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"DE ESU CARNIUM: ARNALD OF VILLANOVA'S DEFENCE  
OF CARTHUSIAN ABSTINENCE"

The treatise referred to in some of its manuscript versions as *De esu carniium* is an unusual work by an unusual man.<sup>1</sup> Arnald of Villanova's

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1. Scholarly ground on this work was first broken by Juan Antonio Paniagua, "Abstinencia de carnes y medicina (El 'Tractatus de esu carniium' de Arnau de Vilanova", *Scripta Theologica* 16/1-2, 1984, 323-346, and *El maestro Arnau de Vilanova, médico* (Valencia, 1969), 63, and I am deeply grateful and indebted to him for paving the way for my subsequent investigation. My critical edition of the Latin text of this treatise is in preparation for the series *Arnaldi opera medica omnia*, ed. by Luis Garcia Ballester, Michael R. McVaugh and Juan Antonio Paniagua (University of Barcelona Press). I am currently aware of the following twenty-five extant manuscripts, dating from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries:

- A = Basel, Univ., A.VI.14, 79-82v
- B = Basel, A.VII.20, 140-145
- C = Basel, A.IX.14, 177-182v
- D = Berlin, Staatsbibl., Theol. lat. quart. 207, 321-324
- E = Bologna, Bibl. Univ., 1784, 97-101
- F = Brussels, Bibl. Roy., 298-306, 37-39v
- G = Brussels, 11925-28, 55v-59v
- H = London, Brit. Lib., Harley 3665, 102-104v
- I = London, Wellcome, 501, 269v-272
- J = Melk, Stiftsbibl., Cod. mell. 1100, 160-166
- K = Milan, Bibl. Brera, AD. IX. 19, 71v-77
- L = Munich, Bayer. Staatsbibl., c.l.m. 18381, 2-3v
- M = Munich, c.l.m. 18444, 274-277
- N = Nürnberg, Stadtbibl. Cent. VI 80, 254v-259
- O = Oxford, Bodleian Lib., Bod. 549, 85v-90v
- P = Paris, Bibl. Nat., lat. 5654 A, 6-10
- Q = Parma, Bibl. Pal., palat. 12, 147-149
- R = Rome, Bibl. Ang., 151, 45-46v
- S = Salamanca, 1878, 2-5v
- T = Vatican City, Bibl. Apost. Vat., Palat. lat. 568, 186-188
- U = Vatican City, Vat. lat. 3824, 226-230

multi-faceted career is well-known to members of this conference –his success as a physician, and the demand for his services by both royalty in Aragon and papal office-holders in Rome and Avignon; his faculty position at Montpellier and his contribution to its curriculum reform; his role in the transmission of medical knowledge from Arabic into Latin; and, finally, his controversial efforts to reform his Church. For most of his life, Arnald devoted his energies to medicine, in one aspect or another; it is during the last two decades of his life, however, that his works directly addressing ecclesiastical matters were composed.<sup>2</sup> But in his defence of Carthusian abstinence from meat, Arnald overtly marshalls his medical expertise in service of his church reformist efforts. And because of this, the *De esu* can be argued to be a quintessential expression of Arnald's intellectual and spiritual range and interest: a defence of a form of ascetic spirituality, on medical grounds, for the sake of ecclesiastical reform.<sup>3</sup>

V = Vatican City, Vat. lat. 5223, 123-126v

W = Vienna, ONB, 4259, 98v-100v

X = Vienna, 5108, 19v-22

Y = Wolfenbüttel, Harz. Aug. Bibl., 233 Gud. lat., 85-90

Many of these are noted by F. SANTI, *Arnau de Vilanova, obra espiritual* (València, 1987), 259 and J. MENSA I VALLS, *Arnau de Vilanova, espiritual: guia bibliogràfica* (Barcelona, 1994), 73. Two additional codices, housed in Gdansk (Polsk. Akad. Nauk, 2315, in which the *De esu* occupied ff. 242-244) and Metz (Bibl. Publ., 173, n. 8) were destroyed this century during WWII, while a third was last identified in 1469 in the university library at Salamanca.

2. While Arnald's biographical bibliography is extensive (and is reviewed by MENSA, *AV, guia*, 31-41), a detailed chronology of the last years of Arnald's life, and especially what he wrote during that period, has yet to be established. The contents of Vat. lat. 3824 represent theological efforts spanning the years from 1288 through no later than mid-1305 (see H. FINKE, *Aus den Tagen Bonifaz VIII* [Münster in Wien, 1902]). Inroads into precisely how Arnald occupied himself from that time until his death, and especially which, if any, of his medical works were composed during this time, and when, require further exploration. See especially the studies of J. A. PANIAGUA, *Estudios y notas sobre Arnau de Vilanova* (Madrid, 1963), 70-81 (published as *Vida de Arnau de Vilanova*, in «*Archivo Iberoamericano de historia de la medicina y antropología médica*» 3/1 (1951), 3-83, at 420-431).

It should also be pointed out that Arnald himself saw spiritual and corporeal well-being as inextricably interconnected (*infra*, p. 247-48), and that, as Joseph Ziegler points out in another paper presented at this conference, Arnald often utilizes bodily metaphors to make spiritual points.

3. That Arnald's defence of Carthusian abstinence was received both as a medical work and a spiritual one is illustrated by the considerable variety of topical classification evidence in the manuscript codices. As has already been noted, the earliest codex, the much-discussed Vat. lat. 3824 (u), constitutes a collection of Arnald's theological works. The codices ABCEFGOTW and part of N contain other documents pertaining to Carthusian spirituality –lives of Carthusian saints, histories of the order and defences of its rigor, letters and compilations of papal privileges granted to the Order, etc. HM and the codices no

*Circumstances of Composition*

Codicological evidence suggests that the work was composed sometime between 1302 and 1305, inclusive,<sup>4</sup> and it is tempting, of course, faced as we are with a figure of Arnald's activist involvements, to try to identify a specific incident prompting so lucid and noteworthy a response. One fifteenth-century manuscript version begins with a titular rubrication that names the "Jacobites" (as the residents of the Parisian Dominican house on the Rue St. Jacques were referred to) as direct objects of Arnald's address.<sup>5</sup> Still, no close contemporary, or even fourteenth-century, sources indicate direct Dominican involvement with the Carthusians in an incident which would have inspired the composition of this work.

Rather, Arnald's own troubles with Dominican theologians at the turn of the fourteenth century may have been the source of his information about Carthusian ascetic rigor, and more general critiques of it. It was in Paris at that time, while serving as a legate of James II to King Phillip, that he was detained for defending his prediction regarding the coming of the Antichrist against the objections of various "theological masters".<sup>6</sup> As

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longer extant from Gdansk, Metz, and Salamanca, contain (or once did) medical works by various authors on such matters as digestion, interpreting urine, phlebotomy, sexual disorders, and plague, as well as various prescriptions, or "recipes." But the fifteenth-century codices containing Arnald's treatise primarily reflect conditions and concerns pertaining to church strife and reform. J was copied in 1448 at the Council of Basel and contains writings by John Gerson, Pierre d'Ailly and Johannes Nider. Gerson and Nider, and works on the eucharist, heresy, and church reform are found in D. X includes a papal bull, commentaries on and concordances of decretals, and legal treatises by, among others, Bartolo of Sassoferrato and Baldo of Perugia. And in S, Arnald's *De esu*, written on the same parchment quire as an account of the origin of the Carthusian order, is inserted into and bound with a paper volume containing several discussions of schism, including one by Francesco di Zabarella and Peter of Ancarano.

