

The Devils Doctor: Paracelsus and the World of Renaissance Magic and Science By Philip Ball

A contemporary of Luther an enemy of the medical establishment a scourge of the universities an alchemist an army surgeon and a radical theologian he attracted myths even before he died. His fantastic journeys across Europe and beyond were said to be made on a magical white horse and he was rumored to carry the elixir of life in the pommel of his great broadsword. He explores the intellectual political and religious undercurrents of the sixteenth century and looks at how doctors really practiced at how people traveled and at how wars were fought. And yet by uniting the diverse disciplines of medicine biology and alchemy he assisted almost in spite of himself in the birth of science and the emergence of the age of rationalism. It examines a wide range of topics including the business cycle random walks phase transitions bifurcation theory traffic flow Zipf's law Small world phenomenon catastrophe theory the Prisoner's dilemma. It examines a wide range of topics including the business cycle random walks phase transitions bifurcation theory traffic flow Zipf's law Small world phenomenon catastrophe theory the Prisoner's dilemma. In a characteristically chaotic polemical pugnacious and combative manner Paracelsus traveled throughout Germany and the neighboring European countries healing people with his alchemical remedies making enemies of the orthodox physicians wherever he went and writing passionately mystically and often incoherently about his practices embedding them in a cosmological system of an alchemical universe Christian theology and Hermetic "chemical philosophy". One well-known theory that was developed from the Paracelsian milieu the phlogiston "principle" of combustibility initially supposed to be akin to alchemical principle of sulphur but ultimately revealed as oxygen after Lavoisier's discovery during the Enlightenment in the 17th century. This biography includes detailed accounts of Paracelsus's continual vagabondage and is interspersed with relevant expositions of the historical and ideological background necessary for the understanding of the events in his life and the curious mixture that was his philosophy. É também um dos poucos talvez o único que tenta ser imparcial com essa figura médica lendária e tenta explicar e analisar sua trajetória de vida relativa às crenças e vivências do período medieval. Produzia suas próprias poções e elixires indo contra a relação entre médicos e boticários "Paracelso tem a convicção de que os médicos não são apenas tolos equivocados mas enganadores deliberados que sabem que a sua medicina não tem utilidade mas persistem com ela pois lhe traz lucro. Acreditava que as respostas estavam na natureza nas estrelas e no universo e que o bom médico precisava estudar alquimia astronomia e astrologia para entender as doenças Talvez com base neste último ainda hoje Paracelso seja tão ligado ao mundo do Ocultismo fato que lá atrás também serviu para desacreditá-lo perante seus pares. Preferia a linguagem do povo falava em alemão ao invés do latim (embora soubesse os dois idiomas) mas sempre possuía dificuldade quando em debates com outros médicos exatamente por essa dificuldade com o ensino regular catedrático. Depreende-se que enquanto as crenças "revolucionárias" e a "língua ferina" o afastavam dos catedráticos e médicos ortodoxos sua eficácia em resolver problemas seus preços e linguagem mais acessível o aproximavam do povo. Numa época em que a astrologia e a astronomia ainda se confundiam Paracelso oferecia mais que a cura palpável mas também um efeito "placebo" talvez ao inserir o ocultismo em suas curas. 15 - Estrela e ascendente Retrata bem como livro histórico-científico como a revolução de Lutero e dos anabatistas em meio à semente do pensamento renascentista moldava em parte as atuações de Paracelso. Philip Ball é um escritor de ciência e não biografista o que se reflete em sua escrita que não flui e parece se posicionar em cima do muro entre descrever a trajetória do médico e explicar a época renascentista. Além disso ao mesmo tempo em que abandona a biografia e mergulha em explicações sobre minérios astronomia química e outros também não consegue identificar se Paracelso contribuiu ou não para a ciência sempre trazendo a mancha do ocultismo para as suas realizações. Despido de um viés puramente ocultista consegue transitar entre a vida do médico e os conceitos renascentistas de alquimia metalurgia e transmutação além de tentar explicar os confusos neologismos do médico suíço. Não é uma bibliografia perfeita mas caso lido com atenção e carinho pode-se aproveitar muito como conhecimento científico e histórico além de importantes conselhos aos médicos: aprender com os pacientes e ouvi-los pois a medicina se encontra em todo o lugar e não apenas nas universidades.

