

Andréas Vesalius and the Occo Medals of Augsburg Evidence of a professional friendship

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Summary

The friendly connection that existed between Andreas Vesalius (1514-1564) and his learned friends in Augsburg comprised three periods in the life of the emperor's court physician. The close ties that must have connected Adolphus Occo II and III and Vesalius are expressed in a number of medals carrying their images.

Résumé

La relation amicale entre André Vesale (1514-1564) et ses amis savants à Augsburg s'est déroulée sur trois périodes de sa vie à la Cour. Les liens étroits entre Adolphe Occo II et III et Vesale se sont manifestés à travers de nombreuses médailles à l'effigie des médecins Augbourgeois.

Introduction

From the reports of contemporaries, the surviving correspondence between him and his fellow medical doctors and from his personal accounts published in his *Fabrica*, we know that the great anatomist Andreas Vesalius (1514-1564) had numerous contacts within the scientific life of which he was a daily participant.

As court doctor to Charles V, a position he occupied since 1544, and on account of the frequent journeys on which he accompanied this ruler throughout the whole of Europe, these contacts were established and renewed (1). In spite of the frequently troublesome means of communication, which took a long time in a Europe that was regularly suffering under the burden of various wars, there were however close contacts between those persons being part of the relatively small world of scientists. Usually employed by universities, royal courts

or city councils, they played an increasingly important role in the cultural period that is still to be considered part of the Renaissance.

Vesalius, being limited in his purely scientific work because of his duties as a court surgeon, was able to contact the foremost contemporary medical practitioners who were eager to consult the emperor's court physician whenever they met complicated medical cases. In the following account we want to pay attention to the scientific and friendly connections Vesalius kept with medical doctors in Augsburg, among whom the members of the Occo family take a special place. The Occo physicians were in the medical profession for generations. Fathers and sons and their images have been preserved on medals for posterity. They hold a special place within the Augsburg circle of friends around Andreas Vesalius.

Vesalius' first stay in Augsburg

The friendly connections that existed between Vesalius and his learned friends in Augsburg comprised three periods in the life of the emperor's

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* fig. 1. Bronze medal of Adolphus Occo I.

court physician. The first long term stay of Vesalius in Augsburg dates back to the period between July 1547 until August 1548 when the first Reichstag was held (2). During his stay Vesalius attempted to relieve an empyema by means of an operation which however did not lead to the desired result. The patient died as a result of haemorrhage(3). In later years Vesalius dedicated a *consilium* to this case (4). There is no doubt that his connections with Herwart were renewed during this period (5). Wolfgang Peter Herwart was born in Augsburg in 1514 and studied at the university of Padua, when Vesalius stayed there. In 1551 he married the daughter of the Augsburg mayor, Anna Pfister, and in 1553 he became a member of the City Fathers.

In October 1563 the city council decided to establish a commission in order to supervise the apothecaries who had settled themselves in the city. Herwart was also a member of this commission. However, he already suffered from diminishing eyesight at that time : an illness that had already announced itself at an early age. On the third of May 1542 (6), Vesalius had written his first clinical lecture in which he aimed to cure the illness in the form of a letter addressed to Herwart: «*Pro visu partim depravato, partim abolito, D. Andreae Vesalij consilium, ad Vuolfgangum Heruuart Augustanum scriptum.*» Vesalius' first *consilium* was first published in 1572 in printed form in Basel in the *Consultationes Medicae* of J.B. Montanus (7).

A young man is presented as, I believe, about twenty-seven years old, fairly well-balanced in regard to the four qualities of temperament, neither exceeding nor greatly lacking in supply of [animal] spirit. Three serious symptoms disturb the visual faculty and occasionally affect its functions. The sight in one eye has been completely destroyed - not very long ago, however - and weakened in the other. He must look at everything with [one] eye, and he no longer observes perfectly. Furthermore, since his vision has been troubled he is also bothered in the other eye because he says that he sees now midges, now bugs, and other things of that sort, which we commonly call vision-blockers and fancied images, and these particularly when he has employed his vision more than usual for writing or reading. In addition to these symptoms in the eyes, there is another kind which consists of the affections of the eyes themselves.

