

Practical Ethics in Technical Accounts

The previous Chapter argued that Galen recasts traditional morality by introducing fresh interpretative lenses through which ethical matters may be viewed. We have seen that our author finds further opportunities for asserting the standard truths, and his own ways of challenging reflection on them, mainly through a process of defamiliarising his audience. Readers are made to take a step back, ruminate, perhaps wonder for a moment before subscribing to any moral attitude, however familiar to them it might be. They are also encouraged to extrapolate the moral gist of the various ethical narratives and thinking about how it can be appropriated to their everyday experience. There is an even greater presumption of this moral discrimination on the part of Galen's audience in a group of technical discussions, which are to some extent also concerned with popular ethics, providing Galen with the opportunity for occasional bouts of moralising. As we shall see, in this case Galen is keen to interconnect the moral with the medical by attributing a strong ethical dimension to bodily care.

The Capacities of the Soul Depend on the Mixtures of the Body (henceforth *The Capacities of the Soul*) is an informative example of this sort. This speculative treatise tackles the thesis that alterations in bodily mixture (*krasis*)¹ due to food, drink or daily habits produce corresponding psychological effects, for example an increase in hot mixture makes people quick-tempered (διὰ γούνην τὴν θερμὴν κρᾶσις <οἱ> ὀξύθυμοι γινόμενοι, *QAM* 11, 88.3-4 Ba. = IV.821.6-7 K.). In putting forward such a

¹ Or temperament, namely a blend of the four elementary qualities hot, cold, dry and wet. Balancing the four basic qualities in the body ensures health, whereas any disruption thereof gives rise to illness. Galen's typology includes eight states of bad mixture (*dyskrasiai*) and one state of good mixture (*eukrasia*). E.g. *Temp.* 2.1, 39.3-10 Helmreich = I.572.3-573.1 K., *Hipp. Aph.* III 2, XVII B.565.8-566.11 K. On Galen's theory of mixtures, see van der Eijk (2013: 329-330) and van der Eijk (2014b: 102-105). On the various methods Galen used to assess bodily mixtures, see van der Eijk (2015).

physiological explanation of moral behaviour, Galen draws on the notion of the interdependence of body and soul which had become prevalent in learned philosophical and medical discourse by his time.² And he develops a model of moral psychology that departs from the one found in his ethical works, for instance in *Affections and Errors of the Soul* or *Character Traits*. Here his philosophical leanings go back to Plato's celebrated tripartition of the soul: i.e. the idea that the human psyche is divided into three parts or faculties, the rational or ruling part (*logistikón* or *hēgemonikon*), administering thought, memory and imagination, *inter alia*; the spirited (*thymoeides*), sharing in courage and anger; and the appetitive or desiderative (*epithymētikon*), related to nutrition and desires.³ Internal harmony comes about when the rational part, assisted by the spirited, prevails over the appetitive, and that is achieved in practical terms by empowering the intellect through rational reflection and habituation. In this model, the body's underlying correlates seem irrelevant to the development or therapy of the soul,⁴ as is medicine's usefulness as a contributing science.

By contrast, the conception of the soul we find in *The Capacities of the Soul*, which is also at the heart of *On Mixtures* and to some extent *On Habits*,⁵ differs in that it gives much more prominence to the corporeal nature of the soul, and therefore to the medical aspect of moral therapy. It thus captures the essence of a lost Galenic work entitled *Whether Physiology Is Useful for Moral Philosophy* (εἰ ἡ φυσιολογία χρήσιμος εἰς

² Galen mentions Plato (especially the *Timaeus*), Hippocrates and Erasistratus as his main authorities on the subject. See van der Eijk (2020). On the body-soul relation in Galen, see e.g. Hankinson (2006), von Staden (2000: 105–116). The interdependence of the soul and body in Galen has sometimes been examined in the light of the concept of sympathy (mutual partnership), on which see Holmes (2013: 163–176). Key primary sources for psychosomatic sympathy are Hierocles's *Elements of Ethics* (written ca. mid-2nd c. AD) and Epicurus's *Letter to Herodotus*. On the overarching thesis of *The Capacities of the Soul* in connection with the body-soul relationship, see e.g. Lloyd (1988) and Hankinson (2019a: 264–274).

³ In his *PHP* Galen embraces Plato's tripartition-cum-trilocation, also adopted by Hippocrates, which maintains that each part of the soul is assigned a *locus* in the body, i.e. the rational in the brain, the spirited in the heart, and the appetitive in the liver (*PHP* 9.9, 598.26–600.4 DL = V.793.6–15 K.). Galen refines this model through anatomical experimentation and his extensive knowledge of the physiology of the nervous system. Galen's physiologically-based psychology in the *PHP* is outside my remit here. On how Galen went about demonstrating this model of the soul, see Tieleman (2008: 55–59). On how Galen's thesis in *QAM* to some extent coheres with that of the *PHP*, despite their obvious differences, see Donini (2008: 196–200). On how this work functions as a medical programme for the intellectual faculties, see Jouanna (2009).

⁴ E.g. Singer (2017: 179–183); Singer (2018: 392–393).

⁵ Oddly, *On Habits* does not have a moral component, its germane subject matter notwithstanding.

τὴν ἠθικὴν φιλοσοφίαν),⁶ with Galen's answer to that question surely being in the affirmative.

