2

The Hygienic Justification

If literature gives pleasure, one possible means of justifying that pleasure is to show that it has beneficial effects. The argument can be put very simply: entertainment is good for you. The most common expression of that idea in the Middle Ages appears in discussions of recreation, which I treat in Chapter 3. Here I want to focus on a somewhat more technical medical argument, implicit in the idea of recreation but usually not fully articulated there. I refer to the theory as "hygienic" because that is the medical area in which it lies, the science of maintaining health. I will also call it "therapeutic," since the theory applies as well to recovery from illness or disability and since "therapy" has both mental and physical meanings appropriate to medieval medical views of literature. If these terms initially seem jarring, it is because we no longer categorize some things as the Middle Ages did. I hope that by the end of this chapter the inclusion of literary pleasure within a conceptual context that also encompasses regularity and proper diet will seem thoroughly justifiable. To understand the hygienic argument fully we must understand that medieval context, and to do that we must begin with the medical theory of the nonnaturals. I treat it at some length because it is not well known outside the history of medicine and because it is fundamental to an understanding of medieval views of the emotional effects of literature.

The Nonnaturals and the Accidents of the Soul

The history of medieval medicine has been written many times, and in broad outline it is well known. I am concerned only with that period from the twelfth century on, when the translation of Arabic works gave the Latin West abundant medical material derived in great part from Hippocratic and Galenic writings. One of the most important texts throughout these centuries was the *Isagoge* of Johannitius. It was available in Latin translation by 1100, and as an introduction to Galen's *Ars medica* (or *Tegni,* as it was often called), it became the first book in the corpus of treatises known as the *Articella,* the standard medieval medical textbook anthology. It was the subject of many commentaries and was widely known; later in this chapter we will see Hugh of St. Victor citing it extensively.[1] The *Isagoge*'s categorization of the parts of medicine, which had great influence on medical thinking in the Middle Ages, begins with a separation of theoretical and practical spheres. Theoretical medicine consists of three divisions: *res naturales* (those things which constitute the body, such as elements, humors, faculties, spirits); *res non naturales* (those things which affect bodily health, such as air, food and drink, exercise); and *res contra naturam* (diseases, the causes of disease, the sequels of disease). Practical medicine also has three parts: the correct use of the nonnaturals (that is, a regimen of health), the use of drugs, and surgery. As L. J. Rather has pointed out, the classification parallels that in Avicenna's most influential works, and one finds these basic divisions throughout medieval medicine.[2]

The conception least familiar to a modern audience and most

[1]On the *Isagoge* and its place in the *Articella* see Oswei Temkin, *Galenism: Rise and Decline of a Medical Philosophy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), pp. 100–8; Paul O. Kristeller, "Bartholomaeus, Musandinus, and Maurus of Salerno and Other Early Commentators of the 'Articella,' with a Tentative List of Texts and Manuscripts," *Italia medioevale e umanistica,* 19 (1976), 57–87; and the introduction by Diego Gracia and José-Luis Vidal to their edition (based on Renaissance texts) and Spanish translation of the *Isagoge* in *Asclepio,* 26–27 (1974–75), 267–382. H. P. Cholmeley has translated the *Isagoge* into English as an appendix to his *John of Gaddesden and the Rosa Medicinae* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1912), pp. 136–66. There is a Middle English translation in a fifteenth-century manuscript, British Library MS Sloane 6, ff. 1–9.

[2]"Systematic Medical Treatises From the Ninth to the Nineteenth Century: The Unchanging Scope and Structure of Academic Medicine in the West," *Clio Medica,* 11 (1976), 289–305.

relevant to this chapter is that of the nonnaturals. The idea, which Temkin calls "one of the most enduring contributions of Galenism to medical thought," has a complex history that only recently has been brought to light and still awaits a full-scale investigation.[3] Briefly, the term "nonnaturals" refers to a set of factors external to the body itself but which affect bodily health depending on how they are used. "Nonnatural" does not mean "unnatural" but indicates rather a special category of things that are separate from one's own constitution (hence not natural) and causative of either health or sickness (hence not inherently contranatural, though a misused nonnatural would become a contranatural in effect). The terminology and logic go back to Galen, though not in any simple way. In the *Ars medica* Galen discusses six necessary causes, "constantly and inevitably acting on the human body in such a way as to alter the balance of the primary qualities (the hot, cold, moist and dry) and thus to affect the character of the humours and the state of humoral balance. Acting in due order and magnitude they promote health. Otherwise they promote disease."[4] Galen does not here use the term "nonnatural," though he does elsewhere; nevertheless, in the Middle Ages his six necessary causes become the standard list of nonnaturals, perhaps due in great part, as Niebyl suggests, to Haly Abbas, who explicitly equates the idea of the nonnaturals in the *Isagoge* with Galen's six necessary causes. One can see the same assimilation at work in the Middle English translation of the *Isagoge*. The original, discussing the causes (*occasiones*) of illness or health, mentions Galen's six but does not call them nonnaturals; the rubric at the side of the translation of this section, though, does: it reads (with the help of ultraviolet light) "6 maners of occasions, þat is 6 þings noȝt naturel" (f. 5v).

[3]Temkin, p. 180. Rather, "The 'Six Things Non-Natural': A Note on the Origins and Fate of a Doctrine and a Phrase," *Clio Medica*, 3 (1968), 337–47; Saul Jarcho, "Galen's Six Non-Naturals: A Bibliographic Note and Translation," *BHM*, 44 (1970), 372–77; Jerome J. Bylebyl, "Galen on the Non-Natural Causes of Variation in the Pulse," *BHM*, 45 (1971), 482–85; Peter H. Niebyl, "The Non-Naturals," *BHM*, 45 (1971), 486–92; Chester R. Burns, "The Nonnaturals: A Paradox in the Western Concept of Health," *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy*, 1 (1976), 202–11. Students of English literature may know of the concept from Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, where it plays an important organizational role.

[4]Rather, "The 'Six Things Non-Natural,' " 339; Galen's text is on 344–45.

What are the six nonnaturals? The usual list follows the order of *occasiones* in the *Isagoge:* air, food and drink, motion and rest, sleep and waking, repletion and evacuation, and the accidents of the soul. Some of these are self-explanatory; it is obvious that eating and drinking the right foods and beverages, getting the proper amount of sleep, and avoiding constipation all contribute to health. Others require some comment. The category of air includes not only questions of its cleanliness but also such matters as climate and seasonal variations; and since medieval medicine generally viewed infectious disease not as contagious but as spread by corrupted air, this subdivision often deals with avoidance of miasmic places and means of purifying the air. Motion and rest is often called "exercise and rest" and entails medieval principles of proper exercise. Finally, and most interesting, is the sixth nonnatural, the *accidentia animae,* what today we would call the emotions. I will return to this category shortly.

In the *Isagoge,* these six factors are listed as *occasiones* of health or sickness. The list of *res non naturales* earlier in the treatise is different: air, exercise, baths, food and drink, sleep and waking, coitus, and the accidents of the soul. The fact that the *Isagoge* has two lists helps create some diversity in subsequent discussions. Bathing and coitus may or may not appear, and when they do may or may not be treated as one of the standard six. Depending on the treatise, coitus may appear as a separate category, as a part of motion and rest (since it involves bodily movement), as a part of repletion and evacuation (since it involves the discharge of semen), or as a part of the accidents of the soul (since it involves so much delight). Arnold of Villanova, in his *Introductionum medicinalium,* offers the most elaborate categorization of the nonnaturals I have encountered: he accepts the standard six as "principales" and argues that an additional seven are secondary nonnaturals that also affect the body.[5]

It is enough for our purposes to think only of the standard

[5]Chaps. 13, 81–87, in *Opera medica* (Lyons, 1504), ff. 5v, 31–32v. Arnold's additional seven are the seasons, locale, sex, occupation, play, bathing, and habit. Together with the first six, these secondary factors, which theoretically include all personal dispositions and activities, suggest a holistic view of health in which all one's actions and attitudes have medical relevance.

six nonnaturals and to focus more intently on the last, the *accidentia animae.* It may seem surprising at first to find a psychological factor listed along with environmental and physical concerns, but the strangeness of this conjunction is perhaps due as much to a conceptual limitation fostered by the medical history of the last century as to any lack of sophistication in medieval thinking. For like the other nonnaturals, the passions of the mind are forces that one must live with, that one can—at least according to medieval theory—exercise control over, and that do affect the body. An emotion is an *accidens* not only in the philosophic sense of being something that inheres in a substance but also in the medical sense of being an unintentioned external cause of physical change—external to the body, that is, since emotions are movements of the soul.[6]

The *Isagoge*'s summary of the accidents of the soul is as good an introduction as any to a medieval attitude that can only be called psychosomatic:

> Sundry affections of the mind produce an effect within the body, such as those which bring the natural heat from the interior of the body to the outer parts or the surface of the skin. Sometimes this happens suddenly, as with anger; sometimes gently and slowly, as with delight and joy. Some affections, again, withdraw the natural heat and conceal it either suddenly, as with fear and terror, or again gradually, as distress. And again some affections disturb the natural energy both internal and external, as, for instance, grief.[7]

[6]The fourteenth-century physician Dino del Garbo, in his commentary on Guido Cavalcanti's poem "Donna me prega," lists three reasons why love is an *accidens:* it is an appetite of the soul, as are the other passions, rather than a substance; it may come or go; it arrives from outside the body, even though different people may have different intrinsic susceptibility to it. For text, translation, and commentary on this passage, see Otto Bird, "The Canzone d'Amore of Cavalcanti According to the Commentary of Dino del Garbo," *Mediaeval Studies,* 2 (1940), 161, 178–79. Dino believes that all accidents of the soul alter the body, love only more so (161). Robert Hollander has recently argued the relevance of Dino's commentary to Boccaccio, in *Boccaccio's Two Venuses* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1977).

[7]Cholmeley, pp. 146–47, with one change in translation. Text in Gracia and Vidal, 335. For similar views in Hippocratic medicine, see Pedro Laín Entralgo, *The Therapy of the Word in Classical Antiquity,* ed. and trans. L. J. Rather and John M. Sharp (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), pp. 160–63.

The basic principle is relatively simple. Emotions affect the body by causing its natural heat (and, according to most texts, the body's *spiritus,* those ethereal substances that enable bodily functions to operate) to move either outward or inward or in both directions. Insofar as these movements of heat and spirit are extreme and violent, they produce severe bodily imbalances. An overabundance of heat at the exterior of the body leaves the heart in a weakened condition; as many discussions note, both extreme anger and extreme joy can cause death in this way. Excessive fear or sorrow, driving all the body's heat and *spiritus* to the interior, leaves one torpid, even insensate. The woeful knight in Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess* is a famous, almost clinically depicted, case of a man whose sorrow has wrought marked physical disability. In some cases a passion causes varied movement, at times inward and at times outward; the *Isagoge* gives *tristitia* as an example, but later treatises tend to see sadness as an interior movement only and cite, among others, the *passio* of love as causing the double motion.[8]

Other treatises offer more extensive discussions. Avicenna's *Canon,* for instance, has a somewhat longer analysis that often appears in later texts. Like the *Isagoge,* the *Canon* associates specific emotions with specific internal movements, but it includes the movement of *spiritus* as well as that of the body's natural heat, and it goes on to argue that the imagination as well as the emotions may have corporeal effects, citing as evidence the belief that the parents' thoughts at the moment of conception have an influence on the physical characteristics of their child. His treatise known in the West as *De viribus cordis* discusses extensively the interrelationship between emotions and the *spiritus* of the heart. Avicenna believes that an abundant and well-balanced *spiritus* promotes joy (*gaudium*) and that reciprocally the emotions affect the characteristics of the spirit and hence one's bodily condition.[9]

[8]For the medical theory of love, see Bird, *Mediaeval Studies,* 2 (1940), 150–203; 3 (1941), 117–60, esp. 123–33 on the physical effects of love. And, of course, John Livingston Lowes, "The Loveres Maladye of Hereos," *Modern Philology,* 11 (1913–14), 491–546.

[9]*Liber canonis,* Lib. I, Fen II, Doct. II, Sum. I, c. xiv (1507; rpt. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1964), ff. 33–33v. English version by O. Cameron Gruner, *A Treatise on the Canon of Medicine of Avicenna Incorporating a Translation of the First*

A late Middle English treatise on medicine, in dialogue form, does not use the term "nonnaturals" but treats the idea nevertheless, discussing their bodily effects as resultant qualities rather than as movements of heat and spirit. It distinguishes between a person's natural complexion (that balance of humors basic to the individual which does not vary) and his accidental complexion (that part of his humoral makeup which can be changed). One's accidental complexion alters in two ways: either "kyndelich," naturally, through aging, in the course of which the changing complexion "dryeth till a man be ded" but causes no specific illness; or "vnkyndelich," which causes sickness. The approach is predicated on the *Isagoge*'s distinction between *res naturales,* which include not only the humors and the qualities (hot, dry, and so forth) but also the four ages of man and their corresponding humoral emphases, and the *res contra naturam,* the "vnkyndelich" causes of disease. Here, as in some other medieval discussions, the nonnaturals disappear as a separate category but surface in their role as contranatural factors when misused. Accordingly, the treatise offers a list of contranatural changes that make people ill, all of which are part of the tradition of the nonnaturals:

> . . . such changyng cometh in many maner wyse, as in chaungyng of metis other of drynkes. Also in takyng to moche outher to lytol of mete and drynk, in slepyng to moche other wakyng to moche, outher travaylyng to moche, bathyng to moche, or jestyng to moche, thynkyng to moche, gret joye, gret sorowe, gret angir, gret hete other of cold outher of drynesse outher of moystenes of the place and of the eyre that a man is in.