Mam wrażenie że autor sam nie do końca wiedział a Lekarza Diabła napisał raczej dlatego że postać Paracelsusa wydała się fascynująca niż dlatego że odegrała jakąś konkretną rolę w rozwoju myśli europejskiej. Would you want to be treated at a place associated with someone whose preferred remedy for the plague was pills of rolled bread tainted with infected faeces...? And sure enough 'Paracelsus' - Theophrastus Bombast Von Hohenheim 1493-1541 - turns out to have been born in the next village inland from me Einsiedeln which is also notable for being the place where Zwingli first worked as a parish priest. The two men were contemporaries; Paracelsus stomped furiously across the whole of Reformation Europe and beyond from Scotland to Algiers from Moscow to Jerusalem and seemingly everywhere in between. He was the archetypal Renaissance magus figure always on the road fascinated by all knowledge seeing no distinction between chemistry and theology by turns modern and medieval and blending occultism with rationalism in a way that made no sense to anyone including himself. One of the things I like best about this book is that it does not try to present Paracelsus - as so many of his contemporaries are presented - as a forerunner of the modern scientist. A lot of energy is expended making the point that 'magic' and 'science' were not in this period distinguishable and the fact that we remember some people (Newton Copernicus) as scientists and others (Paracelsus Agrippa) as magicians/charlatans is an anachronism that has to do with which theories have been shown over time to be true. Gravity really does follow an inverse square law and the earth really does revolve around the sun; but De revolutionibus was couched in terms of astrological significance and Newton devised his theory of gravity while working on a book about the mysteries of the Cabbala. 'Paracelsus produced no real lasting contributions to modern scientific knowledge but his work was not qualitatively different from those that did and for a long time after his death it seemed as though Paracelsianism would determine the shape of modern science. He was the first major figure to break with the Galenic tradition in Europe and suggest that modern medical treatments had the potential to be much better than the received wisdom and humoral theory of the Greeks and Romans. He set more store by experimentation and practice than by books and made a point of consulting just as much with local wise women and folk healers as with learned doctors - indeed probably rather more of the former than of the latter. He was inconsistent fell out with everyone he met bore long grudges and was fiercely independent - as suggested by his family motto: Eins andern knecht soll niemand seyn der für sich bleyben kann alleyn. 'When you read statements like 'practice should not be based on speculative theory; theory should be derived from practice' it is easy to believe that you are dealing with a proto-modern rationalist. For Paracelsus alchemy was less about transmuting base metal into gold (though popular stories about his chrysopoeian abilities abounded) and more about the principle of refining every substance into its purest most elemental components. He attributed this to a sort of internal alchemist called the archeus but it is not such a very long way from passages like the following to the discovery of enzymes: all our nourishment becomes ourselves; we eat ourselves into being.... We do not eat bone blood vessels ligaments and seldom brain heart and entrails nor fat therefore bone does not make bone nor brain make brain but every bite contains all these. Paracelsus tried not to take sides in religious debates - he memorably described Luther and the Pope as 'two whores debating chastity' - but none of this was merely an intellectual exercise for him. If you want to try it at home here's the recipe: Let the semen of a man putrefy by itself in a sealed cucurbit with the highest putrefaction of the venter equinus [horse manure] for forty days or until it begins at last to live move and be agitated which can easily be seen. If now after this it be every day nourished and fed cautiously and prudently with the arcanum of human blood and kept for forty weeks in the perpetual and equal heat of a venter equinus it becomes thenceforth a true and living infant having all the members of a child that is born from a woman but much smaller. It is a miracle and marvel of God an arcanum above all arcana and deserves to be kept secret until the last times when there shall be nothing hidden but all things shall be made manifest. No surprise that Paracelsus was a major source for the Faust legend and indeed was a contemporary of the likely original Doctor Faust with whose biography his own was often conflated. Ball is a science writer not a biographer and there are parts of the book where the narrative drive seems to flag a little; the absence of biographical detail about Paracelsus's life