Now, Galen's endorsement of naturalistic psychology (unlike his philosophical psychology, which is indebted to Platonic tripartition) seems, on the face of it, to exclude the power of reason and persuasion, since a person is teleologically defined by the substances of the body.⁷ In that view the self-governed moral agent of the ethical works, who enjoys ample access to education and philosophy as a way of improving his moral condition, is eclipsed by the essentially helpless embodied entity of the physicalist works, whose 'nature outweighs nurture', as Jim Hankinson put it.⁸ As I will go on to show, this surface reading needs to be questioned, first because, apart from the body's biological make-up (which is connate and hence external to the agent),⁹ there is also its environment, which people can regulate by exercising voluntary action.¹⁰ Secondly, and most importantly for current purposes, because in his physicalist accounts Galen presents the agents' administration of bodily parameters aimed at their intellectual and ethical amelioration as being inextricably entangled with a discriminating application of moral advice.¹¹ Galen thus preserves the concept of their free will as psychological and moral subjects. His support of personal accountability is also in tune with his philosophical opinion that reasoned choice (*prohairesis*) informs people's actions and the consequences thereof (more on this in Chapters 4 and 5), and that virtue is a deliberative state involving acts of will,¹² not a passive condition.

⁶ *Lib. Prop.* 19, 172.17–173.1 Boudon-Millot = XIX.48.4–5 K. Scholars have interpreted the existence of two alternative psychological models in Galen as resulting from some evolution in his thought.

⁷ On Galen's determinism in this treatise, see e.g. Donini (1974: 127–185). The main thesis of this work has been construed from the point of view of modern philosophy of mind as verging on epiphenomenalism, supervenience theory or type-identity theory.

⁸ Hankinson (2019a: 272). The *Digest*, a compilation of juristic Roman documents, offers instances of rescission granted to individuals when their mental defect had a physical causation, and hence did not admit of legal (and by implication, moral) liability, e.g. *Dig.* 21.1.4.1 (Vivianus). Cf. *Dig.* 9.2.5.2 (Ulpian).

⁹ Natural changes to elemental balance also occur due to ageing, another factor outside the agent's control. Rufus of Ephesus, for example, recognised the existence of two types of *melancholia*, one due to the patient's nature and original mixture, the other resulting from a disturbed mixture owing to bad diet; *On Melancholy* in Aëtius, *Tetrabiblos* vi.9, II.144.26–29 Olivieri. This shows that acquired mixture is determined by the patients themselves.

¹⁰ This brings to mind Frank's category of the disciplined body (1995: 41–43) and issues concerning the agent's self-control or lack thereof. See also Singer and van der Eijk (2019: 4).

¹¹ *Pace* Donini (2008: 202), who argues that in *QAM* Galen is entirely indifferent to issues of responsibility. For yet another view, see Hankinson (1993: 200–202), who proposes what he considers a 'coherent, and a sophisticated and explanatorily powerful model of the role of the mind in our physiological functioning'. Cf. Lloyd (1988: 37) and Sharples (2000: 18–22).

¹² Cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1106b37–1107a2.

Imperial-era intellectual culture uniformly favoured personal liability anyway,¹³ confirming the general assumption that character in the ancient world was shaped by independent agents, responsive to the moral climate in which they lived.¹⁴

A first striking example of the way Galen can blend moral persuasion with physiological analysis is provided by what he has to say about the effects of wine and drunkenness. Specifically, the theoretical discussion of *The Capacities of the Soul* progressively advances to the point at which the build-up of each one of the four humours (blood, phlegm, black bile, yellow bile)¹⁵ is said to cause a shift in someone's mental trajectory, and eventually mentions the drinking of *mōrion* (a type of mandragora), which produces stupefaction, and the drinking of wine, which eliminates distress (*QAM* 3, 18.9-19.2 Ba. = IV.776.17-777.8 K.). Galen seeks to emphasise specifically the physiological outcomes of moderate wine-drinking, which, as he explains, makes the soul gentler and braver, while also fostering bodily processes such as digestion, distribution, blood-production and nutrition (*QAM* 3, 21.1-6 Ba. = IV.778.15-779.3 K.).¹⁶

Nonetheless, one soon realises that the notion of moderation is developed outside its psychosomatic ambit, being dealt with as a moral virtue against the backdrop of convivial drinking, an important institution for upper-class citizens in the Roman Empire. As his choice of vocabulary makes clear, Galen plays on his audience's daily acquaintance with wine,¹⁷ recognising that this is a key cultural shibboleth in the imagination of the elite. He therefore goes on to offer guidance on how to behave with as much propriety at the symposium as elsewhere. By means of four popular quotations, three from the *Odyssey* and one from the lyric poet Theognis, he enumerates the benefits of temperate consumption of wine, especially relief from bad thoughts and tormenting feelings, as well as its downsides when the drunkenness goes beyond respectable limits, such as incurring

¹³ The glaring deviation from this is found in astronomical works intimating that character is defined by constellations (Manilius's *Astronomicum*, Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos*), an exception that confirms rather than invalidates the general rule.

¹⁴ What is known as 'input-responsiveness' in modern ethics.

¹⁵ Following a disturbance of the body's elemental qualities, it is assumed. Galen sometimes talks about the disturbance of humours rather than of qualities, for simplicity's sake.

¹⁶ Cf. Thumiger (2017: 220-228).

