135)?⁴⁶ While the presence of a Peter of Blois (1135-1212) has not been proved⁴⁷, the arrival of men from Poitou (e.g. William "Peytavin", or Poitevin) or of Englishmen is more certain. Between the last quarter of the 12th century and the early 13th century, this was the case of Henry of Winchester⁴⁸ and Richard the Englishman, who debatably may be Richard of Wendover⁴⁹. Similarly, a certain Gilbert has been connected (accurately or not?) with the physician Gilbert the Englishman (or Gilbert of L'Aigle in Normandy). The former Gilbert was still master regent in 1240, and was later described as "chancellor", perhaps because he had played an active role in forming the University of Medicine. Resemblances have been noted between the works of these two Gilberts, which borrow extensively from the classics of Salerno (*articella*) and combine similar topics: pulse, urine, signs, prognoses, anatomy, as found in Richard's *Micrologus*, which is apparently the oldest collection. Henry of Winchester hesitantly introduced the contributions of Arab physicians with a commentary on *Isagoge* by Ioannitius (the *Masā'il fi t-tibb* by Hunain ibn Ishāq, translated by Constantine the African)⁵⁰, whereas Gilbert's *Compendium medicinæ* (written circa 1207-1214?) gave an

⁴⁵ Poitevin merchants were captured by the strongmen of Count Raymond V of Toulouse in 1188 and tortured: *privavit plures oculis et testiculis...* Pierre Belperron, *La croisade contre les Albigeois et l'union du Languedoc à la France (1209-1249)* (Paris: Plon, 1942), 36.

⁴⁶ His status as a physician, commonly asserted in biographies, is open to debate and is not lend credence in Wisckersheimer or Talbot. Klaus Reinhardt, Horacio Santiago-Otero, "Pedro Alfonso. Obras y bibliografía", in *Estudios sobre Pedro Alfonso de Huesca*, ed. Marìa Jesùs Lacarra (Huesca: Instituto de Estudios Altoaragoneses, 1996), 19-44; Charles Burnett, "The Works of Petrus Alfonsi: Questions of Authenticity", *Medium Aevum*, LXVI (1997), 42-79.

⁴⁷ Urban T. Holmes Jr. and Frederick R. Weedon, "Peter of Blois as a Physician", *Speculum*, 37 (1962), 252-256. François-Olivier Touati, "Maladies et pratiques médicales, IXe-XIVe siècle. Pierre de Blois. La transmission d'un dossier médical à un confrère", in *Sources d'histoire médiévale*, eds. Ghislain Brunel and Elisabeth Lalou (Paris: Larousse, 1992), 786-788.

⁴⁸ André Gouron, "Médecins et juristes montpelliérains au XIIe siècle: une convergence d'origines?", in *Hommage à Jean Combes (1903-1989). Études languedociennes offertes par ses anciens élèves, collègues et amis* (Montpellier: Société archéologique, 1991), 23-27; Wickersheimer, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 279 [Guintonia] and *Supplément*, p. 119.

⁴⁹ Wickersheimer, 694-698 and 703-704 and *Supplément*, 256-257.

⁵⁰ Danielle Jacquart and Françoise Micheau, *La médecine arabe et l'occident médiéval* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1990), 100-103.

early echo of Avicenna's work, which as we know had been translated in Toledo by Gerard of Cremona before 1187. This dating would thus place Montpellier at the avant-garde of receiving these Arabic works⁵¹.

Therefore, are there grounds for acknowledging that Montpellier had its own specific features or identity? A convergence towards the practical application of the art, a predilection for learning the medical profession by practising it, as shown by the aforementioned authors' already-noted interest in *Practicæ* or *Experimenta*? A taste for illustration that would be seen later in manuscripts from Montpellier?⁵² Thus, the assistance provided under the leadership of the Canons of Maguelone (the diocesan seat, located just near Montpellier) to "restore the minds and bodies" of the poor, of travellers, lepers, Jews and Saracens alike, required support from an outside physician attached to a hospitaller, a male nurse and a barber⁵³. Inside or just on the outskirts of the city, the presence of numerous hospitals, with at least eight charitable institutions created since the early 12th century, backed by the (Williams) Guilhem dynasty and increasing participation of the burghers, provided a favourable and well-documented field for the physicians to apply their knowledge⁵⁴. The large Hospital of the Holy Spirit, founded by William

⁵¹ Previously, the initial dating of 1240 was proposed by Michael McVaugh, "The 'humidum radicale' in thirteenth-century medicine", *Traditio*, 30 (1974), 259-283; Danielle Jacquart proposes a dating shifted in the opposite direction: "La réception du *Canon* d'Avicenne: comparaison entre Montpellier et Paris aux XIIIe et XIVe siècles", in *Histoire de l'École médicale de Montpellier*, 69-77.

⁵² Such as the Latin manuscript of Roger of Parma's *Practica*, preserved in the medical school library at Montpellier, H 89, and which includes 115 illustrations of the technical gestures of the practitioner. It can be compared with the manuscript preserved in the British Library, Sloane 1977, of similar provenance. Helen Valls, "*Illustrations as abstracts: the illustrative programme in a Montpellier manuscript of Roger Frugardi's Chirurgia*", *Medicina nei Secoli Arte e Scienza*, VIII-1 (1996), 67-83.