'That eye in which vision has been completely destroyed has lost its natural color and the pupil appears tinted by a suffused glaucous and white color. Therefore I consider that the present ailment is instrumental - residing in the damaged instrument - that is, a thick humor underlies the watery humor, so thickened that it may perhaps deserve to be called a complete suffusion, and I shall say something about this matter later. Furthermore, he says that from an early age he was one of those who had to approach very near to whatever he was going to look at, and then his vision was sufficiently keen but it became weaker with the passage of time (8).

It was not until that 1547 Vesalius and Herwart met in Augsburg after their stay in Padua. At that time Herwart had already left the afore-mentioned commission several years earlier on account of his physical condition, yet he still had frequent contacts with the Augsburg medical doctors

fig. 2. Bronze medal of Adolphus Occo II. (front side)

such as Gasser, Stenglin and both Occos. Herwart died on either 12th or 22nd May 1585 (9).

Vesalius' second stay in Augsburg

During Vesalius' second Augsburg term, which was to last from July 8th until mid October 1551, the already established contacts he held with the afore-mentioned medical doctors became closer; in the first place the contacts he had with Achilles Pirmin Gasser, who was born on November 3rd, 1505 in Lindau, the son of Ulrich Gasser, the personal doctor of Emperor Maximilian I. After his studies in Wittenberg, where he met Luther and Melanchton in 1522, and Vienna, he went to Montpellier in 1527. In 1528 he became a medical doctor in Avignon and in later years he established himself in Feldkirchen and in Augsburg (10). Gasser published several medical works, including *Curationes et Observationes Medicinae* (11). Yet another Augsburg medical doctor of importance was Lucas Stenglin (1523-1587) who had also studied at Padua and graduated there in 1549. After that he practised medicine in Augsburg where he established the *Collegium Medicum* in 1549. He also held a post in the commission established by the council of Augsburg in 1563 in order to supervise the city's apothecaries (12). In contrast to Ambrosius Jung, who also belonged to this group of physicians, more autobiographical accounts are available about the Occos II and III and their relatives, and we shall return to this subject later. In the second Augsburg term Vesalius was repeatedly asked his opinion in certain medical cases, about which he reports in the second edition of his *Fabrica* in 1555.

As such he reports an autopsy he held on a fifty year old woman suffering from a swelling in the abdomen which at dissection turned out to have been caused by an unexpectedly large ovarian tumor.



'In Augsburg I, together with several other physicians, found in a female weaver after her death more than sixty Augsburg measures of serous water, in her uterus, which alone weighed three pounds. Nowhere, however, was water present around the intestines, nor was there a loose tumor in the hands or feet, or even in the viscera, nor was there otherwise damage of any other organs. In addition to the size of that uterus, its mouth had remarkably thickened and had attached to the peritoneum on the whole right side. The glands of the right ovary had increased astonishingly as if nine or ten goose eggs, or rather an ostrich egg, were therein, and filled with a single humor not dissimilar from white of egg, but perhaps a little thicker' (13).

A second case in which Vesalius' opinion about an autopsy was requested, related to Herr von Imersele, who died as a result of what we nowadays would describe as intra cardiac thrombus on the basis of partial cardiac aneurysm.

'The heart of a noble and learned man caused us no little astonishment, as in its left ventricle we found almost two pounds of glandular - but darkish - flesh with the heart distended around that fleshy mass like a uterus. ... Before death the man was of a

* fig. 3. Reverse side of the bronze medal of Adolphus Occo II

somewhat melancholy temperament and very wakeful, with a remarkably uneven and varying pulse that clearly displayed the contraction of the artery. For many months before his death - although otherwise he walked about as if in good health - the pulse, or rather the artery, seemed to contract and remain contracted for an interval of three or four pulses or beats, as if it were attempting expulsion. Indeed, in the final weeks of his life, during an interval of nine beats three or only two dilatations of the artery were apparent to the touch. He retained the animal faculty and functions of the animal spirit up to his death, which resulted not so much from the defect of his heart as from gangrene of the left leg, which took its rise from the impeded pulse of the artery as if those pulses, interrupted by the heart's defect, did not properly revive the native heat of the leg; especially since several years earlier that artery extending to the lower leg had been damaged by a gunshot wound. (14).'

