

On Gambling

PASCASIUS JUSTUS TURCQ



Pascasius Justus Turcq

On Gambling

edited & translated by

William M. Barton



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Acknowledgments

This edition of Pascasius' *De alea* has its origins in a series of conversations during the visiting fellowship of Prof. Jean-François Cottier at the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Neo-Latin Studies (LBI) in January 2017. Prof. Cottier introduced me to the text and its author, and underlined *De alea*'s significance for the history of the medical model for addiction. It quickly became clear that an English translation of the text should complement his own work in French and that of Kronegger-Roth in German, ensuring access to the text for English-speaking medical historians and interested practitioners. Work began in earnest on the text in the following months during my time as *chercheur invité* at the University of Paris Diderot (Paris VII) with Prof. Cottier. I remain deeply grateful to Prof. Cottier for his introduction to Pascasius, the chance to work with him during my fellowship in Paris, and his continued support on my work with *De alea*.

The larger part of my work on the text has taken place within the context of the LBI's research project on scientific literature, which began as part of the Institute's second septennium in 2018. This programme line contributes to the LBI's overarching focus on the Latin literature of the early modern period as a dynamic element of contemporary culture through its study of Latin as a medium for contemporary research in the sciences. The science line, alongside the ERC funded project NOSCEMUS run by Prof. Martin Korenjak, Innsbruck, aims at alerting today's scientific community to the existence of the forgotten scientific literature of early modern times and establishing this literature as a legitimate and important object of research in the history of science today. Enormous thanks are due to the members of the LBI's science line and the NOSCEMUS team for their stimulating and informative discussion of Neo-Latin science, as well as for their guidance in placing Pascasius' work within the field. I similarly owe a debt of gratitude to the LBI's directors and the team at large for help on questions of early modern Latin literature and language of all kinds, and the singularly supportive atmosphere in Innsbruck.

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My personal debts to family and friends for their patience with Pascasius are too great and numerous to recount here. In their stead, I can only quote our author, "Si cui forsan molestius paulo (nam varia sunt hominum ingenia) idem subinde repetere visus sum, is non solum a Ciceronis libris ad Galeni volumina transiisse me iamdiu sciat, verum etiam illud Senecae dictum putet: 'Nunquam satis dicitur, nunquam quod discitur satis.'"

William M. Barton

Introduction

Games and leisure pastimes of all sorts saw a marked rise in popularity in the 16th and 17th centuries.¹ Gambling for money on games of cards, rolls of the dice, or a variety of finger games – the games mentioned primarily in the present text – were common across the period’s social classes.² Although frequently normalised in the educative and courtly handbooks of the time,³ and often even praised for their social benefits and as opportunities for developing skills in ingenuity, guile, memory and wit,⁴ ludic practices were also commonly condemned as examples of time-wasting, moral depravity and as causes of wider social problems. This criticism was not only directed at tricksters and cheats, who emerged as a familiar figure in Renaissance literature and art:⁵ inspired in the ubiquitous Christian religious positions of the period, the recurrent moral and ethical critique of excessive play in written sources from the 16th and 17th centuries was accompanied by widespread legislation across Europe intending to restrict or even frequently ban gaming.⁶ When betting was involved, the social criticism and legal force directed against ludic culture was all the greater.

Among the early modern descriptions, praise and (more frequent) vilifications of gambling from the period, Pascasius Justus Turcq’s *De alea* (1561) stands out as a unique contribution to 16th-century ludic discourse. In the volume’s opening section, Pascasius, a doctor of medicine from Eeklo, proposed a novel, medical description of compulsive

¹ O’Bryan 2019, 18. This was also the chief argument of the seminal paper by Burke 1995.

² See, for example, Leibs 2004, 96. For the early modern card game “primera” or prime (an early version of poker) in *De alea* see §1.107. For dice games see, for example, §1.117. For the finger game of *morra* §1.18.

³ Juan Luis Vives in his educational text *Linguae Latinae exercitatio* (1539) had set out the rules of gaming, including instructions on which types of games were suited to whom and when, for example in the dialogue *Leges ludi*.

⁴ See O’Bryan 2019, 46-52.

⁵ On the figure of the gamester and cheat in Renaissance art and literature, with an emphasis on the work of Caravaggio, see Feigenbaum 1996. The cheat appears in *De alea* at §1.81.