also means he has to pad the book out with long diversions on contemporary mining banking venereal disease etc. Ball's assessment of one of Paracelsus's theories will stand for a good summary of the man's work and indeed of the whole fascinating period: This is all wrong of course but it is not unreasonable. (May 2014) In Meinrad Lienert's *Sagen und Legenden der Schweiz* I read that local legend accounts for the loss of Paracelsus's alchemical secrets: his powers were apparently concentrated in the pommel of his smallsword which was lost when he died. 'Now the servant saw that he had not made the best choice; he took the sword but did not throw it into the Sihl instead hiding it in a bush so that he might come back and retrieve it upon Paracelsus's death. The wondrous doctor spoke to his servant: 'Now know I that you have followed my command that never shall my sword be passed down and that for me the time has come to pass from the world. This book contains a lot of information about alchemy and metal-mining astrology and religious mores but the main thread follows Paracelsus on his never-ending journeys across central Europe in search of knowledge. And due to its length a bit of a slog for those who might not be as convinced as I am that Paracelsus is interesting! Hardcover I ran into Paracelsus reading Daniel Boorstin's *The Discoverers* and Barzun's *From Dawn to Decadence*. Please understand this is a great read with lots of other people running around (Luther looms large as he should) and the attending history that was contemporaneous with Paracelsus's life is important and fascinating. I guess because people actually listened to this guy who does seem to get closer to a modern approach to the scientific method than many (but in no way all) thinkers of the time. His was instead the thankless task of preparing for the hegemony of science lacking the tools he needed derided by onlookers and having no real notion of what it was he was doing.

Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombast von Hohenheim who called himself Paracelsus stands at the cusp of medieval and modern times. His name was linked with Faust who bargained with the devil, Who was the man behind these stories? Some have accused him of being a charlatan a windbag who filled his books with wild speculations and invented words. Philip Ball exposes a more complex truth in *The Devil's Doctor*—one that emerges only by entering into Paracelsus's time, For Paracelsus was a product of an age of change and strife of renaissance and reformation. *The Devil's Doctor: Paracelsus and the World of Renaissance Magic and Science* Philip Ball (born 1962) is an English science writer: He holds a degree in chemistry from Oxford and a doctorate in physics from Bristol University. He was an editor for the journal *Nature* for over 10 years: Ball's most popular book is the 2004 *Critical Mass: How One Thing Leads to Another* winner of the 2005 Aventis Prize for Science Books, The overall theme is one of applying modern mathematical models to social and economic phenomena. He holds a degree in chemistry from Oxford and a doctorate in physics from Bristol University: He was an editor for the journal *Nature* for over 10 years: Ball's most popular book is the 2004 *Critical Mass: How One Thing Leads to Another* winner of the 2005 Aventis Prize for Science Books: The overall theme is one of applying modern mathematical models to social and economic phenomena, {site_link} This is supposed to be a book about Paracelsus but it's more about his time than the man himself, Do we really need to rehash Luther's clash with Zwingli? The author continually emphasises that Paracelsus was not a scientist. Our hero's books on medicine astrology chemistry and theology are a muddle of guesswork and prejudice, Just occasionally as if by chance he happens to say something that later ages approve of. That leaves me with no clear idea of where he fits in the history of science where his greatness lies indeed why he matters at all: Hardcover A fascinating journey through the life of an itinerant German physician and alchemist Philip Theophrastus Bombast von Hohenheim a. Paracelsus whose "new medicine" (chemical medicine iatrochemistry) revolutionized the practice of medicine that until that point had still been based in ancient Hippocratic and Galenic ideas, Although his ideas had long been superseded Paracelsus (1493-1541) was a crucial link between the world of medieval "natural magic" of alchemy and the modern scientific chemistry: Interest in his ideas and practices spurred the following generations of Paracelsian physicians to investigate further and make further steps in the development of the chemistry: Hardcover Único livro autointitulado biográfico sobre o personagem Paracelso médico