The treatise goes on to specify the humoral and qualitative imbalances that result from such excesses. Too much wakefulness, working, bathing, or anger makes people choleric. "Moche joye maketh a man moist and hote for the tyme of his joye and aftirward. And sorowe maketh a man cold and drie in complexion." From the *Isagoge* and the *Canon* one would know that these imbalances are due to internal movements of heat and *spiritus.*

Book (London: Luzac, 1930), pp. 212–14, and 535–47 for a translation of the relevant chapters of *De viribus cordis.*

Implicit in this discussion is a principle of therapy made explicit in the following chapter, which states the standard medieval view of allopathic medicine: one should use cold medicines to cure hot sicknesses, dry medicines for moist sicknesses, and so on (though in some cases the treatise advises homeopathic rather than "contrarie" remedies). What is most revealing for our purposes is that the treatise acknowledges here a curative role for the *accidentia animae* as well: "And syknes that cometh of angir and of sorow ben heled with joy and murth." The regulation of the emotions, then, has value not only in hygiene, in preventive medicine, but may play a role in therapeutics as well.[10]

In order to see the impact of the doctrine of the nonnaturals beyond the realm of academic medicine, we may turn to texts more specifically concerned with hygiene and more prescriptive in intent than purely theoretical tracts. As we know from the *Isagoge,* practical medicine consists of regimen, drugs, and surgery, and regimen is the proper use of the nonnaturals. Medieval theory and medieval practice meet in those texts where physicians make specific recommendations to laymen

[10]British Library MS Sloane 3489, ff. 31–31v. Two examples may serve to indicate how seriously the Middle Ages could take the idea of the emotions as a factor in therapy. The Middle English translation of Lanfranc's *Chirurgia magna,* a highly respected surgical text written in 1296, argues that a good surgeon must know every aspect of medicine, including "thynges þat beþ noȝt natureles." It then explains how each of the nonnaturals is applicable to the treatment of wounds; the *accidentia animae* are relevant because the surgeon should "entempre . . . þe hert of hym þat ys seke, ffor to gret wratthe makyþ þe spirites renne to myche to þe wounde, & þat ys cause of swellynge; to grete drede, oþere vntryst of helpe of hys wounde holdiþ spyrites withynne hys body, þat mater may nouȝt come to hele þe wounde." *Lanfrank's "Science of Cirurgie." Part I,* ed. Robert von Fleischhacker, EETS o.s. 102 (1894; rpt. Millwood, N.Y.: Kraus Reprint, 1973), pp. 15–17. A work on poisons by William de Marra says that music relieves the effect of tarantula bite, since the poison produces melancholy and music produces joy, the most effective antidote; he thinks that by moving the *spiritus* outward joy prevents the poison from destroying the vital organs. See Lynn Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science,* 8 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1923–58), III: 534. In Chap. 5 we will see evidence of the hygienic belief that cheerfulness could ward off plague. Scientific views of the power of the emotions over the body enter into some thirteenth-century biblical commentaries on the fast of the Hebrew children described in Dan. 1. The medical attitude is consistent with such scriptural passages as Prov. 17:22 and 15:13. See Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (1952; rpt. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964), pp. 314–16.

about how to conduct themselves: in the many regimens of health and in those *consilia* that have survived from a few doctors of the later Middle Ages.

The idea of a regimen of health, a set of rules for maintaining the soundness of the body, is as old as Hippocratic medicine and as new as the latest paperbacks on what to eat and how to jog. Galen's *De sanitate tuenda* is one of the major efforts of its kind and is available in a modern English translation. One medieval regimen is very well known, the *Regimen sanitatis salernitanum,* which we will consider later; but it is only one of a slew of hygienic treatises that appeared in the later Middle Ages. Almost all of these must be read in manuscript or in Renaissance editions, and even historians of medicine do not seem to have devoted extensive study to them. Only recently, for example, was it shown that the regimen attributed to Ugo Benzi (Hugh of Siena) is in fact an Italian translation of a fifteenth-century regimen by Benedetto Reguardati of Nursia, which in turn is based in great part on two fourteenth-century works.[11] Much in the medieval regimens has been borrowed and reborrowed, and there is no full-scale study that has disentangled the lines of filiation. What I cite from these sources, then, should probably be taken more as conventional wisdom than as independent medical thinking, though, as we can see in Hill Cotton's analysis of Benedetto's distinctly Neapolitan touches in his remarks on diet, individuality does at times intrude into the otherwise routine and usually unacknowledged copying of earlier authorities. It should also be clear that my own survey of the regimens has been quite limited and that I do not attempt to deal with questions of sources and influence, merely with a few hygienic ideas that we can say are at least present, most likely quite widespread, in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[12]

[11]Juliana Hill Cotton, "Benedetto Reguardati: Author of Ugo Benzi's *Tractato de la conservatione de la sanitade,*" *Medical History,* 12 (1968), 76–83.

[12]My primary reference sources have been these classics of medieval scientific scholarship: George Sarton, *Introduction to the History of Science,* 3 vols. in 5 (Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, 1927–48); Thorndike's *History;* Thorndike and Pearl Kibre, *A Catalogue of Incipits of Mediaeval Scientific Writings in Latin,* rev. ed. (Cambridge, Mass.: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1963)—hereafter "TK"; and Dorothea Waley Singer, *Hand-List of Western Scientific Manuscripts in Great Britain and Ireland,* available in MS at the British Library.

The regimens vary greatly in length, but most are organized according to the nonnaturals. That schema was so pervasive in the Middle Ages and Renaissance that when in 1584 Thomas Cogan published his *Haven of Health,* a regimen based on a five-point Hippocratic outline (exercise, food, drink, sleep, sex), he felt the need to preface his text with the acknowledgment that "such as haue written of the preseruation of health before me, for the most part haue followed the diuision of *Galen* of thinges not naturall which be sixe in number." He argues, somewhat desperately, that his own conceptual choice "is more conuenient for the diet of our English Nation" in that no one is "so dull of vnderstanding" that he cannot keep the five single terms in mind. He also explains that one category ostensibly omitted in his formula, the accidents of the soul, is in fact included in the five, since "affections of the minde doe commonlie folowe the temperature of the bodie which is chiefely preserued by the moderate vse of those fiue thinges."[13] Mind-body interaction remains an assumption, though here the sixth nonnatural is viewed only as a consequence of a purely somatic regimen.

What do the regimens recommend in regard to the *accidentia animae*? The briefer ones tend just to warn against extreme emotions. Fuller treatments go into the same kind of technical explanations we have seen in the *Isagoge* and the *Canon,* spell out the dangers of excessive joy or anger, and usually advise not simply a Stoic rejection of all emotion but adoption of a moderate cheerfulness. Bernard Gordon, whose *Regimen sanitatis* is the final book of a longer work, *De conservatione vitae humanae* (1308), but circulated in manuscript as a separate hygienic treatise, cites the hazards of inordinate passions but then adds: "Nevertheless, you should know that a moderate cheerfulness is fitting for every age, every temperament, and every person, except for those who do not want to gain weight, for according to Avicenna a moderate cheerfulness is fattening."[14]

[13]*The Haven of Health* (London, 1584), ff. 4–4v.

[14]"Intelligendum tamen, quod gaudium temperatum competit omni aetati, et omni complexioni et omni homini, nisi quando non vult impinguari, quoniam gaudium temperatum impinguat, secundum Auicen." *De conservatione vitae humanae,* c. 15 (Leipzig, 1570), p. 79. On the circulation of this text see Ynez Violé O'Neill, "The History of the Publication of Bernard of Gordon's Liber de Conservatione Vitae Humanae," *Sudhoffs Archiv,* 49 (1965), 269–79. Bernard

His concern about weight gain is not an issue for other physicians. Maino de' Maineri, author of a fourteenth-century regimen often attributed to Arnold of Villanova, thinks of temperate joy as an important element of hygiene:

> In regard to *gaudium* and tranquillity of mind, you should know that a moderate cheerfulness belongs to a regimen of health because it is one of the means of strengthening bodily energy. Energy is promoted by tranquillity and cheerfulness, though the cheerfulness ought not be excessive, since that leads to syncope and death. Cheerfulness is especially appropriate for those who worry a lot and are worn down with troubles and are frequently harrassed. Similarly, it is appropriate for those who are continually and excessively cheerful to be saddened at times.[15]

The use of emotions as a part of allopathic medicine is clear. Cheerfulness (*gaudium*) is not only helpful to the body per se but is also a remedy for anxiety and depression. To anticipate later arguments: anything that produces temperate cheerfulness, such as reading a fiction, is thus functioning to preserve health; cheerfulness induced by storytelling, for example, would be particularly useful to people burdened with cares, such as the horrors of the Black Death.

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may be misrepresenting Avicenna's *Cantica,* which states: "A great joy makes the body prosperous. There are some noxious ones which generate too much obesity." Trans. Haven C. Krueger, *Avicenna's Poem on Medicine* (Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1963), pp. 25–26.

[15]"De gaudio autem et mentis tranquillitate sciendum quod gaudium temperatum competit in regimine sanitatis ex eo quod est vnum de confortantibus virtutem. Virtus enim confortatur tranquillitate et gaudio, sed gaudium non debet esse excessiuum quia inducit sincopim et mortem; et maxime gaudium competit hiis qui multum curant et sollicitudinibus destruuntur et crebro punguntur. Et similiter hiis qui sunt in gaudio continuo et immoderato interdum tristari conuenit." Magninus Mediolanensis, *Regimen sanitatis,* pars III, c. viii (Louvain, 1486), sig. k 7. For more on Maino see Lynn Thorndike, "A Mediaeval Sauce-Book," *Speculum,* 9 (1934), 183–90. In the 1504 edition of Arnold's works, this passage, worded somewhat differently, is on f. 63. Arnold's own regimen for the King of Aragon recommends *gaudium* in similar circumstances: "People who are distracted by many cares and troubles and who are frequently harrassed should take time out for cheerfulness and for proper recreations, so that their minds may flourish anew and their spirits be reinvigorated (Qui vero multis curis et sollicitudinibus distrahuntur et crebro punguntur gaudio sepe vacare debent et honestis solatiis vt animus refloreat et spiritus recreentur)." F. 81.

The most extensive claims for the value of *gaudium temperatum* I have seen appear in the regimen of Benedetto Reguardati, which Hill Cotton dates ca. 1435–38, though it draws on material written a century earlier. Benedetto has a long chapter on the *accidentia animae,* and after discussing the dangers of excessive *tristitia* and *gaudium* (complete with anecdotes of people who dropped dead from sudden great joy), he presents the preferred emotional attitude:

> For the preservation of health we should strive most resolutely for moderate pleasures and for gladdening solaces, so that as much as possible we may live happily in temperate gaiety. That condition expands the *spiritus* and natural heat to the outer parts of the body and makes the blood purer; it sharpens one's wit and makes the understanding more capable; it promotes a healthy complexion and a pleasing appearance; it stimulates the energies throughout the whole body and makes them more vigorous in their activity.[16]

For Benedetto the proper emotional disposition has consequences not only for the body but for the mind as well. The *spiritus* and natural heat functioning at their optimum effectiveness enhance mental ability. *Gaudium* improves the whole person. And not only physicians impute mental values to a well-disposed body. Aquinas asserts that even though happiness does not consist of bodily well-being, perfection of the body is necessary for acquiring happiness in this life (*ST,* I–II, q. 4, a. 6).

At this point we have clearly transcended the more limited goal of medicine which is the maintenance of bodily health. And the implications of dealing with the passions were not lost on some of the authors of the regimens. They were aware that, as Moses Maimonides pointed out, the study and correc-

[16]"Pro sanitatis igitur conseruatione summopere ad temperata gaudia et solatia alacriora conari debemus, ut quam possibile sit lete uiuamus moderata cum letitia. Spiritus, naturalem calorem ad exteriora expandit membra; clariorum sanguinem facit; ingenium acuit; intellectum solertiorem efficit; et uiuidum colorem placidumque aspectum inducit, atque totius nostre corporis uirtutes excitat et in eorum operibus agiliores prestat." *Pulcherrimum et utilissimum opus ad sanitatis conseruationem* ([Bologna], 1477), ff. 124v–125.

tion of the emotions belong chiefly to moral philosophy.[17] But they staked a claim for their attention to the *accidentia animae* on the grounds that the emotions affect the body, hence affect health, hence pertain to the physician.[18] Bernard Gordon's *Regimen sanitatis* features a *quaestio* devoted to this issue: whether it is proper for the physician qua physician to deal with the accidents of the soul. Not only does he decide that it is right, he goes so far as to suggest that the physician in correcting the passions becomes a moral philosopher of sorts, and a distinctive one, since he can instruct people of all kinds and speak about both the body and the soul.[19] To what degree these arguments reflect motives beyond self-justification is unclear, but the concept of the *accidentia animae* is certainly a precise point of connection between medicine and moral philosophy.[20] The attention to proper disposition of the passions in medieval treatises thus carries an implicit and sometimes explicit ethical dimension, which doubtless helps account for what later evidence will reveal: the easy assimilation of essentially hygienic principles into moral justifications of entertainment.

The most famous medieval regimen, known by a variety of titles but most commonly as the *Regimen sanitatis salernitanum,* is not explicitly organized around the nonnaturals. But within the first few lines it gives prominence to the role of mental attitude in health in a way that clearly reveals the influence of the psychosomatic principles of the *accidentia animae:*

[17]See Ariel Bar-Sela, Hebbel E. Hoff, and Elias Faris, "Moses Maimonides' Two Treatises on the Regimen of Health," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society,* n.s. 54, pt. 4 (1964), pp. 25–27; and his *Treatise on Asthma,* trans. Suessman Muntner (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1963), pp. 36–38. These texts were available to the West in Latin translation by the early fourteenth century.