⁶ For the Christian position on gambling, on the example of England and France, see Cottagnies & Fang 2021, 2-3. For attempts at legislation see Fischer 2017, 205-06.

gambling as a psychological disorder. He then proposed a therapeutic method for sufferers in cognitive terms in the work's second section. Calling on his training in the ancient medical and philosophical traditions from his time at the universities of Italy, Pascasius wrote his work in Latin, the *lingua franca* of humanist intellectuals of his time. He had *De alea* printed in Basel, at one of Europe's leading publishing houses, before returning to the Low Countries to settle and work as a physician. The work saw two further editions after Pascasius' death and was frequently referenced by scholarly writers on gambling into the 18th century, before it disappeared almost entirely from view until the late 1990s.

Following an increase in attention to the text and its author beginning in 1995, *De alea* has risen in prominence once more among readers interested in the history of ludic culture and the history of addiction. An abridged French translation of the text was published in 2014, alongside a full French translation made available for download on the publisher's website. This was followed by an edition of the Latin with a German translation in 2015. These publications have done much to promote access to Pascasius' work and their significance for our understanding of the text is clear. The present volume now offers a new critical edition of *De alea*, which re-evaluates the remaining issues in the Latin text, along with the first complete English translation of the work and explanatory notes.

1. Pascasius Justus Turcq – A Life

For information on the early life of Pascasius Justus Turcq, we depend in large part on inferences from the text of *De alea* itself and the short biographical sketch produced by later humanist Marcus Zuerius van Boxhorn (1612-53) for the 1642 edition of the work.⁷ This lack of firm data resulted in significant confusion and differences of opinion in earlier scholarship over such fundamentals as his name and likely date of birth. Thanks to the contributions of Elaut, Van Houdt and Cottier,⁸ however, a more stable image has now emerged of the man and his

⁷ E₃ at [7v]. Boxhorn's 1642 *Life of the Author* is included in the present edition. Later early modern accounts of Pascasius' life can be found in Jöcher's *Allgemeines Gelehrten-Lexikon*, vol. 2, 2041, and Paquot 1765, 588-89. He has a short entry in Jacques 1889, 513-14. The first dedicated scholarly article on Pascasius in the 20th century was Elaut 1952.

⁸ Van Houdt 2008, 5-19; Cottier 2020.

career. The following account takes this recently established *communis opinio* as its starting point.

Pascasius came from Eeklo in East Flanders and was born around 1520 into a well-to-do family. This basic information can be evidenced from *De alea*: on the title page of the first edition, the author presents himself with an adjective from his place of origin, *Ecloviensis*, “from Eeklo”. The use of such demonyms was common practice in publishing throughout the early modern period.⁹ From the dedication letter to *De alea*, the reader learns that Pascasius had been away from home for 18 years, and that he began his time abroad whilst “still a young man” (*adolescens adhuc*) (*Dedicatory Letter* §1). Boxhorn’s biographical sketch informs us “he reached his prime” (*floruit*) around 1540 (*Life of the Author* §1, 3). This vocabulary is vague, but working from the assumption that his “prime” was probably around 20 years of age – an assumption supported by the close coincidence of the author’s stated 18 years of absence from home in 1560 (1542), and Boxhorn’s *floruit* in 1540 – a date around 1520 emerges as most probable for his birth.¹⁰

Having identified himself as only Pascasius Justus on the title page of *De alea*, the author’s name has undergone several reinterpretations over the centuries. Taking the respective parts as fore- and surnames, 18th-century bibliographer and Hebraist Jean-Noël Paquot (1722-1803) gave him the erroneous alias “Pâquier Joostens”, which endures even in areas of modern scholarship.¹¹ De Waard’s article for the *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biografisch Woordenboek* first reunited Pascasius with his surname, Turcq (Turcaeus) for modern scholarship. Pascasius Justus’ son Israel and grandson Pascasius carried the surname into later generations,¹² and Boxhorn’s 1642 edition of *De alea* is dedicated to Justus Turcaeus, our author’s great-grandson.¹³ Speaking of another distin-

⁹ Compare, for example, the frequent use of Hieronymus Cardanus Mediolanensis (Gerolamo Cardano of Milan) or Andreas Lacuna Secobiensis (Andrés Laguna from Segovia) in printed works by these authors, to mention just two names relevant for the present text.

¹⁰ Elaut 1952, 196; Nadeau & al. in Turcq, *De alea*, 71. For the later suggestion of 1527 see Depaulis 2010, 139.

¹¹ The biographical article in Jacques 1889 gives this name alongside the Latin version. Depaulis 2010 repeats the *alias* in his title, though he deconstructs the myth already in the first two pages (135-36). Kronegger-Roth’s edition 2015 perpetuates Paquot’s error.

¹² De Waard 1912a and 1912b.

¹³ See the dedication letter of Boxhorn to Justus Turcq in E₃, p. *3.