suíço do período renascentista (1493-1541) publicado em português: Talvez por possuir este objetivo pouco em relação à descrição de suas contribuições. Paracelso pseudônimo de Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim é uma figura histórica polêmica assim como o foi no período em que viveu. Até hoje ainda se discute se sua escrita prolífica impactou realmente a ciência ou apenas o ocultismo o que o autor também não deixa claro em seu texto: “O cirurgião e o inquisidor só diferiam por sua motivação: fora isso seus conjuntos de facas serras e pinças para cortar perfurar queimar e amputar em muito se pareciam, 4: O bastão e a Cobra /As polêmicas em torno do seu nome são inúmeras pois para começar Paracelso se posicionava contra o estereótipo médico da época: 1, Defendia que o médico deveria sempre viajar para aprender com o povo e não com o conhecimento fechado das faculdades³. Falava o que pensava apresentando pouco tato político e social⁶, Atuava também com procedimentos cirúrgicos “sujando as mãos” algo impensável numa época em que havia distinção entre médicos e cirurgiões-dentistas⁷. Ele ainda desprezava o ensino tradicional e a argumentação clássica. “Essa ideia de que a matéria ganha existência através de um tipo de revelação alquímica é fundamentalmente não científica mas teológica: 14: Além das maravilhas Posto isso o livro tem seus méritos em explicar a cada curva da vida de Paracelso a relação entre o seu posicionamento com o pensamento da época, Ganhava fama em cada problema de saúde que resolvia e em seus discursos que buscavam relacionar a cura à natureza e às conjunções (alinhamento de estrelas e planetas): “Mas a grande atração da astrologia era seu poder ‘explicador’. O único antídoto para o desespero era a ilusão de controle e isso a astrologia providenciava: Em outros momentos ainda que fugazes traz dados contraditórios pois o mesmo P. que contradiz Lutero age e fala de forma bem parecida sendo ambos muito extremistas e de pouco cuidado com o modo como suas palavras impactavam os ouvintes, “Lutero estava preparado para encorajar as reações extremadas dos príncipes e suas palavras chocavam até mesmo aqueles que eram convocados para executar suas decisões: (:) Portanto a qualquer um deve ser permitido castigar assassinar esfaquear abertamente ou não lembrando que nada pode ser mais venenoso diabólico ou ameaçador do que um rebelde: Cap 7 - Revolução sob o signo do Sapato Como livro biográfico o autor peca repetidamente. Desta forma o livro ainda é a melhor opção bibliográfica que se tem hoje disponível sobre Paracelso, Hardcover Since I discovered Philip Ball and his writings I have been reading everything he produces, I am also interested in reading everything about Paracelsus since I consider himself one of my heroes in science and medicine no matter what people think about him. I think he played a very important role in modernization of chemistry and medicine: If you think this book is an ordinary biography you are mistaken: The book is really well written with the most interesting stories and endless journeys of Paracelsus, You will not only read his life his work and trips; but also the political and religious environment of his age, If you ever read anything about Paracelsus you probably know that he traveled almost anywhere accessible in 16th century to learn how different people fight the diseases. He was outspoken and he had extreme ideas and sometimes practices that gave him trouble. To him schools were not really the only places that you can learn a profession: At all the German schools you cannot learn as much as the Frankfurt fair. Traveling was so important for him that once he said If a man wishes to recognize many diseases let him travel: Unlike several other books the book does not have a fixed idea on Paracelsus' character or whether we should take him seriously or not: This makes the book even more special by allowing us to have our own opinion: I strongly recommend this book for science medicine philosophy philosophy of science and chemistry enthusiasts. My personal opinion is that Paracelsus was a great man and scientist and