⁵³ This (exceptional?) situation is described in the confirmation of the chapter's customs in 1331, *Cartulaire de Maguelone*, ed. Julien Rouquette, (Montpellier, 1912), I, 342-360 and Henri Vidal, "Le Moyen Âge" in *Le diocèse de Montpellier, Histoire des diocèses de France*, 4, dir. Gérard Cholvy (Paris: Beauchesne, 1976), 51-52.

⁵⁴ William V (1085-1121) founded the Hospital Saint-Guilhem; Hospital of St John the Great in 1127; Hospital Du Pont near the Lez, Hospital Saint-Barthélemy documented in the Saunerie faubourg in 1167; circa 1180 Hospital of the Holy Spirit in Pila Saint-Gély, which came under the protection of Pope Innocent III in 1198, then quickly expanded to include several houses in France and two hospitals in Rome (Borgo Santo Spirito in Sassia, 1204); Hospital Saint-Éloi, founded by the burgher Robert Pellier, in the Lattes faubourg, first called Hospital Robert (1183); the lepers' colony of Saint-Lazare, at the Pont de Castelnau since at least 1138; the Hospital Saint-Jaume founded in 1220 by Guilhem de Perefixe after returning from Compostela, the Holy Trinity Hospital founded prior to 1217 and the Brothers of Mercy

VIII's brother around 1180, is a perfect example. This hospital was placed under the protection of Pope Innocent III in 1198, before rapidly branching out, first to Rome, at the Pope's request, then to Provence, Champagne, Burgundy and further afield, possibly following kinship networks in which women may have had some influence: the mother of the Languedoc lords was Matilda of Burgundy, and William VIII's wife was Eudocia Comnena, a princess of a Byzantine dynasty that was especially active in charitable foundations⁵⁵.

The university statutes of 1220: papal oversight, reaction and revelation

It is rather surprising to see how Giles of Corbeil's enthusiastic references to Salerno at the turn of the 13th century seem to overshadow the fresh and innovative contribution of Constantine's translations. Is this because Giles was seeking to shed light on the two creative geniuses Hippocrates and Galen? He refers only to Galen's *Pantegni* (i.e. 'Ali ibn al-'Abbas al-Majusi's *Royal Book*) but makes no mention of the books published in Kairouan and translated by Ishāq al-Isrā'īlī – even though these were at the heart of the topics he was dealing with: *De dietis*, *De urinis* and *De febribus*. Nor does he mention the famous *Guide* by Ibn al-Jazzar (a student of al-Isrā'īlī's), known under the Latin title *Viaticum*. Yet these treatises were in the list of books that Alexander Neckham recommended before 1217 to those who wanted to study medicine⁵⁶. It is uncertain whether these references had already reached Paris when Neckham was there (before 1182); they may

for the ransoming of captives, later supported by James of Aragon. Robert Dumas, "Les hôpitaux médiévaux de Montpellier", *Bulletin de l'Académie des Sciences et Lettres de Montpellier*, 12 (December 2011), 397-408. Henri Vidal, "Le Moyen Âge", 62-65 and *idem*, *Histoire de Montpellier*; Louis Dulieu, *La médecine à Montpellier*, 153-177; Giulio Cipollone, "Les Trinitaires dans le Midi", in *Islam et chrétiens du Midi*, 135-156.

⁵⁵ Fabrège, *Histoire de Maguelone*, 389-402; Gisela Drossbach, *Christliche caritas als Rechtseinstitut. Hospital und Orden vom Santo Spirito in Sassia (1198-1378)* (Paderborn: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2005); Timothy S. Miller, *The Birth of the Hospital in the Byzantine Empire* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985); François-Olivier Touati, "La Terre sainte: un laboratoire hospitalier au Moyen Âge?" in *Sozialgeschichte mittelalterlicher Hospitäler*, Colloque de Reichenau, Konstanzer Arbeitskreis für mittelalterliche Geschichte, 19, März 2002, Vorträge und Forschungen, LXV, eds N. Bulst and K.-H. Spiess (Ostfildern: Jan Thorbecke, 2007), 169-211.

⁵⁶ *Sacerdos ad altare*, ed. Charles Homer Haskins, *Studies in the history of mediaeval sciences* (Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, 1924), 274-375. Gorochoff, *Naissance de l'université*, 118-119; our chronological interpretation is different to that of Mireille Ausécache, in the commentary to her edition of Gilles of Corbeil, *Liber de uirtutibus...*

have been brought directly to England through the travels of masters and students who were under no requirement to establish a “school”. Despite his virulent attacks, Giles of Corbeil acknowledges Montpellier’s role in the process of *translatio studii*, in the literal meaning of transmitting knowledge, by expressing his admiration for Richard the Englishman, “Richard the Elder, without whom the medical light of Montpellier would have been extinguished long ago”, and to whom he dedicated the task of transmitting his own early works!⁵⁷ Like John of St Paul before him, Richard the Englishman was redeemed in Giles of Corbeil’s eyes by the fact that he was inspired by Salerno⁵⁸. A single author (or presumably the same author) may be referred to by various by-names in different manuscripts: the Englishman, the Salernitano, the Montpellierian or even the Roman. These multiple names blur the philological tradition, but they are indeed an indication that Montpellier was a more essential site than Paris.