The permanent consideration of Arnald's *De esu* as a medical work may have been forged by its inclusion, along with four other medical texts (not all Arnald's) from the Harley codex (H), in the second printed edition of Arnald's medical *Opera omnia* (Lyons, 1509), where it remained in all subsequent printings. See PANIAGUA, "Abstinencia," 325-326.

4. One collection of his theological works, Vat. borgh. 205, dates to 1302 and does not include the Carthusian defence, and the next collection of his theological works, Vat. lat. 3824, dated June, 1305, at Montpellier, contains the earliest manuscript version of this work; it is untitled.

5. Harley 3665

6. *Tractatus de tempore adventus Antichristi*. Both versions are in Vat. lat. 3824, ff. 50-68 and 68-78. They are partially edited in H. FINKE, *Aus den Tagen Bonifaz, VIII* (Münster in Wien, 1902), (Quellen), cxxix-clix, and in POU Y MARTÍ, *Visionarios, beguinos y fraticelos catalanes (siglos XIII-XV)* (Vich, 1930), 50-53 (orig. in *Archivo Ibero-Americana XI* (1919), 142-231). It is fully edited by Josep PERARNAU in *Arxiu de Textos Catalans Antics*, VII-VIII (1988-1989), 134-169.

he himself refers to "regular and secular clerics" as the critics of Carthusian abstinence, it is highly likely that he encountered these general criticisms during this period, and that no particular incident provoked his treatise. Indeed, he writes of the Carthusian order in general and seems to have no specific Charterhouse community in mind.<sup>7</sup> Given especially that in this first decade of the fourteenth century (and this last decade of his life), Arnald had devoted himself to supporting all manner of rigorous Christian practice, and critiquing all manner of perceived laxness, the Carthusian order may simply have been one among several beneficiaries of Arnald's reformist attention.

Another possible connection between the Carthusian monastics and unspecified Parisian clerical opponents may be found in Carthusian sources. These (and other) sources indicate that the order received much criticism throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Indeed, while a perpetual ban on meat consumption may not have originated with the earliest proponents of this eleventh-century monastic experiment,<sup>8</sup> the

7. That Arnald held some Carthusian monks in his confidence is revealed in a passage in his response to objections to his treatise on the coming of the Antichrist, which he claims to have shown to no one except "some Carthusians in their monastery" (in Miquel BATLLORI, *Dos nous escrits espirituals d'Arnau de Vilanova*, in «*Analecta Sacra Tarraconensia*», 28 (1955), 45-70 [61] and *Nuevos datos biográficos sobre Arnaldo de Vilanova* "Actas del XV Congreso internacional de historia de la medicina" (Madrid, 1957), 235-37 [236], referred to by Robert Lerner, *Ecstatic Dissent*, in «*Speculum*», 67/1 (1992), 33-57. If this occurred some four years before his diplomatic mission to Paris (as Arnald describes), now dated to the autumn of 1300 (see Michael MCVAUGH, *Further Documents for the Biography of Arnau de Vilanova*, «*Acta Hispanica ad medicinae scientiarumque historiam illustrandam*», 2 (1982), 363-72 [367-68], then Arnald's contact with these unnamed Carthusians took place around 1296. Still, in which monastery they lived remains unknown, and it cannot be assumed that the *De esu* was composed for that community, or even that Arnald learned of this controversy at that time, rather than while he was in Paris (although it certainly quite possible that he did).

8. There was no foundational Rule of the Carthusians; like many monastic "foundations," the retreat of the former Reims Cathedral canon, Bruno, with six others, constitutes a monastic foundation merely in retrospect. Only with its fifth prior, Guigo, were Carthusian practices first officially compiled—the so-called *Customs*, dating from c. 1127 (*Sources Chrétiennes* 313, Éditions du Cerf, 1984; PL 153, 631-760). This document omits any reference to meat. Recent standard histories of the Carthusian Order include those by Bernard BLIGNY, *L'Église et les ordres religieux dans le royaume de Bourgogne aux XIe et XIIIe siècles* (Grenoble, 1960), Margaret THOMPSON, *The Carthusian Order in England* (London, 1930), 103-130. See also H. LÖBBEL, *Der Stifter des Carthäuser-Ordens der Heilige Bruno aus Köln*. 5/1 *Kirchengeschichtliche Studien* (Münster, 1899), and the still adequate summary by Raymond WEBSTER in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* 3 (New York, 1903), 388-392. Documentary evidence is provided by BLIGNY, *Recueil des plus anciens actes de la Grande-Chartreuse (1086-1196)*, (Grenoble, 1958), and André WILMART, *La Chronique des premiers Chartreux*, in «*Revue Mabillon*» 16/62 (1926), 1-26 and 77-141. Studies of the Order and editions of its docu-

order once formed eventually came especially to be identified, by its own members and by outsiders—and of the latter, both supporters and critics—by its practice of complete and perpetual abstinence from meat, *even*, as all were wont to highlight, in the case of sickness. When viewed negatively, it was not hypocrisy, but cruel rigorism, that was the charge levelled against the Carthusians.<sup>9</sup> The earliest mention of an incident (referred to in subsequent documents as “the tempest of meat”)<sup>10</sup> involving Parisian clerics appears in a late fourteenth-century chronicle, where an episode involving unnamed “learned men” from Paris were received into the Charterhouse at Witham, under its prior, the later canonized Hugh of Lincoln. The trouble-makers stirred up once again the controversy surrounding the question of meat, and took the matter all the way to Paris, “where it was debated openly in the schools as to whether the Carthusians, who did not use meat in their infirmaries, would be saved.”<sup>11</sup> While this incident reportedly took place in the twelfth century, it is certainly possible that the debate itself, regarding the appropriateness of such a practice, continued in theological and reformist circles through the time of Arnald’s stay in Paris.

#### *Summary Précis of Arnald’s Argument*

In defending the Carthusian practice of perpetual abstinence from meat, Arnald appeals to logic, ecclesiastical authority and tradition, medical science, scripture, empirical evidence, and the image of the “Golden Age”, calling upon an eclectic array of authorities ranging from works and concepts attributed to Hippocrates and Galen, to the scriptural examples of David and Jesus, while citing Paul, Aristotle and Boethius along the way.

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ments are ongoing in the series *Analecta Cartusiana* (Salzburg), ed. by James HOGG, who himself traces Carthusian legislation enjoining perpetual abstinence in *Carthusian Abstinence*, in «*Analecta Cartusiana*», 35/14, in «*Spiritualität Heute und Gestern*», 14 (1991), 5-15. See also n. 58 below.

9. By 1206, the satirist Guiot de Provins, in his poem entitled “Bible,” had called the Carthusians “dure et cruel” for refusing meat to their sick members, noting that even St. Benedict (who, after all, it was noted, had written a fairly strict enough rule) had not intended to make homicides of their sick. See *Les oeuvres de Guiot de Provins*, ed. John ORR (Manchester, 1915), ll. 1388-1401.