*Pascasii Iusti Ecloviensis, philosophiae et medicinae doctoris,
in suos de alea sive curanda ludendi in pecuniam cupiditate libellos*

Praefatio ad lectores

1. Cum in omni omnium hominum vita duo sint praecipua mala, saevus nimirum amor et praeceps alea,¹ quae maxime, vel potius sola, iam inde a priscis temporibus usque, omnes homines, iuvenes praesertim, et eos summa spe animi atque ingenii praeditos ab optimis omnibus studiis abducunt, et misere nobis perdunt, adeoque proterve,² petulanter et obnixe id faciunt (credo, ne qui liberi et sani homines diis aliquando similes evadant), vix ut ex omnibus uni concedant. Amor eiusque tota vis et natura,³ a multis optime varieque secundum omnes suos sensus et motus, magna multorum utilitate et authorum admiratione ac laude descriptus, omnium est oculis manibusque, immo etiam puerorum studiis utiliter expositus; alea vero (hoc est, immensa illa et effrenata in pecuniam ludendi appetitio et cupiditas), quam multo etiam ante quam amorem ab omnibus cognosci aequum erat (nam et longe prius homines invadit, et certius in exitium trahit ac gravius diutiusque, ne dicam toto vitae curriculo, intimis in visceribus haerens, graviter ardet magnumque et acerbum dolorem commovet) sola adhuc incognita, velut immanis aliqua et saeva pestis, plane gravi mortalium detrimento et philosophorum poetarumque non levi nota in omnem hominum vitam longe lateque magna pernicie grassatur.

2. Neque enim quisquam, ne veterum quidem, usque adhuc inventus est qui (quod sciam) animi affectionis huius impetus et motus, quos habet gravissimos, quales sint aut unde veniant, ulla oratione aut stylo nobis proposuerit; nemo qua se ratione erigere afflicti graviter aut quo consilio recreare et reficere aegrotum animum possint, explicavit.

§1 Amor et alea duo vitae praecipua mala. | Cato dicere solebat: "Si sine mulieribus vita hominum consistere posset, non defuturos qui diis aliquando similes evaderent." | Alea prius quam amor homines invadit et maius detrimentum facit. §2 Alea a nemine hactenus ex professo descripta.

¹ Hor. Ep. 1.18.21.

² E₁ has *proterva*. The adverbial form printed in E₂ is taken here.

³ For the Cato reference in the marginal note, see Plut. *Cato Ma.* 8.2.

Foreword to Readers

*from Pascasius Justus of Eeklo, Doctor of Philosophy and Medicine,
on his books about gambling or on curing obsessive betting for money*

1. There are, in the lives of all men, two principal evils: the cruelty of love, of course, but also dangerous gambling.¹ They have primarily, if not single-handedly, distracted men continuously from the finest occupations from ancient times to the present, especially the young and those whose spirits and characters are the most promising. It is these evils, indeed, which – unfortunately for us – ruin them. Both love and ruinous gambling manage to distract us with such ruthlessness, so relentlessly² and in such an unforgiving way (in order, I believe, to stop any free and healthy man from becoming like the gods), that these two evils scarcely have to yield to others. Love, with all its power and its special character,³ has been described very often and very well, in various ways and with its whole range of feelings and emotions for the greater good of all and to the glory and praise of the authors. It has thus been helpfully put before the public's eyes, as well as in their hands, even as part of the schooling of children. As for gambling, however – in other words this appetite, this uncontrollable and overpowering desire to bet for money – how much fairer it would be that people learn about this, even before they learn about love! For gambling overcomes men much earlier, and draws them into an unavoidable, more oppressive, and more lasting ruin, for the rest of their lives: it clings to the very lining of their guts; it burns deep and causes enormous, bitter pain. Still thus alone and little-known, like a vast and cruel scourge, with obvious and serious loss to mankind – even famous philosophers and poets censure it very seriously – it wheedles its way into the smallest parts of men's lives.

2. Now, as far as I know, no-one until today, even among the ancient authors, has presented to us the impulses and troubles of this mental affliction in a treatise or a literary work, describing the most serious

§1 *Love and gambling are life's two principal evils. | Cato used to say: "If the life of men could do without women, there would be no lack of them who someday turn out like the gods." | Gambling overcomes men before love and does them greater harm. §2 No-one has openly made description of gambling so far.*

Immo ne in comoedia quidem unus aliquis spectandum nobis aleatorem dedit. Itaque plerique, a nemine animadversione hac excitata, ne affectionem quidem ullam animi manentem aleam esse aut ullis a natura incitamentis magnopere ad ludendum homines concitari putant, sed tantum vel consuetudine aliqua prava, vel nimio quodam otio et negligentia, vel potius temeritate quadam et repentino quasi vento impetu animi impulsos, ignota occultaque causa, improbe sic facere credunt.

