

The Vernacular  
Reception of Lanfranc  
of Milan's Surgical  
Works in Late  
Medieval Europe



# The Vernacular Reception of Lanfranc of Milan's Surgical Works in Late Medieval Europe

Edited by

Chiara Benati and Marialuisa Caparrini

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# LANFRANC OF MILAN: A RATIONAL SURGEON FROM BOLOGNA TO PARIS

CHIARA BENATI AND MARIALUISA CAPARRINI

## 1. Life

As observed by McVaugh (2006: 9), “between 1240 and 1320 a new genre of medical writing appeared in Western Europe, the Latin general surgery.” In the works produced in those eighty years, different authors elaborated a shared idea of surgery as a rational and scientific discipline. The cultural hub of this development was the city of Bologna, where the largest part of the representative of this rational surgery either practiced or received their medical training, as it is the case for Lanfranc of Milan.

Information regarding Lanfranc of Milan’s biography is quite scarce; however, some essential details about his life and his education can be gleaned from some biographical hints reported and inserted in both his surgical writings, the *Chirurgia parva* and, above all, the *Chirurgia magna*.<sup>1</sup>

Born in the mid-thirteenth century (1245 c.), probably in Milan from a family of Pisan origin, he studied medicine at the University of Bologna and trained surgery under William of Saliceto (1210-1277), as Lanfranc points out in chapter XVI of his *Chirurgia parva* (Sapota and Sosnowski 2016: 139-140).<sup>2</sup>

About 1270, he moved to Milan, where he successfully practiced surgery, as attested by some anecdotes inserted in the *Chirurgia magna*, such as, for example:

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<sup>1</sup> On this, see Gurlt (1898: 765); Tabanelli (1965: 803); Schalick (2005: 305); Sosnowski (2014: 9).

<sup>2</sup> Currently, no critical edition of the Latin texts exists. All quotations from Lanfranc’s *Chirurgia magna* will be based on the *editio princeps* printed in Venice in 1498, whereas those from the *Chirurgia parva* will be conducted on the revised version of the *editio princeps* by Sapota and Sosnowski (2016).

Puer quidam .xv. annorum fuit percussus ab alio cum paruo cultello in ciuitate Mediolani [...] (Lanfranc 1498: f. 172rb).

[A certain fifteen-year-old boy was stabbed by another with a small knife in the city of Milan.]

Quare tibi pono curam: narratoriam quam cuidam gallico stipendiario in ciuitate feci Mediolani: vt in alijs tibi similibus fit exemplum. Cuidam iuueni .xxx. annorum venit antrax ex dextra parte colli [...] (Lanfranc 1498: f. 186ra).

[Therefore, I entrust to you the narrative that I made to a French mercenary in the city of Milan, so that it can be a useful example for others like you. A certain thirty-year-old man developed anthrax on the right side of his neck.]

As outlined in the epilogue of his *Chirurgia magna*, in 1290 he was banned from Milan by Matteo Visconti for political reasons (Tabanelli 1965: 804; Sosnowski 2014: 9). Thus, forced to flee, Lanfranc moved to France, arriving first in Lyon, where he taught and practiced surgery (*Chirurgia magna*, chapter III.iii.1; Tabanelli 1965: 805), and where he also wrote his first surgical ‘short’ treatise, the *Chirurgia parua*, dedicating it to his friend Bernard de Gordon (Keil 1985: 562; Keil 2004: 98), a French physician and professor at the university of Montpellier:

Intendens, venerabilis amice Bernarde, componere librum, in quo tradam omnium concedente deo datore plenam doctrinam ad instrumentum cyrurgicum pertinentem, non propono in presenti opusculo tradere tibi nisi pauca leuia et probata (Sapota and Sosnowski 2016: 119).

[I am intending, venerable friend Bernard, to compose a book in which I will transmit, with God’s permission, the complete doctrine on surgical instruments, I do not intend to present in this current booklet anything other than a few light and proven matters to you.]

After about five years, in 1295, he moved to Paris, “terra pacis et studij” (Lanfranc 1498: f. 166va) (land of peace and study), where he met “an encouraging reaction” (McVaugh 2000: 292). He was accepted into the *Confrérie de Saint-Côme et de Saint-Damien*, the first French surgical guild founded in 1271 (Tabanelli 1965: 805), and had the opportunity to practice as well as to teach surgical theory and practice to many pupils, like, for example, Henry de Mondeville and Jan Yperman (Tabanelli 1965: 806; Sosnowski 2014: 9).



In this context, Lanfranc also obtained the support of the dean of the faculty of medicine, Jean de Passavent, who asked him to compile a writing on ‘his’ surgery, as stated in the epilogue of the *Chirurgia magna*:

Ibique rogatus a quibusdam dominis et magistris et specialiter a viro venerando domino magistro Ioanne de Passauanto magistrorum medicine: necnon a quibusdam valentibus bachalarijs omni dignis honore: que ea que de rationibus cyrurgie legendo dicebam: et meum operationis modum et experimenta: quibus vtebar: in scriptis ad communem vtilitatem et recordationem perpetuam compilarem (Lanfranc 1487: f. 210vb).

[And there, I was asked by some lords and masters, and especially by the venerable man Jean de Passavant, master of the masters of medicine, as well as by some worthy bachelors, who deserve all honor, to compile a writing for common utility and for perpetual remembrance about surgery, which I reported while teaching the procedure of my operations which I used and the experience I had proposed.]

Lanfranc completed his major surgical work in 1296 and dedicated it to the King of France, Philip IV the Fair (1285-1314).

Unfortunately, there are no further details regarding Lanfranc of Milan’s life; it is most likely that he passed away between 1306 and 1315 (Sosnowski 2014: 11).