10. See Charles LECOULTEUX, *Annales ordinis cartusiensis*, 4 (Montreuil-sur-Mer, 1888), 499.

11. *Ortus et decursus ordinis cartusiensis*, written in 1398 by the Carthusian monk, Hendrik EGHER VAN KALKER, ed. J. B. C. W. VERMEER (Wageningen, 1929). The episode is recorded on pp. 122-129.

*Argument from logic:* To summarize his argument briefly, Arnald begins with the accusation levelled against the Carthusians that they must be lacking in love, as shown by their refusal to allow even their sickest members to eat meat. Arnald resorts to scholastic syllogism: His major premise is that what proceeds from the greatest love cannot lessen love. Defining the greatest love as the love of God, he notes that the Carthusian statute enjoining abstinence from meat was enacted, and is observed, out of that love of God. And he concludes that the Carthusians cannot thereby rightly be accused either of lacking love or opposing it.

*Argument from tradition –an accusation of heresy:* It is in Arnald's appeal to tradition that his medical and theological concerns merge. He notes that a heretic is generally understood as one who i) opposes the Roman Church and ii) fashions new dogma in those matters pertaining to the universal condition of the faithful.

i) With respect to the first criterion, he notes that the Church as always supported such discipline as abstinence from meat, not only from the inception of the Carthusian Order, but from the inception of the Church itself. Anyone who opposes such practice, then, opposes the favor that the Church has shown it, and therefore opposes the Church.

ii) With respect to the second, in presuming that the sick may, on occasion, be unable to avoid death without the sustenance that meat provides, the opponent of Carthusian abstinence falls into the second category by which a heretic is defined, by fashioning new dogma –*medical dogma*.

*Argument from medical science:* Death is the extinction of the vital force. To avoid death due to disease or to inadequate nutrition, one must uproot the cause subverting the vital force –in the case of disease, through suitable medication, and in the case of inadequate nutrition, through food suitable to restoring and strengthening the vital force. Appealing to the admonition found in Hippocrates' *Regimen in Acute Disease* regarding the ill consequences of prescribing an entire regimen in the case of mere hunger, or forcing foods on a patient unable to tolerate them,<sup>12</sup> prescribing meat to a patient when medicine is required can only be harmful, whereas if food is required, there are far more suitable sorts for bedridden patients than meat (which is more appropriate for vigorous muscular activity).

12. *Regimen in Acute Diseases*, chs. 43-44, Hippocrates, ed. and trans. W. H. S. JONES, vol. 3, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, MA, 1923). For more proximate concern with formulating distinctions between food and medicine, see n. 25 below.

Arnald attributes to Galen the notion of three "vital forces", governing basic bodily functions (such as breathing and pulse), cognitive activities, and voluntary motion. And he prescribes "light and subtle foods", such as wine and egg yolks, to provide the proper amount of vital heat, at the best rate, for sick patients.

So why could such an erroneous medical assumption be made, he asks? There are three possibilities: i) malice (and here Arnald compares the critics of the Carthusians to Jews opposing Christ; ii) lack of judgement, due to a blinding love of meat; and iii) ignorance of the distinction between the vital forces and the relative effects of foods.

*Argument from Scriptural examples:* Here a stream of scriptural citations and examples follow: Paul advised Timothy to "use a little for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments." (1 Tim 5:23) He also said, "He who is weak eats vegetables." (Rom 14:2)

Jesus fed bread and fish to the multitudes (Mk 8:1-3), who had been with him for three days with nothing to eat, and had come to him to be cured of illness (Lk 6:17-19; cf. 6:10; Jn 6:2); and if the Lord himself, who cannot err, demonstrates that it is not necessary to provide meat to prevent a life-threatening defect in the vital force in the case of hunger, who are we to dispute? And David revived the spirit of an Amalechite without the aid of meat, using bread, water, pieces of figcake, and two clusters of raisins (1 Sam 30:11-13).

*Evidence of longevity and appeal to the "Golden Age":* Finally, Carthusians are renowned for their longevity, frequently reaching the age of eighty, and even one-hundred. Further, it is known, both from scripture and from classical authors like Boethius, that in the earliest age, people lived longer than they do now, and did so without eating meat.<sup>13</sup>

*Conclusion:* But Arnald concludes that this diet is not for everyone. Those who can maintain it, like the Carthusians, will reap great spiritual reward, but those who cannot do so should maintain a life of virtue. Citing Paul, Arnald exhorts, "Let not him who eats despise him who abstains, and let not him who abstains pass judgement on him who eats." (Rom 14:3)

In order to understand the dynamics of this work fully, it is necessary to review some of the medical traditions regarding the properties, and proper use, of meat, which formed the medical basis of his treatise. Here

13. Gen 9, 3; *De cons.* II,v.

we should distinguish between the prescriptive lists of foodstuffs (sometimes along with their associated effects), which comprised a significant portion of dietary literature from antiquity through the Middle Ages, and more complex theoretical frameworks that were either assumed or further developed (or both) by such associations.<sup>14</sup> In addition, we should survey some of the theological rationales and monastic practices (not entirely unrelated to medical thinking) which served as precedents to Carthusian insistence on perpetual abstinence from meat, and which formed the "tradition" of the Church which Arnald sought to defend and to which he appealed.

### *Medical Traditions*

Dietetic medicine based on presumed links between constitutive elements of the cosmos (fire, air, earth and water), the qualities of heat, coldness, dryness and moisture, and the fluids constituting the condition of the human body, can be traced to the fifth century B.C.E., and it is a characteristic of Hippocratic writings.<sup>15</sup> Food and medication were both considered essential, though distinct, resources for treating illness, and knowledge of the type of food to offer, and when to do so, was essential. In most general terms, dietary rationale at this time focusses on the qualities of heat and cold, moisture and dryness, characteristic of both specific conditions and food substances, as well as the appropriately selected and timed administration of the latter with the intention of offsetting an imbalanced predominance of one or more qualities in the patient. While liquids and barley gruel, for example, which are thought to be "cooling" and "drying," as well as easy to digest, are prescribed at the peak of fevers, gradually "light foods," such as beef, mutton, pork, whelp, and fowl, as well as broths made from these, may be introduced as strength is regained.<sup>16</sup>

14. A point made by W. D. SMITH, *The Development of Classical Dietetic Theory*, in *Hippocratica*, ed. M. D. GRMEK, pp. 439-448.

15. Owsei TEMKIN, *Galenism*, p. 103. See also I. M. LONIE, *A Structural Pattern in Greek Dietetics and the Early History of Greek Medicine*, in «*Medical History*», 21/3 (1977), 235-260.

16. See LONIE, *Structural Patterns*, *passim*. Among some of the texts from which he takes examples, see especially *Regimen 2*, ed. JONES, Loeb Series vol. 4 (Cambridge, 1931), chs. 46-49, and 56, on the properties of animal food (*krea*, *zôa*), based on origin and preparation; *On ancient medicine*, ed. JONES, on the relatively equal effects of eating animals (wild or otherwise) on the moderately healthy and the moderately sick; *Diseases 2*, ed. Paul POTTER (Cambridge, MA, 1988), chs. 44, 46 and 56, on eating meat (*kreas*) as strength is regained; and *Regimen in acute diseases*, *passim*, on gruel, solid food, and liquid diets.