3. Ac qui perniciosus est error: multi etiam ne iniuriosos quidem in proximos esse eos qui in alea ludunt, aut ullo se scelere contaminare, quamvis id magnam in pecuniam vel rem faciant, arbitrantur. Quod quidem certe propter consuetudinem nimis valde communem, a qua, cum poena abfuit, impetratum hoc videtur, usuvenit. Qui vero doctiores sunt interrogati, omnes (ut putant, Aristotelem secuti) avaritiam esse, brevi nimium sermone responderunt; qui quidem quam id obscure et vix minima, immo nulla rei parte cognita dicant, toto passim libro latius explicavimus. Nam (si est etiam simpliciter breviterque dicendum) et a prodigalitate longe quam ab avaritia plura sumit. Inconsideratae enim temeritati et effusioni multum ubique similis et vicina, nusquam autem timiditatis aut contractionis particeps esse videtur; et sicut Aristoteles de animi elatione docet,⁴ quae a magnanimitatis officiis modum transeundo recedit,⁵ in errore potius et opinione pravoque de se iudicio tota consistit. Spes enim – sive compendii faciendi ex ducta sorte, confidens et fixa opinio absque ulla ratione aut causa, sola quadam iuveniliter exultante fiducia atque omine concepta et natura animique nimio fervore nata, qua quidem certe, non avaritia, ad ludendum omnes homines ducuntur – aperta est stultitia et sui ignoratio.

§3 *In pecuniam qui ludunt, in proximos iniuriosi sunt. | Consuetudo peccandi facit ut quantumvis grave delictum pro nihilo ducatur. | Ludendi cupiditas non ex avaritia nascitur, sicut docti putant. | Ludendi cupiditas in opinione et errore consistit.*

⁴ For Aristotle on μεγαλοψυχία, *elatio animi* (“exuberance”) see *EN* 1125a16-1125b25.

⁵ The “right measure” (*modus*, τὸ μέτριον, μέσον) is a key concept in ancient philosophy. It is, for most philosophers, including Aristotle (*EN* 1106-07), a pillar of good living: Μεσότης τις ἄρα ἐστὶν ἡ ἀρετή, στοχαστικὴ γε οὐσα τοῦ μέσου (“Virtue, therefore, is a mean in the sense that it is able to hit the middle.”)

problems along with its characteristics and causes. No-one has explained how those who are seriously afflicted might recover and what strategies allow an ailing mind to improve. Moreover, not a single author has written a comedy with a gambler in it for us to watch. For this reason, because no-one has ever considered gambling in this way, namely that gambling is a lasting condition of the mind, most people think that men are encouraged to gamble mainly by their nature and various other incentives. They rather simply believe that gamblers behave so shamefully either because of their bad habits, because they are idle and lax, or rather because of a lack of consideration and an impulsiveness of the mind as changeable as a gust of wind, as the cause of gambling addiction is unknown and hidden.

3. On the other hand, and this is a dangerous mistake, many people believe that those who gamble are not harming their nearest and dearest, nor that they are corrupting themselves by engaging in crime, even though they are acting in the interest of property or large winnings. This undoubtedly stems from the fact that the habit is far too common, and since there is no punishment, it seems to have become accepted. When I have asked scholars about the topic, all of them (thinking that they follow Aristotle) replied tersely that the cause is simply greed. What they say in confused terms and in a bare minimum without having properly understood any aspect of the subject, I have explained at length and in detail throughout this book. Indeed (to put it simply and in few words) gambling has far more to do with wasteful spending than with greed. It does indeed have strong similarities and a close relationship with unthinking rashness and extravagance but it does not share anything with cowardliness or a dependency. As Aristotle teaches about exuberance,⁴ which differs from the kindness of magnanimity by overstepping the right measure,⁵ gambling is based entirely on erroneous judgements and opinions about oneself. For it is hope – in other words, the firm belief in gain from a stroke of luck, without any reasonable motive or cause, conceived on the sole basis of unbridled confidence and simple intuition, born of one's nature and an overheated state of mind which drives men to gamble, not greed. This reveals obvious folly and a lack of

§3 *Those who play for money do injustice to their nearest. | The sinful habit means a fault, no matter how serious, is regarded as nothing. | The passion for gambling does not stem from greed, contrary to what scholars think. | The passion for gambling is based on opinion and error.*