## 2. Works

### 2.1. *Chirurgia Parva*

Lanfranc’s first writing, the *Chirurgia parva*, is an introduction to the surgical art conceived as a short preview of his major treatise for a quick and easy reference (De Tovar 1982-83: 196 and 198; Sosnowski 2014: 16):

quia intentio huius libri, qui erit preambulus ad maiorem, si deus concesserit, est breuitas (Sapota and Sosnowski 2016: 128-129).

[The intention of this book, which will be a preamble to a greater one, if God grants, is brevity.]

Nevertheless, brevity does not imply incompleteness; on the contrary, despite its condensed structure and content, the text constitutes a comprehensive surgical treatise encompassing both theoretical and practical teachings as well as all major topics of this craft (de Tovar 1982-1983: 196).

The “opusculum” (booklet) consists of two main sections (Keil 1985: 562; Keil 2004: 98). The first section is the ‘real’ surgery with the description and treatment of wounds, ulcers, abscesses, as well as of fractures, dislocations, and eye disorders. The second section is a pharmacopoeia which includes medical remedies divided into nine different categories (repercussives, resolutives, maturatives, mundificatives, regeneratives, consolidatives, corrosives, cauteries and mollificatives), in accordance with their different effects (Sosnowski 2014: 18).

According to the version transmitted in the *editio princeps* printed in Venice in 1498, Lanfranc’s minor surgical work is divided into the following sixteen chapters:

- I. *De intentione chirurgici* (on the surgeon’s intention)
- II. *De vulnere facto cum puncta alicuius instrumenti ut gladio vel sagitta* (on wounds caused by sharp weapons, such as a sword or arrow)
- III. *De vulnere facto cum ense vel alia re incidente* (on wounds caused by a sword or other cutting object)
- IV. *De incisione nervi* (on the incision of nerves)
- V. *De fluxu sanguinis ex vena vel arteria* (on the flow of blood from vein or artery)
- VI. *De vulnere in carne cum osse* (on wounds in the flesh with bone fracture)
- VII. *De vulnere capitis cum fractura cranei* (on head injuries with skull fractures)
- VIII. *De omni vulnere sine fractura cranei* (on every head injury without skull fractures)
- IX. *De morsu canis rabidi* (on the bite of a rabid dog)
- X. *De apostematibus* (on abscesses)<sup>3</sup>
- XI. *De curis apostematum omnium* (on the treatment of all abscesses)
- XII. *De ulceribus differentia* (on the differences of ulcers)
- XIII. *De algebra sive restauratione* (on the treatment of dislocations)
- XIV. *De fractura ossis* (on fractures)
- XV. *De egritudinibus oculi* (on eye diseases)

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<sup>3</sup> This chapter, which is one of the longest within the text, is strongly indebted to the humoral theories of Lanfranc’s time. On this, see Sosnowski (2014: 17).

XVI. *De antidotis* (pharmacopoeia).<sup>4</sup>

This division into sixteen chapters is not original,<sup>5</sup> however, it is a practice taken from the incunabula which has now become common usage (Röhl and Keil 1976: 1382).

The booklet enjoyed great popularity during the Middle Ages, as it is demonstrated by the large number of manuscripts and printed versions transmitting it, on the one hand, and by the number of vernacular translations, on the other (see *infra*, 3. The Vernacular Fortune of Lanfranc of Milan's Works). Currently, there is no critical edition of the Latin text. Röhl (1976),<sup>6</sup> Keil (1985: 563), as well as Röhl and Keil (1976: 1387-1388) list more than thirty witnesses which preserve the Latin *Chirurgia parva* (complete or single parts of it).

Below are listed all the manuscripts identified by Röhl and Keil (1976), Sosnowski (2014: 23-26), Sapota and Sosnowski (2016: 118), as well as recorded in the digital database based on Thorndike and Kibre (1963):

- (i) Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. Lat. fol. [= Clf] 56 (mid of the fourteenth century); ff. 294ra-298ra; incipit: *(I)ntendens venerabilis amice bernarde componere librum* (Rose 1905: 1074-1078);
- (ii) Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College, MS 407 (413) (fourteenth century); iii, ff. 8v-23r; incipit: *Intendens venerabilis amice Bernarde componere librum* (eTK No. 0757A) (James 1908: 472-474);
- (iii) Cambridge, Trinity College, MS 913 (R.14.41) (fourteenth century); ff. 87-109v; incipit: *Intendens venerabilis amice Bernarde componere librum* (eTK No. 0757A) (James 1901: 328-329);
- (iv) Chartres, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms. 393 (thirteenth-fourteenth century); ff. 143r-v; incipit: *Ista remedia subsequential scibuntur in parvo Lanfrancho. Suscipias itaque antidotarium medicinarum* (eTK No. 1550E)

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<sup>4</sup> This final chapter, which is linked to William of Saliceto's teaching and model (Keil 2004: 98), is, perhaps, the most original section within the text (Sosnowski 2014: 18).

<sup>5</sup> For a study of the structure of the *Chirurgia parva*, see Röhl and Keil (1976: 1375-1386).

<sup>6</sup> Heinz-Ulrich Röhl, "Textkritische Vorstudien zur 'Chirurgia parva' Lanfranks." Ph.D. Diss., University of Bonn, 1976. Unfortunately, this preliminary study to the edition of Lanfranc's *Chirurgia parva* has become almost impossible to find.