we owe him a lot. Since I first heard of his name when I was a little boy I always felt very close to him: What I like him the most as Philip Ball says always he was no one's man but his own. Hardcover Książka bywa momentami ciekawa daje całkiem niezłe ogólne wyobrażenie o tym jak wyglądała medycyna (i szerzej: intelektualne życie Europy) w barwnych czasach Renesansu: Brakuje jej jednak jakiegoś szerszego ogólnego zamysłu czy struktury przez co ma się wrażenie że składa się w większości z dygresji, Po prawie 500 stronach wciąż nie jestem przekonany jaką w zasadzie rolę odegrał w rozwoju medycyny i chemii Paracelsus: Ball wprowadził do książki bez szczególnie wyraźnego celu mnóstwo historycznych postaci których nie sposób

spamiętać przez co lektura jej momentami przytłaczająca i nużąca. Nie rozwinął też kilku (dla mnie) bardzo interesujących wątków pobocznych takich jak np. przyczyny powstania racjonalistycznego nurtu w XIII-wiecznej teologii który zakładał że Bóg nie zawiaduje światem w sposób bezpośredni ale przy pomocy praw natury przez niego ustalonych: Nurt ten stał się potem podstawą dla późniejszych empiryków próbujących poznać i zrozumieć mechanizmy rządzące światem, No i te odniesienia do Junga który ma rzekomo pomóc przedstawić wewnętrzne konflikty targające Paracelsusem, Wspieranie się Jungiem nie sprawia że analiza jest bardziej wnikliwa ani bardziej głębsza a jedynie bardziej irytująca. I tak dobrze że Ball z dwójki najbardziej znanych psychoanalityków wybrał Junga a nie Freuda. Hardcover My local hospital in the little Swiss village where I now live is called the Paracelsus-Spital: He must be from round here I thought - no one would name a hospital after a mad alchemist unless there was some local connection surely. We remember the bits that are part of modern science and forget that they came from a complex early-modern mixture of feverish theories and arcane suppositions. 'Science resulted not from efforts to get rid of [magical ideas] but from attempts to make sense of them, What did the term mean exactly? Well in part it meant modernity. But Paracelsus rarely followed his own advice and many of his own theories were not just misguided but frankly batshit insane: He maintained a fierce belief in alchemy at a time when it looked like the discipline might be going out of fashion. He discovered for instance that repeated distillation and separation of wine would produce a colourless fiery 'quintessence' - now known as alcohol: What was done by the alchemist in his laboratory was no more than what was done by nature all the time - not least within the human body. Paracelsus has been called the first biochemist for his insightful realization that some kind of transmutation must be taking place within our own bodies every time we eat: For every bite we take contains in itself all our organs all that is included in the whole man all of which he is constituted.... Bread is blood but who sees it? It is fat who sees it? ...for the master craftsman in the stomach is good: He can make iron out of brimstone: he is there daily and shapes the man according to his form: Spare a thought for the fact that the transformation of bread into flesh in sixteenth-century Europe was to put it mildly a live issue: His theories are 'best described not as proto-science but as chemical theology'. Chemistry and medicine were ways of understanding the hand of god of deciphering the secrets that underpinned the universe. And once you knew these secrets astonishing mysteries became available to you, Paracelsus believed that he could create life in his laboratory in the form of a homunculus a little humanoid grown from natural alchemy: After this time it will be in some degree like a human being but nevertheless transparent and without body. This we call a homunculus; and it should be afterwards educated with the greatest care and zeal until it grows up and begins to display intelligence, Now this is one of the greatest secrets which God has revealed to mortal and fallible man. Philip Ball tells the story well drawing links to modern scientific ideas where necessary but never letting you forget the profound mysticism of the time. The outstanding introductory chapter which sets the scene of Renaissance science brilliantly is worth the cover price alone: Paracelsus is worth sticking around for a good reminder of the potential futures that were contained in the early-modern present. My very free and selective translation of the deathbed scene: Only one loyal servant remained. To him Paracelsus wanted to bequeath something and he allowed him to choose between his smallsword and his books. But