¹⁷ 'this is something we experience every day' (ἐκάστης γὰρ ἡμέρας τούτου πειρώμεθα), *QAM* 3, 19.3 Ba. = IV.777.8-9 K.; 'when we may observe every day all the effects of wine . . .' (ὁρῶντες ὅσημέραι τὸν οἶνον ἐργαζόμενον . . .), *QAM* 3, 19.13-14 Ba. = IV.778.1 K. On the regulated use of wine in the symposium in Plutarch's *Table Talk*, see Vamvouri-Ruffly (2012: 47-50, 101-104).

ridicule in public for making laughable gestures or uttering obscenities.¹⁸ Galen cautions particularly against conduct that could jeopardise someone's harmonious co-existence with their fellow-men, as seen in a similar passage in *Matters of Health*, where excessive consumption of wine elicits irascibility, insolence and lewdness, all critical vices leading to desocialisation (*San. Tu.* 1.11, 26.4-7 Ko. = VI.55.2-4 K.).¹⁹ That Galen's advice here is addressed to a non-specialist readership is also supported by his heavy reliance on quotations, which as Vivian Nutton rightly observes, is a move that anticipates a wider readership among the nobility.²⁰

Galen, consequently, promotes the philosophical associations of wine and is aligning himself specifically with aristocratic concepts of restraint. In doing so, he seems surprisingly sensitive to the social interface of drinking rather than its therapeutic potential or pathogenic outcomes.²¹ That is a novel approach, in the sense that in this text Galen is by and large writing from the standpoint of a physician, whose standard duties in the area of regimen included the preservation or restoration of the balanced constitution through prescriptions for diet, physical activity and drugs, and not moral guidance on affability or social integration.²² For example, the

¹⁸ *Odyssey* 4.220-221: 'All at once into the wine she threw the drug, and they all drank it | Taker of sorrow and anger, removing the thought of all evils'; *Odyssey* 21.293-298: 'Honey-sweet wine it is that weakens you – wine, which has always | Harmed men when they drink to the depths, beyond decent measure. | Wine undid Eurytion, the great and glorious Centaur, | Visiting Peirithous the high-spirited, lord of the Lapiths, | In his high halls; yes, with wine he undid his own wits; and then, all | Havoc he wrought in his madness, in lord Peirithous's palace'; *Odyssey* 14.464-466: '<Miserable thing,> that has caused the wisest of men to go ranting, | To laugh like a soft-cheeked youth and set his feet dancing, | And to utter a word which best would remain unspoken.'; Theognis fragm. dub. 8 Young: 'Excess drinking of wine is an evil; but if a person | Drinks of it wisely – then not an evil; a good thing.' All translations are from Singer (2013). The advantages and downsides of wine drinking were also noted by Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 14.137. On Roman attitudes to drunkenness, see Gourevitch (2016).

¹⁹ The poetic citations from Homer and Theognis do not conform with Galen's inclination to dismiss poets on the grounds that they were purveyors of falsehoods and therefore non-epistemic, unreliable authorities (on which see Rosen 2013). Thus, Lloyd (1988: 18) justifies their inclusion in *QAM* by saying that this is 'a fair sprinkling of literary allusions . . . which contributes to giving the work a cultivated air. That Galen should seek such an effect is not surprising, even if the quality of some of the material he cites verges on the banal.' As I shall show, the quotations serve a markedly moral purpose.

²⁰ Nutton (2009a: 32).

²¹ E.g. Galen, *On the Causes of Diseases* 3, VII.13.13-15 K. The physician Asclepiades of Bithynia was notorious for assigning a major therapeutic role to wine, which he posited needed administering at the right time and in the right quantity (cf. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 7.37, 23.22). However, he does not seem to have given a moral inflection to the use of wine, as Galen does. See Green (1955: 121-125).

²² In a study devoted to wine in ancient medicine, Jouanna (1996) gathers a wealth of passages from Greek doctors dealing with wine; none of them seems to have a moral bearing as in Galen. A slight exception is perhaps the eulogy of wine by the fourth-century BC doctor Mnesitheus surviving in

doctor Soranus of Ephesus, though acknowledging the close links between bodily and moral health, was against the idea that physicians should ‘break with custom and philosophise’ in treating the body.²³ And along similar lines, the philosopher Seneca was equally adamant that regimen belonged to the doctor’s area of expertise, and that it was within his competence to give advice about the use of wine in particular: ‘He [i.e. the doctor] will prescribe a diet, with wine as a tonic, and he will tell you when you ought to stop drinking wine so that it will not provoke or irritate coughing’ (Seneca, *Letter* 78.5).

Galen departs from such views. As we will see in more detail in later Chapters (esp. Chapter 6, 7 and 8), Galen has a wider concept of medicine, which he envisaged as closely intertwined with ethical philosophy, and this leads him to infuse his naturalistic accounts with moral layers, showing special concern for many strands of social and cultural life. Within the context of *The Capacities of the Soul*, our author assigns himself an innovative role by contemporary standards, that of an expert in shaping characters specifically by means of bodily nourishment:

So, then, let those who are unhappy with the notion that nourishment has the power to make some more self-controlled, some more undisciplined, some more restrained, some more unrestrained, as well as brave, timid, gentle, quarrelsome and argumentative – let them even at this stage get a grip on themselves and come to me to learn what they should eat and drink. They will derive the greatest benefit with regard to the philosophy related to their characters . . .²⁴ *QAM* 9, 66.11-67.4 Ba. = IV.807.17-808.6 K.