Galen appropriated and systematized these concepts, and embellished the theoretical framework of the four elements. It was his understanding that they were present in the body as its fluids, or humors (yellow bile, blood, black bile, and phlegm) —each humor containing all the elements, but being dominated by its characteristic element.<sup>17</sup> Health consisted of the perfect balance of these elements, and physiological “types,” or temperaments deviating from that ideal resulted from the predominance of any *one* of the four qualities, or any *pair* of them (i.e. hot and dry, hot and wet, cold and dry, cold and wet). Foods, then, would be prescribed to produce the proper temperamental effects, whether to ameliorate a condition of illness or to maintain the condition of health.<sup>18</sup>

In addition to the theoretical framework of the humors, however, Galen introduced the notion of one (or possibly more) “spirits” (*pneumata*) or “forces” (*dynameis*) operating in the body and essential for life.<sup>19</sup> Galen’s treatments included food, baths, massage and (if necessary) medication, and prescribed foods in the context of specific conditions (as opposed to describing the specific properties of foodstuffs), doing so with reference both to the humors and the vital spirit.<sup>20</sup>

And dietary medicine throughout the Hellenistic period and beyond varies between presenting foodlists and prescribing food contextually, as one aspect of the treatment for specific illnesses. In Bk II of Celsus’ *De Medicina* (1st c. C.E.), for example, countless animals and their parts, plants (whether vegetables, fruits, herbs, grains, seeds, oils, or spices), and dairy products, are compiled and characterized generally as “good” or “bad” by their own effects —as easy or difficult to digest, warming or

17. For a discussion of the reception of the Galenic notion of *complexio*, as reflected in medieval commentaries, see Per-G. OTTOSON, *Scholastic Medicine and Philosophy: A Study of Commentaries of Galen’s Tegni* (c. 1300-1450) (Uppsala, 1982), 87-113, and for Arnald’s appropriation, see Luis GARCÍA BALLESTER in AVOMO 15 (1985), 73-117.

18. Indeed, the maintenance of health, rather than merely the curing of illness, was a prominent, if not primary, goal of medical practice in the Hellenistic period. See L. EDELSTEIN, *The Dietetics of Antiquity*, in *Ancient Medicine*, ed. O. and L. TEMKIN, pp. 303-316.

19. PANIAGUA points to Galen’s enumeration of three “forces” —nutritive, vital, and psychic, in *Methodus medendi* 9.10 (KÜHN 10, 635-36; see “Abstinencia,” 338), while TEMKIN has discussed Galen’s frequent references to a “vital spirit” (*zōtikou pneumatos*) emanating from the heart, along with references to a “psychic spirit” (*psychikou pneumatos*), originating in the brain, and a “natural spirit” (*phsistikou pneumatos*), seated in the liver and veins (citing, among other passages, *De meth. med.* 12.5 [KÜHN 10, 839-40], and *De usu partium* 6.17, 7.8 [KÜHN 3, 496, 539-40]). See “On Galen’s Pneumatology,” *Gesnerus* 8 (1951), 180-189 and *Galenism*, p. 107]. He writes that subsequent Arabic interpretations of Galen’s thought (both in IOHANNITIUS’ *Isagoge* and AVICENNA’S *Poem of Medicine*) “canonized” these as three spirits —natural, vital, and psychic. Arnald refers to Galen’s “three forces” (*virtutes*) —vital, animal cognitive, and animal motive— in the *De esu*.

20. E.g. *Meth. med.* 12.8 (KÜHN 10, 861-873).

cooling, gas-producing, cleansing, nauseating, etc. Subsequently, foods are prescribed within a larger context of treatment for specific conditions.<sup>21</sup> Caelius Aurelianus (5th c.), to whom is owed the transmission of the works of Soranus' writings (2nd c.), utilizes lists of foods in this manner, presenting various meats simple as especially appropriate for restoring a patient's strength as the course of a disease winds down, prescribing (to give but a few examples) breasts of chicken and other fowl, pig's feet and brains, and goat loins for cardiac disease (these are also listed for pleurisy), fish and fowl for apoplexy, and fruits, pig parts, and various fowls that are not fat, for hemorrhages. Attention is paid to method of preparation (e.g. boiling, roasting, frying), and the kind of spices utilized, and the chief theoretical concerns appear to be the ease of digestion, the need for a varied regime, and the stage to which the illness in question has progressed.<sup>22</sup>

It is with Isaac Israeli (d. 932), however, that we first find a full systematic analysis of diet, both outlining general theoretical principles for selecting foods and offering characterizations of specific foods.<sup>23</sup> For the most part, his theoretical framework focusses on the qualities of heat and cold, dryness and moisture, with secondary (though assumed) attention given to their corresponding elements. With respect to their humoral products, it is especially in relation to the quality of the blood that foods generate that reference is also made to the "heaviness" and "lightness" (or "subtlety") of particular foods, their "thinness" and "viscosity," the speed and ease with which they are digested and assimilated, and the degree to which they produce waste products, or "illaudible spirits".<sup>24</sup> The speed and ease of digestion is also viewed as related to the place where this

21. *De Medicina*, ed. Eduard MILLIGAN (Edinburgh, 1831).

22. See *On Acute Diseases and On Chronic Diseases*, ed. and trans. I. E. DRABKIN (Chicago, 1951), 202-3, 278-9, 520-23, 678-9.

23. After Isaac's dietary treatises, *Liber dietarum universalium* (hereafter referred to as *DU*) and *Liber diaetarum particularium* (*DP*) (Lyons, 1515), entered the Latin world by the late eleventh century, through Constantine the African's translation, they were transmitted with the twelfth-century commentary of Peter of Spain. Where the notion of *diaeta* in antiquity was generally understood broadly to encompass a complete regime (of which food comprised but a part), Peter is explicit in his understanding of diet as "a certain rule for living designated for the use and utility of the human body . . . . Diet is the appropriate presentation of food and drink with respect to quantity, quality, time, number, and varying order." (*DP*, comm., f. 103v)

24. *DU*, ch. 20, lect. 23, f. 52v; cf. *DP*, f. 103. See also, e.g. Constantine's transmission of HALY IBN-ABBAS' *Kitab al-maliki*: "All flesh is hot and humid flesh is nutritive and generates blood, but some do more so than others." He goes on to recommend pork (*quadrupedum porcina*) as among the most nutritious meat, and "the flesh of birds" as easier to digest and [therefore] more laudible than the flesh of all quadrupeds." (*Pantegni*, theorice lib. 5, chs. 85 and 87, in *Opera Isaac*, f. 23).

digestion takes place: stomach (first), liver (second), and [body] "members" (third).<sup>25</sup>

Foods are distinguished not only, of course, by the living sources which produced them, but also by the environment and condition in which the sources lived. Thus, plants and animals are differentiated from another, and each is designated as either wild or domestic.<sup>26</sup> Animals are further distinguished according to whether they are terrestrial, aerial, or aquatic.<sup>27</sup> (Thus fish & fowl are considered as providing "meat," along with other animal sources.) Meat is often distinguished by the age of the animal that produced it—young (even "year-old," or nursing), prime, or old. Younger animals are deemed more moist and lubricating to the stomach than older ones; older animals tend to produce more phlegmatic blood and greater waste ("superfluities"), unless they are "naturally dry," (e.g. goat and cow).<sup>28</sup>