- (<https://portail.biblissima.fr/fr/ark:/43093/mdataf79ffcefc3ebc79e2f0edebf069cc3d52e1a7b11>);
- (v) Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 1165 (thirteenth-fourteenth century); ff. 131va-137vb; incipit: *Intendens venerabilis amice Bernharde componere librum* (eTK No. 0758A) (Schuba 1981: 122-124);
  - (vi) Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 1179 (second half of the fourteenth century); ff. 158r-167v; incipit: *Intendens venerabilis amice Barnade* (Schuba 1981: 145-148);
  - (vii) Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 1260 (begin of the fifteenth century); ff. 304ra-313vb; incipit: *Intedens venerabilis amice* (Schuba 1981: 318-328);
  - (viii) Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 1305 (1422); ff. 1r-18r; incipit is lacking; explicit: *Explicit Alfrancus minor* (Schuba 1981: 397-398);
  - (ix) Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 1345 (mid of the fourteenth century); ff. 180va-190va; incipit: *Atendens venerabilis amice Bernarde componere librum* (Manteyer 1897; Sosnowski 2014: 24-25);
  - (x) Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. Lat. 1963; ff. 82r-88v; incipit: *Intendens venerabilis amice componere librum* (Sosnowski 2014: 25);
  - (xi) Erfurt, Universitäts- und Forschungsbibliothek Erfurt/Gotha, Ampl. Coll. 2° 236 (end of the fourteenth century); ff. 177ra-183vb; incipit: *Intendens venerabilis Bernarde componere* (Schum 1887: 143-148);
  - (xii) Erfurt, Universitäts- und Forschungsbibliothek Erfurt/Gotha, Ampl. Coll. 2° 288 (thirteenth-fourteenth century); ff. 79-80; incipit: *Suscipe itaque antidotarium medicinarum* (eTK No. 1550E); ff. 80-81; *De curis oculorum eiusdem*, incipit: *Scias quod non est egritudo in aliquot* (eTK No. 1389H) (Schum 1887: 195-197);
  - (xiii) Erfurt, Universitäts- und Forschungsbibliothek Erfurt/Gotha, Ampl. Coll. 4° 15 (thirteenth-fourteenth century); ff. 12-34; incipit: *Intendens venerabilis amice Bernarde componere* (eTK No. 0757A) (Schum 1887: 295-298);
  - (xiv) Erfurt, Universitäts- und Forschungsbibliothek Erfurt/Gotha, Ampl. Coll. 4° 174 (fourteenth century); ff. 95-101; incipit:

- Intendens venerabilis amice Bernarde componere* (eTK No. 0757A) (Schum 1887: 428-430);
- (xv) Kraków, Biblioteka Jagiellońska, MS 849, f. 187v (Sosnowski 2014: 24; Sapota and Sosnowski 2016: 118);<sup>7</sup>
  - (xvi) Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. 1203 (mid/end of the fourteenth century); ff. 41ra-53ra;
  - (xvii) Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. 1222 (1453, 1415); ff. 143vb-150vb; incipit: *Intendens venerabilis amice Bernarde componere librum* (Sturm and Mackert 2014);
  - (xviii) London, British Library, MS Additional 26, 106 (early fourteenth century); ff. 2ra-12vb;
  - (xix) London, British Library, MS Egerton 2340 (second half of the fourteenth century); ff. 3r-82r;
  - (xx) London, British Library, MS Sloane 284 (end of the fourteenth century); ff. 82r-82v;
  - (xxi) London, British Library, MS Sloane 442 (mid of the fifteenth century); ff. 67r-77v;
  - (xxii) London, British Library, MS Sloane 3124 (mid of the fifteenth century); ff. 237r-264r;
  - (xxiii) London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 409 (fourteenth century); 2<sup>nd</sup> volume, ff. 77r-87v;
  - (xxiv) London, Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, MS 547 (fourteenth century); ff. 266a-280v; incipit: *Intendens venerabilis amice bernarde* (<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/yxkf3x3k>);
  - (xxv) London, Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, MS 553 (1470); ff. 173r-187v; incipit: *Attendens venerabilis amice Bernharde* (<https://wellcomecollection.org/works/qbynjhgg>);
  - (xxvi) Mainz, Wissenschaftliche Stadtbibliothek, hs. I 518 (fifteenth century); ff. 105ra-111vb (List and Ottermann 2022);
  - (xxvii) Marburg, Universitätsbibliothek, Hs. 17 (1467-1468); 118vb-140vb; incipit: *Indendens venerabilis amice Bernarde componere* (Heyne 2002: 40-44);
  - (xxviii) Metz, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms. 176 (first half/mid of the fifteenth century); ff. 40ra-44vb, 50ra-53vb, 45ra-49va;

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<sup>7</sup> On this, see also Sturm and Mackert 2014 who mention Maria Kowalczyk, *Catalogus codicum manuscriptorum medii aevi latinorum qui in Bibliotheca Jagellonica Cracoviae asservantur*, Vol. 6: *Numeros continens inde a 772 usque ad 1190*, Kraków 1996: 375).