*Pascasii Iusti Ecloviensis, philosophiae et medicinae doctoris,
Alea, sive De curanda ludendi in pecuniam cupiditate
Liber prior*

1. Quam sit difficile atque arduum de re magna,¹ late omni hominum vita diffusa, eaque a nemine antea explicata, in maxima doctorum virorum celebritate et frequentia scribere, neminem ignorare puto. Nam qui eiusmodi aliquid instituit ac parat, eum certe, praeterquam quod magno animo esse oportet, nova dicere atque a se inventa vel excogitata in medium proferre necesse est. Quod quidem nemo umquam ulla in re recte praestiterit, nisi qui sit vel longa experientia crebraque exercitatione edoctus, vel singulari quadam atque eccellente ingenii magnitudine praeditus, vel potius optime a natura informatus, frequente adhibita cogitatione atque usu, utraque re pariter ornatus.

2. Verum de alea (hoc est, “ludendi in pecuniam perniciose cupiditate”) praesente libro verba facturus, plane quod dixi mihi usu venire videtur. Nemo enim adhuc (quod sciam) inventus est qui affectionem hanc animi, qualis quantaque sit, consulto explicavit; nemo veterum, nemo huius memoriae aut nostrorum hominum, qui omnem suam scientiam ad utilitatem publicam attulisse videntur, impetus illos et motus ac sensus, quos quidem maximos acerrimosque in hominum animis excitat, persecutus memoriae tradidit. Et tamen iam inde a primis temporibus usque nullum ubique malum, nulla pestis, nulla perniciosa in omnes civitates atque homines longius latiusque magna calamitate invasit; ut qui id nitatur nullo alio argumento, nulla scribendi ὑποθέσει, maiorem sibi laudem, aliis utilitatem afferre posse videatur.

3. Verum ne quis arrogantiae aut temeritatis vitio adscribat, quod cum nihil eorum quae dixi, vel certe exigua omnia in me reperiantur, quae ad tractandum praesentem materiam magno et erudito viro digna requiruntur, tamen id hoc et tempore et loco celeberrimo, homo alienigena et longinquus audeam prius, qua ratione potissimum adductus id

§1 *Duo inventionis instrumenta, experientia et ratio sive ingenium.*

¹ The first book’s opening phrase echoes the famous tag “magnum opus et arduum” used in the preface to Aug. *Civ.* 1. Praef. Augustine himself was calling on Cic. *Or.* 33.

*Pascasius Justus of Eeklo, Doctor of Philosophy and Medicine,
On Gambling, or On the Desire to Bet for Money
Book One*

1. I think everyone knows how tough and difficult it is to write about an important topic,¹ which is widespread throughout the whole of human life and left untreated by anyone among the great number and crowds of scholars. This is because the person who is preparing and about to embark on a venture of this kind – apart from needing a good deal of bravery – ought to offer the public new results and present discoveries and reflections of his own. No-one can ever really offer anything worthwhile unless they have gathered long experience and frequent practice, or are gifted with an exceptional and remarkably great talent or – perhaps the best of all – they possess both equally: an excellent natural disposition reinforced by reflection and diligent exercise. 2. Indeed, in preparing myself to say something about gambling in this book – that is to say the harmful passion for betting for money – it seems that what I have just said actually happened to me. For as far as I know, no-one has yet specifically analysed this condition of the mind, its nature and its power. None of the ancients, no-one more recently, nor even those of our contemporaries who seem to have used all their knowledge to the public good has managed to give to posterity an account of those urges, the movements and the feelings it arouses, which are the greatest and most violent that affect the human mind. Yet from the earliest times until today, no evil anywhere, no plague, no harm has so disastrously infested cities and all of mankind for longer and more extensively. So, one who tries to grapple with this topic in the absence of any other basis or *previous statement of discussion* for composition, appears to be able to gain more glory for himself, and more benefit for others.

3. I would not want to be accused of arrogance or rashness. And as neither of those qualities are present in me (or at any rate only minutely) which are, however, required for the present topic and worthy of a great scholar, I still have the audacity to explain to you today before this very large audience – as a foreigner from a distant land

§1 *Two instruments of invention: experience and reason or talent.*

etiam est quod optimo quisque ac splendidissimo ingenio facile affectu isto ut iracundia omnique mentis fervore efferatur longiusque accensus feratur quam temperato conveniat. Nam praeterquam, quod recte Vergilius argumentatus est de novo hospite,