The last case about which Vesalius was consulted concerns a two year old girl who died two days later and had been suffering from hydrocephalus which had been growing increasingly larger.

'In Augsburg I observed a little girl of two years whose head had so enlarged in about seven months that I have seen no man's head as large in mass. It was that ailment the ancients called hydrocephalus, the result of the water that is gradually collected and retained in the head. In this girl's case it had not collected between the skull and the exterior membrane girdling it, or the skin - where otherwise the books of physicians teach that the water is retained - but in the cavity of the brain itself, and in its right and left ventricles. Their capacity had so increased and the brain itself had so extended that almost nine pounds of water or, incredible as it may seem, three Augsburg measures of wine, were contained. In addition, as the



brain in the vertex of the head was thin like a membrane, or like a body continuous with its thin membrane, so also the skull was wholly membranous and osseous only in the area representing the girl's skull before her head increased abnormally. It was almost as in recently born children where we observe the frontal bone and bones of the vertex to form where they are otherwise coterminous in us, and in many children are seen to be membranous over a notable area. Meanwhile, the cerebellum and the whole base of the brain were normal as also the extensions of the nerves. I found water only in the ventricles of the brain, which were augmented, as I have mentioned, and up to the time of her death the girl had all her senses. However, when I observed her a few days before her death, as often as her head was moved by those attending, and however slightly it was somewhat raised, immediately she was disturbed by a severe cough, with difficulty in breathing, suffusion of blood, flushing of the whole face, and a flowing of tears. The rest of her body was weak, but although lax and infirm there was no paralysis of the limbs nor even any notable appearance of emaciation or serous tumor in the limbs or epilepsy. The liver, when it was examined a little after death, was pale and otherwise somewhat contracted and harder than a normal liver; the spleen appeared very large and soft as if



fig. 4. The first bronze medal of Adolphus Occo III. (front side)

it had functioned for some time in place of the liver; so that, together with the physicians present, I marveled at nothing more than that such amount of water had for so long collected in the ventricles of the brain without greater symptoms (15).'

Vesalius gives detailed accounts of these cases in the second edition of his *Fabrica* (16).

Vesalius' third stay in Augsburg

After his departure from Augsburg in October 1551 Vesalius was not forgotten. More than once his personal advice was sought. In 1553 he gave written advice (17) regarding the Augsburg patient Markus Pfister, father-in-law of his friend Wolfgang Peter Herwart (18), who was suffering from a skin disease. In 1555 Vesalius was sent for by Achilles Gasser and Occo III to Augsburg, as Leonard Welser, a member of the well-known bankers' family, was suffering from severe stomach pain (19). On examination, Vesalius found a tumor in the abdomen, on which he based his diagnosis: pulsing *aneurysma aortae*. Vesalius was the first medical doctor who had a clear image of the structure of an aneurysm and was the first to establish this diagnosis on a living patient (20).

When Welser died in June 1557 post-mortem examinations were made by the Occos,

Ambrosius Jung and Lucas Stenglin, Vesalius' diagnosis proved to be correct. Gasser sent a written report to Vesalius about this conclusion.

'When the abdominal cavity had been opened in the usual manner, the natural members appeared to be fairly normal. There was no damage in the stomach and intestines, the liver was intact and very large; likewise the vena cava was of very large size, larger perhaps than had ever been seen by us before in any dissection. It was ruptured where the aneurysm had come in contact with it... No little expansion in the aorta (swelled it) to the size of a palm, (and it) was so affixed to the ribs and vertebrae that it could not be separated intact...'(21)

Vesalius probably did not stay long in Augsburg this time as the second edition of the *Fabrica* demanded his full attention. After a long period of preparation this second edition was published in 1555 by Oporinus in Basel.

