

## Book Reviews

one such example discussed in a separate chapter). The injury becomes stylized and subservient to this ideal. Part Three examines the archaeological record. It is unfortunately rather short, and the sections on arms and armour and surgical instruments were better placed in Part One.

The conclusion is one and a half pages, and Salazar excuses this because of the book's "multi-disciplinary approach", for it is "obviously impossible to provide an overall conclusion other than stating that the topic of wound treatment in antiquity is of far greater interest than most scholars assume" (p. 248). This is fudging.

Eight figures are included. Figure 5, showing Roman surgical instruments, is not provided with a scale. And two illustrations from plaster-casts of Graeco-Roman gems are very similar (figures 6 and 7a show essentially the same treatment given to a thigh injury). On page 49, Celsus's description of the *Diocleus cyanthiscus*, the "spoon of Diocles", a remarkable and impractical device for large arrowhead extraction, is summarized. But the citation is given on page 102. In the index *locorum*, Galen is cited both by work but also without indication of the work. Non-Galenists (and Galenists, for that matter) have to hunt the text in question. And why is it still felt necessary to transliterate Greek? Thus, "probing" is rendered "μηλῶσις/*mêlôsis*" (p. 48), which cannot help the Greekless reader. There is also no excuse nowadays to refer to pseudo-Galenic works as Galenic. *De fasciis (on bandages)* is so listed (p. 52). In reference to trepanation, "Galen [*sic*] writes in his *Introduction . . .*" (p. 46). Galen did not, but Salazar could have made use of *In Hipp. epid. III, comment.*, 25.14–21, Wenkebach, where Galen emphasizes the need to protect the dura mater from the trephine and lists the varying effects of skull fracture.

Although Salazar states that it is "necessary to examine the topic in its totality" (p. xxiv), her text, for reasons of space alone, cannot approach this goal in

the way she intends. This is not meant to disparage; on the contrary, the topic is fascinating and merits further investigation. This book provides an excellent start.

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Alfrieda and Jackie Pigeaud (eds), *Les Textes médicaux latins comme littérature. Actes du VI<sup>e</sup> colloque international sur les textes médicaux latins du 1<sup>er</sup> au 3 septembre 1998 à Nantes*, Centre Cælius, Pensée médicale et tradition, Institut Universitaire de France, Université de Nantes, 2000, pp. 389, FFr 200 (paperback 2-86939-156-0).

Selecting as a conference theme medical texts in Latin as literature was a bold decision, not least because many of them, being recipe collections, lectures, or compendia of data, are far removed from what most people would think of as literature. Informative case-histories or authorial reminiscences are almost entirely lacking, and few medical writers have any pretensions to stylistic elegance.

The result was, perhaps, predictable. For all their many virtues, few communications live up to the organizer's programme as announced in his own contribution, and almost anything seems to count as literature, from the rhetoric of prefaces and the genre of medical epistolography to suffixes of adjectives and the translocation of pages in a manuscript. There are studies of all the major Latin medical writers, and of some of the minor; one essay is devoted to medicine in literature, the *History of King Apollonius of Tyre*, and one to Cornelius Celsus' references to writing in its implications for literacy and, more surprisingly, in therapy, where reading can be both recommended as part of the process of healing and deprecated as a source of physical ills. The contributions cover some post-classical authors, Du Laurens,

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Morgagni, and Laennec, but not Cato or Seneca, although the latter reveals much about medicine. The encyclopaedist Pliny receives less than his due as an author with wider literary ambitions.

But these gaps are hardly the fault of the conference organizer, inevitably dependent on those willing to come and speak. Students of medicine in Rome will benefit

from reading these essays, which are always informative, and display a high standard of scholarship. But it is doubtful whether literary critics will be induced by them to turn their attention to medical texts.

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