Athenaeus’s *The Sophists at Dinner* 2.36a-b: ‘Mnesitheus said that the gods had revealed wine to mortals, to be the greatest blessing for those who use it aright, but for those who use it without measure, the reverse. For it gives food to them that take it, and strength in mind and body. In medicine it is most beneficial; it can be mixed with liquid drugs and it brings aid to the wounded. In daily intercourse, to those who mix and drink it moderately, it gives good cheer; but if you overstep the bounds, it brings violence. Mix it half and half, and you get madness; unmixed, bodily collapse.’ The medical effects of wine are here connected with its day-to-day moral effects; the latter, however, are only briefly touched upon and are not as developed as in the Galenic passages we have just seen.

²³ Soranus, *Gynaecology* II.57 (65.28-34 Burguière, Gourevitch, and Malinas) with Coughlin (2018: 112 and 140-141). Coughlin hypothesises that Galen was influenced by Athenaeus of Attalia, the founder of the Pneumatic school of medicine, in integrating philosophical issues into matters of regimen.

²⁴ ὥστε σωφρονήσαντες καὶ νῦν γοῦν οἱ δυσχεραίνοντες τροφή <ὅτι> δύναται τοὺς μὲν σωφρονεστέρους, τοὺς δ’ ἀκολαστοτέρους ἐργάζεσθαι καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἐγκρατεστέρους, τοὺς δ’ ἀκρατεστέρους καὶ θαρσαλέους καὶ δειλοὺς, ἡμέρους τε καὶ πρῶους, ἐριστικούς τε καὶ φιλονείκους, ἠκέτωσαν πρὸς με μαθησόμενοι τίνα μὲν ἐσθίειν αὐτοῦς χρητ, τίνα δὲ πίνειν. εἰς τε γὰρ τὴν ἠθικὴν φιλοσοφίαν ὀνήσονται μέγιστα. . .

In this section of the work, Galen is addressing a group of contemporary Platonist philosophers who rejected foodstuffs as a moral determinant (and generally downplayed the physical basis of character), establishing a forceful portrayal of himself as teaching them how to adjust character.²⁵ His authority is particularly clear from the use of the expression ἡκέτωσαν πρὸς με μαθησόμενοι ('let them come to me to learn'), which is a statement of authority used in other parts of Galen's writings (e.g. *PHP* 2.4, 122.27-31 DL = V.234.11-15 K.). His teaching material includes not purely advice on nutrition but also, as he says subsequently, on drink, winds, mixtures of the ambient air and topography.²⁶ These are all qualifications provided by Galen so as to help philosophers achieve character improvement, in line with Plato's numerous accounts of this process (*QAM* 9, 67.8-11 Ba. = IV.808.9-12 K.). The oppositional construction of this passage is reinforced in the next section, in which Galen, in his usual way, sides with Plato and censures the above-mentioned philosophers not only for failing to understand or recall Plato's views in this respect but for also being reluctant to do so (*QAM* 10, 67.12-15 Ba. = IV.808.13-15 K.). This characterisation of them accentuates their lack of self-control or unsoundness of mind (*sōphronein*) in failing to become Galen's students, as stressed in the passage above.

In the text that follows this passage, Galen taps into the authority of Plato and refers anew to the issue of wine drinking, citing two quotations from the *Laws*.²⁷ These exhort the reader to consume wine only in moderation in young age, while stressing wine's usefulness in old age, totally repudiating drunkenness and excess. Even though the Galenic text explains the implications of wine for the body,²⁸ what the Platonic citations help emphasise is the need to regulate the use of wine on different military, social and political occasions (e.g. on a tour of duty, while being a magistrate, helmsman or active juror) as well as in private life (e.g. sexual intercourse at night). Similarly, when he goes on to briefly explicate the

²⁵ Also in *Matters of Health*: 'And every year we make many people, who are diseased in terms of the ethos of the soul (διὰ τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς ἥθος), healthy when we correct (ἐπανορθώσομενοι) the imbalance of movements', *San. Tu.* 1.8, 20.11-13 Ko. = VI.41.11-13 K.; transl. Johnston (2018). The context of this section espouses similar notions to those found in the *QAM* passage quoted in the main text, namely that, since 'the character of the soul is corrupted by bad habits in food, drink, physical exercise, things watched and heard', it is not only the business of the philosopher to shape the character of the soul, but that of the doctor too.

²⁶ Environmental factors affecting character is a topic that harks back to Hippocratic works such as *Regimen*, *On Humours*, *Epidemics* 6 and *Airs*, *Waters*, *Places*.

²⁷ *QAM* 10, 68.4-69.10 Ba. = IV.809.1-15 K. citing *Laws* 666a3-c2 and *QAM* 10, 71.6-72.10 Ba. = IV.810.17-811.11 K. citing *Laws* 674a3-b8.