- incipit: *Intendens, venerabilis amice Bernarde, componere librum*  
[https://ccfr.bnf.fr/portailccfr/jsp/index\\_view\\_direct\\_anonymous.jsp?record=eadcgm:EADC:D05010495](https://ccfr.bnf.fr/portailccfr/jsp/index_view_direct_anonymous.jsp?record=eadcgm:EADC:D05010495));
- (xxix) München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 323 (fifteenth century); ff. 74ra-122; incipit: *Intendo componere librum in quo traderam omnes* (eTK No. 0758J) (Halm 1892: 82);
  - (xxx) München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 8808 (1426); ff. 1-7v; Incipit: *Intendimus venerabile amice Bernharde componere librum* (eTK No. 0758A); ff. 7r-9v; incipit: *Suscipe itaque antidotarium medicinarum* (eTK No. 1550E) (Halm and Meyer 1874: 53);
  - (xxxi) München, Universitätsbibliothek, 2 Cod. Ms. 576 (1383); ff. 106ra-113vb; incipit: *Intendens venerabilis amice Bernarde componere* (Daniel and Schott and Zahn 1979: 100);
  - (xxxii) München, Universitätsbibliothek, 2 Cod. Ms. 677 (1387; 1390-1392; first half of the fifteenth century); ff. 150r-157v and 317v (Daniel and Schott and Zahn 1979: 161 and 166);
  - (xxxiii) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Nouv. Acq. Lat. 693 (fourteenth century); ff. 139ra-149va; incipit: *Intendens venerabilis amice Bernarde componere* (eTK No. 0757A) (<https://portail.biblissima.fr/fr/ark:/43093/mdata56a1435b7bfb7a5bdcdf16387b87dd776f4e9ce9>);
  - (xxxiv) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. Lat. 6992 (1400-1499); ff. 197ra-211ra; incipit: *Attendens venerabilis amice Bernarde componere librum in quo tradam...*  
(<https://portail.biblissima.fr/fr/ark:/43093/mdatacf4b41efc6fb7a7261f8e445a27fed78cbd4be68>);
  - (xxxv) Praha, Národní knihovna České republiky, Ms. VB 22 (mid of the fourteenth century); ff. 78vb-90vb (Truhlář 1905: 342-343).
  - (xxxvi) St. Gallen, Kantonsbibliothek, Vadianische Sammlung, VadSlg. Ms. 430 (end of the fifteenth century); ff. 1ra-18rb (part 3) (Scherer 1864: 124-125);
  - (xxxvii) Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. Pal. Vind. 2466 (fourteenth century); ff. 124r-128r *Lanfrancus, Antidotarium, quod in fine suae parvae chirurgiae composuit* (Tabulae 1868: 79);
  - (xxxviii) Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. Pal. Vind. 5306 (first half of the fifteenth century); ff. 126ra-131va

- Lanfrancus Mediolanensis Chirurgia Parva* (Tabulae 1870: 96);
- (xxxix) Wien, Schottenkloster, Hs. 166 (Hübl 138) (first half of the fifteenth century); ff. 276vb-282ra, incipit: *Intendes venerabils amice Bernharde*; ff. 282ra-283vb; incipit: *Suscipias itaque antidotarium medicinarum* (eTK No. 1550E) ([https://manuscripta.at/hs\\_detail.php?ID=28678](https://manuscripta.at/hs_detail.php?ID=28678));
- (xl) Wolfenbüttel, Herzog August Bibliothek, Cod. Guelf. 12.4 Aug. (1452); ff. 344ra-354vb (Heinemann 1966: 95).

## 2.2. *Chirurgia Magna*

If the *Chirurgia parva* was conceived as a brief and easy-to-consult reference booklet, the *Chirurgia magna* is Lanfranc's flagship work, the one in which he displays his knowledge and fully unfolds his idea of surgery as a rational science. This impressive, still unedited text or parts of it are preserved in at least fourteen manuscripts:

- (i) Bordeaux, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms 117-118 (fifteenth century); ff. 232r-241v; incipit: *De doloribus juncturarum secundum Lanfrancum* (<https://portail.bibliissima.fr/fr/ark:/43093/mdata77ec27feac4e8bcffc054126e3ffda1001c4a17f>);
- (ii) Cambridge, Gonville and Caius, MS 159 (209) (thirteenth/fourteenth century); ff. 111-443; explicit, fol. 443: 1296 (James 1907: 183-184);
- (iii) Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. Lat. 1345, ff. 99r-180r (mid of the fourteenth century; Sosnowski 2014: 24-25);
- (iv) Città del Vaticano, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. Lat. 1963, ff. 1r-78v (Sosnowski 2014: 25);
- (v) Erfurt, Universitäts- und Forschungsbibliothek Erfurt/Gotha, Cod. Ampl. 4° 174 (first half of the fourteenth century); ff. 42-95, Italian provenance (Schum 1887: 428-429);
- (vi) Kraków, Biblioteka Jagiellońska, MS 849 (Sosnowski 2014: 24; Sapota and Sosnowski 2016: 118);
- (vii) London, British Library, Royal MS 12 C. XIV (fourteenth century);
- (viii) Mainz, Wissenschaftliche Stadtbibliothek, Hs. I 518 (fifteenth century); ff. 9ra-104vb (List and Ottermann 2022);

- (ix) München, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 323 (fourteenth century); ff. 13-69 (first treatise); explicit: *scripsit Stephanus filius Thomassini de Caluomonte*, 1330 (Halm 1892: 82);
- (x) Oxford, All Souls, MS 76 (fifteenth century); ff. 213-229 (first treatise, interrupting in third chapter of the third section) (Coxe 1842: 24);
- (xi) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. Lat. 6992 (fifteenth century); ff. 91ra-197ra; incipit: *Protector in Christo sperantium Deus excelsus et gloriosus*;
- (xii) Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. Lat. 7065 (after 1497) (Saraman and Marichal 1962: 513); ff. 21r-31r; incipit: *Propono capitulum de iuncturarum doloribus facere speciale*;
- (xiii) St. Gallen, Kantonsbibliothek, Vadianische Sammlung, VadSlg. Ms. 430 (end of the fifteenth century); ff. 1va (part 2)-1ra (part 3) (Scherer 1864: 124-125; <https://swisscollections.ch/Record/991170512965705501?sid=126463970>);
- (xiv) Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS 5406, ff. 161r-234v, explicit: 1366, from Montpellier (Unterkircher 1969: 79-80).

