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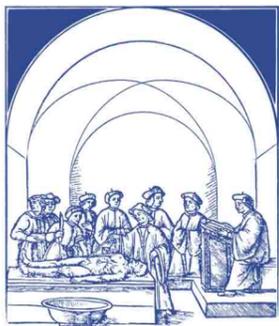


UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI PARMA



STUDIO FIRMANO
PER LA STORIA DELL'ARTE MEDICA E DELLA SCIENZA

CSMBR
ONLINE
EVENTS



CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF
MEDICINE AND THE BODY
IN THE RENAISSANCE

FROM NATURAL HISTORY TO HUMAN GENERATION

PLINY THE ELDER AS A SOURCE OF RENAISSANCE GYNAECOLOGICAL TREATISES

GABRIEL SILVA • University of Lisbon

12
MAY
2026
5.00 PM

CENTRAL EUROPEAN TIME

Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* is one of the most important sources for gynaecological treatises of the Renaissance. Of the entire Plinian encyclopedia, books 7 and 28 seem to be the most frequently quoted or used to explaining medical phenomena, particularly those relating to anthropology, extraordinary births, and the miraculous properties of menstrual blood, among others. For this presentation, I will consider two works in particular: Ludovico

Bonacciolli's (1475–1536) *Enneas muliebris*, and Rodrigo de Castro Lusitano's (1546–1627/29), *De uniuersa mulierum medicina*. Bonacciolli's treatise is included in the *Gynaeciorum libri* (last edition in 1597), a compendium of several treatises on women's medicine. Castro's work deals with women's nature and conditions in a theoretical and practical way. Both authors cite Pliny as a main source, particularly with regard to

cases and stories of *mirabilia*. Besides the medical content extracted from Pliny, the Roman naturalist collected and conveyed a very particular kind of knowledge, names, and figures that would otherwise have been lost. Ultimately, Pliny was used as a source for *Wunderkammern*. For this presentation, my main goal is therefore to explore the importance of Pliny in these treatises and to pinpoint how the knowledge he conveyed was used and preserved by these physicians.

The event is free to attend but registration is required. Info at csnbr.fondazionecomel.org