²⁸ Cf. Boudon-Millot (2002).

content of Plato's quotations, it is the moral effects of wine that Galen develops first:

I would ask you, then, to answer this question. Does not wine, when drunk, command the soul, like some tyrant, to abandon its previous accuracy in intellectual activity and the previously correct performance of its actions; and is it not for that reason that Plato tells us to guard against it as an enemy? For if once it reaches the inside of the body, it prevents the helmsman from handling the rudder of the ship as he should and the soldiers from behaving with self-control within their ranks; it causes jurors to blunder when they should be just, and all the officials to err in their rulings, and give commands which are utterly harmful.²⁹ *QAM* 10, 73.4-15 Ba. = IV.811.15-812.6 K.

This passage invites a moral understanding of wine. What Galen really wants to examine is the moral behaviour of potential drinkers, from a ship's captain to a soldier or a juror – all entrusted with public duties in both Plato's and Galen's society. In *The Capacities of the Soul*, wine is not only negotiated as a nurturing element, but is also explored in association with its ethical usefulness, as actually influencing certain qualities in one's character, in a practical way in different areas of life, and not vaguely as in the previous passage (i.e. *QAM* 9, 66.11-67.4 Ba. = IV.807.17-808.6 K.). Galen advances this argument based on the writings of Plato. That explains why he concludes this section by quoting a passage from the *Timaeus*³⁰ that sets 'nurture' (τροφή, used here in its stricter sense of nourishment) alongside 'practices' and 'studies' as 'factors destructive of vice and productive of virtue' (ὥσπερ γὰρ ἐπιτηδεύματα καὶ μαθήματα κακίας μὲν ἀναρετικά, γεννητικά δὲ ἀρετῆς ἐστίν, οὕτω καὶ ἡ τροφή, *QAM* 10, 75.5-7 Ba. = IV.813.4-6 K.).³¹ This is how the passage from *Thrasylbulus* discussed earlier also works, bearing out its author's 'desire to derive a morality of food consumption from its medical consequences'.³²

²⁹ ἀποκρίνασθέ μοι τούντευθεν ἔρωτωντι, πότερον οὐχ ὥσπερ τις τύραννος ὁ ποθεὶς οἶνος κελεύει τὴν ψυχὴν μῆτε νοεῖν ἀκριβῶς ἢ πρόσθεν ἐνόει, μῆτε πράττειν ὀρθῶς ἢ πρόσθεν ἔπραττε, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο φυλάττεσθαι φησὶν ὁ Πλάτων ὡς πολέμιον; εἰ γὰρ ἅπασ εἰσω τοῦ σώματος ἀφίκοιτο, καὶ τὸν κυβερνήτην κωλύει, ὡς προσήκει, μεταχειρίζεσθαι τοὺς οἴακας τῆς νεῶς καὶ τοὺς στρατευομένους [μὴ] σωφρονεῖν ἐν ταῖς παρατάξεσι καὶ τοὺς δικαστάς, ὁπότε [οὖν] δικαίους εἶναι χρή, ποιεῖ σφάλεσθαι καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἄρχοντας ἄρχειν κακῶς καὶ προστάττει [μὲν] οὐδὲν ὑγιές.

³⁰ *Timaeus* 87b3-6 and 87b6-9 in *QAM* 10, 74.13-75.5 Ba. = IV.812.17-813.4 K. Pigeaud (1981: 47-67) provides an analysis of the physiology in the *Timaeus* and the way in which Galen was influenced by it. Cf. Gill (2006: 291-304).

³¹ For this idea, Galen seems to have been inspired by Posidonius. See Sorabji (2000: 255-260).

³² Rosen (2010: 335).

Of course, in Galen's ethical and other moralising works there is hardly any mention of food or drink affecting moral dispositions specifically through changes in the body's physiology, though there is an emphasis on philosophical control in the consumption of food and drink, which is intended to alert the reader to the consequences and advocate appropriate behaviour. Chapters 6 and 8 will have more to say on that.

All in all, Galen's engagement with ethics in *The Capacities of the Soul* might be interpreted in the light of the distinction he makes in *Art of Medicine* between innate ethical characteristics determined by bodily temperament,³³ and acquired ethical characteristics formulated under the influence of philosophy (*Ars Med.* 11, 309.3-7 Boudon-Millot = I.336.16-337.2 K.). In *The Capacities of the Soul* Galen offers a combined agenda for paying heed to both categories of moral traits. The latter through the philosophical caveats about wine in social surroundings, which are meant to educate the reader in exercising self-control. The former through the proposal that wine drinking in moderation produces good mixture and hence virtue in the soul. In this case, the moderate approach to drinking that has been engrained in a moral life may eventually overcome the impact of inherent *krasis*, making nature an acquired state (φύσιν ἐπίκτητον ἐργάζεται, *Hipp. Aph.* II 40, XVIIIB.554.5 K.), as Galen asserts in another work with reference to the role of customary practices in maintaining a healthy body.³⁴

³³ The idea of virtues defined by blending is made more explicit in the late-antique commentary tradition pertaining to the hierarchy of virtues, where at the bottom of the hierarchy are the natural (φυσικά) virtues, those related to one's innate blending (ἀπὸ κράσεως ἐπιγίνονται ἡμῖν) that is arranged in such a way as to define one's moral disposition from birth, e.g. Olympiodorus, *In Phaed.* 8.2, 119.1-7 Westerink vol. 1; Damascius, *In Phaed.* I 138 Westerink vol. 2. The second lowest class comprises the ethical (ἠθικά) virtues, which come about through habituation (ὡς αἰ ἀπὸ συνηθισμοῦ) and 'rise above the blends' (τῶν κράσεων ὑπερανέχουσαι), Olympiodorus, *In Phaed.* 8.2, 119.7-9 Westerink vol. 1.