In this case, the desire for “progress” (*provectum*) that motivates Giles of Corbeil’s efforts in Paris was a process of catching up on an intellectual, if not scientific, level. This appeared all the more necessary as the Parisian schools enjoyed freedoms and legal privileges granted by King Louis VII (1137-1180), then reiterated or even strengthened by Philip Augustus in 1200. At that time, a collective organization came into being. Called a “*universitas*”, created at the initiative of the masters, its members had sworn an oath and complied with a set of written customs. Pope Innocent III recognized the University of Paris in 1208-1209, and in August 1215, following a special request by the same pope, papal legate Robert of Courson promulgated the earliest extant statutes. Without expressly mentioning medicine, the framework laid out by these statutes covered all the fields described in the early 13th century by the chronicler William the Breton, and enjoyed the same prerogatives: “the complete and full teaching of the means that have been written to heal the human body and to preserve health”⁵⁹. Thus, medicine became part of the ancient catalogue of liberal arts, alongside law and theology – this was a revolution that has not been sufficiently emphasised.

The parallels with Montpellier are so striking, can we speak of an immediate precedent? This, too, warrants further attention.

⁵⁷ Corbeil, *Liber de uirtutibus...*, I, v. 150-167: *Quo Pessulanus nisi Mons niteret/ lam dudum phisice lux eclipsata fuisset...* Mireille Ausécache, “Gilles de Corbeil ou le médecin pédagogue au tournant des XIIe et XIIIe siècles”, *Early Science and Medicine*, 3 (1998), 187-215.

⁵⁸ Corbeil, *Liber de uirtutibus...*, I, v. 126-130; Ernest Wickersheimer, *Dictionnaire biographique*, 480 and *Supplément*, 180.

⁵⁹ Gorochov, *Naissance de l’université*, 36-37. F.-O. Touati, “Faut-il en rire?...”, 255-257.

Firstly, the date of the statutes. Is it an accident or a coincidence that the statutes of Montpellier were promulgated in the month of August, as well, five years after Paris? When classes were interrupted for the summer, and the time could be dedicated to agreeing on a text, preparing it? Or playing on the element of surprise and softening any reactions that might be opposed to certain measures viewed as being imposed...? Then, the similarity in the authority issuing these statutes – no less than the apostolic legate, in other words, practically the pope himself! What was he doing in this matter? Did any other “trade” need St Peter’s successor in order to exist...? Was this move taken to rival the ambitions of Salerno, which had the support of Emperor Frederick II, who had just recently been crowned by the pope himself? This interpretation is an anachronism; the coronation was a time of promises, with conflict only to come later⁶⁰. However, in 1231, when Frederick II granted the masters of Salerno and his officials – i.e. the secular authorities – the responsibility for testing the capacity of physician candidates, this was merely for the permission to practise medicine (*Licentia practicandi*), not the right to teach it (*Licentia docendi*)...⁶¹ In the case of Paris, the promulgation followed on the protection granted to the students by King Philip Augustus in 1200; this protection amounted to submitting students and masters to the jurisdiction of Church courts. This transfer of legal authority may seem logical as the purpose was to confirm a scope of action for the Church while handling the secondary matters: a few issues related to the corporative organization, governance and the censoring of certain parts of the curriculum.

However, in Montpellier, where the secular ruler had granted full freedom to the medical schools without making any allusions to possible control by the Church, the publication of the statutes was much more significant. It restricted that freedom by subjecting the holding of public classes to the approval of the Bishop of Maguelone, within the dominion of his diocese expanded to include the surrounding dioceses, while also placing it under the temporal control of the Holy See for Montpellier – a twofold restriction! The only concessions granted were: the consultation of “a few professors” before awarding this *Licentia* and the fact that students and masters would be subject to judgment in civil matters by one of the masters, named the “chancellor of students” and appointed by the bishop and three masters, with the most

⁶⁰ This erroneous interpretation was put forth by A. Mandin and T. Jeanneau, “La donation des premiers statuts de la faculté de médecine de Montpellier (17 août 1220) et son contexte géo-politique”, in *Histoire de l’École médicale de Montpellier*, 16-17.

⁶¹ On the measures taken by Frederick Frédéric II in Salerno, in 1231 only, Touati, “Maladies et pratiques médicales, IXe-XIVe siècle”, 788-791.

senior master holding a preeminent position. Thus, this group, described as the “university of physicians, both doctors and students” was indeed subject to ecclesiastical courts. The ecclesiastical status was further strengthened by the requirement of wearing tonsure. This was a new measure, according to the statutes, for those who were not already clerics (i.e. holding ecclesiastical benefices) or priests. It was combined with a requirement for regulars to wear religious habits. Yet which regulars are being referred to? The measures taken after the Second Council of the Lateran in 1139 (Canon 9) prohibited monks and canons regular from practising civil law or medicine⁶². The Councils held in Montpellier in 1162 and 1195, while not barring them from studying, had prohibited them from giving any lessons in the subject (*ad physicam legendas accedat*), whereas in Paris, the legate Robert of Courson in 1213 and Pope Honorius III in 1219 extended this measure to the secular clergy with a view to giving theology a more important place⁶³. A certain degree of tolerance may have existed in the Languedoc, as confirmed for law by the Council of Narbonne in 1227⁶⁴. However, this issue of being recognisable through the tonsure and habits was crucial in the prevailing circumstances in the region. Both customs were a sign of identification and affirmation of Christian faith in the face of heresy, with the clergy forced to hide them in Cathar country⁶⁵. This measure aimed at eliminating all heretics from the medical profession, as clearly stated in the regional councils, for example in Toulouse in 1229: serious suspicions weighed on certain physicians who might take advantage of the sick to convert them, to administer the Cathar “sacrament” of *consolamentum* and to influence their testaments as they were dying⁶⁶.