The qualities of particular animals are thought to render them especially appropriate for consumption at certain times of the year. Thus animals in which the qualities of dryness and heat predominate (e.g. camels "and similar foods") are best consumed in winter, but certainly not in summer; those which are dominated by the qualities of heat and moisture (e.g. cattle) are good in spring and agreeable in autumn. One should reserve animals dominated by the qualities of cold and moisture (e.g. pork) for midsummer until the end of the season; they are neutral in spring and autumn, but are not to be consumed in winter. Animals dominated by cold and dryness (e.g. cows and goats) are adequate from the beginning of the summer to midseason. Nursing kid, veal, and year-old lambs are temperate (balanced) animals, and may best be eaten in spring, and secondarily in summer.<sup>29</sup>

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25. *DU* ch. 1, lect. 4, f. 19 (cf. ch. 29, lect. 33). Peter comments on this passage, adding that food and medication may be distinguished from one another by their respective purpose and function: food strengthens or conserves the body (its tissues, its vital force, its heat), whereas medication "alters" it (changing its qualitative/humoral complexion). Some foods, however, work like medicine, according to Peter, because they actually produce heat (e.g. goat & lion) or cold (e.g. hare, rabbit, etc.)

26. *DU*, ch. 33, lect. 36, f. 67. Game produces subtler, finer blood. Since undomesticated animals eat less, they are drier, because of their excessive motion; domestic animals produce harder, heavier and thicker blood, because they eat more and move less. These latter are, in turn, classified by what they feed on: those that graze on grass (e.g. cows), those that eat very little (e.g. sheep), and those that feed on branches (e.g. goats). Cf. *DP*, f. 134.

27. *DU* ch. 29, lect 33, f. 62v-63v; *DP*, f. 132v.

28. *DU* ch. 32, lect. 35, f. 66. Young lactating animals are the most moist, and therefore the worst for the sick, since their natural moisture collects and becomes heavy, thick, and difficult to digest. Cf. *DP*, f. 102v-103.

29. *DU* ch. 35, lect. 37, f. 68v.

With respect to gender, animals fall into three categories: male, female, and neuter (castrates). Male animals are generally hotter and drier, and therefore better, than female animals, which are colder and wetter (castrates are mid-way between the two). Male animals are more digestible and produce a less viscous and more subtle humor, and in general, male food is superior to female food, producing better (more "laudible") and more digestible blood.<sup>30</sup>

Where theological discussions recognize a categorical distinction between birds and beasts (even if they ultimately group them together as forbidden substances),<sup>31</sup> medical discussions tend to treat fowl as one class of animal, whether in lists or in more sophisticated theoretical classificatory schemes. Thus Isaac devotes a section of his dietary works to the comparison of *volatilia* with *ambulabilia*. "Fliers" are less nourishing, less heat producing, but subtler and easier to digest, than "walkers."<sup>32</sup> Chickens (*pulles*) especially are light, and quickly and easily digested; they are acceptable to all constitutions, and produce blood of good quality.<sup>33</sup> Again, males strengthen the body's natural heat most effectively, and produce the cleanest humors.<sup>34</sup>

The speed, intensity and duration of heat-production is a key standard of comparison of foodstuffs, and other substances may be considered as suitable alternatives to meat insofar as they prove effective in this regard. And since Arnald suggests wine and egg-yolks as more appropriate substances than meat for strengthening the body's "vital heat," we may inquire as to how they fit into Isaac's dietary scheme. Wine, Isaac maintains, provides a good nutriment, restoring and maintaining the body's health, and furthering the digestive process both in the stomach and liver. Wine strengthens and increases the body's vital heat and is quickly converted into the purest blood. And, depending upon the age of the patient, wine can function either as a food or a drug. For the elderly, it acts like a medication, since it staves off their natural cold state; for the young, it acts more like a food, since it more closely approximates their natural heat. And for adolescents, it acts like both a food and a drug: Insofar as it augments and strengthens their natural heat (albeit not yet matured), it functions like a food; but inasmuch as it alters their temperament, drying out their natural moistness, it behaves like a drug.<sup>35</sup>

30. Male cattle, for example, generate superior blood. An exception to this rule is goat, which is naturally dry, and where the female provides superior nourishment. *DU* chs. 30-31, lect. 34, ff. 64v-65v; *DP*, 132v-133.

31. See below.

32. *DU*, ch. 48, lect. 40, f. 75v.

33. *DP* f. 144.

34. *DU*, ch. 48, lect. 40, f. 75v.

35. *DP*, f. 151rv. In commenting on Isaac's discussion of fatty foods, Peter of Spain

Eggs, like the birds that lay them, strengthen quickly, and produce a subtle nutriment that is easily assimilated throughout the body. The yolks, especially, because of their heat and moisture, most closely approximate the temperament of the human body (unlike egg-whites, which are colder, drier, and more difficult to digest).<sup>36</sup> And Arnald's prescription of wine and egg-yolks in the *De esu* are certainly consistent with Isaac's views.

Other, far shorter, regiminal works composed during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, like those written by Arnald,<sup>37</sup> suggest the appropriate dietary responses to specific illnesses and conditions. For example, one twelfth-century Salernitan *Flores dietarum* attributed to John of St. Paul treats various meats along with other foods according to their humoral traits and effects.<sup>38</sup> In the mid-thirteenth century, Peter of Spain, whose commentary on Isaac's dietary treatises remains their standard accompaniment, wrote a short *consilium* for surgical patients and those suffering from wounds of various sorts. Very little rationale is articulated in it (and no references are made to Isaac). Still, the underlying principles seem to be ease of digestion, "lightness," or "delicacy," and foods that "generate good blood." Such are, in the case of a patient suffering from worms, "chickens, partridges, pheasants and capon, hens, borage, lettuce, well-cooked bread and good red wine." Boiled chicken, and fowl in general, far outpace red meat among his recommended substances for all conditions: Pork, beef, goat and fish are positively to be avoided by those suffering from abscesses, as is the "flesh of ruminating animals" and "all waterfowl" for those suffering inflamed spleens. But "domestic birds" and "game fowl that don't fly too much" and "broth of meat and cabbage" are recommended.<sup>39</sup>

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turns his attention to distinguishing the effects of meat and wine. Meat, Peter observes, restores what is lost or destroyed; wine, in contrast, does not restore, but *strengthen*s natural heat. So, he concludes, in the case of the sick, where we seek to *restore* what is lost, meat should be given, rather than wine. (*DU*, ch. 42, comm., f. 72v. Cf. n. 24, above.)

36. *DU*, ch. 54, lect. 42, f. 79; *DP*, f. 145v.

37. See below.

38. Ed. Hermann Johannes Ostermuth, (Doctoral Dissertation, Institute für Geschichte der Medizin an der Universität Leipzig, 1919). Cf. a similar humorally based *Flores dietarum* attributed to Giovanni Monaco, a follower of Constantinus Africanus, ed. by Charles SINGER, *A Review of the Medical Literature of the Dark Ages, with a New Text of about 1100*, in *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine*, series ed. J. Y. W. MACALLISTER, Vol. 10 (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1917), 107-160.

39. *Eine kurze Diätetik für Verwundete von Petrus Compostellanus*, in *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Chirurgie im Mittelalter*, ed. Karl SUDHOFF, Vol. 2 (Leipzig: Johann Ambrosius Barth, 1918), 395-398.