³⁴ In explicating the Hippocratic aphorism Τὰ ἐκ πολλοῦ χρόνου συνηθέα, κἂν ἢ χεῖρω τῶν ἀσυνήθων, ἥσσον ἐνοχλεῖν εἴωθε. δεῖ οὖν καὶ εἰς τὰ ἀσυνήθεα μεταβάλλειν ('Things to which for a long time the body has been accustomed occasion less inconvenience than others more salutary to which it has not been habituated. It is therefore necessary occasionally to change the habits'), Galen flags up the role of *physis*, which is not verbally signalled in the Hippocratic intertext. He says that daily practices (e.g. the taking of food, drink, baths, sleep etc.) cause less harm when they become habitual than practices that are naturally less harmful (φύσει μὲν ἀβλαβεστέρου), while they may never cause any harm whatsoever if they reach the point of becoming quite customary (*Hipp. Aph.* II 40, XVIIIB.553.13-554.1 K.). This exegetical section prioritises habit above nature and leads more naturally into his statement that food and drink make nature an acquired state (ἐδέσματα μὲν καὶ πόματα φύσιν ἐπίκτητον ἐργάζεται).

It has been suggested that in *The Capacities of the Soul* Galen advertises a form of medicine whose primary role is to promote moral excellence,³⁵ and that through its polemical tone the work is meant to raise the standing of Galen's medical expertise in accounts of the soul.³⁶ The analysis given above and elsewhere in this book shows that moral philosophy in Galen is not in competition with or ancillary to his medicine,³⁷ but more of a complementary area, a collaborative science, as we shall observe in the example from *Matters of Health* discussed below. This suggestion is backed up by Galen's emphatic assertion that his argument in *The Capacities of the Soul* 'is not destructive of the fine teachings of philosophy' (*QAM* 11, 77.5-6 Ba. = IV.814.8-9 K.), a locution that indicates acceptance and collaboration between distinct disciplines much more than dismissal and antagonism.

By the same token, the ethical narratives we have seen so far do not merely emphasise the patient's moral responsibility in opting for a healthy lifestyle, as others have suggested.³⁸ They mostly advertise Galen's moralising agenda for his fellow-men, whom he deemed thinking moral entities rather than simply prospective patients *qua* embodied creatures. Even though several doctors, such as Aretaeus, Rufus of Ephesus, Soranus or Athenaus of Attalia, had accepted that disease-engendering customs and behaviours were related to moral choices, practices and obligations, Galen is different in that: a) he brings the soul much more prominently into his concept of health and disease and b) he links the advice he gives on moral

³⁵ Given that emotions, for example, can threaten physical health or come about as a result of physical or mental illness. Donini (1974: 144), García Ballester (1988: 129), Lloyd (1988: 41–42), Trapp (2007: 91), Bazou (2011: 6*), Devinant (2020: 24–28). Boudon-Millot (2013: 140–142) simply attributes Galen's concern with the therapy of emotions to his role as a physician who cares for the health of the body that can be disturbed by harmful emotions. Her discussion neglects Galen's identity as a moralist, even though she discusses some strictly ethical works such as *Affections and Errors of the Soul* or *Avoiding Distress*.

³⁶ Donini (2008: 200), Singer (2013: 344); cf. Sharples (2000: 21–22).

³⁷ van der Eijk (2013: 332) suggests that Galen's entry into the ethical domain in his *Affections and Errors of the Soul* is designed to cover the therapy of mental conditions that do not admit of physical treatment and belong rather to the philosophical area. That may well be true. However, such arguments run the risk of becoming reductionist and not doing justice to Galen's concentrated ethical production, as analysed in this study.

³⁸ E.g. Boudon-Millot (2013: 138–139); van der Eijk (2014a: 367–368), who independently says: 'Galen emphasizes the role of human responsibility, and he takes the moral factor in disease quite seriously, ... in the sense that their [i.e. people's] morally reprehensible behaviour leads to an unhealthy life-style that in turn brings about ill-health and disease. In doing so, there is a moralistic aspect to Galen's theory of disease ...'. On moral responsibility and accountability, see Hankinson (2001: 71–76, 155–157) and for Galen specifically Hankinson (2001: 400–402), van der Eijk (2013: 309–310) and van der Eijk (2014b: 106–125); cf. Siegel (1973: 203–219). See also Thumiger (2018) on eating and drinking as involving volition.

health in his naturalistic discussions to wider societal and ethical concerns to make it resonate with the popular philosophical tradition on corresponding issues. Hence, by vigorously shoring up the role of practical ethics in the traditional domain of medicine, Galen is playing a double game as physician-cum-ethicist. His originality by comparison with other physicians in combining popular philosophy and medicine is apparent in terms of extent (an unparalleled number of references to and insinuations concerning morals), emphasis (the soul and morality/ethics not playing second fiddle to the body and medicine) and being wider in scope (his practical ethics go hand in hand with the medical art, given that Galen can take a moralising turn on just about any piece of medical analysis or advice). These aspects loom large in *Matters of Health* too.

