

in Tepoztlan”) and 9 (“Land Tribute in the Jagiellonian Library Census Fragments”), which further contribute to describing the heterogenous socioeconomic conditions existing within colonial power structures.

Lastly, researchers seeking to have a more accurate map of the various fragments that make up the larger corpus of the Marquesado Census will find a series of concise studies on the history of the Berlinka collection (chapter 1), the provenance of the fragment studied in the volume and its relationship to other pieces of the Marquesado Census found Mexico and Paris (chapter 3), and a description of the various collections within the *Manuscripta Americana*, some of which are yet to be studied (chapter 2).

There is no doubt that *Fragments* is a significant contribution to Mesoamerican studies, and the work that the authors have put together is a well-researched and meticulously documented piece that deserves serious consideration by scholars and students alike.

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*On Pestilence: A Renaissance Treatise on Plague.* Girolamo Mercuriale.

Trans. Craig Martin. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2022. 160 pp. \$69.95.

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Girolamo Mercuriale is one of the great figures of the Italian medical humanism. He was a professor at the University of Padua, where he taught practical medicine since 1569. He treated Alexander Farnese and was later in the service of Emperor Maximilian II. A great figure, then—one of those whose reputation goes beyond borders. His *De Pestilentia* was published for the first time in 1577, both in Padua and Basel, before being republished several times, included in posthumous collections in the seventeenth century, and now translated, edited, and introduced by Craig Martin.

Among other purposes, the treatise aimed at restoring the reputation of its author. Indeed, when solicited in 1575 by the government to give his opinion about health in Venice, Mercuriale did not foresee the plague that had begun to decimate between one-quarter and one-third of the population. As a result, there was no call for quarantine, which relieved many people in Venice, including merchants and the doge himself, Alvise Mocenigo, who did not particularly favor the measures requested by local surgeons and physicians, or by the Provveditori alla Sanità, the Health Magistrate of the Republic. *Vera pestis?* No, at worst a *mal contagioso*.

Mercuriale's treatise develops a practical theory of pestilence in which theoretical elements, particularly on the corruption of the air, are supplemented by a whole series of recommendations, as well as by historical considerations. Not surprisingly, Hippocratic terminology and etiology strongly influenced Mercuriale, who taught a course on the

plague at the University of Padua when it reopened in January after the outbreak. Copious also are his references to the Galenic corpus. Furthermore, his emphasis on recommendations—for diet, pharmacopoeia, or surgery—is relatively new, and has some continuity with the Galenic canon, for which treatment is relative to the causes. Another element of continuity: Mercuriale mentions the appearance of a supernova in 1572, or the looming aspect of Mars to contextualize the events, and he never refutes the existence of occult elements in the spread of epidemics. Nevertheless, Craig Martin convincingly points out in his introduction that these explanatory schemes remain less important in this text than they were in other works of the same period, and that they are less central than the analyses relating to the putrefaction of the air, including scientific description and historical comparisons, or the means of remedying it.

Above all, Mercuriale's analysis embodies a sort of political turn in epidemiology. The remedies he proposes are both on an individual scale (application of cloacae, blood-letting, etc.), which was not new, and on a collective scale, which was more so. In addition to epidemiological considerations, he shed light on a whole set of measures to improve the quality and circulation of the air. From condemning the windows of the houses to modifying the layout of the neighboring mountains, from isolating the sick from the others to ensuring the proper supply of food to the city, and removing the dead or incinerating objects, the recommendations engage the government and genuinely lead to public health action.

Along with the meticulous translation of the text, which will be of great value to scholars studying the history of science, Venice, or the Renaissance without any knowledge of Latin, and beyond the good fortune that has led many publishers to enrich their catalogue in the history (and philosophy, sociology, etc.) of epidemics since COVID-19, the twenty-four-page introduction to the thirty chapters of the treatise justifies its modern republishing. The context produced by the scientific editor is an example of its kind. In addition to being comprehensive, it supports convincing analyses of the mechanisms of recommendation in late medieval Italy and makes the Mercuriale case the basis for a wider reflection on the political-scientific management of premodern public health crises, including elements of comparison with the management of the latest epidemic.

Craig Martin's work *non solum* makes the *De Pestilentia* accessible. While the reading of the translation is delightful, it also raises new questions, emphasizing in particular Mercuriale's relevance in public health and environmental thinking.

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