Moreover, the Latin text is transmitted, along with other surgical works and the *Chirurgia parva*, in five early modern printed versions:

- (i) *Cyrurgia Guidonis de cauliaco. Et Chirurgia Bruni. Theodorici. Rogerij. Rolandi. Bertapalie. Lanfranci.* Venetijs: Impressarum mandato Octaviani Scoti Liuis Modoetiensis Cura et ante Boneti Locatelli Bergomensis, 1489 (*editio princeps*);
- (ii) *Cyrurgia Guidonis de cauliaco. De balneis porectanis. Chirurgia Bruni. Theodorici. Rolandi. Rogerij. Lanfranci. Bertapalie.* Venetijs: Impensus (impensis domini Andree Torresani de Asula) per Simonem de Luere, 1499;
- (iii) *Cyrurgia Guidonis de cauliaco. De balneis Porectanis. Chirurgia Bruni. Theodorici. Rolandini. Rogerii. Lanfranci. Bertapalie. Jesu Hali de oculis: Canamusali de Baldac de oculis.* Venetijs: Impressum per Gregorius de Gregoriis, 1513;
- (iv) *Cyrurgia Guidonis de Cauliaco: et cyrurgia Bruni. Teodorici. Rolandi. Lanfranci. Rogerij. Bertapalie.* Venetijs: Per Bernardinum Venetu de Vitalibus, 1519;



- (v) *Ars chirvrgica Gvidonis Cavliaci medici celeberrimi lucubrationes chirurgicae, ab infinitis prope mendi emendatae: ac instrumentorum chirurgicorum formis, quæ in alijs impressionibus desiderabantur, exornatae. Brvni preterea, Theodorici, Rolandi, Lanfranci, et Bertapaliæ, chirurgiæ, maxima nunc diligentia recognitæ his accesservnt Rogerii Gvlielmu Saliceti chirurgiæ [...]. Venetiis: Apvd Ivntas, 1546.*

After a long theological proem fundamentally summarizing the *historia salutis*, a personal note on the author's biography and the dedication to Phillip the Fair (1285-1314) and to his friend Bernard, the text is organized in five books (*tractate*), beginning with anatomy – which is placed at the beginning as it constitutes an intellectual prerequisite for surgical practice (McVaugh 2006: 40-41) – and ending with the medicines that can be useful for a practicing surgeon (*antidotarium*).

The first book is further divided into three sections (*doctrinae*). The first section consists of three chapters: The first includes the definition of surgery; the second lists the qualities that a good surgeon should have and provides indications on how he should behave, while the third one deals with the surgeon's intentions – *olutio continuitatis* (solution of continuity), *solutionis continuatio* (continuation of the solution) and *superflui remotio* (removal of the superfluous) –, all requiring the use of the hands. The second section consists of a single chapter and deals with anatomy and physiology, while the third, which is divided into fifteen chapters, describes the treatment of wounds from head to heel. The second book is again organized *ad capite ad calcem* and includes ten chapters dealing with particular wounds. The third book is on the therapy of surgically treatable conditions that are neither wounds nor ulcers and is divided into three sections, on the diseases of skin and scalp (eight chapters), abscesses (seventeen chapters), and various kinds of diseases, among which ophthalmic pathologies and conditions affecting the genitalia (nineteenth chapters). The fourth book is divided into two sections dealing with the restoration of, respectively, fractures (seven chapters) and dislocations (five chapters). The surgical treatise ends with the antidodary, in which the various remedies that a surgeon could need are classified according to their function (Gurtl 1898: 766-790; Sosnowski 2014: 11).

### 3. The Vernacular Fortune of Lanfranc of Milan's Works

The fortune of Lanfranc's surgical works is witnessed by the large number of vernacular translations that were produced already shortly after their completion. The *Chirurgia parva* in particular enjoyed great popularity and became one of the most influential surgical texts of the Middle Ages (Cifuentes 2001: 100). One or more vernacular translations of the text are, in fact, transmitted in French, Catalan, Italian, Hebrew, English, German and Dutch. The French, Italian, English and German branches of this tradition will be dealt with in detail in the present volume.

In the Romance language area, the oldest known vernacular version of the *Chirurgia parva* (and the *Chirurgia magna*) is possibly represented by the Catalan translation realized, in 1329, by the Catalan physician licenciado in Montpellier Guillem Salvà preserved in the fifteenth-century manuscript Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional de España, MS 10162 (Sosnowski 2014: 29).

As for the Germanic languages, the oldest-known translation of the *Chirurgia parva* is the – now lost – Middle Low Franconian one that was produced in the Flanders in the first part of the fourteenth century at latest. Still in the same century, this first version was revised in the Southern part of the Netherlands. On the whole, three different Dutch versions derive from that archetype: London, British Library, Ms. Harley 1684, ff. 105r-140r, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Ms. 8216, ff. 59ra-73vb, and the one printed by Konrad Braem in Leuven in 1481. These Dutch versions are edited in Scholle (1978).

As the *Chirurgia parva*, also the *Chirurgia magna* was repeatedly translated into various vernacular languages: Castilian, Catalan, French, Dutch, English, and German. The tradition of this text has, however, been mainly disregarded by scholars and, apart for the Castilian, English and, in part, Dutch versions, all the texts are still unedited. The English and German translations and their manuscript tradition will be treated in Marialuisa Caparrini's and Chiara Benati's essays, respectively.

The *Chirurgia magna* enjoyed an extraordinarily wide circulation in the Catalan language, even though it is preserved only in four fourteenth and fifteenth manuscripts, none of which is complete (Cifuentes 2001: 101).

During the fifteenth century three different Castilian versions of Lanfranc's major work were produced: the first two are transmitted, in a single copy, in manuscript form, while the third one was printed in Seville in 1495 (Albi Romero 1988: 105-107).