[18]Magninus Mediolanensis, sig. k 6: "et quia anime accidentia ex necessitate alterant corpus, et eorum correctio et moderatio ad medicum pertinet." Another regimen, the *Sermo de conservatione sanitatis* by Philippus, son of Bandini of Arezzo (TK, col. 1294), argues that depending on how they are studied the *accidentia animae* may be the province of the physician, the natural philosopher, or the moral philosopher; Bodleian Library MS Canon. Misc. 192, f. 33.

[19]*De conservatione vitae humanae,* quaestio IV, pp. 158–60.

[20]See on this subject the fascinating article of Patrick Gallacher, "Food, Laxatives, and Catharsis in Chaucer's Nun's Priest's Tale," *Speculum,* 51 (1976), 49–68. On the more general connection between physical and moral law, see John A. Alford, "Medicine in the Middle Ages: The Theory of a Profession," *Centennial Review,* 23 (1979), 377–96, esp. 385–91.

Anglorum regi scripsit scola tota Salerni:
Si vis incolumen, si vis te reddere sanum,
Curas tolle graves, irasci crede prophanum. . . .
Si tibi deficiant medici, medici tibi fiant
Hec tria: mens leta, requies, moderata dieta.

The whole School of Salerno wrote for the English king:
If you want to be healthy, if you want to remain sound,
Take away your heavy cares, and refrain from anger. . . .
Should you lack physicians, these three doctors will suffice:
A joyful mind, rest, and a moderate diet.[21]

The Salernitan regimen's three physicians make their way into another poem of widespread popularity, John Lydgate's *Dietary:*

Ther be thre lechees consarue a mannys myht,
First a glad hert, he carith lite or nouht,
Temperat diet, holsom for every wiht,
And best of all, for no thyng take no thouht.[22]

Here in its most general form is the medical principle that a cheerful disposition is life-conserving. The *Regimen*'s "mens leta" becomes Lydgate's "glad hert," a joyful attitude that does not let cares weigh on it. *Requies,* which probably implies both physical and mental recuperation, seems to be more purely psychological in Lydgate: avoiding "thouht" in one of the standard medieval meanings of that word, troublesome thoughts, vexation. Lydgate's three doctors seem more like two.

The *Dietary* is interesting, also, for the way in which it mixes physical and moral recommendations. The ethical implications of the regimens become more explicit in the hands of someone

[21]Lines 1–3, 8–9. Ed. and trans. Patricia W. Cummins, "A Salernitan Regimen of Health," *Allegorica,* 1, no. 2 (1976), pp. 82–83. The poem exists in many versions. Of the several English translations, perhaps the best known is Sir John Harrington's (1607). On the influence of the Salernitan regimen in the Renaissance, see Pritchett, pp. 79–81. On its origins, see Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The School of Salerno," *BHM,* 17 (1945), 169–70.

[22]*The Minor Poems of John Lydgate,* ed. Henry Noble MacCracken, 2 vols., EETS e.s. 107, o.s. 192 (1911, 1934; rpt. London: Oxford University Press, 1961–62), II: 704. The Robbins-Cutler *Supplement to the Index of Middle English Verse* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1965), p. 521, puts the *Dietary,* with its 55 MSS, third among all Middle English verse in terms of number of texts preserved.

writing not as a physician but as a wise and learned counselor. The same phenomenon can be seen in the development of the various versions of the *Secretum secretorum,* which along with the *Regimen sanitatis salernitanum* is (in part) the Middle Ages' best-known treatise on health. The *Secretum,* supposedly a letter of advice from Aristotle to Alexander, came into Latin from Arabic; it has both short and long versions, some five hundred manuscripts in Latin alone, and an immensely complex textual history. The short Latin version of Johannes Hispaniensis, which I will quote in a Middle English translation, is essentially a manual of hygiene. Like the Salernitan regimen, it does not use the nonnaturals structurally but reveals their principles at work. The second precept for Alexander, and by implication for any prince interested in his own well-being, has to do with clothing:

> Se that thi clothis be precious and riȝt feire to the eye, for beauté and preciousenes of þe clothis liȝtenith and gladdith the spiritte of man, which gladnes of spiritte is cause of a continuaunce in helth like as heuynes of spiritte and sorow inducith sikenes. Hit causith also a man to be more quick in all his deedis, and þe bettir to execute all that perteynith to his office.

Similarly, perfuming the body "refresshith" the spirit "like as holsum mete confortith þe body," and such refreshment helps the heart and promotes the movement of blood. At the end of the treatise comes a reassertion of the value of these and other secular pleasures:

> And þe bettir for helth and digestion if þe man haue ioy and gladnes, and with þat goode fortune, as glory, worship, fame and worship of þe peple, victory of his ennemyis. Also if he may beholde beauteuous parsonis, and delectabil bookis, and here pleasaunt songis, and be in cumpany of such as a man louith, and to were goode clothis, and to be anoyntid with swete oynementis.

This list is followed by one of dangers to the body, including excessive drink, work, and sex, bad choices in food and drink, and "ofte to be in drede and to haue grete sorow."[23]

[23]Ed. M. A. Manzalaoui, Secretum secretorum: *Nine English Versions,* EETS o.s. 276 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 4, 8–9. For textual his-

In translations of the long version of the *Secretum,* the *regimen sanitatis* becomes part of a *regimen principum.* Health becomes but one aspect of the responsibilities of a ruler, and these texts include a great deal of ethical and political advice, as well as encyclopedic additions to the material on health; there may be sections on physiognomy, parts of the body, natural history, and so on. The summary statement just cited remains intact, at least in the Middle English translations I have seen, with varying degrees of expansion.[24] The long version of the *Secretum* thus occupies a kind of middle ground between the medical regimens and the purely ethical manuals for princes that had substantial currency in the later Middle Ages. At that end of the spectrum we have works like Thomas Hoccleve's *Regement of Princes,* which borrowed in part from the *Secretum* and from Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum;* the only attention to matters of hygiene comes in some general remarks on diet, significantly, in the context of a section on chastity: abstinence is necessary to put down lust, so one's diet must be restrained in order to avoid gluttony and the consequent arousal of carnal desire and other debilitating vices.[25]

The fusion of medical and ethical precepts in the long *Secretum* is perfectly natural. As the prince rules the state, so reason must rule the emotions and control the body. All such operations are examples of proper "governance." Hygiene is ethical activity, for it both reveals and reinforces a properly functioning hierarchy within the individual. The *Secretum secretorum* not only accepts the value accorded a "mens leta" by the Salernitan regimen but also suggests means of attaining such useful joy-

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tory see Manzalaoui's introduction and references. The accessus to a Latin verse rendering of Hispaniensis categorizes the text as belonging principally to physics, "that is, to natural science," and incidentally to ethics, "because it instructs people in regard to behavior." Ed. R. A. Pack, "Pseudo-Aristotelis *Epistola ad Alexandrum de regimine sanitatis* a quodam Nicolao versificata," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge,* 45 (1979), 313.

[24]In addition to the English translations of the long version in Manzalaoui, see *Three Prose Versions of the* Secreta secretorum, ed. Robert Steele, EETS e.s. 74 (1898; rpt. Millwood, N.Y.: Kraus Reprint, 1973), pp. 30, 75–76, and 247–48.

[25]Ed. Frederick J. Furnivall, EETS e.s. 72 (1897; rpt. Millwood, N.Y.: Kraus Reprint, 1973), pp. 137–40.

fulness. These two most popular regimens confirm what may be concluded from the others: that recommendations for cheerfulness constitute the most familiar piece of advice in medieval medicine regarding proper mental outlook, and that such advice is rooted not just in common sense but in a physiological theory of what happens to body and mind when one's emotional state is moderately joyful.

Literature as a Source of Cheerfulness

The relevance of these medical ideas to literary theory becomes clear when one asks the practical question of how to attain the *gaudium temperatum* recommended by the regimens. We have just seen the *Secretum secretorum* supply a variety of answers, including "delectabil bookis," and many of the items in its list of pleasures are repeated throughout the later Middle Ages. Our interests lie in the role of literature as a factor in hygiene and therapy. We may begin with a fifteenth-century addition to the regimen of Aldobrandino of Siena. Written in the middle of the thirteenth century for Beatrice of Savoy, countess of Provence, who was about to travel to see her four daughters (well situated as the queens of France, England, and Germany, and as the countess of Anjou), Aldobrandino's *Régime du corps* is one of the major early French medical texts, and to judge from surviving manuscripts it must have been quite popular throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[26] It is a full-scale medical manual in four parts: general regimen (including the nonnaturals, bloodletting, and special regimens for travel, pregnancy, and the different age groups); specific maladies and their treatment; simples; and a short section on physiognomy. In the chapter on the accidents of the soul, Aldobrandino repeats the standard discussion of different emotions based on movements of heat and spirit, and he com-

[26]The modern edition, *Le régime du corps de Maitre Aldebrandin de Sienne,* ed. Louis Landouzy and Roger Pépin (Paris: Champion, 1911), identifies 35 MSS. But since then have appeared a number of notices of other MSS, and without much searching I have seen nine in England not mentioned by Landouzy and Pépin: British Library MSS Add. 8863, Royal 16 F. VIII, Royal 19 A. V, Royal 19 B. X, Royal 20 B. IX; Wellcome MSS 31, 32, 546; Rylands French MS 7. There are also MSS of Italian translations.

ments briefly on melancholy. Though highly destructive to the body, it can be treated by purgation, by lectuaries such as "Galen's Happiness," and by being joyful and cheerful ("et avoir joie et lieche"). In much medieval thinking melancholy is of course a more serious disability than a simple emotional imbalance; but Aldobrandino, like others, sees it in the context of the passions, and he recognizes as therapy not only medicinal but emotional remedies.[27]

How does one gain cheerfulness and happiness? There is no specification in the original text itself, but the earliest manuscript has illuminations for each chapter, printed by Landouzy and Pépin, and the illustration for the accidents of the soul is that of a figure playing a stringed instrument. Another manuscript, the British Library's beautifully illuminated Sloane 2435, which contains texts of the *Régime du corps* and the *Image du monde,* has two antithetical figures in its illustration of this chapter (f. 10v): an instrumentalist on top, below him a man seated, hand on cheek, in the traditional pose of sorrow or melancholy. In light of the long tradition of regarding music as emotionally therapeutic and as a cure for melancholy, and of the nature of the other illuminations in the text, the depiction of a man playing a musical instrument to illustrate emotional attitude probably functions not only as an icon of joy but also as a practical indication of one way of attaining it.[28]

Some later manuscripts of the *Régime du corps* indicate another, for in a revision of Aldobrandino's text the advice for those who are melancholy is not just to "avoir joie et lieche" but

[27]Landouzy and Pépin, p. 32, based on the oldest Aldobrandino MS. For the contents of the lectuary known as *leticia Galieni,* see their note, p. 233. On the complex history of views of melancholy in the Middle Ages, see Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky, and Fritz Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy* (New York: Basic Books, 1964), pp. 67–123. One of the most influential medieval treatises on melancholy, by Constantinus Africanus, recognizes the need for emotional treatment as part of a regimen of nonnaturals. *Saturn and Melancholy,* p. 85, misrepresents Constantinus's organizational scheme: the "sex necessaria" include the *accidentia animae;* see *De melancholia,* in *Opera medica* (Basle, 1536), pp. 291–94 (misnumbered as 391–94).

[28]The Sloane illumination is printed in *Saturn and Melancholy,* pl. 67; see pp. 286–91 for discussion of the pictorial tradition of the melancholic pose. On music as therapy in the Middle Ages, see Madeleine Pelner Cosman, "Machaut's Medical Musical World," in *Machaut's World: Science and Art in the Fourteenth Century,* ed. Madeleine Cosman and Bruce Chandler, *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences,* 314 (1978), pp. 1–36.

to "be joyful and happy and associate with cheerful people and read pleasant and unusual things (prendre ioye et leesse et hanter gens ioyeuses et lire ioyeuses choses et estranges)."[29] With this line we arrive at an explicit connection between literature and the *accidentia animae.* Clearly some reviser of Aldobrandino in the fifteenth century felt that the recommendation to be cheerful needed supplementing, and he added two means of removing melancholy: associating with cheerful people (one thinks of the gregarious friends of Dorigen in Chaucer's *Franklin's Tale* who try to take her mind off the grisly rocks; later we will see Boccaccio's *Decameron* storytellers becoming "gens ioyeux" in an act of self-remedy against the plague), and reading delightful and unusual works. What is the author thinking of here? What kind of writing is "ioyeuses" and "estranges"? I would imagine the passage refers to some kind of exciting or exotic narrative, perhaps a romance or something like Mandeville's travels. In any case, there is a precise connection established between the reading of enjoyable material and one's health. Writing that makes one cheerful has a role in the cure of melancholy and, for the same reasons, in hygiene as well.

For confirmation of the therapeutic value of literary entertainment, whether read or heard, we may turn to the late medieval *consilia,* reports by physicians on specific cases they have either seen or been informed of. The basic structure of the medical *consilium,* as outlined by Dean Putnam Lockwood, is tripartite: a description of the symptoms, perhaps with an attempt at diagnosis; a prescribed regimen based on the nonnaturals; and a final section on medical treatment. Not all *consilia* follow this pattern, and many shorter ones are little more than recipes for a particular malady. Moreover, not all writers of *consilia* adhere to the form as rigorously as Ugo Benzi, the subject of Lockwood's study.[30] But the attention to regimen in many *consilia* offers a chance to see medieval physicians working with the theory of the *accidentia animae* in specific practical circumstances.