Credo equidem, nec vana fides, genus esse deorum:
degeneres animos timor arguit [...],³⁴

etiam Plato disputat ingeniosos homines concitatos ac furiosos plurimum esse solere; et ab eodem ac Demetrio in scriptis relictum est neminem bonum poetam sine inflammatione animorum existere posse ac sine quodam afflatu quasi furoris.³⁵ Galenus etiam libro *De natura hominis* biliosis temperaturis animi dexteritatem et prudentiam tribuit.³⁶ Nam quod Aristoteles ait, “ingeniosos et excellentes in omni arte et quavis scientia viros omnes melancholicos esse,”³⁷ id vero etiam huc vel in primis est referendum. Non enim simpliciter hoc dixit quasi de sicca frigidaque natura, quae ad omnes animi et corporis habitus atque usus maxime inutilis est, sed de naturali et temperate calida melancholia, quaeque optimam accepit habitudinem, loqui se plane et aperte demonstravit. Melancholia enim, cum omnes caliditatis frigiditatisque summos gradus ut aqua recipere possit, quemcumque sortita est habitum propter firmitudinem motumque naturalem constanter continet et fortiter admodum ac continenter propellit. 49. Ideoque recte illam vino, quod velut aestu vibrare ac fluctuare videtur et maxime etiam varium est, comparat. Nam et illud calore ac sui motus vehementia maxime naturam hominis excitat atque explicat. Quae si per se optima est, tum vero velut afflatu percita praecipue insignis et excellens evadit. Recte enim in Meleagri epigrammate scriptum est:³⁸

Αἱ νύμφαι τὸν Βάκχον, ὄτ’ ἐκ πυρὸς ἤλαθ’ ὁ κοῦρος,
νίψαν, ὑπὲρ τέφρης ἄρτι κυλιόμενον.
Τούνεκα σὸν νύμφαις βρόμιος φίλος, ἦν δέ νιν εἶργης
μίσγεσθαι, δέξῃ πῦρ ἔτι καιόμενον.

§49 *Melancholia vino similis est.*

³⁴ Verg. *Aen.* 4.12-13. Dido calls Aeneas a “novus hospes” (“new guest”) at 4.10.

³⁵ Pascasius cites almost *verbatim* Cic. *De or.* 2.194, where Cicero references Plato and Democritus. Perhaps revealing his reliance on a second-hand reference, the early modern editions have *Demetrius* for Democritus. As an interesting insight on his use of sources, this is not corrected in the present edition. In Plato, the idea is found e.g. at *Ion* 533e.

I believe, and this is not a vain belief, that he is of the godly race:
fear betrays base souls [...] ³⁴

Plato also argues that talented men are usually the most excitable and the most delirious. Both he and Demetrius left us the idea in their writings that no-one can be a good poet without some exhilaration of the spirit or without a sort of vigour bordering on rage.³⁵ Galen also, in his book *On Human Nature*, attributed shrewdness and foresight to bilious constitutions.³⁶ The phrase of Aristotle, that “talented men, excelling in every art or science, are all melancholy,”³⁷ should be remembered here too, even in the first place. For he did not say it as if speaking simply of dry and cold nature, which is deeply unhelpful to all states and uses of the body and mind. It is quite clear that he was talking about a natural, moderately warm melancholy, which has received an excellent character. Since, like water, this natural melancholy can accept all degrees of heat and cold, and it maintains whatever arrangement it has due to its strength of resistance and its natural movement constantly, and it continues to in this way strongly and without interruption. 49. It is therefore right that melancholy should be compared to wine, which is also very variable, and seems to change and fluctuate as if under the effect of heat. Thus, on account of its heat and the intensity of its movement, wine excites and reveals human nature. If a person’s nature in itself is good, once excited, it becomes particularly remarkable and excellent. Meleager was right when he wrote in his epigram:³⁸

The Nymphs washed Bacchus when the young man came out of the flames
as he had just been rolled over the ashes.
So, boisterous Bacchus is friends with the Nymphs, but if you stop his wine
being mixed, you’ll receive a fire still kindling.

§49 *Melancholy is like wine.*

³⁶ A reference to Gal. *HNH* 15.97 K.

³⁷ Pascasius has his knowledge of Aristotle again by way of Cicero. Here he cites closely Cic. *Tusc.* 1.80.12: “Aristoteles quidem ait omnis ingeniosos melancholicos esse, ut ego me tardiorem esse.”

³⁸ *Anth. Gr.* 9.331. This poem plays on the frequent use of the name of the God Bacchus for wine, the product with which he was associated. The strong, basic wine (ἄκρατος, *merum*) of Ancient Greece and Rome was normally diluted with water.