Very little is known about the French tradition of the text, since parts of it are included in at least two manuscripts: Paris, Bibliothèque

interuniversitaire de santé, Ms 2072 (fifteenth century) and Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, Ms 1036 (1456) (Sosnowski 2014: 28).

Three different versions of the *Chirurgia magna* are also preserved in the Dutch language and their relationships have been explained by Huizenga and Reynaert (2002) based on a partial parallel edition. The oldest Dutch translation is witnessed by a series of fourteenth-century fragments (Darmstadt, Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek, Ms. 2201 (Appendix); Köln, Historisches Archiv der Stadt, Best. 7050 A 57, Köln, Universitäts- und Stadtbibliothek, without shelfmark) and by the manuscript Gent, Universiteitsbibliotheek, MS 1272, ff. 1r-134v (fifteenth century); while the other two – both reflecting the language of the northern part of the Netherlands – are transmitted, respectively in Amsterdam, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Cod. II F 39 and Uppsala, Universitets bibliotek, MS Waller 132 (Reynaert 1999; Huizenga 2008).

#### 4. Aim and Structure of the Volume

Containing essays of experts in the field in both the Romance and the Germanic areas, the present volume aims at analyzing in depth some key-aspects of the translations of Lanfranc's surgical works belonging to these two traditions from a philological and lexical perspective, reflecting, in particular, on the reasons behind the choice of the vernacular as metalanguage in the transmission of surgical knowledge, the presumed authors of these vernacular renderings, and their intended recipients.

The first part of the book, dedicated to the Romance tradition of Lanfranc's *Chirurgia parva* consists of three essays by Roman Sosnowski, Francesco Crifò, and Sonia Maura Barillari, and focuses on the Italian and French versions of this medieval surgical 'best-seller'.

In the chapter dedicated to the Italo-Romance versions of the *Chirurgia parva*, Roman Sosnowski introduces the four manuscript witnesses constituting the Italian tradition of Lanfranc's quick reference work. The comparison of these manuscripts has shown significant differences in both the language and the degree of dependence from the Latin source, allowing them to be regarded as representatives of four completely independent versions. Among them, the reworking of the text transmitted in Kraków, Jagiellonian Library, Ital. quart. 67 is particularly interesting. It is with no doubt the most innovative of the four. Its language is therefore acribically analyzed with respect to its graphemic, phonological, morphological, and lexical features. Furthermore, the author argues that the three-layer vertical stratification model proposed for the languages for specific purposes (LSP) can be successfully applied to these texts and

contribute to a better understanding of the relationship between Latin and vernacular scientific texts during the Middle Ages.

Francesco Crifò's essay offers an edition of the antidotary from the Italian vernacularisation of Lanfranc of Milan's *Chirurgia parva*, transmitted in Ravenna, Biblioteca Classense, MS 139, which remains unedited and unpublished to this day. Moreover, the author focuses on the linguistic analysis of this vernacular version of Lanfranc's minor surgical text and, using a strictly lexicological approach, examines other European versions, highlighting errors, analogies, and correspondences among the various vernacular traditions of Lanfranc's work.

In her essay, Sonia Maura Barillari focuses on the oldest-preserved manuscript witness of the French translation of the *Chirurgia parva* – Bern, Burgerbibliothek, MS A 95.2 – which, despite having been compiled only about fifteen years after the composition of the Latin original, already transmits a revised version of the original, now lost, French translation of the surgical booklet.

The second part of the book, on the other hand, deals with the Germanic tradition of Lanfranc's surgical works and includes the works of Marialuisa Caparrini, Chiara Benati, and Laura Poggesi.

The intended audience of the Middle English versions of both the *Chirurgia parva* and the *Chirurgia magna* are at the centre of Marialuisa Caparrini's reflection. With respect to late medieval England, the author highlights the inadequacy of the traditional clear-cut distinction between "Latin-educated and non-Latin educated, Latin and vernacular, academically trained physicians/surgeons and empirics" as users and producers of vernacular surgical texts, and suggests that these translations circulated in broad discourse communities constituted by individuals with different educational backgrounds and different practical skills sharing an interest in surgery.

A parallel reflection on the intended audience of the vernacular translations of Lanfranc's works is conducted in the essay of Chiara Benati with respect to the three Early Modern German versions of the *Chirurgia parva* (two manuscript and one printed version), to the Middle Low German fragment of retranslation of one of these, as well as to the single Early Modern German version of the *Chirurgia magna*. In her essay, the author highlights how these vernacularisations can be seen as the work of surgeons with a certain familiarity with the Latin language, intentionally emphasizing practical aspects over theoretical ones to meet the needs not only of empirics and non-university-trained practitioners but also – particularly in the pharmaceutical sections – of apothecaries and alchemists.

Laura Poggesi's essay takes a more specifically linguistic approach, focusing on the Middle English translation of Lanfranc's *Chirurgia parva*. The author investigates the translation process of technical terms specific to the surgical field, as well as the different strategies employed by the translator in rendering terms related to anatomy, ailments, surgical instruments, and treatments. It is noted that, with the exception of anatomy, whose terms derive almost always from the Old English, there is a prevalence of borrowings from Latin and French. This may indicate a certain reticence by the translator due to a still relatively young vernacular surgical tradition in late medieval England.

