APPENDIX B:
EXCERPTS FROM ERASTUS'S CORRESPONDENCE
CONCERNING PARACELSUS

Translated by Charles Gunnoe and Jole
Shackelford, University of Minnesota

Text No. 1

Erastus to H. Bullinger, Oct. 29,
[1570]. StAZ, E II 345. fols. 741–742.¹

[fol. 741^v] Sum iam totus in cogitatione de confutando monstrosiss[imo] et absurdissimo dogmate Paracelsi, et in prima parte (puto libros mihi scribendos fore 4 benè magnos) ea tractare statui, quae ad pietatem attinent, id est de superstitiosa et Magica curatione per verba, characteres, invocationes nescio quorum Angelorum et quicquid huius farinae caco-daemones excogitarunt. Graves hic quaestiones incident quas partim ex philosophia, partim ex Theologia pro virili mea tentabo plane ut solide dissolvere. [...]

[fol. 742^r] Cuius causa scripsi illa, haec est: Ille Paracelsus vocat, se Eremitam ab Hohenheim, itemque Bombast. Velim ergo scire, an sit aliqua familia nobilis umb Einseidlen von Hohenheim (oder Bombast) et si quid praeterea sciri de hac re potest. Vehementer te rogo, ut, undecumque aliquid resciscere possis, scisciteris per occasionem. Fuit familiaris aliquando cuidam D[omino] Clausero, Medico Tigurino.

Translation

I am completely absorbed in thinking about how to stem the most monstrous and absurd dogma of Paracelsus, and in the first part² (I suppose I will write 4 large volumes) I have resolved to deal with those things which pertain to piety—that is, concerning superstitious and

¹ These extracts come from a much longer letter that is largely about church politics in the Electoral Palatinate.

² I.e., *De medicina nova*, 1.

magical healing through words, characters and the invocations of all sorts of angels³ and whatever else of this nature evil spirits contrive. Here serious questions arise, partly from philosophy, partly from theology, which I will attempt to dispense with clearly and thoroughly to the best of my ability....⁴

The reason for which I have written these things is this: that man Paracelsus calls himself the “Hermit of Hohenheim,” also “Bombast.” Therefore, I want to know, whether there might be some noble family “von Hohenheim” or “Bombast” in Einsiedeln, and if anything else can be discerned about this matter. I emphatically beg you to investigate thoroughly, at the proper time, anything you can find out from any source whatever.⁵ He was once an acquaintance of a certain D. Clauser, a physician in Zurich.⁶

Text No. 2

Erastus to J.J. Grynæus, Nov. 29, [1570].

Basel UB, Ms. G II 4, fols. 300–301.

[fol. 300^v] Fuit superioribus mensibus Spirae Henricus Petri, et cum Joh[anne] Cratone Medico Caesaris collocutus inter alia eidem de Theophrasti vita moribusque notatu digna retulit: quae valde velim exactius cognoscere. Scripsit ad me Crato et vehementer orat, ut incoepto pergam opere, se eiusdem generis quaedam habere quae mihi sit liberaliter communicaturus. Dixit ei inter alia D. Henricus Petri, ut ad

³ literally, “of I know not what angels.”

⁴ At this point in the letter Erastus interrupts his discussion of Paracelsus with a brief reference to demonological and astrological questions. In this context he mentions Ludwig Lavater’s *De Spectris* (Zürich, 1570) and his own *Defensio libelli Hieronymi Savonarolae*. Before returning to Paracelsus, he comes upon the question of whether witches should be put to death and mentions Weyer’s *De praestigiis daemonum*. With this phrase “cuius causa scripsi illa, haec est” Erastus apparently is referring Bullinger to his initial discussion of the anti-Paracelsian project some lines before.

⁵ Bullinger fulfilled this request by sending a letter describing his own meeting with Paracelsus. See chapter 8 above (text in note 109). Erastus thanks Bullinger for fulfilling this request for information in text no. 3 below.