As in Paris (or rather, worse than in Paris, where the schools were faced with the danger of heresy when the university was being founded)⁶⁷, the

⁶² *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta*, 173-179. See Paul Delaunay, *La médecine et l'Église. Contribution à l'histoire de l'exercice médical par les clercs* (Paris: Le François, 1948), 56-76.

⁶³ *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, ed. J.D. Mansi, t. XXI (Venice, 1776), col. 1160: cap. XV. *Prohibuit praeterea sub omni severitate ecclesiasticae disciplinae, ne quis monachus vel canonicus regularis, aut alius religiosus, ad saeculares leges vel physicam legendas accedat.* (following the Council of Tours); XXII (Venice, 1778), col. 670 (same terms). Camille Vieillard, *Gilles de Corbeil*, 153-154. *Chartularium universitatis parisiensis*, eds Heinrich Denifle and Émile Chatelain, I (Paris: Delalain, 1889), 77-78; Gorochov, *Naissance de l'université*, 154.

⁶⁴ *Sacrorum Conciliorum*, t. XXIII (Venice, 1779), col. 24, cap. 11: “Monks, canons regular and priests cannot be lawyers, except on behalf of their church or the poor.”

⁶⁵ Belperron, *La croisade contre les Albigeois*, 105.

⁶⁶ Belperron, *La croisade contre les Albigeois*, 397.

⁶⁷ Gorochov, *Naissance de l'université*, 159-209.

provisions handed down by Conrad of Urach (circa 1170-1227), appointed as the legate of Pope Honorius III just after Simon de Montfort died on 25 June 1218, followed a similar rationale whereby Montpellier, an islet loyal to Rome, might seem like a bastion that was entrenched... and threatened. The Parisian master Alain de Lille (ca. 1128-1203) lived in the Languedoc around fifteen years, doing his work as a theologian while paying special attention the questions of nature, before later retiring to Cîteaux Abbey. Had he not dedicated his treatise *De fide catholica contra haereticos* to William (Guilhem) VIII, sometime before 1202?⁶⁸ The 1208 assassination of legate Peter of Castelnau, another Cistercian and the archdeacon of Maguelone, could be seen as an attack on Montpellier, the pope's refuge in the 12th century. Just as worrying was the succession of William VIII of Montpellier – or rather his lack of a successor, for the marriage of his eldest daughter Mary with Peter II of Aragon, who died in Muret in 1213, left only one young son, who was held hostage between the Montforts and the Knights Templar. William VIII's other daughter Agnès had married Raymond-Roger de Trencavel, the viscount of Béziers and Albi, and their son's alliance with the Count of Toulouse was quickly regarded as being on the side of the Albigensians. Substantial reinforcements of "Parisians" – with close ties to both the schools of Paris and their former fellow disciple, Pope Innocent III (Pope Honorius's immediate predecessor) – arrived in successive waves in the South of France. Peter of Nemours arrived in 1211; as the Bishop of Paris, he had tracked down the Amalricians and made certain concessions on examinations for awarding the licence⁶⁹. Later came John of Matha, founder of the Order of the Most Holy Trinity, and – after the Muret debacle – the canon James of Vitry; Peter Poulverel (or Pulverel), a glossator who had studied in Bologna and who taught Roman law and canon law in Paris, then became the Bishop of Agde once in the South; and the formidable Robert of Courson, who was named legate on two occasions, before calling a Council in Montpellier at the end of 1214, ahead of the major Fourth Council of the Lateran the following autumn⁷⁰.

⁶⁸ Émile Lesne, *Les écoles*, 55-58; Nikolaus M. Häring, "Alan of Lille's *De fide catholica* or *Contra haereticos*", *Analecta cisterciensia*, 32 (1976), 216-237; Gorochov, 50-54; Benoît Patar, *Dictionnaire des philosophes médiévaux* (Quebec: Fides, 2006), 31-34.

⁶⁹ Belperron, *La croisade contre les Albigeois*, 217.

⁷⁰ Belperron, *La croisade contre les Albigeois*, 290-293; N. Gorochov, *Naissance de l'université*, 182-183; as jurist and theologian, Robert of Courson often referred to physicians' words (*phisici dicunt...*); he ordered the burning of seven fait Waldensians in Morlhon in May 1214; not well liked, he was the subject of complaints to the Council of the Lateran. Marcel and Christiane Dickson, "Le cardinal Robert de Courson, sa vie", *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge*, 9 (1934), 53-142.

Between the two councils, Courson – who had served as diocesan chancellor and thus all teaching was subject to his permission – issued the statutes that transformed the schools of Paris into a university: he enacted the rules whereby the university was under the control of the Church.