[29]E.g. British Library MSS Royal 20 B. IX, f. 19v; Sloane 3152, f. 14; Rylands French MS 7, f. 17v (reading "choses plaisantes" for "ioyeux choses").

[30]*Ugo Benzi, Medieval Philosopher and Physician 1376–1439* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951); see pp. 44–78 for a discussion of the *consilia,* pp. 86–138 for what one can infer from Ugo's about medical practice.

Lockwood mentions five physicians, through the middle of the fifteenth century, whose *consilia* have survived in substantial collections. The earliest of these is Taddeo Alderotti, a distinguished thirteenth-century doctor and teacher. His *consilia,* the only collection of the five to have a modern edition, generally include brief formulaic statements about the accidents of the soul which are usually no more specific than those in the regimens. The following is typical: "The patient should avoid all sadness and worry; bring joy and happiness to him by means of all those things he finds delightful."[31] But just what are the things that produce cheerfulness? Only once does he enter into some detail, in a *consilium* dealing with a marquis's melancholy and sleeplessness: "His cheerfulness, gaiety, and solace should be promoted by taking walks at times, by seeing things that are beautiful and delightful to him, by hearing songs and instruments that he likes, by being told about and promised great yields from profitable markets, or by some other means."[32] Visual and aural delights are familiar sources of temperate joy, but the economic recommendation is unusual and may reflect some specific knowledge Taddeo had about the patient. He does not mention literary narratives, but his reference to "cantilenas" doubtless includes works that today would be treated as lyric poetry. Here we see the regimens' recommendation of *gaudium temperatum* being given specific secular application; certainly in this case Taddeo recognizes mental attitude as a factor in therapeutics and countenances a variety of means to promote the patient's cheerfulness.

Though his *consilia* are less explicitly structured than Taddeo's, and though he is more likely to omit any mention of the *accidentia animae* in regimens where apparently he does not think them relevant, Gentile da Foligno (who died of the

[31]"Caveat sibi ab omni tristitia et sollicitudine, inducatur ei gaudium et letitia cum omnibus rebus cum quibus contingit delectari." Taddeo Alderotti, *I "Consilia,"* ed. Giuseppi Michele Nardi (Turin: Edizioni Minerva Medica S.A., 1937), p. 22. On Taddeo and his *consilia* see also Nancy G. Siraisi, *Taddeo Alderotti and His Pupils* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981). This richly informative book appeared too late to be of aid in writing this chapter.

[32]"Inducatur gaudium et letitia et solatium eundo spatiatim, videndo res pulcras et delectabiles sibi, audiendo cantilenas et instrumenta sibi placentia, et annuntientur et promittantur sibi magna lucra de mercationibus lucrativis, vel alio modo." P. 55.

plague in 1348) still retains something of Taddeo's perfunctory formulaic advice. His favorite recommendations concerning the passions are to avoid being alone and to become cheerful by conversing with friends. One *consilium* expands this somewhat: "Among other things, [the patient] should especially take care not to remain alone nor to plunge himself into sadness or heavy thoughts. To this end conversation with good friends works very well, as do a change of scenery, tackling things that seem challenging to complete, and hawking and hunting."[33] Here the list seems predicated on the idea of distraction and includes not only activities that might in themselves conduce to good spirits but also work that will take one's mind off unhealthy preoccupations. Later we will see Boccaccio naming some of the same pursuits as cures for melancholy, to which he adds the reading of the *Decameron.*

In a long *consilium* on a bishop's problems with his liver and other digestive organs, Gentile suggests something of his own attitude toward the efficacy of the sixth nonnatural as part of a regimen: "In regard to the accidents of the soul, it is easy to explain what may be helpful but not easy to see that it is carried out." He lists a variety of possible sources of cheerfulness for the patient, from thoughts of heaven to thoughts of earthly pleasures. Though convinced that the proper emotional attitude has a role to play in this instance, he is aware of the subjectivity of personal responses and the difficulty of instituting mental change in the way that one might institute a dietary regimen; doubtless this accounts, at least in part, for the wide variety of possible means to cheerfulness that he enumerates.[34]

[33]"Inter alia singulariter procuret non remanere solitarius nec profundare se ad tristitiam et cogitamina. Ad hoc multum valet conuersatio cum dilectis et mutatio de terra in terram et tentare aliqua que videantur difficilia in consecutione et aucupari et venari." Gentile says that regimen is particularly important in this case, a patient with digestive problems. *Consilia Cermisoni. Consilia Gentilis* (Venice, [1495?]), f. 63v. The *consilia* of Antonio Cermisone, printed with Gentile's in this volume, are predominantly recipes and show little interest in the *accidentia animae;* there is usually a more religious tone to his recommendations about mental attitude, e.g. "Mente letetur et speret in domino qui sibi sanitatem restituet" (f. 21). For bibliography on Gentile's *consilia,* see Lynn Thorndike, "*Consilia* and More Works in Manuscript by Gentile da Foligno," *Medical History,* 3 (1959), 8–19.

[34]"Circa accidentia anime quod sit vtile leuiter explicatur sed non leuiter executioni mandatur. Expedit enim vt euitentur in quantum possunt cogitamina tristia et intendatur gaudio et letitie et conuersationi amicorum et eorum

Like Gentile, Ugo Benzi frequently recommends conversation as a means of inducing cheerfulness. In one *consilium* he adds that such talk should take place "in beautiful and pleasant places, with delightful and sweet musical sounds (in locis pulchris et amenis cum sonis musicalibus delectabilibus et suauibus)," evoking an entire pastoral setting reminiscent of the gardens in the *Decameron.*[35] Often Ugo couples conversation with what seem like more distinctively literary activities, recommending in one case "conversing with friends and listening to pleasant things" (f. 20v), in another "hearing or reading delightful things" (f. 41v), in another "seeking out cheerful and amusing speech" (f. 11). His most detailed recommendation concerning the *accidentia animae* involves a case of melancholy in a noble youth who has come to fear that he is about to die. Here mental attitude is obviously crucial, and after naming the emotions to be avoided, Ugo turns to those to be promoted, adducing a variety of pleasure-creating activities that has many parallels to the list in the *Secretum secretorum:*

> There should be the most diligent effort made to instill liveliness and good hope in him, and to shift his thoughts on one day to some delightful and fitting thing, on another to something else. Such things include looking at various beautiful and entertaining decorations; hearing music and songs; reading something not too difficult, like a narrative or some other work he likes; perfuming or selecting clothes for himself; preparing houses, pleasure gardens, and estates; and other similar activities.[36]

In Ugo Benzi's mind, conversation with friends is closely linked to listening to discourses that most likely include the telling of

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quibus delectatur, et rememorationi rerum amabilium et intuitui serenitatis celi et rerum preciosarum et innouationi vestium et eorum que delectationem afferunt et tristem cogitationem expellunt que sunt diuersa secundum diuersitatem hominum." F. 65.

[35] *Consilia Ugonis Senensis saluberrima ad omnes egritudines* (Venice, 1518), f. 4v.

[36] "Sed sit diligentissimum studium in dando sibi alacritatem et bonam spem et permutando cogitationes suas quadam die ad vnam rem delectabilem et honestam, alia die ad aliam. Et hoc aut videndo diuersa ornamenta pulchra vel ioculatoria, aut audiendo sonos et cantilenas, aut in legendo aliquid non difficile sed vel hystoriam vel aliam rem sibi caram, vel odorando vel ordinando sibi vestes, vel aptando domos et viridaria et possessiones, et aliis modis similibus." F. 13.

stories. Although words like "placita" and "sermones" are too general to allow specific inferences, the fact that such "delectabilia" can be read as well as heard must mean that they include forms substantial enough to be committed to writing. We are in that nebulous area of medieval discourse where it is difficult to distinguish between stories or anecdotes told casually as part of sophisticated conversation and narratives recited more formally as some kind of "official" entertainment. Ugo's advice to the young nobleman is less problematic: he recommends the medieval equivalent of "light reading," a narrative that will prompt immediate pleasure.

Some of the most interesting comments on the *accidentia animae* appear in Bartholomaeus da Montagnana, whose *consilia* number over three hundred in Renaissance editions. In certain cases he recommends that a patient follow a regimen that will increase the movement of *spiritus* and humors in his body, and he notes that a variety of passions will accomplish this end, including anger as well as delight. To gain delight he advises in one instance "delightful stories that may expand the *spiritus* and move bodily substances (historias delectabiles que dilatent spiritus et moueant materias)" and in another stories "distinctly oriented toward laughter (ad risum notabiliter inclinantes)."[37] Like Gentile, he is aware that dealing with the emotions is tricky and that there is a risk involved in trying to excite strong passions (f. 15v). He not only grants a therapeutic function to delightful stories but attributes adverse effects to other kinds of narrative. In a long *consilium* for a Dominican friar, whose many ailments are seen as a result of a combination of his natural complexion turning hot and dry and the accidental complexion of his brain turning cold and moist, Bartholomaeus recommends avoidance of all strong emotions and specifies that "this man should avoid distressing accidents of the soul, such as anxiety, melancholy, sadness, perverse ruminations, the reading of horrible stories depicting martyrdoms or death, and similar things."[38]

Perhaps it is his focus on the *movement* of bodily substances as a

[37]*Consilia Magistri Bartholomei Montagnane* (Venice, 1499), ff. 83v, 15v.

[38]"Ista vir euitet anime accidentia contristatiua, ut angstiam [sic], melancoliam, tristitiam, et meditationes prauas, et horribilium historiam [sic] lectiones representantes martyria siue mortes, et similia." F. 18; see f. 263v for the same reasoning in a *consilium* for a Franciscan.

result of the passions that leads him to treat material usually classified under the accidents of the soul as belonging to another nonnatural, motion and rest. Sometimes he runs the two categories together, apparently thinking in terms of a logical connection between bodily movement and the movements of the soul. In one *consilium* he mentions the study of moral or theological stories along with the singing of psalms as among the "exercises of the soul" that bring delight (f. 278). Possibly the more didactic, rational content of moral or religious narratives leads him to see them as an exercise for the soul rather than as simply an instigator of the passions, but in any case the idea that reflection on serious works can be part of a curative regimen suggests that the therapeutic powers of delight extend to more than purely entertaining literature. Another work treats listening to stories as exercise for the ear ("Aures vero exercitentur historias magnarum rerum audiendo"), as is attending to songs and instrumental music (f. 288v). Bartholomaeus also joins a long tradition in specifying singing or reciting aloud as a form of exercise, particularly good for the chest.[39] More than the other authors, he seems to think of activities we now classify as part of literature or the performing arts in terms of the variety of physiological and psychological purposes they serve.

The *consilia* are interesting for a number of reasons. They offer more immediate evidence of medical practice than academic treatises and regimens, and they show as well how theory and practice relate. Compared with their concern with medicaments, the amount of time they devote to the nonnaturals is relatively small, and within the sections on regimen the amount given to the *accidentia animae* is much smaller still. Even so, their reflections on mental attitude are intriguing and certainly point to a medieval awareness of a possible psychosomatic element in health and illness, an awareness not just theoretically

[39]See e.g. ff. 3, 18, 288v. For evidence from classical medicine recommending reading aloud, see Francesco di Capua, "Osservazioni sulla lettura e sulla preghiera ad alta voce presso gli antichi," *Rendiconti della Accademia di archeologia, lettere e belle arti di Napoli,* n.s. 28 (1953), 59–62, a reference I owe to Susan Noakes. In a regimen dated 1315, a physician of Valencia tells his two sons, away at school in Toulouse, that they can get exercise indoors in inclement weather. He includes dancing in this category; "eciam cantare est exercicium pectoris." Ed. Lynn Thorndike, "Advice from a Physician to His Sons," *Speculum,* 6 (1931), 113.

formulated in the concept of the nonnaturals but acted on in various attempts to recommend ways of altering a person's disposition.[40] In many of the cases cited, the physician's increased attention to the *accidentia animae* seems justified by the nature of the malady. But even the most detailed advice is usually quite conventional. Without a formal discipline of verbal psychotherapy, medieval physicians can do no more than list a number of possible causes of cheerfulness, acknowledge that there may well be others, imply that anything that will work is good, and occasionally admit to the difficulty of instituting successful mental regimens.

To pursue these issues further would demand more attention to complete cases than space allows and more medical knowledge than I have. We can, however, at least see the role that literature occupies in the *consilia*. Although it is not a large one, reading and hearing narratives appear as means of attaining the *gaudium temperatum* that normally stands as the desired mental attitude of a person in good health. The authors who mention literature specifically (we will meet more of them in a later chapter that treats *consilia* on the plague) seem to agree that delightful narratives promote cheerfulness. Literature, music, and conversation are grouped together as methods of properly disposing the emotions, in what may be the closest approach medieval medicine makes to recognizing psychosomatic factors in illness. By extension, reading or hearing stories, listening to music, conversing with friends in beautiful gardens—all those activities we see so often as part of the leisured social life of the later Middle Ages—play a role in hygiene as well as in therapeutics. The perspective of the regimens and *consilia* gives medical sanction to behavior that might otherwise be dismissed as the self-indulgence of the idle and the extravagant.

[40]Generally psychosomatic medicine is considered a modern discipline. But at times earlier thinking along psychosomatic lines is recognized as such. See e.g. Antoinette Stettler, "Zur Psychosomatik im Mittelalter," *Gesnerus*, 31 (1974), 99–106; Marek-Marsel Mesulam and Jon Perry, "The Diagnosis of Love-Sickness: Experimental Psychophysiology without the Polygraph," *Psychophysiology*, 9 (1972), 546–51. For broader historical background see Pedro Laín Entralgo, *Mind and Body*, trans. Aurelio M. Espinosa, Jr. (New York: P. J. Kenedy, n.d.), and L. J. Rather, *Mind and Body in Eighteenth Century Medicine: A Study Based on Jerome Gaub's* De regimine mentis (London: Wellcome Historical Medical Library, 1965). Rather's introduction and notes extend the range of his book beyond the eighteenth-century texts he prints.