Pascasii Iusti Ecloviensis, philosophiae et medicinae doctoris,

Alea, sive De curanda ludendi in pecuniam cupiditate

Liber posterior

1. Ne cui mirum videatur quod, cum proximo libro flagrantem ludendi in pecuniam cupiditatem, a naturae temperie calidiore adeoque vinoso et velut undante quodam sanguine in hominibus, qui scilicet naturam sequuntur suam, nasci, longa oratione dixerimus, nunc vero curationem praescripturi, quasi causae immemores vel medicinae indocti, remedium formulas quae ad animum adhibeantur, proponamus,¹ huic prius quam ad rem accedamus, respondendum puto, ne forte potione medica vel catapotiis fieri id solum posse putet.

2. Quamvis igitur variis rationibus commonstrare possimus recte cupiditatum motus omnes curari (hoc est, et cohiberi et evelli) posse, ad animum si conveniens adhibeatur medicina eamque demum vel potius solam ad sanitatem veram viam esse (ita enim natura comparatum est, quantumvis plurimum refert ad motuum impetusque varietatem, quae sit cordis et spirituum temperies, affectus animi cogitationis aestimationem sive cognitionem ut sequantur), nos tamen, quo melius quod dicturi sumus, comprehendi ab omnibus possit ac ne totam de affectibus doctrinam ab aliis traditam assumere cogamur, illam hic potissimum afferemus rationem, quae et medica plane est, et iuvenibus perspicua videri poterit. Ea autem est eiusmodi.

3. Diximus a calore nimio, qualis vino potorum hominum calor est, εὐελπιστίαν, aleae praecipuam causam, in hominibus qui naturae propensioni obediunt generari. Itaque si contraria contrariorum sunt remedia remotaque causa removeri effectus debet, certe refrigerationem esse, quae sola, vel potissimum sine malo, remedio esse possit et debeat, non obscure videtur. Atqui sic est, et nos refrigerationem huic

§3 *Quare alea et cupiditates caeterae etiam ex corporis intemperantiae, adhibitis ad animum remediis, curari probe possint. | Cogitationis aestimatio refrigerare et calfacere homines vel maxime potest. | Oratio flexanima. | Quare ex animalibus solis, vel maxime hominibus, seminis profusio per somnum contingit.*

¹ Here Pascasius makes the psychotherapeutic method of his cures in Book 2 explicit.

*Pascasius Justus of Eeklo, Doctor of Philosophy and Medicine,
Gambling, or On the Desire to Bet for Money*

Book Two

1. Lest anyone be surprised: I have discoursed at length in the preceding book on that burning desire to gamble with money, which arises from a very hot natural temperament, indeed from a wine-like, almost surging type of blood in people who simply follow their physical nature. Now, however, as if I had forgotten the cause of evil or were untrained in medicine, I am going to propose a treatment and offer remedies which are to be applied to the mind.¹ I think, then, that before turning to my subject, I must respond to the first point, so that no-one might imagine that a cure can be found only in a potion or in pills.

2. Although I could, then, demonstrate on the basis of numerous arguments that it is possible to properly cure, that is to say, to contain and repel, all of the impulses of passion if the right remedy is applied to the mind (this is ultimately the one true way to regain health, since nature has foreseen that however much variety and force there is in our emotions, whatever the temperament of our heart and soul, our dispositions of mind conform to our ideas, or rather to our thought) I will here first, however, introduce this method – which is distinctly medical and will seem clear to young people – so that everyone can understand what I say, and I am not obliged to sum up the whole doctrine of diseases that others have passed down to us. Here it is.

3. I have said that the main cause of playfulness, *optimism*, is produced in people obeying their natural inclination by excess heat, a heat of the sort produced by wine on men who drink. So, since opposites cure opposites, and we must get rid of the cause to remove the effect, it is clear that one can and should offer only cold, which principally doesn't do any harm, as the only remedy for this evil. Well, so it is. And I expressly assert that it is primarily through speech, which "sways

§3 *Why gambling and all other passions arising from a poor bodily disposition can be perfectly cured by administering remedies to the mind. | The power of thought certainly cools men down and warms them up. | Speech, the shaper of minds. | Why it is only in animals, and especially in humans, that ejaculations occur during sleep.*