All these men shared an obsession with fighting heresy and were prompt to imagine the infiltration of heretical ideas under the most varied forms, as presented in the overture to the Fourth Council of the Lateran by Thédise (†1233), Peter Pulverel's successor as Bishop of Agde, a former Canon of Genoa, whom Pope Innocent III appointed in March 1209 as the auxiliary legate to Arnaud Amalric (a Cistercian abbot who served as Archbishop of Narbonne from 1212 until his death in 1225). Heresy was the major focus, both directly and indirectly, of the decrees issued by the Fourth Council of the Lateran, which these prelates attended. The canons covered the status of masters and teaching in cathedrals (Canon 11), confession (Canon 21), and thus the precedence of spiritual health over bodily health, with the two being interconnected (Canon 22)⁷¹: the same Latin word *salus* is used to refer to both spiritual and bodily health.

We are familiar with Pope Innocent III's (1198-1216) sensitivity towards the sick, his founding of hospitals in Rome (copied from the Montpellier mode), as well as his deep reflections on human nature (*De miseria conditionis humanae*) and on the nature of flesh. His letters frequently use references to disease, as in this letter dated 20 May 1207 to Raymond VI of Toulouse (1156-1222):

“You are not made of iron, your body is like that of other men, you can be taken over by fever, struck down by leprosy, by paralysis, become demonic or riddled with incurable ailments”⁷².

Why was Giovanni Castellomata, the pope's personal physician (and in fact the first to hold the title “pontifical physician”, *medicus pape*), in Montpellier in 1213 during the writing of the will of Mary of Montpellier, the heiress to the Lordship of Montpellier and the wife of Peter II of Aragon?⁷³ For political considerations? Out of concern for the masters of the medical arts,

⁷¹ Belperron, *La croisade contre les Albigeois*, 306. *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta*, 206-243; also Foreville, *Latran*, 239-386. Canon 11 on teaching specifies Canon 18 of the Third Council of the Lateran (1179), see note 22 above.

⁷² Belperron, *La croisade contre les Albigeois*, 136.

⁷³ Agostino Paravicini Bagliani, “I papi e la medicina di Salerno (XII-XIII s.)”, in *La Scuola Medica Salernitana*, 385-402.

calling for a special mission from one of their colleagues – even though he had studied in Salerno?! That the pope’s successor Honorius III would share this crucial concern and continue with the actions under way would be even more warranted. For there were other reasons.

Illness, the body. A controversial topic in light of heresy, the *pestilentia detestabilis*, to borrow the words used by Peter of Vaux-de-Cernay in 1218⁷⁴, faced with the interpretation that Catharism was supposed to make of the meaning of suffering, the meaning of creation and divine will, the meaning of the purity and impurity of this world and of matter, the meaning of good and evil... This was a central theme of the conversions to Catharism, during the moments of weakness so feared by the Church authorities, when death was near. To such an extent that the Church decided to require the presence of a priest for the signing of any will, or prior to calling for a physician!⁷⁵ The conciliar considerations around the condition of the sick should be compared with the preamble of the order creating the “university of physicians” of Montpellier. Why was a university established where only medicine was taught? Why was this so “urgent” while the teaching of law, for example, was at the same level – as illustrated by the fact that Italian jurist Placentinus, from the school of Bologna, was in Montpellier in the 12th century? The introduction of the statutes was a point-by-point response to the heretics’ arguments: the rejection of matter as vile and corrupted, evil and transitory; the visible universe that could not possibly be the work of a good and perfect God⁷⁶: “The exercise [of medical science] makes the nature of things familiar, makes those who practise it wiser men and is warranted by the healing of human weakness.” And to quote Ecclesiasticus (38:1-4), after others (the encyclopaedist and physician Rabanus Maurus, of the Carolingian age, whose encyclopaedic work *De rerum naturis*, whose purpose was to introduce readers to “the nature of things, medicine and the universe”):

⁷⁴ Petri Vallium Sarnaii monachi, *Hystoria Albigensis*, eds Pascal Guébin and Ernest Lyon (Paris: Champion, Société de l’histoire de France, 1926), I, § 5.

⁷⁵ Council of Toulouse in 1229 (cf. Pierre Belperron, *La croisade contre les Albigeois*, 397) and Fourth Council of the Lateran, Canon 22.

⁷⁶ Within the voluminous historiographical production, of particular interest is the corpus of doctrines or beliefs collected by René Nelli, *La religion des cathares. Le catharisme* (Toulouse: Bibliothèque historique Privat, 1976, republished in 1986), especially 41-53, 65-67 (“Le corps de chair”) and 164-179 (“L’endura”). Also useful, *Idem*, *Dictionnaire du catharisme et des hérésies méridionales* (Toulouse: Privat, 1994); Michel Roquebert, *La religion cathare: le bien, le mal et le salut dans l’hérésie médiévale* (Paris: Perrin, 2001); Pilar Jiménez-Sánchez, *Les catharismes, modèles dissidents du christianisme médiéval (XIIe-XIIIe siècles)* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2015).

“This science is honoured and proves that the most High created medicines out of the earth; and he that is wise will not abhor them”⁷⁷.