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**PART I:**  
**THE ROMANCE TRADITION**

# THE ITALO-ROMANCE VERSIONS OF LANFRANC'S *CHIRURGIA PARVA*: AN ANALYSIS OF THE SPECIALIZED LANGUAGE WITH PARTICULAR RESPECT TO THE MANUSCRIPT KRAKÓW, ITAL. QUART. 67

ROMAN SOSNOWSKI

## 1. Introduction

It is well acknowledged that Lanfranc's contributions to the field of surgical arts were expeditiously translated into vernacular languages. Translations of the *Chirurgia parva* were particularly favoured, as their compact size and persuasive language aligned seamlessly with the accessible and utilitarian nature of scientific literature during the medieval period. Furthermore, the translation of these texts into vernacular languages rendered them appealing manuals for communities of surgeon-practitioners, who frequently lacked a commendable command of Latin but possessed proficient medical expertise.

The vernacular translations presented here serve as significant evidence of the condition of medical terminology during the later Middle Ages, providing insights into the linguistic development of specialized forms of the language. Upon commencing my investigation in 2008 into the extensive realm of translations and the impact of Lanfranc on the field of surgery, it became evident that Italian vernacular languages were conspicuously absent. If, on the one hand, this situation might appear logical, given Lanfranc's departure from Italy and the subsequent dissemination of knowledge pertaining to Italian surgeons in foreign lands, on the other, there is evidence indicating that Lanfranc's works had considerable readership in Italy, as exemplified by the highly significant edition of his oeuvre published in Venice in 1498 and subsequent years.

Given the widespread popularity of the *Chirurgia parva* in Europe, the absence of Lanfranc's manuscripts in Italy appeared to be unusual. While engaged in the process of cataloguing the Berlin collection of

manuscripts housed in the Jagiellonian Library in Kraków, I came across with codex Ital. quart. 67. In addition, I conducted a thorough examination of Classense 139 at the Ravenna Library for additional purposes pertaining to the research. The primary focus of these vernacular manuscripts revolves around a surgical treatise, which lacks a clear title or authorship, hence posing challenges in determining its origins. I undertook an examination of the Kraków version, and during my scholarly investigation, I came across two additional manuscripts: Ms. 72 from the Biblioteca Universitaria in Padua, and Vat. Lat. 10239 from the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana. During that investigation, I managed to identify four manuscripts with vernacular versions of Lanfranc's *Chirurgia parva*, and it was a first step in further research, concentrated mostly on the Kraków manuscript.

In the present study, I intend to research some nuances of the Italo-Romance adaptations of Lanfranc's *Chirurgia parva*. The investigation begins with a brief introduction to the four manuscripts that form the basis of this investigation. After this introduction, the discussion shifts to a brief comparative analysis, focusing on the significant differences between the various translations. The main focus of the philological and linguistic analysis is, however, the manuscript Ital. quart. 67, which I had the opportunity to edit in 2014, and which also seems to be the most interesting of the four witnesses due to its greatest degree of originality and transformation of the Latin text.

Finally, I will move to examine the surgical language in the Middle Ages within the theoretical framework developed for the languages for specific purposes (LSP). Such broad research lenses are critical for comprehending the social, cultural, and professional contexts in which these manuscripts were not only created but also consumed.

## **2. The Four Manuscripts of the *Chirurgia Parva* in Italo-Romance Vernaculars**

The four vernacular versions of the *Chirurgia parva* from the Italic Peninsula are transmitted in manuscripts without images, or extended decorations. Three of them also have a very similar format: between 20 and 22 cm in height and between 14 and 16 cm in width. Only the Kraków codex has a considerably larger format: 28.5 by 21.5 cm. However, this difference alone does not allow to draw conclusions on a different use and circulation of Ital. quart. 67, since, despite being larger than the other three, all other features (handwriting, *mise en page*, lack of illustrative element) point to the same non-university professional environment.

Unlike the French tradition of the *Chirurgia parva*, for which de Tovar (1982) was able to find connections and dependencies between the witnesses, the four identified Italo-Romance vernacular versions do not seem to belong to the same tradition. As far as I can tell, they are completely independent versions, as evidenced by the following table containing comparisons of two of the manuscripts. Let us first compare the Padua codex (Ms. 72) to the Ravenna codex (Classense 139) focusing solely on the prologue:

Ms. 72	Classense 139
<p>O tu, buono amico mio honorevole, io intendo di componere alcuna opera in della quale <b>iddio ricordando e laudando dirò</b> piena dotrina che tutte <b> cose apartente allo stromento della cerusia</b>. Et <b>non propono</b> di mettere in della presente opera se non poche cose le quali sieno legieri e provate le quali cose sieno brevi inperò per la grande utilidade di quelle si puono seguire che siano large e di intendimento non le dia infondare conciosia cosa che di queste primamente ti possa confidarti. Io <b>pongo certamente, sicondo la tua pitizione</b>, medicine provate a maniera di qurazione di piaghe e di posteme e di ulcerazione e di altracte e di carboni e di fistole e alcune quere d'ochi e l'alcune quere di rotture e dissiogazione di gionture secondo che è provato longo tenpo per me. E io <b>mi confido</b> in dio e nella gloriosa Vergine Maria e nella sottilita mia e del tuo intendimento che per questo poco col tuo ingegno a grande opera potrai pervenire e a nome di grande Medico pervenire. <b>Inperò congiuro te per deum</b> e per la tua nobilezza che tu questa opera non la mostri a</p>	<p>Amigo mio breuiando intendando mi componer un libro, in lo qual <b>concedando el dator de tuti io darò</b> plena doctrina <b>pertinente al operation dela cirogia, non propono</b> in la presente ouer selo a ti dar si non pocho breue e prouade cosa la qual vene cosi breue in si per la grande utilidade sua. Non dispresiar, ançi disponi te fidarti plenamente perch'io <b>mitto in summa secondo la to domanda</b> provade medexine, lo modo da medegar de piage fresche, apostemation e piage vecchi, cancri, fistoli, e anche alcune cure de ochi. E per tal modo de' redur ossi a li so luogi secondo como mi à insignado la raxon operar e per expremento [sic!] per mio longo tempo confirmade. Certo io <b>mi confido</b> tanto dela sutilitade del (1v) to intelletto che per quelì pochi cosse come el to intelletto a gran operation to porà vegnir che per quele a nome de gran medigo. <b>Ma pur io ti zuro per dio</b> e per tua nobilitade che ad algun ignorante che to non debia dar questa ovra açò che per sua ignorancia la ovra non nosa ad algun; la qual per comuna utilità de tuti e a ti caritativamente data de tuti li piagi.<sup>2</sup></p>

