

The discussion about the intended audience of the treatise and its character of oral discourse underlines our lack of knowledge of key topics concerning medical literature, such as who these works were intended for, how accessible they were, and when and why they began to be written and read. Concerning audience and genre, Schiefsky establishes some parallels between *On ancient medicine* and other Hippocratic writings such as *Affections, Art, Breaths, Diseases I and Nature of man*. In doing so, he raises some stimulating questions for further research on other Hippocratic writings. Regarding the date of composition, problematic as it always is in connection with anonymous works, Schiefsky argues the treatise was written not much before 420 BC. He may be right, but one of the arguments he bases his conclusion on is the date of composition of the treatises *On generation / Nature of child* and *Diseases IV*, which is itself controversial and by no means sure.

The thorough and thoughtful commentary is, I think, Schiefsky's greatest contribution. Concerning questions of medical and scientific method, it goes beyond Jouanna's and Festugière's. Each chapter of the treatise is given a general overview, with attention paid not only to the theoretical and empirical aspects of medicine in early Greece but also to some questions of textual criticism (when they happen to support his interpretation of the passage) and to a minor extent, the author's prose style. Two appendices discussing the relationships between *On ancient medicine* and medical empiricism, and the affinities and differences between this treatise, Plato, Aristotle and other authors on the imprecision of medicine close the volume. With it Schiefsky has achieved one of the aims he states in the preface: his book is undoubtedly a worthy companion to Jouanna's critical edition and will definitely serve as inspiration to other scholars writing commentaries on Hippocratic writings.

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Véronique Boudon-Millot (ed. and trans.), *Galien: Introduction générale; Sur l'ordre de ses propres livres; Sur ses propres livres; Que l'excellent médecin est aussi philosophe*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 2007, pp. ccxxxviii, 315, €75.00 (paperback 978-2-251-00536-2).

This new volume of the Budé edition of Galen should be on the shelves of anyone interested in ancient medicine. Of the tracts here edited, one, *That the best doctor is also a philosopher*, represents a succinct statement of a dominant theme throughout Galen's own writings, and the other two, *On the order of my own books* and *On my own books*, are the foundation for all biographies of Galen. Their availability in an elegant and accurate French translation, along with detailed notes, is a major contribution to the understanding of Galen and his milieu. But this edition stands out for three different reasons, which together mark an important stage in Galenic studies.

Intended as the first volume in the whole series, it opens with two novel surveys. The first is the most up-to-date and easily accessible biography of Galen in any language. The Budé format has allowed Mme Boudon-Millot to deal with many knotty problems of dating at greater length than I could in my *Ancient medicine* (2004), and unlike Prof. Schlange-Schöningen, whose German study of Galen's life and milieu appeared in 2003, she has the gift of seeing the wood for the trees. I may disagree with her on some minor points—for example, she believes that Galen left Rome in 166 to avoid the plague, although its arrival is usually associated with the return of Roman armies from the East to Rome in 167—but she gets the basics right.

Secondly, she provides the first general survey for nearly a century of the textual history of the Galenic Corpus. Contrary to what was once believed, many Galenic manuscripts go back to the twelfth century, and the whole Greek textual tradition is older, and possibly more secure, than we believed a generation ago. This introduction must be the first port of call for all future editors, for it brings together the results of major manuscript investigations

over the last thirty years. There is inevitably more work to be done—I miss a reference to the former Phillips MS 4614, now at Yale, Beinecke 1121, one of the Iohannikios group of codices, and I suspect that Mme Boudon-Millot overvalues the Armenian versions and underestimates the value of the Hebrew—but even a cursory reading reveals the enormous spread of Galen's writings, particularly in the languages of the Middle East, and the growing influence of his treatises in the 1300 years after his death. More might have been said about the medieval Latin traditions—the important studies by Mario Grignaschi of the translator Niccolò da Reggio (fl. 1308–45) in *Medioevo*, 1990, **16**, are not mentioned, for instance—and the contrast between Niccolò and earlier Latin translators should have been emphasized more. Niccolò's precise, word-for-word versions allow us to recover in detail much of Galen's original Greek, something that is impossible with other translators, especially those using Arabic intermediaries who prefer to emphasize the general sense of a passage.

Most important of all, Mme Boudon-Millot provides us with, in effect, the *editio princeps* of Galen's bibliographical treatises—and more besides. In 2005, her student Antoine Pietrobelli chanced upon a microfilm of a previously unknown manuscript, no. 14 in the collection of the Vlatadon monastery in Thessalonica. It contained unexpected treasures. Mme Boudon-Millot had already been able to use the evidence of two Arabic manuscripts from Meshed to fill in some of the gaps in our solitary Greek manuscript, now in Milan. This was no mean feat, since for forty years access to them had been almost impossible. But Vlatadon 14 preserved Galen's original Greek, since it had the leaves missing from its Milanese sibling, and, particularly in *On the order of my own books*, passages missing also in the Arabic. We have now new material from Galen describing at the end of his life how and when he wrote his books, and the way in which he wished them to be read. This edition supersedes all previous editions and translations of these two treatises, although it too may in turn be surpassed once

scholars are allowed to see Vlatadon 14 and are not compelled, though religious obscurantism, to work only through a difficult microfilm.

But there is more. Vlatadon 14 also contains Galen's philosophical testament, *On my own opinions*, complete in Greek, much of which, in my edition of 1999, I had to reconstruct from a poor medieval Latin translation. Mme Boudon-Millot and M. Pietrobelli edited this in the *Revue des Etudes Grecques*, 2005, along with a French translation. But the greatest surprise, to be published later this year in a volume in honour of Jacques Jouanna, is Galen's tract *On the avoidance of grief*, previously known only through quotations in Arabic and, more substantially, in Hebrew. Mme Boudon-Millot in her notes gives references to some of the new information contained in these new Greek discoveries which amplifies some observations in the three treatises edited here.

The Budé Hippocrates has long been regarded as the most important and accessible modern edition of that author. It is no mean compliment to say that the Budé Galen bids fair to be its equal.

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**C M Woolgar, D Serjeantson, and
T Waldron** (eds), *Food in medieval England: diet and nutrition*, Medieval History and Archaeology, Oxford University Press, 2006, pp. xv, 347, £55.00 (hardback 978-0-19-927349-2).

Food in medieval England—what could be a better subject except, perhaps, food in medieval France? In this collection, an archaeologist, a physician and a librarian bring together nineteen essays summarizing the last two decades of archaeological, scientific and documentary research. Details of digs, analyses of carbon ratios in bones, close studies of manorial and monastic accounts, palaeopathological reports, intricate tables and graphs of seed and bone