This work focuses on hygiene, the art of keeping one's body in good health. Galen's target audience here comprises a well-off, educated group of readers, who are advised on how to follow a healthy lifestyle not in a vacuum, but within the urban environment they live in, and in the face of the socio-political difficulties and pressures they are likely to experience. In light of this, ethics could not have been left out of the account on hygiene, given the way it is socially embedded in Galen's thinking, as seen in the previous part of this Chapter. One of the chief obstacles to health that Galen emphasises throughout is a lack of self-control, which prevents patients from monitoring their desires, leading them into bad habits that disturb their natural constitution.³⁹

The beginning of Book 5 of *Matters of Health* is a good test-case for the creative involvement of incontinence as a moral vice within a health-related matrix. In distancing himself from other doctors and gymnasts who had concerned themselves with hygiene, Galen highlights the efficacy of his preventive medicine as opposed to the lack of success of his rivals' versions, accusing them in particular of being unable even to preserve their own health, despite what they preach orally or in their writings. One

³⁹ *San. Tu.* 6.8, 182.33-35 Ko. = VI.415.15-17 K.: 'Some do not put their trust in it [i.e. the art of hygiene] because they are overcome by the pleasure of the moment (ἐν τῷ παραχρῆμα νικηθέντες ἡδονῆς)—we call such people weak-willed (ἀκρατεῖς) and ill-disciplined (ἀκολάστους)'; *San. Tu.* 5.11, 162.19-21 Ko. = VI.368.17-369.2 K.: 'Some however, either overcome by pleasure (νικηθέντες ὑφ' ἡδονῆς) or due to extreme foolishness not perceiving the causes of the harm, continue on with the bad customs.'; *San. Tu.* 2.7, 59.14-18 Ko. = VI.133.2-6 K.: 'For many who are brought up with defective customs, living a life that is too undisciplined or idle, destroy their good natures, just as some in turn, defectively nurtured in respect of the body, by a well-considered life and work, and by timely exercises, corrected the majority of the deficiencies' (πολλοὶ γὰρ ἔθεισι μοχθηροῖς ἐντραφέντες ἀκολαστότερον ἢ ἀργότερον διαπύμενοι διαφθείρουσι φύσεις χρηστάς, ὥσπερ αὐτὰρ πάλιν ἔνιοι μοχθηρῶς φύντες τὸ σῶμα βίῳ σώφρονι καὶ ἔργῳ καὶ γυμνασίοις εὐκαίροις ἐπανωρθώσαντο τὰ πολλὰ τῶν ἐλαττωμάτων); transl. Johnston (2018).

reason for this failure is, according to Galen, their lack of self-control (*akolasia*), which he links to social ridicule aimed at them, evinced in the adage ‘the doctor to others is himself full of ulcers’ (Euripides, fragm. 1086; Kannicht, *TrGF* vol. 5, p. 1012, in *San. Tu.* 5.1, 136.7 Ko. = VI.307.16 K.).⁴⁰ The other reason for their failure is overwork. True, elite ethics requires leisure time, but Galen dismisses the excuse that they lack this, by pointing to his own demanding and often physically testing lifestyle and claiming that it has not led him into similar intemperance.⁴¹ Nor, he says, has it precluded the nurturing of other virtues, among which Galen particularly stresses his love of learning and (albeit obliquely) his love of the beautiful and of labour.

Having established his professional and moral superiority, Galen repeatedly emphasises the disgrace involved in his colleagues’ erroneous attitudes to health, in order to highlight their moral failings:

How then is it not shameful for someone gifted with the best nature to be carried around by others due to gout, or to be undone by the pains of stone, or pains in the colon, or to have an ulcer in the bladder from a disorder of his humours? How is it not shameful for someone to be unable to use his own hands due to severe arthritis and to need someone else to bring his food to his mouth or wash his fundament after defecation? If he were not altogether a coward, it would be a thousand times better for him to choose to die before enduring such a life. Even if someone actually overlooks his own shame due to shamelessness and faintheartedness, at all events he should not overlook the sufferings he has day and night, as he is tormented by his passions as if by executioners. And it is intemperance or ignorance or both that must inevitably bear the blame for all these things. Now may not be the time to correct intemperance, but I do hope to cure the ignorance of those things that must be done, establishing through this treatise a healthy regimen for each specific bodily nature.⁴² *San. Tu.* 5.1, 137.26-138.5 Ko. = VI.311.9-312.9 K.; transl. Johnston, revised

⁴⁰ Interestingly this fragment survives only in Plutarch (*On Friends and Flatterers* 71F, *On How to Benefit from your Enemies* 88D, *On Brotherly Love* 481A and *Against Colotes* 1110E), from whom Galen must have taken it.

⁴¹ Cf. Boudon-Millot (1994).