since he neither knew nor imagined the magic power of the sword's pommel he would not take the sword and said to his master 'Give me your books: ' Paracelsus was disheartened and said: 'I would rather have seen you choose the smallsword; but so be it you may keep the books: Take the sword and cast it into the Sihl that none might have it, Then he returned to his master who asked him 'Have you done what I asked of you?' to which he answered 'Yes my lord. ' Then the sorcerer who knew well what had happened waxed wroth and threatened to shoot the servant dead for his disobedience, Trembling the servant went back and retrieved the sword from the bush brought it to his master and confessed his guilt. Paracelsus repeated his earlier command and this time the servant did throw the sword into the Sihl, The river began to roar and thunder; rocks cracked open; the ground shook; and the house of the dying Paracelsus shuddered, (Dec 2015) Hardcover Written for a popular audience and I think it succeeds in that respect, Ball is clearly knowledgeable his writing is fine and it's certainly a

compelling read even if depth is often sacrificed for breadth: (The implication that he is writing about Paracelsus in spite of himself is kind of a turn-off too,) I found the citations frustrating — for the most part only direct quotes are footnoted: He makes a lot of pretty strong assertions — not to mention stating theories as facts (Chapter 20 I'm lookin' at you!) — and I would have appreciated more references, Hardcover About a year ago I was gripped with an enthusiasm for the European Reformation and how science was emerging at that time from magic and occultism: Sharing as I do a birthday with Einstein I'm inclined to believe there may be something in it myself. He was a wandering scholar moving from one university town to another narrowly escaping death on numerous occasions getting into drunken brawls and generally collecting enemies. But it is now held by many that he was one of the pioneers of modern chemistry: Hardcover A very thorough review of a somewhat obscure story about a Renaissance physician and scientist far better known than understood, Does a great job of explaining the unexplainable: how Paracelsus could have thought the things he did even in 16th century context, Not as insightful in dealing with the surrounding historical and theological context and sometimes caricatures better-known figures of the times, Both these authors made him seem so fascinating that I knew I had to find a biography of this amazing man, Now that I have read one I think the small mentions in the previous two books did as much in service of his memory than this whole book. There is also quite a bit of fun in looking at the intricate carefully constructed pseudo sciences of the time even if in the end it is largely a waste of thought, Unfortunately Paracelsus himself was so frequently incorrect in his work that I found it hard to understand why the man was so important. I would like to include a few quotes from the author that appear to sum up the book pretty well, Since there seems to be no need for Paracelsus his continuing presence cannot be explained by any deep validity or novelty in his ideas, And one from Boorstin who I guess addresses my concerns with this . If his arguments weren't right his insights and his hunches were, May serve as a decent primer in Renaissance thought but there are much better books on this era. Others claim him as the father of modern medicine. He now writes a regular column in Chemistry World. Philip Ball (born 1962) is an English science writer. He now writes a regular column in Chemistry World.k.a.” - Pag 45 - Cap. Não se vestia com sedas e pompas2. Acreditava no empirismo para evolução dos tratamentos médicos4.”Pag. 156. Cap. 9: Elixir e quintessência 5. (.) Para Paracelso o Gênesis era um conto de alquimia (.)” Pg 243. Cap. A explosão de interesse pelas artes ocultas (.) estava relacionada aos medos e dificuldades da época (.)” - Pag 269. Cap.” Pg 127. In my opinion he is by far the best science writer. I think the book is a fascinating work on Paracelsus.<http://chemdiary.blogspot.com/2015/04>. Podsumowując: książka ma kilka istotnych wad. Polecam raczej miłośnikom Renesansu i alchemii. 'Let no man belong to another who can belong to himself. It was all about the meaning of life.Heady stuff. which different readers may find fascinating or distracting. The servant reflected long on this choice.' And thus he died. Astrology was ubiquitous and firmly believed in by everyone. A fascinating character anyway.So an interesting read but largely inessential. Hardcover