The relevance of these hygienic ideas to literary theory will be clear, I hope, by the end of Chapter 4, when we have seen a number of works make reference to them by way of explaining their goals and usefulness. At this point, however, the view of literature implicit in the regimens and *consilia* may seem too distant from specific texts and specific literary theorizing to be accepted as a part of standard medieval critical thought. After all, one can recognize the use of poetry in therapy today but not think it appropriate to construct an elaborate poetics on the basis of that single limited function. Granted that physicians may have recommended literary entertainment as part of their medical advice, that in itself is no evidence that people more closely involved with literature gave such arguments weight or even accepted them. Hence in order to gain some initial assent to the presence of a medical view of the effects of fiction in medieval literary thought, I turn in the next section to two instances where what we would call literary criticism depends on the physiological ideas just presented. The first involves some twelfth- and thirteenth-century theorizing about the value of theatrics; the second, a much briefer example, involves a portion of Laurent de Premierfait's commentary on the *Decameron,* which will be discussed in full in a later chapter.

Theatrica

The idea of theatrics, a science of entertainments (*scientia ludorum*), appears first and fully developed in Hugh of St. Victor's *Didascalicon,* written in the late 1120s. One of its purposes is to categorize the various disciplines that constitute human knowledge. Knowledge is of four kinds: theoretical (which is concerned with truth and which includes theology, mathematics, and physics), practical (concerned with morals; includes ethics, economics, and politics), logical (concerned with words; includes grammar and argumentation), and mechanical (concerned with the works of human labor). Of the traditional seven liberal arts, the trivium appears within logic, the quadrivium within mathematics. Hugh finds a parallel to this pattern in the seven mechanical arts: three (fabric making, armament, commerce) are concerned with outer covering, as the trivium is concerned with words; four (agriculture, hunting, medicine,

theatrics) are concerned with internal nourishment, as the quadrivium is concerned with interior mental concepts.[41]

Before considering Hugh's discussion of *theatrica* we must look at the preceding chapter on medicine, for the two are closely connected, as Glenda Pritchett has indicated (pp. 78–79). Hugh's treatment of medicine consists of a set of carefully selected passages from the *Isagoge* of Johannitius, simplifying its categorizations by dividing the discipline into *occasiones* and *operationes.* Operations are either interior (for example, the use of drugs, emetics) or exterior (for example, ointments, surgery). *Occasiones* are, as we have seen, the six nonnaturals, which Hugh enumerates. He attends particularly to the *accidentia animae,* quoting the *Isagoge* on the effects of various emotions on bodily heat.

He then defines the seventh mechanical art, and it is necessary to reproduce the entire discussion:

> The science of entertainments is called "theatrics" from the theatre, to which the people once used to gather for the performance: not that a theatre was the only place in which entertainment took place, but it was a more popular place for entertainment than any other. Some entertainment took place in theatres, some in the entrance porches of buildings, some in gymnasia, some in amphitheatres, some in arenas, some at feasts, some at shrines. In the theatre, epics (gesta) were presented either by recitals or by acting out dramatic roles or using masks or puppets; they held choral processions and dances in the porches. In the gymnasia they wrestled; in the amphitheatres they raced on foot or on horses or in chariots; in the arenas boxers performed; at banquets they made music with songs and instruments and chants, and they played at dice; in the temples at solemn seasons they sang the praises of the gods. Moreover, they numbered these entertainments among legitimate activities because by temperate

[41] *The* Didascalicon *of Hugh of St. Victor,* trans. Jerome Taylor (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), pp. 61–82. My debt to Taylor's work will be obvious. Latin text ed. C. H. Buttimer (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1939). On the sources and influence of Hugh's conception, see W. Tatarkiewicz, "Theatrica, the Science of Entertainment," *Journal of the History of Ideas,* 26 (1965), 263–72. On Hugh's understanding of the mechanical arts, see Pierre Vallin, " 'Mechanica' et 'Philosophia' selon Hugues de Saint-Victor," *Revue d'histoire de la spiritualité,* 49 (1973), 257–88.

> motion natural heat is stimulated in the body and by enjoyment the mind is refreshed (temperato motu naturalis calor nutritur in corpore, et laetitia animus reparatur); or, as is more likely, seeing that people necessarily gathered together for occasional amusement, they desired that places for such amusement might be established to forestall the people's coming together at public houses, where they might commit lewd or criminal acts.[42]

Tatarkiewicz has rightly pointed out that, unlike the other descriptions of the mechanical arts, this one is in the past tense, apparently reflecting Hugh's reading in Isidore of Seville rather than his interest in contemporary pastimes. His implication seems to be that Hugh has added theatrics solely out of motives of intellectual completeness, appropriating an ancient source because it revealed certain activities with rules, hence valid arts, that needed to be dealt with somewhere in his system. Taylor, on the other hand, speculates that Hugh's "favorable attitude" toward theatrics is "perhaps not unconnected with the rise of liturgical drama in the twelfth century" (p. 206, n. 79). That suggestion is appropriately cautious, for nothing in the passage itself is explicitly contemporary. Yet I think Taylor's attempt to find a modern resonance is also true to Hugh's intent. For later in the *Didascalicon,* commenting on the different motives people have for studying the Bible, Hugh scorns those more interested in "marvels" than in "salvation":

> They wish to search into hidden matters and to know about unheard-of things—to know much and to do nothing. . . . What else can I call their conduct than a turning of the divine announcements into tales (fabulas)? It is for this that we are accustomed to turn to theatrical performances, for this to dramatic recitations (sic theatralibus ludis, sic scenicis carminibus)—namely, that we may feed our ears, not our mind.[43]

Here we are in the present tense, but the idea of theatrics, a science that includes such *ludi* as plays and recitations, surely cannot be far away. Hugh may not have seen chariot racing,

[42]Taylor, p. 79; Buttimer, p. 44.
[43]Taylor, p. 134; Buttimer, p. 111.

but he and his audience would have had no trouble envisaging the public performance of "gesta," the presence of songs and music "in conviviis," or the Christian equivalent of singing praise in the temples. Hugh has a conception of entertainment that is relevant to his century as well as to classical culture; and even if we cannot identify precisely those stage entertainments he may have turned to in order to please his ears, we should think of his treatment of *theatrica* not just as a historical reconstruction but as a reasoned statement on entertainment applicable to his own era.

And when we do, we find that the rationale for theatrics is thoroughly physiological. Hugh ascribes the two arguments advanced—that temperate motion stimulates the body's natural heat, and that pleasure refreshes (or repairs) the mind—to ancient belief. But in fact they do not occur in Isidore's material on games (*Etymologiae,* XVIII, 16–69), which critics as long ago as Robert Kilwardby and as recently as Tatarkiewicz have named as his source. The arguments were obviously in Hugh's mind from his preceding chapter, where he had noted the effect of *gaudium* and other emotions on the natural heat. Here he explains the reactions somewhat more ambiguously: the temperate motion that promotes heat probably alludes to the physical endeavors of the participants, as Tatarkiewicz argues, though it is certainly possible that the line refers as well or instead to the emotions generated in the audience, since they too are movements that affect the body's natural heat. Later in the twelfth century, William Fitzstephen describes adult Londoners coming to watch boys play sports and having their natural heat raised simply by emotional identification with the children.[44] Hugh's second argument is not explicitly in the *Isagoge* but as we have seen is a familiar extension of its principles: the emotion of *gaudium* or *laetitia,* by expanding heat and *spiri-*

[44]"Elder men and fathers and rich citizens come on horse-back to watch the contests of their juniors, and after their fashion are young again with the young; and it seems that the motion of their natural heat is kindled by the contemplation of such violent motion and by their partaking in the joys of untrammelled youth (et excitari videtur in eis motus caloris naturalis contemplatione tanti motus et participatione gaudiorum adolescentia liberioris)." Text in J. C. Robertson, *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket,* Rolls Series, 67, p. III (London, 1878), p. 9. Trans. H. E. Butler, rpt. in *The World of* Piers Plowman, ed. Jeanne Krochalis and Edward Peters ([Philadelphia]: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1975), p. 31.

tus throughout the body, renders the mind as well as the members reinvigorated.[45]

Hugh's final alternative intimates that the physiological justification may be more rationalization than rationale, since he considers it "more likely" that the primary motive for the creation of places of entertainment was a moral and social one. He is certainly responding here to Isidore's association of theaters and brothels (XVIII, 42). But even if the origin of theatrics lay in the need for controlling wicked behavior, it is still true that people gathered for amusement "necesse," and Hugh thinks of that unavoidable need in medical terms. Theatrics is one of the mechanical arts that minister to bodily demands. Entertainment is justifiable because of its restorative value: it feeds the ears, satisfies the sensitive rather than the rational soul. As Hugh says elsewhere, there is a music of the body; it can be seen in the power of growth, in the mixture of humors, and "in those activities (the foremost among them are the mechanical) which belong above all to rational beings and which are good if they do not become inordinate, so that avarice or appetite are not fostered by the very things intended to relieve our weakness." Reason allows for a properly controlled satisfaction of physical and emotional needs. There are more important kinds of music, of course: of the soul, of the soul and body in harmony, of the universe itself. The proper human music "consists in loving one's flesh, but one's spirit more" (Taylor, p. 69). The *Didascalicon* as a whole is naturally more concerned with the latter; but its attention to the mechanical arts, and by implication to whatever literary activity is subsumed within the category of *theatrica*, rep-

[45]Cf. the revision of William of Conches's *De philosophia mundi*, which follows Hugh here but changes the terminology: "Two things are vitally necessary to man . . . movement to keep the mind from languishing, joy to keep the body from exhaustion by too much work (motus quidem ne animus tabescat, gaudium ne nimia exercitatione fatiscat corpus)." Trans. Taylor, p. 205, n. 68. Text in *Un brano inedito della "Philosophia" di Guglielmo di Conches*, ed. Carmelo Ottaviano (Naples: Alberto Morano, 1935), p. 34. The cause-effect relationships seem different from Hugh's, motion aiding the mind, joy the body; but since both involve the expansion of heat and *spiritus*, which has both mental and physical benefits, there is no fundamental disagreement. What is more significant for our purposes is that this work, like Hugh's, views theatrics in the context of the mechanical arts, which are a remedy for *infirmitas*, physical or psychological weakness, rather than for moral or intellectual frailty. On the kind of remedy provided by the mechanical arts, see Taylor, pp. 51–56, Ottaviano, p. 23.

resents Hugh's sensible and temperate recognition of the needs of the body.

His classification of the mechanical arts was highly influential. Tatarkiewicz points to its appearance in St. Bonaventure and in Vincent of Beauvais, while Roger Baron and Pierre Vallin cite other borrowings.[46] To these may be added the early thirteenth-century commentary on Alain de Lille's *Anticlaudianus* by Radulphus de Longo Campo. Like Hugh, Radulphus is concerned with categories of knowledge, and he discusses *mechanica* as one of four types of *scientia:*

> Mechanics is the science of human activities that serve bodily necessities. It has a countless variety of subdivisions, such as fabric making, armament, commerce, hunting, agriculture, surgery, and theatrics. Fabric making eliminates cold and produces the opposite; armament eliminates accidental death and preserves life; . . . theatrics removes displeasure by producing attentiveness and happiness. Thus it is clear that the mechanical arts remove a defect and produce bodily well-being.
>
> They are called mechanical, that is, adulterate, because they teach the spirit to serve the flesh, whereas conversely the flesh ought to serve the spirit. Hence the other three branches of knowledge are liberal, and this one alone is called servile.[47]

The list of mechanical arts follows Hugh, except that surgery replaces medicine, since Radulphus elsewhere classifies medicine as a subdivision of physics, which is part of theoretical philosophy (p. 41). Also, he treats the seven as exemplary rather than exhaustive. His definition of "mechanica" as "adulterina"

[46]See the notes to Baron's edition of the *Epitome Dindimi in philosophiam,* in *Opera propaedeutica Hugonis de Sancto Victore* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966), pp. 220–21. Vallin, 286–88.

[47]"Mechanica igitur est scientia humanorum actuum corporeis necessitatibus obsequentium, cuius infinitae sunt species ut est: lanificium, armatura, navigatio, venatio, agricultura, chirurgia, theatrica. Lanificium quidem expellit frigus et informat contrarium; armatura expellit mortem casualem et conservat vitam; . . . theatrica removet fastidium informando attentionem et laetitiam. Patet ergo quod mechanica expellit defectum et informat valetudinem.

"Dicitur autem mechanica quasi adulterina. Docet enim spiritum servire carni cum e converso caro spiritui servire debeat. Cum igitur aliae tres filiae scientiae liberales sunt, haec sola servilis dicitur." *In Anticlaudianum Alani Commentum,* ed. Jan Sulowski (Wroclaw: Zakład Narodowy Imienia Ossolinskich Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademi Nauk, 1972), p. 44.

comes from Hugh's false etymology (explained by Taylor, p. 191, n. 64), and his analysis of each art in terms of removing a defect and supplying a benefit corresponds to the *Didascalicon*'s focus in Book I on knowledge as a remedy for deficiency. Radulphus keeps Hugh's physiological perspective: the usefulness of theatrics is that it makes one more alert and cheerful, and these qualities are seen as part of "valetudinem," good health. His distinction between mechanical and liberal knowledge, framed in a pointed opposition that does not appear in the *Didascalicon*, further emphasizes *mechanica*'s application to the body alone and its inferior position among the sciences as a result. In short, Radulphus accepts and even sharpens Hugh's approach to entertainment as an art justified by its physical consequences.