Did this opposition, coming from a belief that all carnation and incarnation was diabolical, represent a threat to any intervention on the body, any approach to the sick, any attempt to heal their illness due to the physical “corruption” that was inherent to nature? The meaning of certain heretical rituals and customs (such as the *endura*, the *consolamentum* and the *convenenza*) could suggest this. In any case, this was the Church’s fear, if not the situation that these first statutes were intended to face: “To wisely counter whatever opposes this study and so that the repetition of erroneous arguments does not prevail”. Who else would have disputed the usefulness of the development of medical science? Much the contrary – and this could be another danger, calling for another response...⁷⁸

Therefore, in this case, is the question of the university’s “spontaneous” rather than “created” birth (according to a classic typology used by specialists in university history) actually relevant?⁷⁹ As in many other cases, the first statutes *reveal* a pre-existing group, based not only on an ancient tradition of teaching, but also following a pre-established organization, as the “community [*universitas*] of physicians, masters and students” is immediately recognized as the interlocutor having given its advice to the legate in the decisions being made. However, it is not clear to what degree this group was structured prior to the document. As Jacques Verger has noted, the purported consensus (*de communi consensu et consilio*) could probably only be the “result of negotiations and compromises”⁸⁰. This phrase is not merely formulaic, it is even pioneering, as in Paris five years earlier. Yet in Montpellier, in the familiar environment of communal or consular management that prevailed in the administration of many southern cities, no direct intervention can be seen. Should we attribute this to a shared cultural tradition or to the imitation of other models: Paris, Bologna, etc.?

The very structure of the statutes (see the translation below, Document 2) reflects the stakeholders and their interests. Alongside the legate – a Cis-

⁷⁷ François-Olivier Touati, “Raban Maur et la médecine carolingienne”, in *Raban Maur et son temps*, eds Ph. Depreux, S. Lebecqz, J.-L. Perrin and O. Szerwiniack (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 173-202.

⁷⁸ François-Olivier Touati, “François d’Assise et la diffusion d’un modèle thérapeutique au XIIIe siècle”, *Histoire des Sciences médicales*, XVI, 3 (1982), 175-184.

⁷⁹ Verger, *Les Universités au Moyen Âge* (Paris: PUF, 1973). 41-46.

⁸⁰ Verger, “Les statuts de l’Université de médecine de Montpellier”, 22. Gorochov, *Naissance de l’université*, 302-303.

tercian of German origin, probably less familiar with schools than his colleagues – a certain number of prelates probably reported previous experiences in setting up a university (in Paris, Bologna, Oxford and perhaps Salamanca, two years earlier?), adding to the private discussions with the aforementioned stakeholders. However, no names are mentioned. Reference is made to the bishops of the dioceses surrounding Maguelone (Montpellier was in the diocese of the nearby town of Maguelone) – but the names of the actual bishops are not given. The statutes were intended as a permanent document. However, it is useful for us to mention the surrounding prelates: a secular cleric and member of the local nobility, Bernard of Mèze (near Étang de Thau, 1216-1230), Bishop of Maguelone; Peter-Raymond de Montpeyroux, Bishop of Lodève (1207-1237), from the same background and fiercely loyal to the King of France, who had confirmed his viscounty; William of Montélier (or Monteux), Bishop of Avignon (1209-1216); and Thédise, Bishop of Agde (1215-1233), whose awareness of the dangers of heresy as well as his generosity to the infirm and his status as a jurist (having studied in Bologna) were crucial in this case⁸¹. Oddly enough, the Bishops of Nîmes, Arles and Uzès are not mentioned, nor even is the (Metropolitan) Archbishop of Narbonne – who, at the time, was a major personality, along with Arnaud Amalric. Auch, Carcassonne and Toulouse were probably less loyal to the Church⁸².

The purpose of their involvement is mentioned at the top of the document: permission to teach, i.e. the *Licentia docendi*, was placed under the supervision of the Church. In other words, jurisdiction over the *scolares* (both masters and students) meant that they had to be clergy, including the distinction signs enabling them to be supervised (the tonsure and religious habits). However, a concession was made: the Bishop of Maguelone would not issue this licence alone, but with the assistance of regents, i.e. a jury of masters, and ordinary civil justice would be handed down by a master chosen from among the doctors. The equivalent of the episcopal chancellor or canon chancellor that governed schools elsewhere, the chancellor was – like in Oxford – a representative of the university community, not of the Church⁸³. This compromise offered advantages for both sides; we can easily see the advantage for the masters, whose personal authority over the students was

⁸¹ François Nougier, *Histoire chronologique de l'Église, evesques et archevesques d'Avignon* (Avignon: Georges Bramereau, 1659), 69-74. On Thédise, André Castaldo, *L'Église d'Agde (Xe-XIIIe siècle)* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1970), especially with regard to his acts of charity, 8-9, note 4, and on his administration, 144-148.

⁸² Belperron, *La croisade contre les Albigeois*, 102-103.

⁸³ Hastings Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, II, 124 and III, 37.

confirmed, with a curb on competition because their priority in the town is the first criterion given.

The Church had achieved its crucial goals. The other details, covered in the second part of the statutes, defined the nature of the fraternal association whose existence had been confirmed. It laid down the main guidelines for how the university would operate: the masters would assist one another, rather than competing; all of them would join together to celebrate funerals, assemblies and processions; the most senior master, as a “dean” (*prius*), would have the honour of precedence and would decide on the schedule and harmonize the lessons in a way that is made known: a lecture (*lectio*) or lesson, and a debate or discussion (*disputatio*). The document concludes with details on the awarding of the *inceptio* (the status of master), in this case presumably the permission to practise medicine (the *Licentia practicandi*), along with the sworn assurances to respect and preserve the provisions of the document.