⁶ Regarding Christoph Clauser (149?–1552), a Zürich Physician, see Gustav Adolf Wehrli, *Der Zürcher Stadtarzt Dr. Christoph Clauser und seine Stellung zur Reformation der Heilkunde im XVI. Jahrhundert, nebst Faksimileausgabe seiner Harnschrift und seiner Kalender* (Zürich: Sedwyla, 1924); Pagel, Paracelsus, 351. Paracelsus’s “Begleitbrief an Clauser” from 10 November 1527, is printed in PI, 4:69–74. Erastus mentions this preface again in *De medicina nova*, 2:21.

me ille scripsit, omnes ad unum eodem anno istic interiisse, qui vel ab Erasmo persuasi vel ab aliis Theophr[asticis] remediis ausi fuerint uti. Peto ergo ex te maiorem in modum, ut per occasionem ex viro illo in sua Repub[lica] clariss[imo] mihi que meritò colendissimo, intelligas huc pertinentia omnia, et sigillatim ad me scribas. Ego summa cum modestia, sicuti facienda rei cuiuspiam talis mentio fuerit, agam omnia, sicque temperabo, et omnes videant me rem tractare non personam accusare, utque sua cuique laus dubita maneat, nec quisquam praestitae nobis operae fructu defraudetur. [...]

Translation

During the past months, Heinrich Petri⁷ has been at Speyer, and having spoken with Johannes Crato,⁸ the imperial physician, among other things he related to him some things worth noting concerning the life and customs of Theophrastus, which I greatly desire to learn more precisely. Crato has written to me and vehemently asked that I continue in the work already begun, and that he has certain things of the same sort which he would freely communicate to me. Heinrich Petri told him, among other things, as *he* [Crato] wrote to me, that everyone to a man who had dared to use Theophrastian remedies, whether persuaded by Erasmus [of Rotterdam] or others, perished there [i.e., in Basel] the same year. I ask therefore the best that you can do, that, at the right time, you gather together all pertinent information from that most illustrious and (in my estimation) rightly cultivated man in his republic, and write those things to me one by one.⁹ I will undertake all with greatest modesty, just as someone doing this who was of such opinion, and thus I will temper [my treatment]. And all may see that I address the issue and do not attack the person, with the result that his praise remains in doubt for everybody, and nobody is deprived by us of the fruit of a superior work.

⁷ Heinrich Petri, a printer from Basel known for publishing the works of Crato and Severinus. See Josef Benzing, *Die Buchdrucker des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts im deutschen Sprachgebiet* [Beiträge zum Buch- und Bibliothekswesen 12] (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1963), 33.

⁸ Regarding Crato, see Gunnoe and Shackelford, "Johannes Crato von Krafftheim (1519–1585)."

⁹ Erastus thanks Grynaeus for fulfilling this task in the bottom of text no. 6.

Text No. 3

Erastus to H. Bullinger, Jan. 3, [1571]. ZBZ, F 62, fol. 204.

[fol. 204^r] S[alutem] D[icet] Literas tuas, vir clariss[ime] et colendiss[i-me] postremas accepi, et in h[is] quas de Paracelsi rebus ante scripseras, quae mihi ambae valde gratae fuerunt. [...]

Paracelsi doctrina non tantum est in philosophia iniqua, in Medicina monstrosa, verum etiam in Theologia impia et blasphema. Negat creationem à Deo vero perfectam, creatores nostros facit fabros quosdam mortales in astris sedentes, miraculorum potestatem tribuit hominibus, herbis, lapillis, spectris. Futurorum praeuisionem à nescio quo Dae-mone in nos derivat, characteribus, verbis, imaginib[us]¹⁰ sub certo syde-rum positu fabricatis vim tribuit plus quam divinam. Vitam nostram in nostro esse arbitrio, ex De[i] praefinitione nihil esse, posse eam nos ad Iudicium extremum usque prorogare. Caelos nequam homines per errorem fabricari, qui boni esse nullo possint modo [etiam].¹¹ Monstra his longe absurdiora alia profert. Omnia haec in priora parte confutatio-nis solidè refellere conor, et iam de creatione, miraculis Imaginationibus nostrae viribus demum de fascinationibus pertexui omnia. [...]