St. Bonaventure alters Hugh's schema to make theatrics unique among the mechanical arts. The *De reductione artium ad theologiam* defines God's gifts to man in terms of four lights, ranging from the "light of grace and of Sacred Scripture" through the lights of philosophical knowledge and sense perception to the lowest, the "*external* light, or the light of mechanical skill." This light enables us to understand things created by human craft, which are intended to supply bodily needs ("propter supplendam corporis indigentiam"); it is external because it is in a sense "servilis" and lies below philosophical knowledge. Bonaventure then refers to Hugh's seven mechanical arts, but in a grouping different from his trivium and quadrivium:

> . . . every mechanical art is intended for man's *consolation* or his *comfort;* its purpose, therefore, is to banish either *sorrow* or *want;* it either *benefits* or *delights,* according to the words of Horace:
>
> "Either to serve or to please is the wish of the poets".
>
> And again:
>
> "He hath gained universal applause who hath combined the profitable with the pleasing".
>
> If its aim is to afford *consolation* and amusement, it is *dramatic art,* or the art of exhibiting plays, which embraces every form

> of entertainment, be it song, music, drama, or pantomime. If, however, it is intended for the *comfort* or betterment of the exterior man, it can accomplish its purpose by providing either *covering* or *food*, or by *serving as an aid in the acquisition of either*.

Bonaventure then explains how fabric making and armament provide covering, how agriculture and hunting provide food, and how commerce and medicine help in their acquisition. He ends with a reminder that "dramatic art, on the other hand, is in a class by itself (Theatrica autem est unica)."[48]

This is an intriguing passage, and interpretations of it vary.[49] For our purposes, we may note that Bonaventure seems perfectly content with Hugh's categorization of *mechanica* as ministering to bodily needs; his innovation, the separation of theatrics from the others on the grounds that it alone produces "solatium et delectationem" rather than "profectum," highlights the uniqueness of entertainment and its role in sustaining life, the banishing of sorrow. And it should be clear by now that, in a cultural context alert to mind-body relationships but without a separate discipline of verbal therapy, such a role is by no means trivial.

But not every thinker accepted *theatrica* so readily. About 1250, probably a few years before *De reductione* was composed, Robert Kilwardby, a Dominican who became Archbishop of Canterbury, wrote a treatise that, as its editor says, attempted to do for the thirteenth century what the *Didascalicon* did for the twelfth. In his analysis of kinds of knowledge, Kilwardby accepts Hugh's category of *mechanica*, an "art or practical science concerned with man's physical existence for the purpose of answering his material needs (ars vel scientia operativa circa res humanas corporales propter necessitates humanas corpo-

[48]*Saint Bonaventure's* De reductione artium ad theologiam, ed. and trans. Sister Emma Thérèse Healy (St. Bonaventure, N.Y.: Saint Bonaventure College, 1940), pp. 38–41.

[49]See Pritchett, pp. 70–72, and David L. Jeffrey, "Franciscan Spirituality and the Rise of Early English Drama," *Mosaic*, 8, no. 4 (1975), 23–25; also his *Early English Lyric and Franciscan Spirituality* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), pp. 97–101. Jeffrey finds a "pedagogical theory of dramatic art" in Bonaventure's view of theatrics.

rales tollendas)."[50] He devotes a full chapter to summarizing Hugh's material on the seven mechanical arts and pointing out the fuller treatments in Isidore. Then, in chapter 40, he proposes some adjustments. Most are terminological, substituting more inclusive names for various arts.

His one change in substance is major: "It does not seem to me that *theatrica* should be given status among Christians; rather it should be hated and attacked (theatrica non videtur mihi ponenda apud catholicos, sed magis detestanda et impugnanda)." In support of his rejection of theatrics he cites Isidore's statement that Christians should have nothing to do with "impudicita theatri," "luxuria ludi," and similar forms of decadence (pp. 131–32). Hugh had omitted this and other passages in the *Etymologiae* which express disapproval of secular entertainments; but in light of much official Church opinion on these pastimes, Kilwardby's hard-line attitude should not be surprising. Still, not all recreations must go: "I think that those entertainments which are permitted to Christians, such as playing the cithara, trumpet, flute, and such, should have their standing as a part of medicine and be placed within that branch of medicine which deals with 'occasions.' "[51] He obviously saw and agreed with Hugh's statement of the physiological benefits of entertainment, so much so that he could reduce music to one of the *occasiones* of health and disease, that is, to its role in the sixth nonnatural, the *accidentia animae*, as a cause of *gaudium*. Presumably other entertainments, if they weren't so vile, would have a place there too, for all kinds of *ludi* minister to bodily demands. He proposes replacing *theatrica* with *architectonica* in order to keep the mechanical arts at seven.

Somewhere between Hugh's acceptance of a science of entertainment and Kilwardby's rejection of it except for certain kinds of music lie the views of Peter the Chanter and ecclesiastics associated with him. They do not discuss *theatrica* as a concept, but, as John W. Baldwin has shown, they reveal at least

[50]*De ortu scientiarum*, ed. Albert G. Judy, O.P. (Oxford: The British Academy and the Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, Toronto, 1976), p. 128.

[51]"Id autem quod de ludis licitum est catholicis, ut cithara, tuba, tibia et huiusmodi, pro loco et tempore aestimo esse reducendum ad medicinam ut collocetur sub illa parte medicinae quae considerat occasiones." P. 132.

some tolerance for certain kinds of entertainers.[52] In general their attitude toward performance is hostile; the Chanter says at one point that the acting profession alone "contains nothing of usefulness or necessity" (II: n. 196), a line that seems almost a direct refutation of Hugh of St. Victor's argument that *theatrica* meets a human need. But the condemnation is not complete. The canonist Huguccio accepts a limited kind of instrumental music if it is used for the praise of God, for legitimate church needs, or "for the health of the body (ad salutem corporis)," an essentially medical view of music's effects on people that may well have influenced Kilwardby's thinking (I: 202–3, II: n. 215). Thomas of Chobham, following another text of the Chanter, admits some kinds of narrative performance as acceptable. In a famous passage of the *Summa confessorum,* he distinguishes three kinds of *histriones.* After condemning the first two he turns to those performers who use musical instruments for people's delight ("ad delectandum homines"). Those who sing songs that move people to licentiousness are damnable; but others sing of heroic deeds and of saints' lives "and bring solace to people in their illnesses or in their mental discomfort (et faciunt solatia hominibus vel in egritudinibus suis vel in angustiis suis)." These "ioculatores" can be accepted as long as they do not engage in any of the damnable forms of behavior.[53]

In the context of our investigation, this statement of the *utilitas* of the one tolerable form of entertainment takes on some interest. Decent minstrels sing epics and saints' lives, and they bring "solatia" to people who are specifically in some kind of

[52]*Masters, Princes, and Merchants: The Social Views of Peter the Chanter and His Circle,* 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), I: 198–204; II: chap. IX. nn. 174–235.

[53]*Summa confessorum,* Art. VI, Dist. IV, q. 2a, ed. F. Broomfield, Analecta Mediaevalia Namurcensia, 25 (Louvain and Paris, 1968), pp. 291–93. Other editions in Chambers, II: 262–63, and in Faral, *Les jongleurs,* with discussion, pp. 67–70. Often translated. For the source passages in Peter the Chanter, who tolerates warily *joculatores* who sing of noble deeds "for the purpose of recreation or possibly instruction (ad recreationem vel forte ad informationem)," see Broomfield's notes. On the presence of *chansons de geste* and saints' lives in the *jongleur* repertoire, see Faral, pp. 44–60. Similar to the views of Thomas and the Chanter is the opinion of Friar Thomas Docking, who distinguishes bad entertainers from those who create "solace to combat anger, sadness, tediousness, or sloth, or to combat bodily infirmities (solacium contra iram, tristiciam, tedium et accidiam, vel contra infirmitates corporales)"; quoted in Jeffrey, *Early English Lyric,* p. 218, n. 36, and see p. 176. See also Faral, p. 320, no. 253.

physical or emotional distress (the regimens sometimes list *angustia* among the accidents of the soul to be avoided). It is possible, given the paratactic grammar, that Thomas is thinking of "solatia" as amusing songs along with the more serious ones. But slightly later he restates his point more causally: entertainers may be tolerated who sing about the deeds of princes and other profitable matters "in order to bring solace to people (ut faciant solatia hominibus)." Stories of heroic deeds and other useful narratives are what produce comfort; there seems to be some kind of moral or religious component to the solace, for Thomas apparently sees *delectatio* as the more general term and *solatium* as a response restricted to worthwhile entertainments. But it is not possible, given the generality of the passage, to infer much about Thomas's view of the profitableness of epic or hagiography. What is certain is his and Docking's belief that some kinds of narrative performance bring solace to people who need physical or mental relief. The only reason why they should qualify the audience in that way is the medieval tendency, observable in the theoreticians of *theatrica,* to think of entertainment as justifiable because of its hygienic or therapeutic effects.

Tatarkiewicz says that Hugh's concept of theatrics "fell into oblivion" after the thirteenth century until the Renaissance (269). That is exaggerated, but I know of no major theoretical treatment of the subject in the later Middle Ages. What is clear from the texts we have seen is that the idea of theatrics, as well as some views of performance not explicitly based on it, entails a medical understanding of the usefulness of entertainment, and that much of what is classified as entertainment seems to belong to what we call medieval literature. It is of course difficult to deduce from such highly theoretical discussions what specific works might fit within the conception. Certainly *theatrica* does not mean *poetica.* Hugh gives poetry a separate standing—but only, interestingly enough, as an appendage to the arts, something to be attended to after one's work on the liberal disciplines, if time allows (Taylor, pp. 87–89). Radulphus, as one might expect from someone commenting on a philosophical poem, makes *poesis* one of his major species of *scientia* (p. 44). But although theatrics does not include the *Anticlaudianus,* it does entail works distinctly "literary" in nature: recitations of

gesta, songs, comedies, and tragedies. Arnulf of Orleans perceives the twelfth-century Latin elegiac comedy *Pamphilus* as an example of a love story presented "in theatro." His reference establishes the performance of that work and perhaps suggests one strain of literature that might be thought of as part of the theatrical art.[54]

The medieval classification of *theatrica* is based on circumstance and function rather than on the inherent characteristics of each type of presentation. To cite just one further example, Peter the Chanter notes that in various entertainments actors are chosen because they fit their parts; this happens not only in saints' plays but also "in festo stultorum in comediis et tragediis et in huiusmodi ludicris ac mimicis representationibus" (Baldwin, II: IX n. 234). This kind of grouping, which seems to include everything from full-scale drama to mime to the celebration of the Feast of Fools, makes perfect sense once we "widen the concept of theatre by including everything that is to-day known as the performing arts."[55] Any story told as part of a public performance, any scenario given whatever kind of stage presentation, any lyric sung—all these more or less literary presentations join music, dance, pantomime, even acrobatics, in the category of *theatrica.* Although we may not be able to know specifically what works Hugh and other writers on theatrics had in mind, and although any given work may well have had values unaccounted for by the general theory, the fact remains that the principal justification for a performance perceived as an example of *theatrica* was essentially medical: entertainment repairs the body and the mind.

If the example of theatrics is problematic because of the breadth of the conception and the generality of the theorizing, no such difficulties arise with my second example of physiological ideas in literary criticism. In the dedicatory letter to his translation of the *Decameron,* Laurent de Premierfait offers im-

[54]Bruno Roy, "Arnulf of Orleans and the Latin 'Comedy,'" *Speculum,* 49 (1974), 258–66. There is much controversy about how the Latin *comoediae* were presented and about theatrical knowledge in general in the twelfth century; for a good summary of these matters see Rosemary Woolf, *The English Mystery Plays* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), pp. 25–38.

[55]Roy, 262, though he is speaking in a different context.

plicitly a critical interpretation of it, focusing particularly on its usefulness. A full examination of this text must come later, but it is relevant now to look at one portion of it. Laurent explains to the Duke of Berry that reading or listening to the *Decameron* will enable him and others to "acquire three profits that are mingled with three honest pleasures." He then defines these "prouffiz" that arise out of "plaisirs," and the last two have medical force:

> Second, after difficult and burdensome work, whether physical or mental, it is natural that everyone restore his energy either through the help of food or through some proper pleasure in which the soul takes delight. Third, since you and other earthly rulers represent divine power and majesty, I say that just as joyful and happy praise from the heart should be sung or spoken before the heavenly and omnipotent Lord, so is it proper before earthly lords that stories be told in an agreeable way and with proper language in order to gladden and cheer people's spirits. For in order to be more fully worthy in the eyes of God, rulers and all men may prolong their lives in any rational way consonant with God and nature.[56]

Laurent's view of the profits of the *Decameron* extends to more than intellectual or moral benefits. His second point is based on a parallel that is absolutely accurate to anyone thinking within the tradition of the nonnaturals. Work leads to weakness, whether of the body or the mind, and some kind of reinvigoration is necessary: food for the body, delight for the

[56]"Secondement, selon ordre de nature aprez griefues et pesantes besongnes traictees par labour corporel ou par subtillite d'engin il affiert que chascun homme refreschisse ses forces ou par confort de viandes ou par aucune honneste leesse en quoy l'ame prengne delectacion. Tiercement, puisque vous et autres princes terriens portez la representacion et figure de puissance et mageste diuine, je di que ainsi comme deuant dieu celeste et tout puissant doiuent estre chantees ou dictes loanges de cueur ioieux et esbaudi, aussi deuant les princes licitement peuent estre racomptees nouuelles soubz gracieuses manieres et honnestes paroles pour leesser et esbaudir les esperitz des hommes. Car pour plusamplement meriter enuers dieu il est permis aux princes et aussi a tous hommes alongner leurs vies par toutes voies consones a dieu et a nature acompaignee de raison." Bibliothèque Nationale MS f. fr. 129, f. 2v. Ed., with some errors in transcription, Attilio Hortis, *Studi sulle opere latine del Boccaccio* (Trieste: Julius Dase, 1879), pp. 745–46.

soul. Laurent thinks of both replenishments in terms of the role they play in restoring human energy. The *Decameron* does for the mind what a good meal does for the body. I don't think he is trying to be witty or cute here. He has a unified conception of refreshment that we will see in the next chapter embodied in the term "recreatio." He makes a perfectly natural and forceful comparison given the hygienic ideas discussed above, and only if we take it seriously can we appreciate some of the ways in which the Middle Ages thought about literary pleasure.