<sup>2</sup> 'My friend, I am trying to compose a book, in which, with the blessing of the Giver of all things, I will provide full doctrine concerning surgical procedures. I do not aim at including in this work anything but a few brief and proven things, which are brief in themselves because of their great utility. Do not despise this, but rather, prepare

uomi grossi e idioti ad ciò che per ignoranza di quelli la mia opera non nuocia alcuno la quale opera a comune utilità e a te continua di mente finita. <sup>1</sup>	
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The elements appearing in both the Padua (*P*) and the Ravenna (*R*) manuscript are so few that they are undoubtedly coincidental. The expressions *non propono* and *confido* appear in the prologue, but the choice of verbs (“aim” and “trust”, respectively) is scarcely significant, as it calques those appearing in the Latin version (*propono*, *confido*).

Instead, differences can be observed in all situations where they are possible. When examining the expressions used in the first clause of *P*, it can be observed that the Latin term *tradam* is translated as *dirò* (I will say), while in *R* it is rendered as *darò* (I will give). Additionally, the phrase *concedente deo datore* in *P* is translated as *iddio ricordando e laudando* (remembering and praising God), whereas in *R* it is rendered as *concedendo el dator de tuti* (granting the giver of all). Furthermore, *P* uses the phrase

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yourself to trust fully, for I present, according to your request, proven medicines, methods for treating fresh wounds, abscesses, old wounds, cancers, fistulas, and also some eye treatments. And in such a way, (I will explain how) to set bones back in their places based on what reason has taught me to do and confirmed through long-time experience. Certainly, I have great trust in the subtlety of your intellect. With these few things, I believe your intellect will be able to achieve great works, and through these achievements, you may earn the title of a great doctor. But I also swear to you by God and by your nobility that you should not give this work to any ignorant person, so that the work does not harm anyone because of their ignorance; it is given charitably for the common utility of all and to you for the benefit of all patients’.

<sup>1</sup> ‘O you, my good honorable friend, I intend to compose a work in which, remembering and praising God, I will speak of the full doctrine concerning all matters related to the instrument of surgery. And I do not aim at including in this work anything but a few things which are light and proven, which are brief; yet, due to their great usefulness, they can lead to broader and deeper understanding without grounding them in anything unnecessary, so that you may trust in these first. Certainly, according to your request, I present tested medicines for the treatment of wounds, abscesses, ulcers, and carbuncles, as well as fistulas, some eye treatments, and remedies for fractures and dislocations of joints, which have been proven by me over a long time. And I trust in God, the glorious Virgin Mary, and in my skill, and your understanding that through this small effort (and) with your ingenuity, you may achieve great works and attain the reputation of a great doctor. Therefore, I conjure you by God and by your nobility not to show this work to coarse and ignorant men so that, through their ignorance, my work does not harm anyone. This work is for common utility and dedicated to you with a continuous mind’.

*apartenente allo stromento della cerusia* (belonging to the instrument of surgery), while *R* employs the phrase *pertenente al operazion dela cirogia* (related to the operation of surgery) to convey a similar meaning (in Latin: *ad instrumentum cyrurgicum pertinentem*).

Ital. quart. 67 ( <i>K</i> )	Vat.lat.10239 ( <i>Vat</i> )
<p>M'amigo charisimo, secondo la ttoa dimanda, tte schriverò modo breve de medigare piage fresche e vechie, e apostimazione, canzeri, fistole, dislongadure e le rotture di ossi. <sup>3</sup></p>	<p>Amicho mio honorabile, io sì voyo conpire uno libro mediante la gracia divinal in lo qual libro te sarà mostrado plena doctrina per modo de instrumento cirorcho e non volio livrar a ti in el presente volume se non poche cossi legere e provade. Li quali, concessiache li siano breve, inperò como talque sono molto profictoxo. Et tu non die aprixiare quelle et io te la meto sumamente, secondo la tua richesta, conzesia ch'ele siano medesine provade e curative brevemente dele malatie e dele ferite e dele posteme e dele ulcere e deli chancrj e dele fistoly. E meto alchune cure deli ogy e cum uno pocho de algebra secondo raxon et experimento me à inseniado l'adoperare et per mi sono stado longo tempo afazado et provado. Et cossi fa dela sotieza delo tuo intendimento che quelle poche cosse tu poray conseguire cum lo tuo ingenio grande opera et conseguire nome e de grande medego. E como s'io te prego, per dio e per la tua nobeleza, che tu non mostri quelli cossi ad alchun idiote per tal che, per ignorancia loro, la mia opera non nosa ad alchuno, como quelle siano livrade a ti caritative, beate e cum utilità.<sup>4</sup></p>

<sup>3</sup> 'My dearest friend, according to your request, I will write to you briefly about the methods for treating fresh and old wounds, abscesses, cancers, fistulas, dislocations, and bone fractures'.

<sup>4</sup> 'My honorable friend, I wish to complete a book through divine grace, in which you will be shown full doctrine regarding surgical instruments. I do not intend to deliver to you in this volume anything but a few light and proven things. Although brief, they are very profitable. You should not disregard them, and I present them to