We have repeatedly come across the names of both Occos so far. For various reasons a more detailed account regarding these medical doctors is required, not only because of the relationship that existed between them, Vesalius and Augsburg, but also in connection with the portrayal of their images on medals that are known to exist.

The Occo family

We have to go back as far as the fifteenth century in order to trace the origins of this family. The forefather of this ancient Augsburg family of physicians, Adolphus Occo I was born in Osterhuize, Eastern Frisia in 1447. The family name Occo is probably a latinised version of the Frisian first name Ocke (22).

Not much is known about the early years of this Occo (23). From his student years in Italy onwards he kept close contacts with his countryman Rudolphus Agricola (1444-1485).



fig. 5. The skeleton figure from the *Fabrics*.

Augsburg containing the following note: «A. Occo, Frisius, cum fuisset Medicus Illustrissimi Archiducis Austriae Sigismundi circa annum 1490, tandem circa annum 1494, Augustam venit, in ea vixit magna cum gloria ad annum Christi 1503» (26).

Occo possessed an extensive library, which he enlarged by copying and annotating Greek manuscripts. Agricola consulted this library as well. Being a true humanist, Occo's knowledge was not limited to medical science but he was an astrology expert as well. From a remark made by the Leipzig professor Martin von Mellerstadt it appears Occo was an authority on the translation of Greek medical terms into Latin (27)

It is said Occo died when he accidentally confused poison with medicines he had prepared for himself. His epitaph in the cloister of the Augsburg Cathedral mentions: «*Me miserum ! Non cautus eram, securus agebam/ Sicque improvisum me fera Parca rapit*» (28) (= I, poor wretch! I was not careful and worked carelessly and thus grim Fate suddenly hauls me away).

They were together in Ferrara and the latter visited Occo in Augsburg on his way back from Italy in 1479. At his death in 1485 he called upon Occo to look after his intellectual heritage (24). It is known that Occo was in 1474 the personal doctor of Johannes von Werdenberg and Frederik von Hohenzollern, bishops at Augsburg. Fourteen years later Occo was personal physician to the court of Duke Phillipus (1476-1485) in Heidelberg and during this period the first contacts were established, amongst others, with the humanist Johannes von Dalberg with the purpose of deciphering and reading Greek texts together (25). After a short period in which he served as personal doctor to Archduke Sigismund of Tirol (1439-1496) in Innsbruck, he finally established himself in 1494 as a medical doctor in Augsburg. In the protocol of the Collegium Medicum of this city we find an overview of the famous medical doctors of

With the death of Occo I, the Augsburg branch of the Occo family would have come to an end if it were not for the fact that he had adopted a child, who is known in surviving literature as Adolphus Occo 11 (29). He was born in Brixen in 1494 and adopted and raised by Occo I. This highly intelligent young man was initially introduced to the basics of medical science by his foster father and following this was sent by him to the university of Bologna, where he graduated as doctor of medicine on May 5th, 1519. Four years later he married Helene Weiss in Augsburg, the daughter of one of the most prosperous merchants of this city. For more than fifty years he was to practise medicine in Augsburg and be a part of the intellectual upper ten of this large merchant city. In 1526 he was appointed as the city physician and as such he also was the «director» of the hospital that the merchant family Fugger had



* fig. 6. Reverse side of the first bronze medal of Adolphus Occo III, taken from the picture in the *Fabrica*.

established for the poor and needy people, «*Nosocomaeo; quod miseris et minoris census omnibus illustrissima Fuggerorum pietas erexerat, visitando praefectus*».

Just as his foster father had done, Occo II took part in the spread and improvement of medical science, not so much by his own scientific work, but rather by supporting learned contemporaries with the translations and publications of classical works. As such he provided a manuscript by Hippocrates to the scholar Janus Cornarius, which proved to be of excellent service to this close friend of Erasmus, according to a statement made by him during the compilation of an Hippocratic publication (30). This publication was awarded by the City Fathers of Augsburg in 1546 with a gift of a hundred silver crowns. Occo and a number of his Augsburg colleagues wrote a book about the bubonic plague which probably was published in 1553.

