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978-1-107-06554-3 - *The Bible and Natural Philosophy in Renaissance Italy: Jewish and Christian Physicians in Search of Truth*

Andrew D. Berns

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THE BIBLE AND NATURAL PHILOSOPHY IN  
RENAISSANCE ITALY

*The Bible and Natural Philosophy in Renaissance Italy* explores the reciprocal relationship between biblical interpretation and natural philosophy in sixteenth-century Italy. The book augments our knowledge of the manifold applications of medical expertise in the Renaissance and of the multiple ways in which the Bible was read by educated people who lacked theological training. Andrew D. Berns demonstrates that many physicians in sixteenth-century Italy, Jewish and Christian alike, took a keen interest in the Bible and postbiblical religious literature. Berns identifies the intellectual tools that Renaissance doctors and natural philosophers brought to bear on their analysis of the Bible and assesses how their education and professional experience helped them acquire, develop, and use those tools. *The Bible and Natural Philosophy in Renaissance Italy* argues that the changing nature of medical culture in the Renaissance inspired physicians to approach the Bible not only as a divine work but also as a historical and scientific text.

Andrew D. Berns is Assistant Professor of History at the University of South Carolina.

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# The Bible and Natural Philosophy in Renaissance Italy

JEWISH AND CHRISTIAN  
PHYSICIANS IN SEARCH OF TRUTH

**Andrew D. Berns**

University of South Carolina



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## A Note on Translation, Transliteration, and Names

All translations, unless otherwise specified, are my own. Translations of biblical verses are generally those of the Jewish Publication Society. When transcribing Hebrew texts, I have not corrected all grammatical or printing errors. When transliterating Hebrew, I have followed the guidelines laid out in *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Second Edition, 2007). I have preferred vernacular as opposed to Latinate names for the Italian protagonists in this work. Thus David de' Pomi rather than David de Pomis; Ulisse Aldrovandi rather than Ulyssis Aldrovandus; Abraham Portaleone rather than Abraham Portaleonis. One exception: when a Northern European such as Melchior Wieland took on both Italian and Latin names, I have used the Latin appellation Melchior Guilandinus in deference to scholarly precedent.

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## Abbreviations

BT	Babylonian Talmud
BUB	Biblioteca Universitaria di Bologna
DBI	<i>Dizionario biografico degli italiani</i>
EJ	<i>Encyclopedia Judaica</i> (Second Edition, 2007)
JQR	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
PL	J. P. Migne, <i>Patrologiae cursus completus series latina</i> (Paris: Garnier, 1844–65)
REJ	<i>Revue des Études Juives</i>
SG	<i>Shiltei HaGibborim</i>