These first known statutes would, of course, be amended, supplemented and specified over time. They would apply to surgery, in particular, and to the examination required for anyone to practise medicine – man or woman, Christian or Jew⁸⁴. Does this mean that anyone could take classes?

Church supervision, admittedly, but also openness to the universal: for this is indeed the definition of any university ideal.

Conclusion

“Birth of the University”. This structure succeeds a tradition established for at least a century prior, thanks to the presence of numerous practitioners which we have endeavoured to detect and inventory. The situation of Montpellier gives evidence of its strong attractiveness from the 12th century. The medical reputation of the Languedocian city rivalled that of other former or emergent centres, such as Salerno or Paris, at the crucial moment of the transmission of the knowledge recovered through the Arabic translations into Latin. After what appears to be a guarantee given to the teaching of medicine in the city, accorded by the lay power in 1181, the first statutes promulgated by the authority of the papal legate in 1220 confirm a collective organization under the control of the Church. Faced with the threat of the Cathar heresy,

⁸⁴ *Cartulaire de l'université de Montpellier*, p. 202-203, no. 64 (James I d'Aragon, 1272); 207-208, no. 16 (James II, 1281), *inter alia*.

these statutes indicate a transformation into a fighting position: defence and illustration of the “physical” creation, the manifesto of the divine work which extends to the art of healing.

Did this transformation allow the teaching of medicine in Montpellier to become even more important? During the feast of Ascension in 1229, preaching to the members of the recently-founded University of Toulouse, the very austere Cistercian Hélinand of Froidmont (ca. 1170-ca. 1237) outlined the programme of virtue and saintliness to be recovered from heresy, but also from the excessive appeal of profane knowledge: “in Paris the liberal arts, in Orléans the authors, in Bologna the [legal] codes, in Salerno the apothecary’s box, in Toledo magic...” One might have wondered why he did not mention Montpellier had he not belittled its major rival, Salerno, as an “apothecary’s box” (*Salerni pyxides*)⁸⁵. In fact, Salerno had begun its decline and never adopted a university structure.

After a momentous period marked by the rise of these new organized structures and by the publication of numerous treatises and commentaries at the turn of the 13th century, the practice and teaching of medicine became – paradoxically – more discreet in Montpellier throughout the 13th century. Was this the result of disruptions related to the heretical opposition, to shifts in political borders (with the city coming under the Crown of Aragon, then a French royal domain before the papacy moved to Avignon? Another century would be needed to build the cathedral of knowledge, before the rise of indisputable masters (Mondeville, Arnaldus of Villanova, Jordanus of Turre, Guy of Chauliac, and others) that definitively made their imprint on the “school” of Montpellier in the 14th century.

⁸⁵ *Patrologia latina*, 212, col. 603. Yves Dossat, “Les premiers maîtres à l’université de Toulouse: Jean de Garlande, Hélinand”, in *Les Universités du Languedoc*, 198.

Document 1

January (1180) 1181

William VIII, Lord of Montpellier, grants full freedom to teach medicine.

Cartulaire de l'université de Montpellier, ed. Alexandre Germain, I, 1181-1400 (Montpellier: Ricard Frères, 1890), 179-180, no. 1; Marcel Fournier, *Les statuts et privilèges des universités françaises depuis leur fondation jusqu'en 1789* (Paris: Larose et Forsel, 1891), II, 3, no. 879.

Translated from Latin⁸⁶.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the year 1180 of his incarnation, in the month of January.

I, William, by the grace of God Lord of Montpellier, the son of Matilda the Duchess⁸⁷, of my own sentiment and my free will, in good faith and without deceit, for the public good and the common profit, for my utility, for that of the entire city of Montpellier and over the full extent of my lands, hereby give by this charter and grant in firm perpetuity before God and before you, my upright men of Montpellier, present and future, and before all the people, that henceforth, in spite of any appeals, pressures or solicitations from any person whosoever, I shall not grant any permission or any privilege to anyone, that any single person may teach or hold school at Montpellier in the field of medicine. Indeed, it is abhorrent and contrary to what is fair and moral to grant or concede to an individual a monopoly over such an eminent science. And as equity and justice would forbid acting in such a way, I shall never in the future grant [this right] to any individual.

Thus, I ask, want, approve and decide that all those who would wish to open a medical school, whoever they might be and from wherever they may hail, shall be able to do so in Montpellier with no impediments. And I grant them henceforth the full capacity, authorisation and power, and I concede it to them in firm perpetuity. I hereby proclaim and approve it entirely, and I enjoin all my successors not to dare go against it.

⁸⁶ A first French translation was given by Patrick Gilli, *Former, enseigner, éduquer dans l'Occident médiéval. 1100-1450*, I (Paris, SEDES, 1999), 65.

⁸⁷ Matilda was the daughter of the Duke of Burgundy, Hugh II Borel, and Matilda of Turenne: thus, she held the honorary title of Duchess.

Document 2

17 August 1220

The first statutes of the "University of Physicians, both Doctors and Students" of Montpellier, drawn up by Conrad of Urach, the legate of Pope Honorius III.

Cartulaire de l'université de Montpellier, ed. Alexandre Germain, I, 1181-1400 (Montpellier : Ricard Frères, 1890), 180-183, no. 2; Marcel Fournier, *Les statuts et privilèges des universités françaises depuis leur fondation jusqu'en 1789* (Paris: Larose et Forsel, 1891), II, 4-6, no. 882.