[fol. 204^v] Ago ingentes gratias, quod mihi Paracelsum depinxisti. Idem fe[cit] Oporinus, quo usus fuit amanuense per biennium. Pulchrè conven[ti] in omnibus. Magum fuisse et Cacodaemonis confoederatum cer[tum] est. [...]

Translation

Greetings. I received your latest letters, most famous and cultivated man, and in them, the things that you had written before concerning Paracelsus, both of which were very pleasing to me. [...]

The teaching of Paracelsus is not only harmful in Philosophy and monstrous in medicine, but also impious and blasphemous in theology. He denies that creation was in fact completed by God. He asserts that our creators were certain skilled mortal beings residing in stars. He has conceded the power of miracles to humans, herbs, stones and specters.

¹⁰ There is a period in the text after the abbreviated "Imaginib." which makes it difficult to discern whether or not a new sentence is intended to begin with "sub" (which is not clearly capitalized).

¹¹ The text here is a "7" sign.

He derives a vision of our futures, from I know not what demon. He has ascribed a more than divine power to characters, words and figures made under a certain arrangement of stars. Our life is in our control; nothing is by God's predetermination. We are able to extend it all the way to the final judgment. The heavens form flawed men by mistake, men who are certainly by no means able to be good. He brings forth other monstrosities far more absurd than these. I endeavor to refute all these things solidly in the first part of the confutation,¹² and I have already finished everything concerning creation, our marvelous powers of imagination and finally concerning charms and spells. [...]

I am grateful that you have described Paracelsus to me. [Johannes] Oporinus,¹³ who had been his amanuensis for two years, made a similar [account]. They complement each other beautifully in every respect. It is certain that [Paracelsus] was a magician and in league with evil spirits.

Text No. 4

Erastus to J. Camerarius II, Feb. 23, [15]71.
Erlangen UB (Sammlung Trew), No. 1.

[recto] Ego namque constitutum habeo, si Deus vitam concedet, (quod in ipsius sancta voluntate est positum, à me nec petitur anxie, nec reicitur) quatuor partibus universam Paracelsi doctrinam confutare. Legi libros circiter 120 et ex omnibus mihi, quae visa sunt, annotavi, inque classes partim digessi, partim adhuc digero. In prima remedia superstiosa Magicasque curationes examino. Et iam absolvi de Creatione disputationem omnem, (in qua, quae bonus et doctus hic vir reprehendit piè, pro meo instituto fusius fortasse, quam par sit, p[er]secutus sum) ac de miraculis. Praeterea de viribus Imaginationis, de fascinatione, et quae huic rei affinia sunt. Quae pars, quia mihi visa est difficilima, ut in quam multae incidant quaestiones, de gravidarum appetitionibus, de menstruatuum visione etc[etera], primo loco periculi faciendi causa suscepta à me fuit. Super est nunc, ut de Magia et Speciebus eius agam, ut coepi, et sic partem primam concludam. In secunda philosophia ipsius expendam. In tertia Medica generatim excutiam. In postrema de particularium morborum curationibus disputabo, quorum ille curationes conscripsit. Vereor autem ne crescant mihi libri nimiu[m]. Pars prima, quam hisce

¹² I.e., *De medicina nova*, 1.

¹³ See Benzenhöfer, "Zum Brief des Johannes Oporinus über Paracelsus."

nundinis, ut spero, perfectam Typographo tradam, ut ad alteras exeat, continebit duo fermè alphabeta. Refutare namque me oportuit [verso] Pomponatii librum de incantationibus et Avicennae sententiam, atque alias similes opiniones. Antequam haec excusa sit, spero me secundam quoque perfecturum.[...]

