

Book Reviews

his early tract on the diseases of the Augsburg goldsmiths (1473, printed 1524), and whose service at the court is here well documented.

The study of medieval medicine is thus alive and well in Germany. This book, with its excellent indices, can serve as a model for similar collections dealing with vernacular medicine in other countries and as the basis on which to write a sound history of medieval medicine.

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ANTOINE THIVEL, *Cnide et Cos? Essai sur les doctrines médicales dans la Collection Hippocratique*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1981, 8vo, pp. 435, [no price stated], (paperback).

M. Thivel is a demolition expert. He devotes almost three hundred pages to showing the unhappy consequences of positing a strict dichotomy between the so-called medical schools of Cos and Cnidos. We find a Coan author with nothing recognizably Coan about him, and Cnidians whose disagreements are at least as significant as their convergences. Rightly, he concludes that we are dealing, not with school doctrines, but with nuances in a medicine in evolution. His last chapter enunciates this medicine. It is based on Ionian or Milesian philosophy, stresses diversity within unity, loves fluidity, and avoids associating humours with elements. This ancient medicine was later opposed and contaminated by Sicilian/Italian ideas of similarities, which led to the schematic four humours of *On the nature of man* and ultimately to Galen's Hippocratism. In general outline this view is highly plausible, and scholars have often noted the medical significance of Empedocles' theory of four elements, but many of the details of Thivel's constructive arguments are open to question. Alcmaeon of Croton (S. Italy) would be surprised to find himself labelled as the outstanding representative of Ionian medicine (348) or denied any knowledge of the optic nerve.

Two further reflections on the state of Hippocratic scholarship are prompted by this book. It sets forth at great length arguments which confirm what W. D. Smith had proposed in *Bulletin of the History of Medicine*, 1973, and what several scholars had also shown. But of this, not a word, save for a brief and unenlightening reference to Smith in a footnote on p. 40. Similarly, although many authors come up for review, one looks in vain for the recent work of Kollesch, Kudlien, Lonie, and Manuli, to name but four. This silence can be in part explained by the book's long gestation – its preface is dated 1977 – but it is strange and symptomatic that neither Lloyd's *Polarity and analogy* (1966, 1971) nor any of his other writings are here noticed.

Second, Thivel rightly stresses the crucial importance of chronology in determining relationships and influences. Yet it is precisely here that the book is weakest, and where a possible difference of one or two generations in the date of *Ancient medicine* casts serious doubt on the stability of any structure raised upon it. Thivel, whose criticism of others is so cogent, fails to bring out fully the implications of his own theories and to examine the pre-suppositions behind them. But he has performed the valuable task of knocking down an outdated (and already tottering) edifice, and others may now begin to survey the foundations anew.

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RICHARD Y. MEIER (compiler), *The Joseph H. Kiefer catalog of history of urology and medicine*, Chicago, Library of the Health Sciences, University of Illinois, 1981, 8vo, pp. xi, 207, illus., \$25.00 (\$10.00 paperback).

This catalogue of Dr Joseph H. Kiefer's collection, now in the University of Illinois (Chicago) Medical Center Library, will be of particular value to those interested in the history of urology. Dr Kiefer himself emerges as a collector of content rather than fame or value; consequently, his library contains a number of obscure but fascinating volumes: for instance, three works by the seventeenth-century French physician and sexologist Nicholas Venette, and nothing by Vesalius save the Saunders-O'Malley edition of the illustrations. The catalogue is divided into eleven sections; the first section – 'Urology, surgery and medicine before 1900' – contains its heart. There are in addition special sections devoted to twentieth-century urology, to human sexuality, and a number of other topics which have taken Dr Kiefer's fancy. In the