Translated from Latin⁸⁸.

Conrad, by divine mercy the Bishop of Porto and of Santa Rufina, Legate of the Apostolic See, to all the sons of the Holy Church, salvation in Christ Jesus.

The force of laws and constitutions was established by the holy fathers and by those that govern the Church so that human boldness would be contained, innocence protected from evil, and the capacity of evildoers to do harm would be reined in by the fear of punishment; for the law was given for those that would transgress it.

Whereas for a long time, medical science has shone under the glorious sign of progress in Montpellier, whereas it has flourished and spread its fruits in a salutary abundance over the various parts of the world, we have deemed it necessary to preserve the studies of medicine and the expenses they incur, thinking of the general interest and of each student at this faculty. All the more as its exercise makes the nature of things familiar, makes those who practise it wiser men and is warranted by the healing of human weakness. Certainly, the words of the Wise Man convince us no less to honour this science, attesting that the most High created medicines out of the earth; and he that is wise will not abhor them.

To wisely counter whatever opposes this study and so that the repetition of erroneous arguments does not prevail, but so that the sound elements may be preserved and prosper through an easier development, with the counsel of our venerable brothers the Bishops of Maguelone, Agde, Lodève, Avignon and other prelates, as well as of the university of physicians,

⁸⁸ A first French translation was proposed by Nathalie Gorochov in *Former, enseigner, éduquer dans l'Occident médiéval. 1100-1450*, dir. Patrick Gilli, I (Paris: SEDES, 1999), 66-67.

both doctors and students, through this perpetual constitution, we have ordered, promulgated and ruled that the following shall be applied irrefutably, by the authority of our legation.

Let no person who has not previously taught at Montpellier deliver public teaching without first having been examined and approved by the Bishop of Maguelone and by the master regents that he has chosen fairly and in good faith.

Let no one be called a student unless he is under the authority of a specific master.

The Bishop of Maguelone, assisted by the most senior professor, and with two other most discreet and most recommendable masters, according to outside testimony and his own conscience, shall choose, either from these three or from among the others, one master to be responsible for delivering justice to the masters and the students, or to the adversarial party should a complaint be raised against them.

Any appeals shall be made to the bishop, as the authority of the Apostolic See is safe in every case.

We say that for civil matters, for any criminal matter shall be referred to the Bishop of Maguelone, who shall be responsible for investigating it.

The master chosen to judge civil matters, as we have said, may be called the chancellor of the university of students.

The Bishop of Maguelone shall support and promote the sentences handed down by the aforementioned chancellor so that they shall be approved by the ecclesiastical courts.

If the seat of Maguelone is vacant, the Provost of Saint-Firmin shall carry out the aforementioned tasks of the bishop, as established in the preceding.

No master or student shall be admitted to any meeting between masters and students, to any reception or to any class unless he wears the clerical tonsure, or unless he has already received an ecclesiastical benefice or unless he has been promoted to the holy orders. Likewise, no regular shall be received unless he is wearing the habit of his [religious] order.

Whenever a master sues for any insult anyone who does not belong to the schools, all the masters and students having been alerted shall assist with their counsel and their aid, albeit without straying from reason in order not to suffer dishonour or damnation.

If a master were to have a dispute with a student with respect to his wages or any other matter, then no other master being aware shall receive this student until he has given or promised to give satisfaction to his former master.

No master may knowingly attract the disciple of another master in order to steal him away, by solicitation, presents or any other means, either personally or through any intermediary.

Respect shall be shown to the senior professors. They shall have precedence during assemblies and processions, for it is fair to show greater honours to the one who has preceded the others and whose teaching work has been more considerable.

The one who has taught first and the most shall establish which days and for how long lessons and disputations [debates] shall be interrupted, so that when he halts and for however long he halts his teaching, the others shall interrupt alike, unless a family necessity or possible illness requires him to stop.

Masters and students shall all attend, with exactitude, the funerals of the deceased.

Whenever a student shall return from the place where he has practised [i.e. where he has been initiated to medical practice], he shall be free to choose the master that suits him provided he owes nothing to his previous master, wages or otherwise.

The student shall do his *inceptio* under a master with whom he studied continuously for at least one month.

We order that this page shall be recited publicly during the *inceptiones* of each master, and that the *inceptio* of no master shall be celebrated without this page being read in its totality, at the beginning of the joint audience, in the assembly of students and masters. No one who must do his *inceptio* shall be considered a master unless he swears in public, on the Holy Gospel, to abide by everything in this document.

We have ordered, out of precaution, that three documents with the same content shall be written and kept, one by the Bishop of Maguelone, the second by the Prior of Saint-Firmin and the third by the chancellor of the university, such that each time that one of them is requested by the chancellor or by the most senior master or by the university of students or by the university of masters, or by two masters, that he shall make a copy of the document that he holds, without difficulty, and the copy being made without difficulty, the original shall be returned without delay by he who made the copy.

If anyone dares, out of bold audacity, to go against these constitutions or to be an obstacle to them, let him know that by the authority of God Almighty and by our authority, he shall be struck with the sword of anathema and cut off from the bosom of the Holy Church. Those that shall apply [these constitutions] shall merit being rewarded by our eternal blessing.

So that the things that have been announced herein shall be forever soundly confirmed, we apply our seal on this document.

At Montpellier, the year 1220, on the 16th day before the kalends of September.

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