Translation

For I have an agreement, God willing (because it is placed in his holy will, neither anxiously sought out nor rejected by me) to confute the complete doctrine of Paracelsus in four volumes.¹⁴ I have read about 120 books,¹⁵ and from all of those that I have seen, some I have commented on and arranged into categories, and some I am still arranging. In the first volume, I examine his superstitious remedies and his magical cures. I have already finished the whole disputation on creation, and also on miracles, in which I have set forth things that this good and learned man piously condemns,¹⁶ perhaps in greater detail than is appropriate for my purpose. Beyond that, [I treat] the powers of imagination and enchantment and topics that are related to this subject. And that part, because it seemed to me to be most difficult, since in it many questions arise about the passions of pregnant women and the vision of menstruating women, etc., was taken up by me in the first place for the sake of making a test case.¹⁷ Now it remains for me to treat magic and its varieties and, thus, I conclude the first part as I began. In the second volume, I will consider his philosophy. In the third volume, I will investigate his medicine in general. In the last volume I will dispute regarding the treatments of particular diseases, for which he has prescribed cures. But I am very much afraid that the books will not be finished. The first volume—the finished draft

¹⁴ I.e., *De medicina nova*, 1–4.

¹⁵ On the first page of *De medicina nova*, 1, Erastus proclaims that he has read “113 books of Theophrastus.” That number, as well as the actual titles Erastus cites in *De medicina nova*, confirms that Erastus had almost every Paracelsian work that had been published by 1571.

¹⁶ In isolation, Erastus’s comment, “that this good and learned man piously condemns,” is quite ambiguous. In the text of the letter before the extract that has been reproduced here, Erastus discusses a certain little book (libellus) that Camerarius had sent to him without mentioning the title or the author’s name. Erastus may be speaking of Bartholomäus Reußner’s *Ein kurtze Erklerung und Christliche Widerlegung*.

¹⁷ Pagel comments on these aspects of Erastus’s refutation. See Pagel, *Paracelsus*, 316–317.

of which I will give to the printer at this season's fair, as I hope, so that it comes out at the next [i.e., the autumn fair]¹⁸—will contain almost two alphabets. For it seemed appropriate to me to refute Pomponazzi's book *De incantationibus*¹⁹ and Avicenna's opinion, and other similar views. I hope that before this volume has been printed, I will have also finished the second volume.²⁰

Text No. 5

Erastus to H. Bullinger, April 9,
[15]71. StAZ, E II 361, fols. 18–18^a.

[fol. 18^r] Partem primam operis contra Parac[elsum] suscepti, adiuvante Domino, absolvi. Spero proximis nundinis exituram. [...] Si Helvetius, (quem tamen fuisse Helvetium nec dum credo) scripsit male, confutavit eundem Helvetius, si non benè, saltem verè. Undique accipio literas, publicante institutum meum D[omino] Joh[anne] Cratone Caes[aris] Medico, quibus ad opus incitor. Et res me ipsa multò magis impellit. Sanctè namque, tibi iuro, nec Arium, nec Photinum, nec Mahometem nec Turcum alium, nec Haereticum vixisse ullum hoc pestilentissimo Mago magis haereticum. Probavi omnia verbis ipsius: et ex vera philosophia solidè sic confutavi, ut in hac re, cum aliàs in paucis mihi satisfaciam, mihi ipse non displiceam. [...] Inserui nonnihil ex tuis literis: sed ita inserui, ut tibi non improbatum iri con[silium] confidam. [...]

Translation

With God's help, I have finished the first part of the work against Paracelsus that I have undertaken.²¹ I hope it will appear at the next fair²² [...] If a Swiss person wrote evil (however, I do not yet believe that he was Swiss), then a Swiss person has refuted him, if not well, at least truly. I receive letters from all directions, since Johannes Crato, the imperial physician,

¹⁸ Erastus is speaking here of the biannual Frankfurt fair which was held in the spring and in the fall.