Like Arnald, Maimonides (a physician who also reflected on religious matters) was called upon by royalty to offer regiminal advice. And in the last decade of the twelfth century, he composed a Regimen of Health (*Fî Tadbîr al-Şiḥḥah*) for King al-Afdal (Nur al-Din), in which he draws attention to a few principles, some of which are found in Isaac's treatise: the necessity of avoiding a full stomach and obtaining exercise as well as food; the Galenic doctrine of three sites of digestion; and a recognition of dietary modifications brought about by the seasons. We should note here that these seasonal requirements are not justified with reference to humors; rather, more food is required in winter, and less in summer, because the "digestions" are weaker in the summer due to the "natural heat" of the body being "dispersed". In winter, the digestions are strong, because the natural heat in the body is increased (because the pores are closed); therefore, more food can and should be consumed. Among the foods that Maimonides generally recommends are wheat bread, young sheep, the meat of chicken (and francolin, grouse, turtle dove and partridge), and egg yolk. Not all meat is "equally laudible." The flesh of fowl is lighter than flesh of quadrupeds, and therefore it is more quickly digested. In a rare reference to humors, Maimonides (unlike Isaac) advises against all fat of any kind: It is too filling, it corrupts digestions, suppresses the appetite, and generates a phlegmatic humor. Fish is nearly always bad, especially for those of humid temperament. Maimonides' prescribed "light diet" for those ill and not under medical supervision consists of chicken broth, meat broth, soft-boiled egg yolk and wine; he suggests chicken itself and bread as more substantial fare.<sup>40</sup> Only egg-yolks and wine are specified by Arnald in his defence of Carthusian abstinence.

### *Theological and Monastic Traditions*

Turning to some of the precedents of Carthusian abstinence, we should recognize that the Carthusians (like several other eleventh-century reformist experimenters in communal living) saw themselves as revivifying the ascetic way of life of the Desert Fathers. These latter exceptional individuals, retiring from urban and village life into the deserts of Egypt and Syria, envisioned themselves (in Pauline terms) as

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40. *Moses Maimonides' Two Treatises on the Regimen of Health*, ed. Ariel BAR-SELA, Hebel E. HOFF, and Elias FARIS, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, n.s. 54, pt. 4 (Philadelphia, 1964).

"spiritual athletes" and "soldiers" of Christ,<sup>41</sup> and practiced a variety of austerities, including fasting, sleep deprivation, self-flagellation, the wearing of uncomfortable clothing, or none at all, in an effort to exercise and strengthen their souls by reducing their bodily demands for comfort. Meat, whether specified or left unmentioned in accounts of these figures and collections of their sayings, found no place in their severe regimens, being considered inappropriately delicate, coddling, and luxurious for these "athletes of Christ" in serious training.

Still, it was also seen, in somewhat contradictory fashion (but recalling the medical views we have already surveyed) as too potent. Jerome, for one example, and Cassian, for another, each put forth the idea that the consumption of meat (like that of wine) induced sexual passion by producing too much heat in the body. As Jerome put it, "The eating of meat, and the drinking of wine, and the fullness of stomach, is the seed-plot of lust."<sup>42</sup> Cassian recommended food "which moderates the heat of burning lust, and avoids kindling it," going on to prescribe bread and beans, herbs and fruits. And as medical writers warned against a full stomach on health grounds, so some theologians connected the vices gluttony and lust, because of the proximity of the stomach to the genitals, and the placement of the one above the other.<sup>43</sup> Tertullian (and Jerome, quoting him) advocated fasting in part because a distended stomach was enough to incite passion, by pressure alone.<sup>44</sup>

It should also be noted that, while the Greek term for "flesh" (*sarx*), whether referring to muscle tissue or a theological condition, is distinguished from designations used for "meat" to be consumed (*enaimos*, i.e. something with blood in it, and *kreas*), the Latin *caro* (*carnis*) is used to designate both concepts, and the Latin reference to one sense reverberates with overtones of the other. The singular form of the Latin, however, is generally reserved for "flesh," where the plural is employed to indicate "meat." And Jerome's advice to his retinue of Roman widows often connected the practice of abstinence from meat with that of virginity, or at least chastity, going so far as to link the consumption of "meat" with the production of "flesh" in pregnancy. In letter of consolation to one recent widow, after advising her to abstain from exotic fowl as well as "quadrupeds" (deeming both as too "delicate"), exhorts

41. Cf. e.g. 1 Cor 9, 25-27, and Rom 13,11-14.

42. *Ad Jovinianum*, II, 7. Meat, wine and baths are all seen by Jerome as productive of this dangerous and unnecessary heat. He thus advised a young man entering clerical life, "If you want to extinguish the heat of your body with the chill of fasts, do not seek the fomentations of baths." Ep. 125,7 (to Rusticus).

43. *Institutes* V, xxiii.

44. TERTULLIAN, *De ieiunio* CSEL 20/1 (Vienna, 1980), and JEROME, Epp. 55.2 (to Amandus), and 54.10 (to Furia).

Let them eat meat who serve the flesh, whose seething passion erupts in sex, who are tied to husbands, and whose work is procreation . . . . Let them who are pregnant fill their wombs and bellies with meat [*carnibus*]"<sup>45</sup>

The general pattern of monastic practice that prevailed in the West was of a more communal sort ("coenobitic") than that exemplified by the more individualistic of the desert hermits ("eremitic"), or by the Roman villa recluses. There were many monastic rules operant in the West from the sixth through ninth centuries, each serving as a practical guide of conduct and organization for one or more monastic communities, but the one which predominated, and which was promoted as standard during the period of reform during the imperial reign of Charlemagne's son, was that attributed to St. Benedict of Nursia, written in the mid-sixth century. Its quality of comparative moderation is often noted. The sections in it pertinent here are chapters 36 and 39, where the flesh of "quadrupeds" is forbidden to monks in good health, but conceded to weak or ill members—not in the refectory, but in the infirmary.

It is illuminating to cast an eye at some of the other rules of this period that mention meat, in order to elucidate some of the issues to which this dietary discipline was seen to be pertinent. The seventh-century *Rule* of Isidore of Seville (d. 636) allows a small amount of meat on holidays, cautioning, however (as do many others), not to eat to the point of fullness, "lest from the fullness of the belly, carnal excess be forthwith stirred up."<sup>46</sup> In both versions of Chrodegang's communal rule for his canons at Metz (c. 755), a portion of meat is permitted in one of the two daily meals, and servings of meat or fat are permitted at both meals during periods of food shortage.<sup>47</sup> In contrast, the *Rule* of St. Columbanus (d. 615) forbids meat to all, well or sick, at all times, "for if one departs from the way of abstinence, vice, not virtue, will ensue."<sup>48</sup> A fifth-century Irish Rule prohibits not only meat and fish, but also cheese and butter to monks except on Sundays and holidays. And, while allowing more pleasant foods to the sick, elderly and travel-weary, it reiterates that they

45. "Comedant carnes quae carni serviunt" (Ep. 79,7 – to Salvina). It is characteristic of monastic and theological discussions—generally distinguishing them from medical ones—to categorize animals by the number of their feet more than by their living environment. Thus, while medical writers for the most part consider fish, birds, and terrestrial animals all as sources of "meat," monks debate whether birds should be considered along with four-footed animals as producing forbidden fare, and this latter discussion revolves around the quality of the flavor they provide.