Except for the contacts Occo II had with Vesalius, he frequently corresponded with learned contemporaries among whom was the famous Swiss Konrad Gessner (1516-1565), medical doctor, philologist and humanist who wrote a *Bibliotheca Universalis* (Zurich, 1545). Gessner recorded all publications by Vesalius on page 45 of this colossal work. He ends this list with the publication of the 1543 edition of *Fabrica*,

in which he points at the young age at which Vesalius wrote it: «*Scipsit autem Vesalius hos libros natus annos 28'*».

The Occo name was kept alive after the death of Adolphus II by his only son Adolphus Occo III, born on October 17th, 1524 (31). From 1494 until the death of this last important Occo in the year 1606 this family continuously practised medicine for three generations. Aided by knowledge and capability it surrounded itself with a company of learned contemporaries among whom Vesalius occupied a vital place. Not only as a physician, but also in the field of archaeology, numismatics and philology this youngest descendant of the Occo family made his name (32).

From 1544 until 1549 Occo III studied at the universities of Tübingen, Padua and Ferrara. He concluded his academic career with his degree at Ferrara after which he returned to his place of birth. Here he was appointed as a member of the commission that was to investigate the functioning of the Augsburg apothecaries, mentioned above. A year later Otto III published his most important work which was related to the visitations of the apothecaries : «*The Pharmacopeia Augustana*».

This pharmacopoeia contained the prescriptions the apothecaries were forced to follow in the preparation of their medicines. By regular visitations of the apothecaries and the publication of these pharmacopoeiae a substantial improvement of medical care in the city was brought about. On the basis of his merits as a medical doctor, Maximilian II decided by decree on November 24th, 1573 that the family crest should be elaborated by a golden eagle on a blue field. About the various books known to be written by this Occo descendant, his book about coins of the Roman Empire, which appeared in 1579 'ex officina Plantiniana' (the printing press of Christoffel Plantijn in Antwerp) is especially worth mentioning. The book's title reads :

• fig. 7. Second bronze medal of Adolphus Occo III. (front side)



fig. 8. Reverse side of the second bronze medal of Adolphus Occo III.



«*Imperatorium Romanorum numismata a pompeio magno ad Heraclium, etc.*» Apart from the contacts Adolphus Occo III had with Vesalius during the period from 1550 until 1551, in which he was present during the dissection on a fifty year old woman as mentioned earlier, he would also have known about the preparations Vesalius made with regard to the second edition of his *Fabrica*.

The Occo medals

The close ties that must have connected Adolphus Occo II and III and Andreas Vesalius are expressed in a number of medals carrying images of the Occos. Occo II or perhaps Occo III was the commissioner of the fabrication of these medals. All medals were produced by Christof Weiditz (about 1500-1559) or one of his successors round about the year 1552 (33). The first bronze cast medal shows the head and shoulders of Occo I (34). A pearl border encircles the portrait. The text reads thus: ADOLPHUS OCCO FRISIUS MEDICUS (Adolphus Occo, physician of Frisia), which leaves unspecified whether reference is made to Dutch Frisia or Eastern-Frisia which nowadays is part of Germany.(fig. 1)

On the reverse side of the medal the following Latin text encircled by a pearl border is depicted: IACTA CURAM TUAM IN DOMINI NAM ILLI

CURA EST DE NOBIS (Put your burden on the Lord for he takes care of us). This medal has neither been signed nor dated. The diameter measures 64.5 mm. The second medal pictures Occo II [head and shoulders] The text read thus: ADOLPHUS OCCO MEDICUS AUGUST (Adolphus Occo, physician of Augsburg) (35) (fig. 2). On the reverse side of the medal the Occo coat of arms and the following Latin text encircled by a pearl border is depicted: DOMINE VERBUM TUUM FACTUM EST MIHI IN GAUDIUM (Lord, your word is a joy for me). The diameter measures 65 mm. (fig. 3).