¹⁹ Pietro Pomponazzi, *De naturalium effectuum admirandorum causis seu de incantationibus* (Basel, 1556).

²⁰ Erastus speaks here of *De medicina nova*, 1 and 2.

²¹ *De medicina nova*, 1.

²² I.e., the autumn Frankfurt fair.

is publicizing my intention, by which I am spurred on to the work. But the project itself compels me much more. For I solemnly swear to you, that neither Arius, nor Photinus, nor Muhammad, nor other Turk, nor any heretic who has [ever] lived was more heretical than this most pestilential magician.²³ I have examined all of his words, and I have so solidly confuted them out of true philosophy, that while on most occasions I am seldom satisfied, I am quite pleased with myself in this matter. [...] I have inserted some material from your letters [into *De medicina nova*].²⁴ However, I have done it in a manner that I trust you would find acceptable.

Text No. 6

Erastus to J.J. Grynaeus, April 17,
[1571]. Basel UB, Ms. G II 4, fol. 255.

[fol. 255^r] Paracels[ici] operis partem primam, eamque difficilimam, et omnibus omnium artium studiosis ultissimam, auxiliante Domino absolvi. Editus nunc est alius eiusdem autoris liber, cuius confutationem per appendicem adnectere cogito. Spero me bonis omnibus gratam operam praestitisse. Hoc scio nullam habuisse ullum haeresiarcham opinioniones magis blasphemias et pestilentes: quod facile credent porro, qui, quae ex eo citavimus, considerabunt. Si [fol. 255^v] potes opera tua nobis adesse, atque ut emendatè politèque edatur curare in Quarto, rogo ne desis. Dedissem Samueli, nisi promississem Perna iam pridem. Sed potero facere in sequentibus, quod placebit. Indicem velim bonum, qui loca etiam notaret, in quibus eadem repetantur (Saepè enim quae uno in loco concisè, in alio plenius sunt declarata) ut concordantiae cuiusdam simul et indicis muni[a] impleteret. Mihi per negocia non licuit contexere.

Pro iis, quae de Paracelso scripsisti, ingentes tibi ago gratias: et oro, ut ex Henrico Petri, quae ante scripsi, exploratius intelligas. [...]

²³ A similar comment is found in *De medicina nova*, 1:25: "Quis porro negare audebit, Paracelsum cunctis Arianis, Mahometanis, Turcis, Haereticis pestilentiorum haeticum esse?"

²⁴ I.e., Bullinger's description of Paracelsus that was printed in *De medicina nova*, 1:239–240. See chapter 8 above. I thank Kurt Jakob Rüetschi of the Bullinger-Briefwechsel-Edition for correcting the transcription of this passage.

Translation

The first and the most difficult part of the Paracelsian work,²⁵ and the most important to all students of all the arts, by the help of God, I have finished. Now another book of the same author has been published,²⁶ a confutation of which I am considering adding as an appendix. I hope that I have offered a work that is pleasing to all good men. I know that no other heresiarch has had more blasphemous and pestilent opinions; moreover, those who will closely examine what I have cited from him will easily believe that. I ask that you do not fail to help with the work, if you can and see to it that it is published in a quarto edition in a faultless and polished manner. I would have given it to Samuel if I had not already promised it to [Pietro] Perna.²⁷ If I am able to bring it out in sequential volumes, that will suffice. I desire a good index, which also notes the places, in which the same things are covered again (For often things that are treated concisely in one place have been explained more fully in another) so that it functions as a kind of concordance and index at the same time. Because of my affairs, I am not now able to put it together.

I am grateful for the things which you have written concerning Paracelsus and ask that you discern more exactly from Heinrich Petri, concerning the things that I have written before.

Text No. 7

Erastus to J. Camerarius II, May 30, [1571].
Erlangen UB (Sammlung Trew), No. 2.