46. *Regula monachorum*, ch. ix, 4. See R. KLEE, *Die Regula Monachorum Isidors von Sevilla und ihr Verhältnis zu den übrigen abendländischen Mönchregeln jener Zeit* (Marburg, 1909).

47. Chs. 22 & 8 (PL 89, 1110).

48. *Regula coenobialis*, ch. 3 (HOLST 2, 74)

may never eat meat.<sup>49</sup> Varied degrees of stringency may be found even within the same monastic counselor. For example, in his Rule for Nuns (c. 534), Caesarius of Arles allows only chicken (*pulles*) to the sick, but never to the community at large, while meat (*carnes*) is forbidden to all. But in a rule drawn up only a few years later, the same writer allows neither meat nor chicken to the healthy, and both to the sick.<sup>50</sup>

This latter example brings to light the fact that a good deal of the variety in monastic practice was due in part to disagreement, even among those communities who wished to base themselves of the Benedictine model, as to what exactly constituted meat—whether “birds” (*volatilia*) comprised a sub-category of “flesh” or a separate category of their own—and, if the former, whether disciplinary restriction should focus on *carnes* or *quadrupedes*.

Unlike medical writers who, as we have seen, focussed on the living environment of the beast—air, earth or water—to distinguish them, or on their mode of locomotion (*volatilia* vs. *ambulabilia*), theological and monastic attention apparently was drawn to the number of legs the creature possessed—two or four. Some interpreters, like Rhabanus Maurus (c. 780-865), take the flesh of quadrupeds and that of birds (*bipedes*) to be equally species of meat, warning against the latter's dangers in terms we have already identified, but interpreting Benedict's regulation narrowly, and viewing the flesh of birds to be unspecified and *therefore* permitted.<sup>51</sup> In contrast, in commentaries on Benedict's *Rule* made by Paul Warnefrid (c. 770) and shortly thereafter by Hildemar (c. 840), the argument is advanced that the meat of birds is to be avoided along with that of quadrupeds, on account of the former's “greater sweetness and delicacy of flavor.” For the issue (in reasoning reminiscent of Jerome's) is “its delicate flavor, not ... the number of the animal's feet.”<sup>52</sup> Three centuries later, in her commentary at chap. 36,9 of Benedict's *Rule*, Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) construes the term *carnes* with equal breadth, conceding all

49. HOLST 1, 222

50. *Regula ad virgines*, ch. 17; *Regula ad monachos*, ch. 24 (PL 67, 1120 and 1104).

51. *De clericorum institutione*, II, 27 (PL 107, 339). For a full discussion of this matter, see E. MARTÈNE, *Commentarius in regulam s. p. Benedicti literalis, moralis, historicus* (Paris, 1690) in PL 66, 633-644 and, focussing on the ninth century, J. SEMMLER, ‘*Volatilia*’ zu den benediktinischen *Consuetudines* des 9. Jahrhunderts, in *«Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktinerordens»*, 69 (1958), 163-176. See also M.-O. GARRIGUES, *Honorius Augustodunensis, De esu volatiliium*, in *«Studia Monastica»*, 28 (1986), 75-130.

52. *Pauli Warnefridi diaconi Cassinensis in sanctam regulam commentarium* ed. monks of Monte Cassino (1880), and also in *Bibliotheca Casinensis* 4 (Florilegium Casinense, 1-173), 342; *Expositio regulae*, ed. R. MITTELMÜLLER, in *Vita et regula s. p. Benedicti* 3 (Regensburg, 1880), 441-442, at ch. 39.

flesh ("understood as including that of quadrupeds as much as that of bird") to the sick. But, in an unusual turn of argument, she allows the flesh of birds to be consumed by healthy members of the community, not only because, as Rhabanus observes, only the flesh of quadrupeds and not that of birds is specifically forbidden in Benedict's Rule, but precisely because, unlike Warnefrid, she finds bird-flesh to be *less* potent, and therefore *less* likely to incite passion.<sup>53</sup>

Subsequent rules, like that eventually drawn up by the Grandmontines (c. 1143) see the term "meat" as covering the same latitude and require (as do the Carthusians, but with more specificity) an even greater stringence than did Benedict, in forbidding meat to sick and healthy alike.<sup>54</sup>

A general relaxation of monastic austerity, beginning in the ninth and tenth centuries as Benedictine monasteries proliferated, and continuing through the twelfth, is reflected in the records, or "customaries," of individual monasteries, including those pertaining to dietary regulation. And gradually one finds loopholes and exceptions to the rule of abstinence from meat. Some commentators interpreted "the weak" (of chapter 39) as including children.<sup>55</sup> A variety of circumventions of Benedictine abstinence in English monasteries have been documented, such as the "abbot's table," which eventually provided a special arena for the abbot and his friends to eat meat; and separate rooms, apart from the infirmary, where those lingering between illness and full health could consume meat with impunity; and periods of *recreatio*, when monks could eat meat.<sup>56</sup> But the heated epistolary criticism of the monks of Cluny reflects the common presence of meat in the refectories themselves: their normally more leave-giving abbot, Peter the Venerable, decried the "boiled and baked pork, fat heifers, rabbits and hares, geese ..., hens and every species of quadrupeds and fowl ever domesticated" that "covered the tables of holy monks."<sup>57</sup>

The degree to which meal-time excesses in general, and the consumption of meat in particular, served as an emblem of lapsed monastic standards cannot be over-emphasized, and many of the new attempts that were made over the course of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, including that begun by Bruno in an alpine valley in 1084, to

53. PL 197, 1059-1060

54. Ch. 57 (PL 204, 1159A)

55. WARNEFRID, *Comm.* at ch. 37

56. See David KNOWLES, *The Diet of English Black Monks*, in «*The Downside Review*» 52/150 (Apr. 1934), 275-290, and Edmund BISHOP, *The Method and Degree of Fasting and Abstinence of the Black Monks in England before the Reformation*, in «*Downside Rev.*» 43 [misprinted XLV], No. 123 (Oct. 1925).

57. Ep. 161, in *The Letters of Peter the Venerable*, ed. Giles CONSTABLE, 2 vols. (Cambridge, MA, 1967).

reintegrate the qualities of early desert monastic rigor into the mountains of Europe, involved attention to dietary rigor, and abstinence from meat.<sup>58</sup> Given Arnald's deploring of the state to which many monks and clerics had fallen, these attempts were ones with which he could not help but be sympathetic.

At the same time, it must be added here that negative views toward abstinence were also expressed by those church officials whose attention was directed at keeping the behavior of ordinary Christians, as well as more energetic full-time ascetics, untainted by unorthodox doctrinal affiliations. From Augustine in the fourth century to the inquisitors of the High Middle Ages, the refusal to eat meat was interpreted as an indication of adherence to tenets of metaphysical dualism, or of deference to religious obligations no longer required by God.<sup>59</sup> And exhortations and regulations to fast were often accompanied by cautionary admonitions regarding the proper motivation in its regard—not out of disdain for or fear of any food, but simply for the sake of bodily discipline. In a remarkable cautionary passage in the monastic rule of Bp. Fructuosus of Braga,

No monk is permitted either to taste or to consume meat, not because we deem any creature of God unworthy, but because abstinence from meat is thought to be useful and appropriate for monks, maintained, nevertheless, with moderation out of consideration for the sick.<sup>60</sup>

And depending on whether the context was one of preservation (or reformist restoration) of clerical and monastic discipline, or the guarding against the assimilation of foreign habits, the same practice could indicate the most authentic discipline and rigor, or signal perilous deviance from orthodoxy.