vel maxime oratione, quae recte a bono poeta dicta est “flexanima”,² sive cogitationis aestimatione et motu induci in hominibus posse, diserte asserimus. Nam quis est qui non multos quotidie sola cogitatione erubescere et pallere, immo etiam tremere, sudare, lachrymari et varie humores intro forasque pellere excrementaque excernere videat? Et Aristoteles ait quod ideo ex omni animantium genere prope solis, vel maxime saltem, hominibus seminis profusio per somnium accidere solet, quia id nisi cum cogitatione fieri potest.³ 4. Si igitur haec omnia cogitatio facit, quae quidem sine calore aut frigore manifesto fieri non possunt, haud dubie nihil cogitatione refrigerare aut calfacere melius et citius potest. Quare etiam si quis, ut Aristoteles recte timorem nil nisi refrigerationem quandam esse saepe dicit,⁴ ita etiam de spe caeterisque affectibus animi simili quadam ratione iudicet, nihil ille absurdum aut ineptum faciat. Ut enim intro forasque repellere spiritus, in quibus calor residet, cogitatio vehemens potest, ita pariter eosdem trahere ad se et ab aliis avocare membris ac spargere varie posse, nullum est dubium. Idque verecundia et amantium omniumque attente nimis et diu de re aliqua cogitantium suspiria, suique oblivio satis indicant. 5. Itaque recte apud Terentium Phaedria: “Coepi egomet mecum inter vias, aliam rem ex alia cogitare; et dum haec puto, praeterii imprudens villam.”⁵ Et alibi Birria: “At quanto satius est te id dare operam, qui istum amorem ex corde dimoveas tuo, quam id loqui quo magis libido frustra incendatur tua.”⁶ Adde quod poetae sic omnes loquuntur. Nam et fervere misera cupidine pectus, et ardere amore, et accendi spe, et timore tremere atque horrere dicunt.

6. Atque hinc est, quod optimi et nobilissimi omnes medici in curandis etiam corporis morbis, iisque non solum intemperie vitiosa, sed etiam corruptis humoribus natis, magnam cogitationum animi rationem habeant, illasque varia ratione et consilio (nimirum prout vel

§4 *Affectus animi corporis mutationes ad frigus et calidum sunt. | Cogitatio vehemens spiritus, qui caloris vehiculum sunt varie movere potest.* §6 *Medici optimi in curandis morbis magnam cogitationum rationem habent. | Affectiones animi celerrime et omnium maxime corpus immutant.*

² A citation from Cicero (*Or.* 187), who in turn references the *bonus poeta* Pacuvius.

³ For Aristotle on the question of nocturnal orgasms in men and women see *GA* 2.

⁴ For [Aristotle] on the relationship between fear and cooling see *Pr.* 947b-48a. Pasca-sius discusses this idea in some detail at §1.77.

⁵ *Ter. Eun.* 629-33.

⁶ *Ter. And.* 307-08.

the spirit” as the good poet said,² or through judgment born of reflection, that this cooling can be brought to men. Since one can see daily a large number of people who, under the sole influence of a thought, grow pale or blush, tremble, sweat, cry, express their moods both outwardly and internally, and even discharge excrement. Aristotle also said that in the entire animal kingdom, humans are nearly the only, or at least it is us above all, who have wet dreams because this cannot happen without the capacity of thought.³ 4. If thought, therefore, is able to accomplish all this, it certainly cannot happen without heat or cold. Nothing, then, will be able to cool or heat up a person better and more quickly than thought. As Aristotle said often and correctly, fear is nothing other than a form of cooling.⁴ So, then, if someone were to judge hope and the other mental affects in the same way, he would not be doing anything absurd or silly. For just as serious thought can repel the inner and outer breaths, where a person’s heat resides, so can it similarly attract them and call them out from other organs, spreading them around the body. Of this there is no doubt. Good evidence of this are the shyness and sighs of lovers, and of all those who think too hard and too long about something to the point of forgetting themselves. 5. So Phaedria in Terence also says very well: “And, along the way, I started to think about one thing, then another, and while I was thinking, I passed the house without noticing it.”⁵ Elsewhere Birria also exclaims: “Alas! How much better is it for you to endeavour to expel that passion from your mind, than to be saying that by which your desire is, to no purpose, still more inflamed.”⁶ Add to this what all the poets say along these lines: they say their heart boils with luckless desire, burns with love, is ignited by hope, and trembles and shudders with fear.

6. This is why the best and most reputable doctors all pay a great deal of attention to the activity of the mind in the treatment of diseases, including those of the body, and not only those due to rancorous excess, but also those due to corruption of the humours. Doctors then recommend various methods and measures for them (depending, obviously, on whether they want to warm people up or cool them down), sometimes by exciting those activities of the mind, sometimes by soothing

§4 Mental dispositions are shifts within the body towards cold and hot. | Powerful thought can move the breath – the transporter of heat – in various ways. §6 The best doctors take into account the activities of the mind in the treatment of disease. | Mental afflictions cause change in the body the fastest and most effectively.

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