[recto] Pars prima tradita fuit Typographo priusquam ult[im]o editum Paracelsi librum viderem. Confutavi tum hunc quoque per appendicem. Negat in hoc, ut caetera sileam, apertè carnis resurrectionem. Negat Virginem ex Adamo propagatum. Negat Christum ex ea aliquid assumpsisse.

²⁵ *De medicina nova*, 1.

²⁶ Erastus is speaking here of the Michael Toxites's edition of Paracelsus's *Astronomia Magna: oder die gantze Philosophia sagax der grossen und kleinen Welt*.

²⁷ Perhaps Erastus was speaking of Samuel Apiarius (Biener), who, like Erastus's printers Pietro Perna and Konrad Waldkirch, was also an active printer of Paracelsian writings. On the other hand, Erastus may have been referring to Samuel König. See K. Sudhoff, *Bibliographia Paracelsica*, 704. Regarding Perna, see the titles by Gilly and Rodondò listed above.

Negat denique Patrem omnipotentem esse creatorem. Alia non commemoro, cum fuerint antea confutata. Dedicabo Augusto, quanquam aliud fuerat consilium, ut in praefatione ipsum moneam, quanto à Toxite dedecore infamiaeque affectus fuerit illius sceleratiss[imi] libri dedicatione. Apertè, modestè tamen, omnes monebo, quid in talibus facere conveniat Magistratus. [...]

Coniunctus, rogo te, ut ad D[ominum] Cratonem perferri cures. Scripsit is mihi nuper de re eadem, nec minus urget te ipso.

Translation

Part one²⁸ had been handed over to the printer before I saw the most recently published book of Paracelsus.²⁹ Then I confuted it too, in an appendix.³⁰ He openly denies the resurrection of the flesh in this, not to mention others things. He denies that the virgin was propagated from Adam. He denies that Christ had assumed anything from her. And finally, he denies that the Father is an omnipotent creator. Other things I do not bring up, since they were confuted before. I will dedicate it to [Elector] August [of Saxony], although there was another intention, with the result that in the preface I warn him,³¹ how much shame and infamy he will have been brought by Toxites with the dedication of that very wicked book of his.³² Openly and also honestly I will advise all what a Magistrate should do in such situations. [...]

Along with this, I ask you to see to it that this [letter] be delivered to Lord Crato. He wrote me recently concerning that same thing, and no less urges you to the same purpose. [...]

²⁸ *De medicina nova*, 1.

²⁹ Paracelsus, *Astronomia Magna*.

³⁰ *De medicina nova*, 1:243–267.

³¹ See Erastus's dedicatory preface to *De medicina nova*, 1:aii^r–aiv^(v). Along with dedicating the first volume of *De medicina nova* to Elector August of Saxony, Erastus also sent him a personal letter (in German) outlining the same errors of Paracelsus that he here describes to Camerarius in greater detail. Erastus to Kurfürst August von Sachsen, Heidelberg, Sept. 9, 1571. Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv (Dresden), Geheim.Rat (Geheim. Archiv), Loc. 8523, Sechs unterschiedliche Bücher, bd. 1; 1570–1574, fols. 186^r–187^v.

³² Toxites had dedicated the book to Elector August. See Toxites's preface to the *Astronomia Magna*.

Text No. 8

Erastus to J.J. Grynæus, June 26,
(1571). Basel UB, Ms. G II 4, fol. 291.

[fol. 291^r] Si nolle Typographum intelligeres, habeo qui etiam centum Thaleros offerant, cum ipsi gratis dederim. Iam ita increbruit fama huius rei, ut sine mea infamia differi non possit res. Quare te oro, ut, si putes non facturam officium D[ominum] Petrum nostrum, quod mihi de eo promitto, alii tradas. Do enim hac in re tibi plenam potestatem hoc ipso scripto, si vel nolit vel non possit ad proximas nundinas absolvere. Fui ante biduum Francoforti, ubi ea intellexi, quae me vehementer incitant, ad hoc petendum, quod peto. Dixerat mihi D[ominus] Perna se in Bohemiam iturum, et ad mensis Maii finem domi futurum, atque curaturam ut parata interea temporis charta mox procuderetur. Iam à D[omino] Cratone Caes[aris] Medico, qui et ipse urget opus, intellegi eum .12. Maii Pragam nondum appulisse: nec scio adhuc, num redierit domum. Literas eius vidi nullas, nec audivi de eo certi aliquid à quoquam. Rogo igitur ut curae tibi sit. [...]