58. Others include those communities founded at Camaldoli, Vallombrosa, Grandmont, Citeaux and Savigny. For a discussion of the specifically Carthusian conceptualization of the eremitic life and its place within the "Benedictine tradition," as well as of the various combinations of communal and eremitic life experimented during this period, see Bernard BLIGNY, *L'Érémisme et les Chartreux*, in *L'Eremitismo in occidente nei secoli XI e XII*, Miscellanea del Centro di Studi Medioevali 4, Pubblicazioni dell'Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (Contributi, Serie 3, Varia 4, 1965), 248-270, as well as other articles from the same conference collection. See also articles by Bligny and others from conference proceedings celebrating the ninth centenary of the Order, *La Naissance de Chartreuses* held Sept. 12-15, 1984 (Grenoble, 1986).

59. For a few examples, AUGUSTINE *De doctrina christiana*, III,xii,19; *De moribus manichaeorum* XXIV, 31; XV, 36-37; XVII, 59-64; ALAN OF LILLE, *De fide catholica contra haereticos sui temporis*, Bk. I, chs. 74-76 (PL 210, 376-78); MONETA OF CREMONA, *Adversus Catharos et Waldenses libri V*, Bk. II, ch. 5 (Rome, 1743); BERNARD OF GUI, *Practica inquisitionis heretice pravitatis*, V,i,2, ed. C. DOUAIS, (Paris, 1886).

60. Ch. 5 (PL 87, 1102). This came to be included in GRATIAN's *Decretum* as *De cons.*, Dist. V, ch. 32.

*Arnald's Appropriation of Medical and Theological Rationales*

In placing Arnald's advice within the medical traditions of which he was a part, we may note that he distinguishes between foods and medicines, and refers to the nutritive attributes of eggs (especially egg yolks), and to the "heating" properties of wine. Indeed, he further notes the excessive "heating" property of meat, but unlike nearly all of his medical predecessors, Arnald does not, in this treatise, prescribe chicken (*pulles*) or any other *volatilia* for consumption by sick Carthusians, nor even, unlike physicians going back to Hippocrates, does he prescribe chicken broth. Whether he is assuming a medical classification of fowl as a subset of *animalia*, or a theological classification of fowls as "flesh" (regardless of the number of the animal's feet), or whether he is bowing to a monastic convention regarding birds as a too-delicate non-meat, Arnald breaks with common medical practice (including his own, with other patients) in his defence of Carthusians.

What is further remarkable about Arnald's medical justification of Carthusian abstinence is that nowhere in it does he make reference to the theoretical framework of humoral physiology. Though he surely lectured on Isaac at Montpellier, in all probability utilizing Peter's relatively recent commentary on it, though he would have been aware of the rival Salernitan writings, and though in his own theoretical writings he describes in detail the various humoral *complexiones* (adopting the Avicennan attribution of two qualities *per element*), still, in the *De esu*, Arnald medically justifies the absence of meat from Carthusian treatment of their ill only with reference to the Galenic concept of the vital forces, thereby passing over an entire tradition of humorally based dietary theory.

It may be that, concise and methodical as this treatise is, mention of the humors would have seemed irrelevant and unnecessary, after successful appeal to the vital forces. It be also be that any mention of humors, with the compensatory treatment that inevitably accompanied it, would have introduced so many pressures to prescribe meat as to undermine Arnald's purpose in this work.

We should note, too, that Arnald composed a number of practical works —*consilia* addressing specific conditions, and regimens addressed to specific patients— in which he unhesitatingly included meat in his remedies —veal for gout; young lamb and pork, and various fowl for fevers; boiled beef and chicken for James II's digestion problems, and roast capon and young poultry for Clement V's headaches.<sup>61</sup> As a general principle, all

61. *Regimen sanitatis ad regem Aragonum* for King James II, and the *Practica summaria* for Pope Clement V. Other works include *Tractatus contra calculum*, *Regimen contra catarrhum*,

foods of good quality, including meat from "good animals," are conducive to maintaining one's youth. And in these compositions, with the exception of occasional reference to a food's "heating" effect, and the assertion that one should gear one's diet according to one's humoral temperament, as well as to the time of year, theory finds no place in Arnald's direct advice. To his patients, or to his colleagues seeking guidance, Arnald does not explain *why* any item is singled out for recommendation or warning; one is left to deduce from a knowledge of his general theory set forth in his *Speculum medicinae* (and his fellow practitioners from their own experience) the reasons underlying his counsel. Thus the *De esu* also stands out among Arnald's regiminal works for its thorough combination of practical recommendation with theoretical justification.

In addition, one cannot help but note that, as a defence of Carthusian practice, Arnald's argument is curiously weak. He does not positively advocate abstinence *per se* until the very end of his treatise, when he encourages those "who can climb the mountain of Carthusian perfection" to do so; still, he never denigrates those who are less able. Instead, Arnald merely demonstrates, using a variety of appeals, why the consumption of meat is not *necessary* for the maintenance or restoration of health, and why abstinence from it constitutes neither unsound medicine nor heretical theology.

It is no small irony that a physician, whose professional qualification rested in great part on a knowledge of which foods to prescribe for which precise effects, was brought into a debate among monastics for whom foods were, ostensibly, of little concern. Many of the strongest theological advocates of monastic abstinence cautioned qualified enthusiasm and tempered observance in its regard, lest the matter of food itself be taken too seriously. It is no coincidence, then, that one of the scriptural passages most often cited by theologians, whether promoting stringency or advocating moderation—"Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man, but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man" (Mt 15:1)—never appears in Arnald's writing. How could it?

### Conclusion

Thus we see how Arnald drew very selectively from the medical traditions which formed his livelihood, and from the theological traditions which he saw himself as defending, in order to fashion a defence of a

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*Regimen de podagra, Consilium sive cura febris ethice, Regimen sive consilium quartane.* See PANIAGUA, Arnau de Vilanova, *médico*, pp. 46-64, as well as his paper for this conference.

monastic practice he saw as redirecting the Church to its proper course. Though, during these later years of his career, he complained of being told all too frequently to involve himself in medicine, rather than theology, he nevertheless saw these two spheres of activity as appropriately connected, and bemoaned the fact that "this poor son of the Church," as he described himself, should be repudiated for his spiritual ministrations, when he was so avidly sought after for his corporeal ones.<sup>62</sup> This merging of medicine and spirituality in Arnald's mind is no better reflected than in his defence of Carthusian abstinence. And though it stands out among his writings in encompassing both of these interests so directly, it is perhaps more characteristic of the breadth and bent of his mind than any other.

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62. Letter to Benedict XI (Vat. lat 3824, ff. 204-214), partially printed in FINKE, *Ans den Tagen*, p. clxxix; fully in PERARNAU, *ATCA*, XI (1991), 201-214.