Das Buch

PARAGRANVM

PHILIPPI THEOPHRASTI

Von Hohenheim/ Beyder Artzney Doctoris:

Inn welchem die Vier Columnae, als nemlich
Philosophia, Astronomia, Alchimia, vnd Virtus,
darauff er seine Medicin fundiret/ beschrieben werden.

VORRED

in das Buch Paragranum,¹

Doctoris Theophrasti Paracelsi

Nachdem vnnd ich hab lassen außgehn/ nicht auß kleinen vrsachen/ von etlichen Kranckheiten/ nemlich/ darinn mein mehrest Argument/ die Irrsalen² der Artzney hoch zubetrachten: So wirdt mir dasselbig vonn denselbigen Irrern hoch verarget: Vnnd nicht allein durch sie die es berührt/ sonder sie bewegendt wider mich die vnuerstendige Rott/

¹ P. does not explain his title coinage, but it resonates with the trademark para- prefix of his pseudonym in a recent astrological publication (see Practica D. Theophrasti Paracelsi, printed in Nuremberg in 1529—S 7:41, fig. 12, cf. 48), or in the cryptic syllable in the title of his printed treatise on syphilis of November 23, 1529, Von der französischen Krankheit, drei Bücher Para[celsi?] (S 7:67). His earlier theological writings had announced coming “paramiran works” (cf. H 1:67). The sense given to “granum” by P.’s extended allusions to Jn 12:24 (cf. H 2:67; H 1:91, 92, 283), to Mt 13:31 (H 2:89; H 1:246), and other biblical seed metaphors (cf. vis-à-vis) is central to his account of the process which yields the medical arcanum (see H 2:15; 1:92) and in conformity with his claim to an apostolic healing mission, persecuted like the seed that dies to bring forth fruit (“wie das Korn/ dz faull wirdt in der Erden/ vor dem vnd es wachst/ vndn darnach in seine frücht gehet”—H 2:67), growing like the tiny “Senffkorn” into a great tree (H 2:89). This figure is also central to his account of the reborn celestial body in De Resurrectione et Corporum Glorificatione (G 1:306). Those sympathetic to P.’s ideas and travails could be expected to understand the title Paragranum in reference to his mission and to the “wondrous” (mirum) healing fruit soon to be brought forth in his long advertised, immediately subsequent Opus Paramirum.

² The reference to medical errors places this work in P.’s line of polemics against medical opponents which extends at least from the Basel episode to the Labyrinthus Medicorum Errantium of 1537-38.
The Book
PARAGRANUM

PHILIPP THEOPHRAST
von Hohenheim

Doctor of both Medicines,

In which the Four Columnae, that is,
Philosophia, Astronomia, Alchimia, and Virtus,
Upon which he has founded his Medicine, are described.

Preface

to the Book Paragranum

Doctoris Theophrasti Paracelsi.

Having urgently brought forth writings on various diseases regarding my major argument on the errors of medicine, I find now that this is being held very much against me, and indeed not only by those [I have] criticized, but, at their instigation, even by the ignorant mob that

1 The trademark neologism (see vis-à-vis) consists of the para- prefix, either Latin, “equal” or “comparable to” (OLD), or Greek παρά- “alongside,” “past,” or “beyond,” and granum, “seed of a cereal plant” (OLD) or a grain of “wheat” (MLLM). This refers in the Vulgate to the grain of wheat which, only if it falls into the ground and dies, bears much fruit (“... nisi granum frumenti cadens in terram, mortuum fuerit, ipsum solum manet: si autem mortuum fuerit, multum fructum affert.” Jn 12:24). The great fecundity of the seed recalls Jesus’ parable of the “mustard seed” that, like the kingdom of heaven, grows to overshadow much else (“simile est regnum caelorum sinapis grano”—Mt 13:31-32; 17:19; Mk 4:31-32; Lk 13:19; cf. vis-à-vis) and Paul’s metaphor of the “bare seed” (“nudum granum”) which grows into a body that may be either celestial or earthly (1 Cor 15:37ff.; cf. Rudolph1 on the implications in connection with alchemical thinking for P.’s theory of the “two bodies” in the writings on the Eucharist around 1530). “Seed,” as metaphor or concept, unites the personal sphere of P.’s mission with the impersonal ones of medicine, alchemy, and resurrection; its floating references variously inform the connections of microcosm, macrocosm, and limbus. (cf. H 2:37, notes b and 2; H 1:97ff.; H 1:201-02). “Seed” represents processes in the light of birth, growth, or genesis, just as the physical and metaphysical notion of “fire” in Opus Paramirum (see H 1:69ff.) represents them in the light of destruction, redemption, and revelation of the inner being.