[fol. 291^v] Partem secundam Paracels[icam] aggressus bona ex parte perfeci.

Mitto nunc praefationem et appendicem primae partis: cum citius mittere non licuerit. [...]

Translation

If you think that the printer does not want it,³³ I have some who are offering even 100 thalers, although I would have given it to him for free. Already the talk of the matter has increased to the point that it cannot be postponed without my disgrace. For this reason, if you think our Peter [Perna] will not do the job which I am sending to him, I ask that you give it to someone else. For I give you full power in the affair by this writing, if either he does not want [it] or is not able to finish it by the next fair. A couple days ago I was in Frankfurt, where I have learned certain things, which greatly stimulate me to ask these things that I am

³³ I.e., Pietro Perna.

asking. Perna said to me that he was on his way to Bohemia and would be home at the end of May, and that he would see to it that the text that is readied in the meantime will be produced then. From Lord Crato, the Imperial Physician, who solicited this work, I have heard that he had not yet arrived at Prague as of 12 May. I do not know as yet, whether he will have returned home. I have not seen letters from him nor have I heard anything certain concerning him from anyone. Therefore, I ask that you look into it. [...]

I have to a good extent finished the second part of the Paracelsica.³⁴

I am now sending you the preface and appendix for the first part, as I was unable to send them sooner.

Text No. 9

Erastus to H. Bullinger, Aug. 5, [1571]. StAZ, E II 361, fol. 78.

[fol. 78^r] Perna mihi spem facit, fore, ut Paracelsica nostra ad proximas exeant nundinas. Quod si est futurum vehementer cupio de re tota vestra audire libera iudicia. Si peccatum est, locus erit revocationi et emendationi in sequentibus. Quippe dum philosophia tracto in secunda parte, cogar subinde intermiscere theologica, velim, nolim.

Translation

Perna gives me hope that our Paracelsica is coming out at the next fair.³⁵ But if it is to have a future, I strongly desire to hear your frank opinion of the whole matter. If there is an error, the passage will be removed and corrected in succeeding volumes. Of course, while I handle philosophy in the second part, I am forced from time to time to mix in theology, whether I want to or not.

³⁴ *De medicina nova*, 2.

³⁵ The autumn fair, 1571.

Text No. 10

Erastus to H. Bullinger, Nov. 2, [1571]. StAZ, E II 361, fol. 74.

[fol. 74^r] Accedit hoc, quod partem alterum Paracelsicae confutationis expedire cogor: qua mihi re nulla umquam plus attulit doloris et molestiae. Tam sunt enim prodigiose tum falsa tum impia, ut quid primò suscipiam refellendum plerumque nesciam. Putavi in prima parte me impietatem detexisse, verum, ut video, vix attigi ex plurimis pauca. Non puto sub hoc sole vixisse hominem nequiores, magisque impium. Et repertus tamen est, qui speciosa oratione impietatem colorando, et absurditatem tegendo, nefario conatu ausus sit librum edere *Idae Medicinæ philosophicae et Paracelsiae etc.* quo valde multis, imposuit, imponit, imponet. et[cetera].[...]

Translation

As it happens, I am forced to prepare the second part of the Paracelsian confutation; nothing has ever brought me more anguish and annoyance than this. For they are so incredibly deceptive and impious,³⁶ that I often do not know why I began refuting them in the first place. I thought that I had exposed their impiety in the first part,³⁷ but as I see, I have scarcely touched on a few of the many points. I do not think that a more evil and impious man has ever lived under this sun.³⁸ And now there is one who, by coloring [Paracelsus's] impiety with pretty speech and defending [his] absurdity (an abominable endeavor!), has dared to publish a book, the *Idea medicinae philosophicae et Paracelsiae etc.*,³⁹ by which he has deceived, deceives, and will deceive many people, etc. [...]