Finally four medals have been left to us of Occo III (1524-1606). All four show the portrait of this descendant of the Occo dynasty. Figure 5 is the medal which portrays Adolphus turning three-quarters to the left. The Greek text reads: Adolphus Occo, descendant of Adolphus from Trigonía (36). The denomination Trigonía (triangle) in literature usually refers to Sicily. In this case Trigonía refers to Frisia, the motherland of the Occos. At the reverse side there is an image borrowed from an illustration of Vesalius' *De Humani Corporis Fabrica*' (fig.5) to which we will refer below. The image of the skeleton leaning on a tomb differs only in detail from the original picture in the *Fabrica*, which was drawn by Stefanus van Calcar and cut in wood. The skull on the grave has been replaced by an hour-glass, emblem of brief and fugitive life. The text on the

* fig. 9. The third bronze medal of Adolphus Occo III. (front side).



fig. 10. Reverse side of the third bronze medal of Adolphus Occo III.



tomb differs as well. There we read the inscription: *VIVITUR INGENIO CAETERA MORTIS ERUNT* (One lives on through one's talent, the remainder shall be a prey to death / Your life is continued by your talents, the remainder will be a prey for death); with the first Occo III medal the translation of the Greek text on the tomb reads: Faithful to his work and devoted until his death. (fig.6).

Around the image of a similar Greek text, the translation reads: There is one entrance to life for all and one and the same exit. The cast bronze medal has a diameter of 65 mm. The second Occo III medal has a diameter of 33 mm. The portrait now faces completely left (37). This bronze medal has not been dated. In the Latin text around this portrait only an X is visible. The text reads: *ADOLPHUS OCCO A F AUGUST. MED. ANNO AET X...* (Adolphus Occo, son of Adolphus, *medicus...* years old) (fig. 7). On the reverse there is again the skeleton leaning at the tomb, which shows the following text: *STIPENDIUM PECCATAE MORS* (The reward of sin is death). The legend on this side reads: *DIXI PUTREDINI PA TER MEUS ES* (Until putrefaction I have said: You are my father.) (fig. 8)

The third Occo medal again dates from 1552 (38). The portrait, seen from the side and now facing the right, is accompanied by the same Latin text as the previous medal, (fig 9). On the

reverse again is the image of Vesalius' picture. Now the legend reads: *IPSE IUBET MORTIS TE MEMINISSE DEUS* (God himself commands you to keep death in mind), while the text on the tomb reads: *ABSORPTA EST MORS IN VICTORIAM* (Death has been transformed into victory). The diameter of this last cast medal is 55 mm. (fig 10).

The fourth and last medal of this Occo III clearly differs from the medals described before with regard to the imagery displayed on the reverse. It was cast in bronze on the occasion of Occo's fiftieth birthday. The centre of the family coat of arms displays a one-headed eagle on a shield crowned by a tournament helmet. The coat of arms is surrounded by ornaments. Encircling it is the following Latin text: *VIRTUTES. PRAEMIIS DECORANTUR*. (Virtues are adorned by decorations) and at the bottom: *MAXIMILII IMP. P.F. AUG. MUNUS*. (Gift of Emperor Maximilian II, the pious, the fortunate and uplifted), (fig. 11). At the front the portrait from aside and encircled by the following text: *ADOLPHUS. OCCO. A.F.A.N.MED.R.P.AUG.AET.L* (Adolphus Occo, the uplifted and noble son of Adolphus, *medicus* in the state of Augsburg, fifty years old.) The medal has a diameter of 37 mm and so would have been produced in 1574. (fig. 12)

This medal is said to have been designed and produced by Balduin Drentwett, born in Frisia in



- fig. 11. The coat of arms on the Occo medal, produced on the occasion of the fiftieth birthday of Adolphus Occo III.

- fig. 12. The portret of Adolphus Occo III on the Balduin Drentwett medal, reverse side of fig. 11.



1545, employed at Augsburg from 1572 until 1586, and after a short intermission lived and worked there once again from 1590 until his death in 1627(39).