The third argument is even more explicitly hygienic. It is permissible to "gladden and cheer people's spirits (esperitz)," for such enjoyment leads to lengthening of life and hence to more opportunity to merit divine reward. Proper secular entertainment is the earthly counterpart of religious celebration, and even its outcome—the improved health that leads to longer life—is put in terms of a final cause, thus giving refreshment theological relevance. But just as interesting as the perhaps overly earnest fusing of secular and sacred here is the unspoken assumption that reinvigorating the *spiritus* will have a notable physical consequence: people who take entertainment live longer, apparently, than those who do not. Laurent's reference to "esperitz," like other literary claims we will see in Chapter 4, is quite likely specifically medical, referring to the *spiritus* that physicians assert to be at its optimum effectiveness for human well-being when one is in a state of temperate joy. Modern allusions to raising one's spirits, or being in good spirits, preserve the old terminology but, of course, without its scientific force. In the Middle Ages, a phrase like "esbaudir les esperitz" is not just a periphrasis for enjoying oneself: it is a precise statement of a desirable physiological consequence of entertainment.

Literature as *Confabulatio*

Thus far we have seen medical texts approach the usefulness of stories in terms of their connection with the accidents of the soul, as a means of attaining a desirable emotional state. There is one medieval book on health which discusses fiction in a different context, but the perspective remains equally physio-

logical, and the attention given to the dynamics of literary response is more complete than in the regimens and *consilia* discussed above. The *Tacuinum sanitatis,* or *Tables of Health,* is a hygienic manual translated into Latin during the thirteenth century from the Arabic of Ibn Butlān, a Christian physician of the eleventh century who studied in Baghdad, practiced in Cairo, and eventually became a monk in Antioch. It should not be confused with the *Tacuinum morborum,* a set of therapeutic rather than hygienic tables by a different author, which was translated in 1296 for Charles of Anjou. The *Tacuinum sanitatis* is perhaps best known to art historians, for in the late fourteenth century a number of beautifully illuminated manuscripts of it were produced in Italy. A recent volume, *The Medieval Health Handbook,* now makes many of their illustrations readily available, and handsome facsimile editions of some of the manuscripts have appeared as well.[57]

From the illustrated versions we can see a view of health as holistic as that in the regimens, for like them the *Tacuinum* is based on the nonnaturals, as its introduction makes clear (see Arano, p. 6). Each page of the illuminated manuscripts offers a picture of something relevant to one's health, below which a text quite succinctly states pertinent information about its use, such as its nature (explained in terms of the four degrees of the four qualities of hot, cold, moist, dry), its usefulness, its dangers, and how to eliminate those dangers. The majority of the pages feature, as one might expect, various foods and herbs; but there are also a few illustrations of the other nonnaturals: entries relating, for example, to air (the four winds and seasons), motion and rest (walking, horseback riding, fencing), and the accidents of the soul (anger, joy, shame). In total more than 250 items appear, though no one manuscript has all of

[57]Luisa Cogliati Arano, *The Medieval Health Handbook,* trans. Oscar Ratti and Adele Westbrook (New York: Braziller, 1976). The introduction is principally from the standpoint of art history and is not especially lucid on the medical background, for which Léopold Delisle's "Traités d'hygiène du moyen âge," *Journal des savants* (1896), 518–40, is still useful. Facsimiles: Elena Berti Toesca, *Il Tacuinum sanitatis della Biblioteca Nazionale di Parigi* (Bergamo: Istituto Italiano d'Arti Grafiche, 1937); Luigi Serra and Silvestro Baglioni, *Theatrum sanitatis. Codice 4182 della R. Biblioteca Casanatense,* 2 vols. (Rome: La Libreria dello stato, 1940); Franz Unterkircher, *Tacuinum sanitatis in medicina. Codex Vindobonensis series nova 2644 der Österreichischen Nationalbibliotek,* 2 vols., Codices Selecti, vols. VI–VI* (Graz: Akademische Druck- u. Verlagsanstalt, 1967).

them. *The Medieval Health Handbook* reproduces most of the illuminated subjects, with English translations of the prose summaries, though unfortunately it does not include any representations of *gaudium,* which is illustrated by a woman and a man standing in a garden setting and which has the following explanation:

> Gaiety. Its nature is an expression of vitality and of the warmth resulting therefrom. Preferable: when it leads to a pleasant feeling. Utility: good for sad and endangered persons. Harm: when experienced too often, it leads to death. Removal of harm: by living with wise men. Especially advantageous to people with a cold temperament, to the weak, in cold seasons, and in cold regions.[58]

We have seen most of these details in the regimens, though expressed somewhat differently. I assume the value of wise men in moderating excessive joy means not that they are uniformly morose but that they are likely to use reason to temper extreme passions. Because of the purely sequential arrangement of the *Tacuinum,* there is no comparative treatment of the emotions, and hence, in contrast to the regimens, no summary statement about the advantages of moderate cheerfulness. But its value is implied elsewhere, for entries on singing, playing music, and dancing discuss the usefulness of these activities in terms of curing illness and inducing pleasure.[59]

Still, the principal interest of the illustrated versions of the *Tacuinum* is the art. The illuminations not only depict the subjects but usually create entire scenes around them, ranging, as do the illustrations of the months in the *Très riches heures* of the Duke of Berry, from views of peasants at work to studies of the leisured life of the upper classes. The terse prose descriptions occupy only a small portion of each page and could not have been the *raison d'être* of the manuscripts. One suspects that their chief contribution to the health of the people who could afford to own them was the *gaudium temperatum* instilled from contemplating beautiful pictures.

[58]Trans. C. H. Talbot, in Unterkircher, II: 137, with Latin text. For the illustration see Unterkircher, I: f. 104v or Serra and Baglioni, I: cciv.

[59]Arano, pl. 66; Unterkircher, II: 135–36.

It is a quite different story when we turn to the fuller, unillustrated *Tacuinum,* which is much less well known but much more medically informative. It too is constructed in a highly schematic manner, with each item of the nonnaturals numbered and defined according to *iuuamentum, nocumentum,* and so on. But the full-length prose text also groups each item within a table, thereby providing a somewhat more hierarchical structure than the one-by-one enumeration of the illustrated versions, and surrounds each table with some general commentary on the principal topics treated therein. Every table also includes a section that gives a paragraph-length discussion of each item; this information is omitted in the short prose summaries of the illuminated manuscripts. Table XXXI, for example, deals with music and the accidents of the soul; it has entries for certain emotions and also for singing, instrumental music, and dancing. Table XXXIV treats not only the general category of motion and rest but also such specific forms of exercise as horseback riding, hunting, and wrestling.[60] For a discussion of literary performance, though, one must turn to another nonnatural.

Table XXXII presents, in addition to some items relating to repletion and evacuation, four entries on the subject of sleep and waking. Two, simply enough, are *somnus* and *vigiliae,* with the usual recommendations about not overdoing either; the third, *confabulationes in somnis,* talking in one's sleep, notes the relevance of the phenomenon to both rational and emotional concerns. The fourth item is *confabulator,* and before we try to define what that means, we need to begin with the *Tacuinum*'s more general discussion of sleep and how it is induced. Sleep comes from humid vapors released by the food one has eaten; it is valuable for the rest it gives the body and the aid it gives to digestion by moving the natural heat from the exterior to the interior.

[60]I base this description on two closely related fourteenth-century manuscripts at the British Library, Sloane 3097 and Add. 38689, in both of which the *Tacuinum* follows Bernard Gordon's *Regimen sanitatis.* The Renaissance edition of the *Tacuinum* (Strasbourg, 1531) groups the general commentaries on each table at the front, and adds some small illustrations of each item at the bottom of pages, but otherwise follows the tabular arrangement of the unillustrated MSS.

> If the digestion of food is not successful, but becomes corrupted, the vapors of the heat thus released ascend to the brain and cause wakefulness. Hence one needs conversations, which may encourage sleep, since sleeplessness dries out the body, harms the members and the brain, confuses the senses, and prompts acute illnesses. For this reason doctors advise people with cold hearts to have stories told to them that provoke anger, and those with hot hearts stories that entail pity, in order that their constitutions may be moderated. The reason that conversations produce sleep is that the ear receives, without any natural movement, certain qualities of sense data, the more delightful of which it takes in and transmits to the imagination, and the imagination to reason. The reason marvels at that which is before it and then tires from this wonder, so that from repeated wonder at the imaginings it has taken in and is fixed on, the faculty of hearing ceases to bring forward what has been spoken. Thus the apparatus of hearing, along with the other senses, pauses from the apprehension of sense data, and sleep is induced, the senses resting from perceptions made while awake. . . . Hence that which is spoken should be delightful, with a fitting verbal adornment, so that one may sleep deeply and not have bad dreams.[61]

Conversation is a means to sleep, and since sleep is essential to well-being, conversation has a medical value. The description of how it contributes to sleep involves the familiar medi-

[61] *Tacuinum sanitatis* (Strasbourg, 1531), pp. 29–30, with emendations from B.L. Add. 38689, f. 89: "Et si forte cibus digeri non ualeat sed corrumpitur, uapores calidi ab eo resoluti cerebrum ascendunt, propter quod uigiliae accidunt. Indiget enim propter hoc confabulationibus, quibus somnus prouocetur, eo quod non dormire corpus dessicat, membris et cerebro nocet, sensum [*ed.* sensus] permiscet, acutas aegritudines commouet. Qua de caussa praecipiunt medici habentibus corda frigida recitari [*ed.* recitare] coram eis historias iracundiam prouocantes et habentibus corda calida historias misericordiam continentes, ut temperentur [*ed.* obtemperentur] complexiones ipsorum. Et caussa in hoc est quod confabulationes somnum prouocant eo quod auditus recipit absque motu naturali qualitates sensibilium, et quia auditus recipit delectabilius ipsorum uel eorum quae audit, et imaginationi transmittit; imaginatio uero rationi. Ratio uero admiratur de praesentatis donec fatigetur ex admiratione praedicta, ita quod ex multiplicata admiratione imaginabilium receptorum quibus intenta est uirtus ipsa audibilis audibilia non praesentat; propter quod quiescit instrumentum auditus ab apprehensione sensibilium, cum aliis sensibus. Unde prouocatur somnus, ipsis sensibus quiescentibus ab apprehensionibus in uigiliis factis. . . . Sermones ergo qui recitantur, delectabiles debent esse ornatu uerborum, ut somni prolixi fiant et dormientes non uideant somnia timorosa."

eval psychology of perception, from *sensibilia* to *imaginatio* to *ratio*.[62] The *Tacuinum* invokes the principle that delightful words lead to a pleasant activity of the mind because of its interest in sleep and dreaming; but the psychology would explain as well why didactic literary theory values surface pleasure as a means of leading an audience to an understanding of rational content. The passage as a whole provides an explanation for some of the observations in the *consilia* on the emotional effects of different types of reading, and like them its view of "conversation" seems to include literary material as well, as the references to stories and verbal elegance suggest. But to see better what kinds of discourse belong to *confabulatio* we may turn now to the *Tacuinum*'s description of *confabulator* as one of the hygienic items in its table on sleep and waking:

> *Confabulator:* A teller of stories should have good discernment in knowing the kind of fictions in which the soul takes delight, should be able to shorten or extend his presentation of stories as he may choose, and to decorate, amplify, and arrange them as is fitting. He should not alter his appearance in conversation,[63] nor should the purpose of the *confabulator* be interfered with by too much talking. A *confabulator* should be proper in manner and courtesy, be able to stay awake, be a good judge of discourses (not only histories of great princes but also delightful stories that provoke laughter), and be conscious of verses and rhymes, so that through these things a

[62]See Murray Wright Bundy, *The Theory of Imagination in Classical and Mediaeval Thought,* University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, 12 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1927), and Salman, 308–16. For the role of wonder (*admiratio*) in the process, and its connections with learning and pleasure, see J. V. Cunningham's chapter in *Woe or Wonder: The Emotional Effect of Shakespearian Tragedy,* reprinted in *Tradition and Poetic Structure* (Denver: Alan Swallow, 1960), esp. pp. 204–9.

[63]One of the standard ecclesiastical complaints about entertainers is that they misuse their bodies through contortions, gestures, clothing, etc. See Baldwin, I: 199. I think the prescription that one not "mutet suam effigiem" may be a means of distinguishing the *confabulator* from the *histrio* and other less savory performers. Geoffrey of Vinsauf, in the section on delivery in his shorter *Documentum de modo dictandi et versificandi,* says that one should vary voice, facial expression, and gesture according to the material, but he is careful to stress that all three should be elegant and restrained, not like the gestures of an actor ("gestus histrionis"). Ed. Edmond Faral, *Les arts poétiques du XII^e^ et du XIII^e^ siècle* (rpt. Paris: Champion, 1962), p. 318. See also Hermannus Alemannus, pp. 32–33.

