This dissertation aims at demonstrating that the wisdom of the Renaissance (specifically the period between 1348 when pestilence attacked Firenze and 1616 when Campanella wrote The Defense of Galileo) covers a vast area of learning that comprises seemingly incompatible fields of human interest and research and also argues that the natural magic of those days is a form of wisdom which purports to capture scientific aspects of nature. Another important point is to show that the great majority of the intelligentsia then based their own reason for existence on learning and seeking various kinds of wisdom and knowledge, namely that they advocated and believed in 'pansophism'.

The paper is organized as follows:

1. The basic tone of life
   1.1 'Cuore mangiato'
   1.2 The affirmation of carnal desires
   1.3 Aspects of sexual intercourse
2. The form and breadth of wisdom
2.1 The wit on the deathbed
2.2 The form of wisdom
2.3 The media of wisdom
2.4 The location of ‘grammar’
2.5 The significance of ‘utility’
2.6 The declination of ‘virtue’

3 The wisdom of magic
3.1 The fables of Calandrino
3.2 Campanella, the prophet
3.3 Campanella and his sense of space
3.4 Campanella and the heliocentric theory

Chapter One deals with the basic tone of life characteristic of the Renaissance culture as is evident in the strong affirmation of worldly life and sexual desires seen in the fables of those days and G. Della Porta’s Natural Magic (close to today’s ‘natural history’).

Section 1.1 begins with a famous fable (novella), ‘cuore mangiato’ in Novellino, which was the first book written in Florence dialect, and shows how vigorously people lived after being relieved from the bondage of the Christian morality at the end of the Middle Ages. Section 1.2 discusses two stories in Decameron and makes it clear that Boccaccio praises and thinks much of several desires that men have. Section 1.3 points out that Della Porta is deeply in love with the natural world by looking into the way he investigates the world, and also considers how he speculates on sexual intercourse.

Chapter Two is concerned with the form of the Renaissance wisdom and how widely it is accepted, and shows that the dramatic rise and fall of humanism is due to the social or religious changes of those days. In addition, what relations there are between this wisdom and men’s lives in the Renaissance is also discussed.

Section 2.1 takes up the first story of the first day of Decameron and argues how human-centered the Renaissance wisdom is by showing that the story is basically about the human wit in this world. Section 2.2, after the analysis and classification of various kinds of wisdom found in the autobiography of Cardano, suggests that the major Cardanian types of
wisdom may correspond to the three sorts of wisdom current in the Renaissance, namely: humanism, Platonism, and Aristotelianism. It is also made clear what concepts Cardano had of God and his Spirit and what scientific view he held of the natural world. Section 2.3 turns to the invention of printing in the middle of the 15th century and reviews not only how new books were circulated and entertained but also how classics were discovered and collected. Also worth mentioning is the way a new Renaissance culture gradually took place of the universal or Catholic culture that is based on the old Latin teaching, as vernacular languages became popular. Section 2.4 concerns what a great part ‘grammar’ plays in the Renaissance culture because it is one of the three basic subjects of the liberal arts. Lorenzo Valla’s linguistic work The Excellence of Latin, for example, emphasizing the universal value of the humanistic turn in the Renaissance, confirms that the Classical world is actually born again. It is in the age of the Renaissance when the real value of ‘grammar’ is recognized as the basis of other subjects. Section 2.5 refers to the notion of ‘utility’ found in Matteo Palmieri’s On the Civil Life. The ‘utility’ notion was so omnipresent in the daily life of those days and handiwork was so much valued that it is concluded that a new thought had already emerged of attaching the same weight to the brain and the hand. Section 2.6 discusses how ‘virtue’ is put against ‘fortune’ on the basis of Machiavelli’s and Guicciardini’s works and explains the way humanism, a belief in cultivating ‘virtue’, gradually declines as the force of ‘virtue’ becomes weaker.

Chapter Three discusses in detail the wisdom of magic with special reference to Campanella and his works, and proves that the majority of the intelligentsia of the Renaissance believed that spirits existed in the universe and in living things.

Section 3.1 points out, by analyzing one of Calandrino’s fables in Decameron, that it is eventually possible to regard a magical stone, elitropia, which makes invisible a man who holds it, as the metaphor of human desires. Section 3.2 goes on to analyze the thought of the millennium of Campanella’s The City of the Sun, makes clear his position in politics and religion, and argues that Campanella expresses his own idea of the Hermetic tradition by making use of the framework of Christianity. Section 3.3 discloses Campanella’s view of the cosmos through the analysis of the constructive structure of the ideal city in The City of the Sun and touches upon his passion for circles. Section 3.4 focuses on Campanella’s The
Defense of Galileo and shows how seriously he thought of nature as the book of God and how deeply he was worried about Galileo's heliocentric theory. Campanella is located in the great chain of ideas as the man who lived on the borderline between natural magic and modern science.

Finally, it is concluded that during the three hundred years of the Renaissance the medieval wisdom, which is static and scholastic, is turned and transformed into an active and humanistic one, which characterizes the Renaissance wisdom. The wisdom now shines on a human and worldly flesh after having cast off the old religious or Christian skin, and the body is supported by the backbone of the Classical world. In the 16th century, this wisdom plays an important role in the mental or intellectual nourishment of new human characters and in the acquisition of new knowledge. That is, the wisdom becomes life-oriented and human-oriented, in other words, more experiential and objective. And keeping step with the advancement of wisdom and actual knowledge, natural magic, which intends to apply such knowledge and skills to the natural world and change it for the betterment of life, gains increasing significance during the Renaissance period and serves as a bridge to modern science.