The skeleton images from the *Fabrica*

The name and fame of Vesalius' *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* are not merely due to the text but also because of the splendid anatomical pictures. This work portrays all aspects of the human anatomy that accurately and truthfully lead to the conclusion the often page sized picture in Vesalius book can be considered as the star-

ting point for an art of anatomical illustration which is being pursued until this day. The plate on page 204 of the *Fabrica* (fig.5) is the least 'anatomical' of all the portrayed skeleton figures. Due to the posture the different parts of the skeleton do not appear to as good an advantage as in the other two skeleton images. From a composition point of view this plate is the most artistic of all. The bent line of the body, the left leg crossed and bent in front of the right one and the skull resting against the bent left hand, reinforce the impression of mourning. The tomb and its inscription --the only text to appear on the large plates- rather indicates an allegory. Seen from this point of view the choice of this skeleton figure from the *Fabrica* -together with the inscriptions on the various Occo medals- seems to be deliberate. The Latin text : "VIVITUR INGENIO CAETERA MORTIS ERUNT", to be translated as: «You live (on) through your talent, the remainder will be a prey to death», has been borrowed from the *Elegia in Maecenatem I*, verse 38 and should be dated about 50-75 A. D. (40). The *Elegia in Maecenatem* is a consolatory verse on the death of a prosperous protector of Art and Science, C.Cilnius Maecenas (70-8 B.C.), friend and advisor to Emperor Augustus, protector of among others Horatius. He was active in literature himself; yet few fragments of his work have been preserved.

It is worth considering in which context the poet of the *Elegia* places the line: it relates to the fact that only the «talent», the works of the spirit such as literature, science *etc*(in short all cultural productions) survive in posterity. The Humanists would surely have been familiar with this *Elegia I* which is included in the *Appendix Vergiliana*, and thus the line in question is well placed in this anatomical picture from the *Fabrica*. The gaze of the skeleton figure, aimed at the skull resting on the grave -pre-eminently the place of the '*Ingenium*'- is especially relevant here.

Only as late as the first quarter of the 16th century this verse line emerges as a subscript

fig. 13. Willibald Pirckenheimer (1470-1530), engraving by Albrecht Durer.

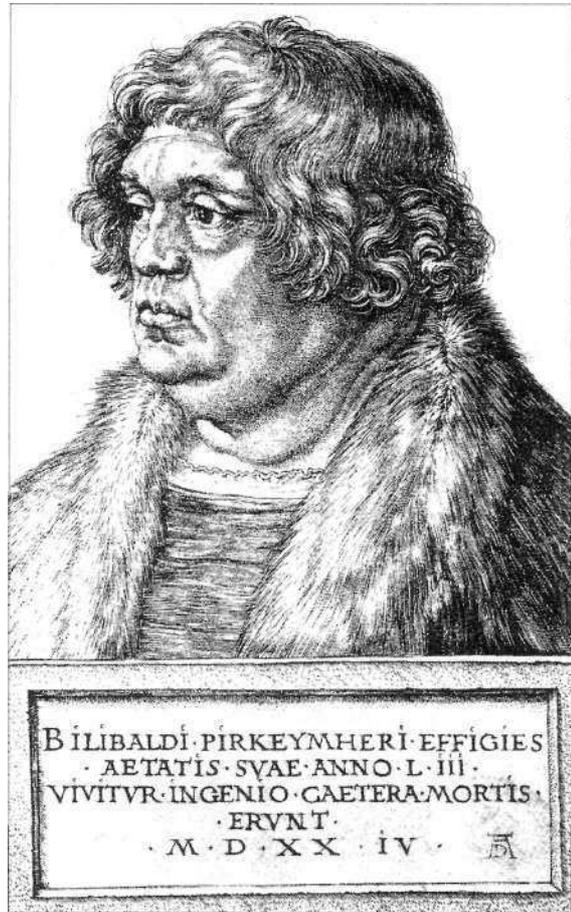
under the portrait of Willibald Pirckenheimer (1470-1530), made as a copper plate by Albrecht Durer (1471-1528). (fig. 13). The Nuremberg humanist was fifty-three years old at the time; *Aetatis suae*. Pirckenheimer devoted a substantial part of his life to the translation of the works of classical authors and scientists (41). Undoubtedly he would have come across the *Elegia in Maecenatem* I, either directly or indirectly, and had chosen this verse line to serve as a subscription to his portrait. It is unknown who drew Vesalius' attention to the Latin text which is depicted on the previously mentioned anatomical picture from his *Fabrica*. It may be that Vesalius himself encountered Pirckenheimer's portrait and was inspired by it to use the text. It is not impossible that Occo II or Occo III drew Vesalius' attention to this text, especially as the anatomical image in question was later used on a number of the family medals mentioned earlier.