> prince may gain an abundance of pleasures. For his digestion will improve because of them, and his *spiritus* and blood will be purified, and he will be freed from all sorts of troubling thoughts, and his memory sharpened for the common talk and occurrences that swell up around him.[64]

Literally, a *confabulator* is simply one who converses; in the illustrated versions of the *Tacuinum*, which show people sitting around a fire in various stages of attention, the description of its usefulness and dangers implies nothing more than ordinary conversation.[65] But the longer prose version, as Delisle notes, turns into a brief treatise on how entertainers should recite stories for the amusement of the nobility. The *Tacuinum* translator expects a *confabulator* to bring pleasure to his prince through a complex of literary and rhetorical skills that are the subject of many a medieval art of poetry. Both serious historical narrative and humorous stories qualify as *confabulatio*. Such verbal pleasure, besides inducing sleep, will have a variety of other physiological and psychological benefits. This passage brings a hygienic perspective to an activity almost always discussed only in social terms; if medieval people seem so fond of after-dinner entertainments, at least part of their interest may be due to the reasoned medical view that such behavior has value in maintaining health.

A well-known passage in Froissart gives us a portrait of the *confabulator* at work. The author has come to visit Gaston Phoebus, Count of Foix:

[64]"Confabulator: debet autem recitator fabularum boni esse intellectus in scientiis ipsius generis fabularum in quibus delectatur animus, potens abbreviare et prolongare, cum voluerit, fabularum sermones, ipsos ornare, continuare et ordinare ut convenit. Nec mutet suam effigiem in ipsa confabulatione, nec prolixitate sermonum varietur confabulatoris intentio. Sit vero confabulator ipse boni modi et bone curialitatis, potens sustinere vigilias, scrutator sermonum, historiarum regum et sermonum delectabilium et risum provocantium, et versuum et rithmorum conscius, ut propter ea rex assumat plenitudinem gaudiorum. Nam propter hec melioratur digestio ejus, et mundificabuntur spiritus et sanguis ipsorum, et vacabit a variis cogitationibus, et efficitur bone memorie in rumoribus et eventibus supereminentibus ei." Ed. Delisle, 534, from a number of Bibliothèque Nationale MSS; the British Library MSS have a few different readings, the most interesting being "animus sapientis" for "animus" in the first sentence. Add. 38689, f. 89; Sloane 3097, f. 94.

[65]Arano, pl. 140; Unterkircher, I: f.100v and II: 132.

> . . . . I had brought with me a book, which I made at the contemplation of Wenceslas of Boeme, duke of Luxembourg and of Brabant, which book was called the Meliador, containing all the songs, ballads, rondeaux and virelays, which the gentle duke had made in his time, which by imagination I had gathered together; which book the earl of Foix was glad to see, and every night after supper I read thereon to him, and while I read, there was none durst speak any word, because he would I should be well understanded, wherein he took great solace, and when it came to any matters of question, then he would speak to me, not in Gascon but in good fair French.[66]

Froissart here exemplifies a number of characteristics specified in the *Tacuinum:* having arranged his material, he reads it to a prince after dinner while everyone else has been quieted down so that the featured speaker may be properly heard and understood. Froissart answers questions in the process, as the reading turns into something more like ordinary conversation. And, of course, the result of the performance is "soulas" for his host. This scene, doubtless typical of the way much medieval literature was presented, does not depict what we know today as a poetry reading; it gives us rather the reading of poems as part of conversational entertainment.

Don Juan Manuel, the fourteenth-century Castilian nobleman and author, confirms that the *Tacuinum*'s medical perspective on stories and sleep was a part of conventional literary theorizing. In one dedication, he notes that he has often been burdened with cares, leading to sleeplessness and resulting in a loss of bodily health, which he remedies by having some books

[66]II, c. 26, in the translation of Lord Berners, *The Chronicles of Froissart,* ed. G. C. Macaulay (London: Macmillan, 1904), p. 329. Text in *Oeuvres de Froissart. Chroniques,* ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove, vol. 11 (Brussels, 1870), p. 85: "je avoye avecques moy porté ung livre, lequel j'avoie fait à la requeste et contemplation de monseigneur Wincelant de Boesme, duc de Luxembourg et de Brabant, et sont contenus ou dit livre qui s'appelle de Meliader toutes les chansons, ballades, rondeaulx et virelais que le gentil duc fist en son temps: lesquelles choses, parmy l'ymagination que j'avoie de dittier et de ordonner le livre, le conte de Fois vit moult voulentiers. Et toutes nuits après souper je luy en lisoie, mais en lisant nulluy n'osoit sonner mot, ne parler, car il vouloit que je fuisse bien entendu. Certes, aussi il prendoit grant soulas au bien entendre, et quant il chéoit aucune chose où il vouloit mettre argument, trop voulentiers en parloit à moy, non pas en son gascon, mais en bon et beau franchois."

or stories read to him to alleviate his worries. Elsewhere he states that such reading will enable one either to escape from troublesome thoughts and fall asleep or, failing that, to learn something useful.[67] He seems to be thinking principally in terms of didactic material, but his interest apparently lies less in intellectual growth than in psychological comfort. In the context of reading to sleep, the question of pleasure or profit becomes subordinated to the immediate hygienic need; hence the *Tacuinum* would have the *confabulator* versed in everything from histories to comic tales. What counts is what most pleases and thereby unburdens one's prince.

What the *Tacuinum* says about the value of listening to stories would apply equally well to reading them, and its analysis of how the mind works on literary material from the point of view of falling asleep receives a witty exemplification in the early portions of Chaucer's *Book of the Duchess.* The narrator begins by pointing out, with much repetitiousness, that his central problem is that "I may nat slepe."[68] He is well aware of the medical dangers of this condition, which the *Tacuinum* and the regimens make clear. Since no earthly creature can live without sleep, he thus fears death, and this concomitant problem aggravates his condition; his mind is "mased" and depressed, and in this dulled state all life becomes flat, meaningless. He knows that such an existence is "agaynes kynde" (16), and that phrase may well suggest the *res contra naturam,* for the narrator's condition is in medical terms pathological.[69] He speculates on the cause of his sleeplessness, a mysterious eight-year sickness that is usually interpreted as love-longing, but after a few lines returns to his malady and how he tried to remedy it:

> So when I saw I might not slepe
> Til now late, this other night,
> Upon my bed I sat upright
> And bad oon reche me a book,

[67]Quoted and discussed, with additional evidence, by Ian Macpherson, "Don Juan Manuel: The Literary Process," *SP,* 70 (1973), 6–8.

[68]Line 3; also 5, 21–23, 25, 31, 44. Ed. F. N. Robinson, *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer,* 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1957). All subsequent references to Chaucer will be to line numbers of this edition.

[69]Cf. John M. Hill, "The *Book of the Duchess,* Melancholy, and That Eight-Year Sickness," *Chaucer Review,* 9 (1974), 35–50.

A romaunce, and he it me tok
To rede, and drive the night away;
For me thoughte it beter play
Then play either at ches or tables. [44–51]

The image of a man awake in bed is precisely that used in the illustrated versions of the *Tacuinum* to depict *vigiliae*,[70] though the parallel is probably due less to specific iconographic intent than to the lack of chairs and sofas in medieval bedrooms. The narrator reads to drive the night away, to pass the time, preferring literary entertainment to chess or backgammon. Later we will see Boccaccio's storytellers favoring narratives over board games for explicit, and I think seriously meant, psychological reasons. Chaucer's comparison is probably not as surprising or sly as it may seem to a modern audience, for, as we have often noted, narratives were perceived in the context of public or private entertainment and grouped with other similar sources of "play" such as music, dancing, and games. The narrator has "fables" of ancient "poets" brought to him because they are "beter play," more fully satisfying entertainment, not because they are great literature. Ovid fulfills a function now occupied by the late show on television or by the mystery story at one's bedside. At least that is how the narrator perceives it, and if ultimately we find that there is more to the story of Ceys and Alcione than he realizes, and by implication more to Ovid than just play, nevertheless we ought to see his reasoning here as perfectly natural.

The fables of poets are "To rede, and for to be in minde" (55). "Be" is not a forceful verb, but the line is more important than it may seem at first glance. The stories, once read, are to be held in the mind, retained by the memory so that the reason may have use of them. The line alerts us to think in terms of profit as well as pleasure, in the same way that the Canterbury pilgrims' belief that the *Knight's Tale* is "worthy for to drawen to memorie" (A 3112) signals the importance of that story. The speaker's immediate concern, however, is to find something interesting, and he does: "a tale / That me thoughte a wonder thing" (60–61). It is a story of love, death, and grief, and it

[70]Unterkircher, I: f. 101v; Toesca, f. 91.

happens to involve Morpheus, the god of sleep, prompting the narrator to think about the possibility of paying for his services in order to cure his insomnia:

> Whan I had red thys tale wel,
> And overloked hyt everydel,
> Me thoghte wonder yf hit were so;
> For I had never herd speke, or tho,
> Of noo goddes that koude make
> Men to slepe, ne for to wake;
> For I ne knew never god but oon.
> And in my game I sayde anoon—
> And yet me lyst ryght evel to pleye—. . . . [231–38]

In his morose state he is not inclined to be playful, yet somehow the fiction triggers a spirit of "game," an amused and amusing flight of thought, his offer of a feather-bed and other rewards to Morpheus or anybody else who can make him sleep. No sooner are the words out than "sodeynly, I nyste how, / Such a lust anoon me took / To slepe, that ryght upon my book / Y fil aslepe" (272–75). And in sleep he dreams a "wonderful" dream that is the center of the poem.

Much has been written about dream-vision poetry in the Middle Ages and Chaucer's relationship to it. Scholars acknowledge his innovativeness in using a literary text as a structural component in his early dream visions. But innovations have contributing causes, and however original and humorous Chaucer may be in describing his means of falling asleep, it is worth noting that his invention in the *Book of the Duchess* seems predicated on a psychology of reading and sleeping that is explained in the *Tacuinum*. From the sense data of the story Chaucer derives "wonder," the "admiratio" which the *Tacuinum* says is involved in reason's contemplation of the most interesting things that the imagination presents to it. Intent upon this wonder (having read the tale "wel" he went back and "overloked hyt everydel"), the narrator becomes actively involved in speculating on what he has found "delectabilius" in the story, the new knowledge of a god of sleep.[71] Thus, even though

[71]Lines 233–37. On wonder as a desire for knowledge, and as causative of pleasure because of the hope of attaining that knowledge, see Aquinas, *ST*, I–II, q. 32, a. 8, trans. Cunningham, pp. 207–9.

reflecting on the story's pathos causes him sorrow the following day (95–100), his mind's involvement at this point in one of its more delightful aspects has led him to a livelier, healthier state. The man burdened with a "sorwful ymagynacioun" (14) is now, thanks to Ovid's story, at least somewhat released from his "cogitationibus" and able to apply his mind "in my game." His sudden sleep is humorous, of course, because it suggests that his request has been miraculously answered by Morpheus. But it has really been answered by a fiction, which has activated his thinking through wonder and filled his brain with pleasant rather than depressing thoughts; with his mind fixed on those ideas, his senses rest. The phrase beginning with line 273 means "such a desire to sleep quickly seized me," but its syntax and the fact that "lust" also means "pleasure" make a second reading tempting if not likely: literary pleasure has indeed brought him to sleep.

The psychology of reader response does not form a large part of the *Book of the Duchess* and is not delineated with precision. Chaucer is after other, and more important, things. But the suggestions of the *Tacuinum*'s logic in regard to stories and sleep give coherence to a section of the poem where Chaucer's humor has not always seemed consonant with its larger purposes. If we think of the playfulness as a therapeutic response to melancholy induced by the delights of fiction, its curative nature makes it a fitting part of the preparation for the dream itself.[72] For if Ovid is Chaucer's *confabulator,* then the narrator is the Black Knight's, and Chaucer John of Gaunt's. The narrator's role in the dream is to lead the knight to wholeness, to let him "ese [his] herte" by telling of his sorrow (553–57), and he does not speak except to further that end. But the work as a whole is all Chaucer's speech, and it is meant to comfort a prince. The relevance of the narrator's sorrow and the story of Ceys and Alcione to the remainder of the poem has been argued fully in many places. It requires the reader of the *Book of the Duchess* to see that there is more to Ovid's story than information about a god of sleep. Chaucer's focus on the dynamics of a man reading and thinking about a work of litera-

[72]Cf. Hill, 44–45, who views the narrator's response as a "defense" mechanism to avoid contemplating the more sorrowful aspects of Ovid's story.

ture, a man who benefits from a story even though his wonder is fixed on one of its less important aspects, is thus both a means of alerting his audience to what his poem asks of them and an expression of hope for what it might be able to achieve for the Duke of Lancaster.

To summarize very briefly the medical view of literature discussed in this chapter: literary delight is one species of the *delectatio* that results from attaining a desired good; it instills *gaudium* in the reader or listener, which when appropriately moderated is the ideal emotional state, useful not only in preserving health but also in attaining the finest disposition of mind and body. Thus literary pleasure promotes physical and mental well-being. This is, to be sure, an argument made by physicians, and when we hear them in regimens and *consilia* recommending entertainment as a means of inducing cheerfulness, we may well ask whether their view of literature is anything more than one profession's use of an art form for its own ends, whether some brief allusions in manuals of health really have much to do with literary thought. But when we hear scholars and theologians discuss theatrics as a remedy for bodily weakness, and Laurent de Premierfait claim that the *Decameron* will reinvigorate the Duke of Berry's *spiritus* and hence prolong his life; when we see Don Juan Manuel explicitly and Chaucer implicitly invoke the principles of *confabulatio* as a means of unburdening the mind and promoting sleep, then we have evidence for an answer to those questions, one that later material in this book will confirm: the hygienic justification of fiction is an important aspect of medieval literary theory.