³⁶ I.e., Paracelsus's teachings.

³⁷ I.e., *De medicina nova*, 1.

³⁸ For a German translation of this passage, see Gilly, *Zwischen Erfahrung und Spekulation*, 2:182.

³⁹ Severinus, *Idea medicinae philosophicae*.

Text No. 11

Erastus to Th. Zwinger, Heidelberg, Easter,
[April 6, 1572]. Basel UB, Fr.Gr. Ms. II 4, no. 93

[verso] Deo est gratia, quod propemodum tertiam quoque parte[m] absolvi: in qua complura non inutilia studiosis Medicinae declarare conor saltem, si non assequor. Mirabuntur boni viri, et miror ips[e]met nonnumquam patientiam meam: quae tamen non semper satis magn[a] est. Illud etiam te rogatum etiam atque etiam velim, ut quae de ha[c] vita moribusque à patruo tuo audivisti, notare mihi velis: imprimis ad curationes spectantia.

Translation

With God's grace, I have also nearly finished the third part,⁴⁰ in which at least I endeavor, if I do not succeed, to declare several things that are useful to medicine. Good men will marvel at my patience—even I myself am sometimes amazed—and yet it is not always great enough. I still wish what I have asked you again and again, that you would write down for me those things about this man's life and customs that you have heard from your uncle [Johannes Oporinus], especially regarding his cures.

Text No. 12

Erastus to H. Bullinger, Sept. 24,
[1572]. StAZ, E II 361, fol. 32–32^a.

[fol. 32a^r] Cum obsignaturus essem, duo in mentem venerant. Alterum est quod monere volui ne labores in legendis Antiparac[elsicarum] nostrarum disput[ationum] partibus aliis. Sunt enim secunda et tertia merè phi[losoph]ica et Medica ex sacris literis tamen comprobata. Hoc enim propositum fuit ostendere, verae philosophiae principia à Deo approbari. In tertiae initio confutavi .18. proposit[iones] cuiusdam Paracels[ici] quibus magis impium nihil excogitatum à Cacodaemone arbitror. Filium Dei facit sp[iritu]m in nobis corporeum, quique arte Chemica possit visibilis reddi: imò mortalis qui sit: et alia talia nefanda deliramenta conti-

⁴⁰ *De medicina nova*, 3.

nent plurima. Mihi satis est, Si Theologis non displiceant, quae in prima parte disputavimus, ad exterminandas superstitiosas vanitates, quibus irretiti omnium propè, etiam bonorum, animi tenentur.

Translation

Since I have sealed this, two things have come to mind.⁴¹ One is that I wanted to inform you—lest you are troubled in reading the other parts of our Antiparacelsian disputations. For the second and third parts are purely philosophical and medical yet confirmed by Holy Scripture. For it was proposed to show the principles of true philosophy approved by God. In the beginning of the third part, I have refuted “18 Propositions” of a certain Paracelsian,⁴² which I judge to be more impious than anything contrived by an evil spirit. He makes the Son of God a corporeal spirit in us, one that can be rendered visible by Chemical art. Indeed, it is even mortal. And most [i.e., the “18 Propositions”] contain other such unspeakable nonsense. It is enough for me, if those things which we have disputed in the first part—for the purpose of banishing superstitious vanities which entangle the minds of almost everyone, even good people—do not displease the theologians.

⁴¹ This extract comes from the postscript of the letter. Erastus's second concern was about a family matter, and so it has not been reproduced here.

⁴² Erastus is speaking here of Alexander von Suchten. See *De medicina nova*, 3:13–60. Though Suchten is not named in the text, he is named in the index (fol. kkk 2^r). See above chapter 8.