It appears from the preceeding evidence that Vesalius, during the time he was employed at the Spanish court, repeatedly found time to spare to advise the medical group practising in Augsburg. From this evidence it appears that he was not merely a gifted anatomist but a brilliant clinician as well. The fact that his medical friends from Augsburg must have had the *Fabrica* in their library, led to three of the portrait medals of Adolphus Occo III being adorned by an image from this book. In this manner this anatomical image from the *Fabrica* has been preserved also in bronze for posterity.

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Notes

1. G.A. Lindeboom (1964) p. 126.
2. G.A. Lindeboom (1964) p. 149.
3. M. Roth (1965) p. 219 and CD. O'Malley (1965) p. 230.
4. H. Cushing (1962) pp. 164-177 and p. 179.
5. CD. O'Malley (1965) p. 108 and p. 435 n. 143.



6. H. Elkhadem and others (1993) p. 118. Elkhadem dates this letter 29 April 1542. See note 5, p. 383.
7. H. Cushing (1962) p. 178.
8. For the translation read CD. O'Malley (1965) p. 378 and further.
9. See note 5.
10. CD. O'Malley (1965) p. 458 n. 36 and H.L. Houtzager (1978a) p. 12.
11. Biolex (1962) Part II, p. 693.
12. Biolex (1962) Part V, p. 415.
13. A. Vesalius (1555) p. 627. For the English translation read CD. O'Malley (1965) p. 252. H.L. Houtzager (1978a) p. 14.
14. A. Vesalius (1555) p. 23. For the English translation read CD. O'Malley (1965) p. 252.
15. A. Vesalius (1555) p. 24. For the English translation read CD. O'Malley (1965) p. 253.
16. See notes 13, 14 and 15.
17. For the Latin text read M. Roth (1969) p. 397.
18. See note 5.
19. CD. O'Malley (1965) p. 264.
20. M. Roth (1965) p. 240.
21. For the English translation read CD. O'Malley (1965) pp. 406-407.

22. B.J.M. deBont(1893)pp. 5-6.
 23. H.V. Buhler (1935) pp. 17-22. For an extensive list for further reading: C. Santing (1992) p. 89n.13.
 24. For the most recent literature on Rudolph Agricola read E.H. Waterbolk. Rudolph Agricola 1485-1985, Gronings humanist. Exhibition catalogue University library Groningen, 1985 pp. 15-21.
 25. C. Santing (1992) p. 89.
 26. H.V. Buhler (1935) p. 19.
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 28. H.V. Buhler (1935) p. 20.
 29. H.V. Buhler (1935) p. 22, H.L. Houtzager (1978a) p. 14. H.L. Houtzager (1984) p. 142.
 30. V. Nutton, Humanist surgery in: Medical Renaissance p. 77.
 31. B.J.M. Bont (1893) p. 17-18.
 32. H.L. Houtzager (1984) p. 143.
 33. G. Habig (1926), H.L. Houtzager (1978b) en (1984).
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 36. C. Picque (1899), G. Habig (1926) cat. nr. 434.
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 39. B. Peus (1975) cat. nr. 57.
 40. H. Schoonhoven (1980) p. 65.
 41. N. Holzberg (1981), Chr. von Imhoff (1982).
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