

Matteolo Mattioli (14.. – 1479?)

He was born in Perugia, probably in the first decade of the 15th century. Although he was only a *magister in artibus*, he began his university career teaching medicine from at least 1427, the year he was offered a teaching post of medicine at the University of Siena. The authorities of Perugia appreciated his work so much that they persuaded him to give up teaching in Siena by granting him a salary increase. This first phase of Mattioli's professional life came to an end in 1430, when he moved to Padua, where he received his doctoral degree, immediately followed by a teaching post at the same university. His career was rather unstable in the following years, since he was a lecturer in several cities. In Padua, he entered the world of humanistic culture. Finally giving in to repeated attempts to have him back as a teacher, he returned to teach in Perugia in 1454, but stayed only a few months, as he was involved in an unpleasant quarrel that led to a literary dispute. The subject of this dispute is unknown, but Mattioli was so blatantly defeated that he no longer wanted to appear in public and decided to leave the city and return to Padua, where he took up the teaching post of ordinary theoretical medicine. In Padua, Mattioli met his most famous students, Ludovico Podocataro and Hartmann Schedel, who became the most important promoter of his master's fame. Most of his works, known only thanks to the transcriptions made by Schedel, date back to the years

of his teaching career in Padua and have all survived as manuscripts, with the sole exception of the short treatise *De memoria*, which had a fair amount of success and was first printed in Leipzig in 1470 and then re-published by both Italian and German printers until the early decades of the 16th century.

In *De memoria*, Mattioli distinguishes, first and foremost and in keeping with tradition, between memory and reminiscence, i.e. between the act of keeping trace of things and notions in the mind and the subsequent act of recalling them to consciousness. According to tradition, it is believed that he died between 1479 and 1480.

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