⁴² πῶς οὖν οὐκ αἰσχρὸν ἐστὶν ἀρίστης φύσεως τυχόντα βαστάζεσθαι μὲν ὑπ’ ἄλλων διὰ ποδάγραν, κατατείνεσθαι δὲ ταῖς ὀδύνας λιθιῶντα καὶ κόλον ἀλγοῦντα καὶ κατὰ κύστιν ἕλκος ἐκ κακοχημίας ἔχοντα; πῶς δ’ οὐκ αἰσχρὸν ἐστὶ διὰ τὴν θαυμαστὴν ἀρθρίτην ἀδυνατοῦντα χρῆσθαι ταῖς ἑαυτοῦ χερσὶν ἑτέρου δεῖσθαι τοῦ προσφέροντος τὴν τροφήν τῷ στόματι καὶ τοῦ τὴν ἔδραν ἀπονίζοντος ἐν τῷ ἀποπάτῳ; ἄμεινον γάρ, ὅστις μὴ παντάπασιν εἴη μαλακός, ἐλέσθαι δὴ μυριάκις τεθνάναι, πρὶν τοιοῦτον ὑπομῆναι βίον. εἰ δὲ δὴ καὶ τοῦ κατ’ αὐτὸν αἰσχυροῦς τις ὑπερορᾷ δι’ ἀναισχυντίαν τε καὶ μαλακίαν, ἀλλὰ τῶν γε πόνων οὐκ ἔχρην ὑπερορᾶν, οὕς νύκτωρ τε καὶ μεθ’ ἡμέραν ἔχουσι, ὥσπερ ὑπὸ δημίῳ στρεβλοῦμενοι τῶν παθῶν. καίτοι τοῦτων ἀπάντων ἡ ἀκολασίαν ἡ ἀγνοίαν ἢ ἀμφοτέρας ἀναγκαῖον αἰτιάσασθαι. ἀλλὰ τὴν μὲν ἀκολασίαν οὐκ ἦν καιρὸς ἐπανορθοῦσθαι, τὴν δ’

This passage leans heavily on a perception endemic in ancient thought that regarded physical beauty as an index of moral decorum. The connection between aesthetic and moral distinction formed a value system, corroborating the proverbial belief that a sound soul dwells within a sound body and thus advocating balance between the two.⁴³ This idea affected people's social perception too, as their deformed body would signify debauchery and hence trigger condemnation by others, who would see them as social outcasts, if not positively sub-human. Galen seems perfectly aware of such attitudes in a section of his *Commentary on Hippocrates' Epidemics VI* (4, 9, 206.23-207.1 WP = XVIIIB.150.8-151.5 K.), where he introduces a moralising note into his Hippocratic source⁴⁴ when he says that it is 'entirely shameful' (ἀσχηστον) for a doctor to exhibit scruffy fingernails, halitosis, body odour and other 'unnatural' (παρὰ φύσιν) somatic conditions. That Galen is interested in the ethical components of the physician's demeanour is also seen from the fact that his moralising twist proceeds from his preceding exegesis of the Hippocratic term σχῆμα denoting character,⁴⁵ analysed immediately before the passage on the doctor's corporeal filthiness. In explicating σχῆμα, Galen develops in particular the moral rectitude demanded of a doctor, i.e. he should be modest and approachable with the patient, not frivolous or snobbish (*Hipp. Epid. VI*, 4, 9, 205.11-20 WP = XVIIIB.148.7-18 K.).⁴⁶

On another level, as is obvious from the recurrent forms of *aischros* in the passage quoted from *Matters of Health*, Galen bombards the reader with the notion of shame expressing popular disapproval. Feeling shame at one's own failings was another important resource for achieving a happy life in the ancient world, in that it coincided with the need for politesse and respect for oneself as much as for others in the context of the

ἀγνοίαν ὧν χρῆ ποιεῖσθαι ἐλπίζω διὰ τῆσδε τῆς πραγματείας ἰάσασθαι, καθ' ἐκάστην φύσιν σώματος ἴδιαν ἀγωγὴν ὑγιεινὴν θέμενος.

⁴³ Cf. Plato, *Timaeus* 88b-c or Juvenal's well-known motto '*mens sana in corpore sano*'; see also Herophilus fragm. 230 von Staden (=Sextus Empiricus, *Adv. Math.* 11.50): 'Herophilus says in his *Regimen* that, in the absence of health, wisdom cannot be displayed, science is non-evident, strength not exerted in contest, wealth useless, and rational speech powerless.' Galen himself referred to Aelius Aristides as an example of a person who had a strong soul in a weak body in the *Commentary on Plato's 'Timaeus'*, 33 Schröder, and thus did not conform to the ideal of a sound body accompanying a righteous soul. See also Chapter 6.

⁴⁴ Gleason (2020: 181). See Hanson (1998) on Galen's role as author and critic in general.

⁴⁵ LSJ s.v. A.5.

⁴⁶ There are moral inflections also in Galen's explication of the doctor's verbal communication (λόγοι) with his patient as well as his attire (ἔσθῆς).

community.⁴⁷ In that respect, Graeco-Roman society fits the rubric of a culture that the twentieth-century para-Freudian anthropology of Ruth Benedict has termed ‘shame-culture’, namely a culture in which violation of moral standards engenders shame, unlike a ‘guilt-culture’ in which the same violations give rise to guilt instead.⁴⁸ In dealing in more detail with the operation and characteristics of shame, Benedict, along with Bernard Williams, have argued that shame implicates fear of exposure to the stigmatisation and mockery of the world,⁴⁹ which constitutes ‘a fantasy of an audience’ or an ‘imagined gaze’ staring at moral transgressions. Both authors have therefore underscored the importance of seeing and being seen and of the revelation of the sight of a moral crime in their conceptualisation of shame.⁵⁰ Remarkably, these are all features that in some ways go back to Roman conceptions of *pudor*, as evinced particularly in Robert Kaster’s sixth ‘*pudor*-script’: ‘Upon (or at the prospect of) seeing myself being seen in discreditable terms, I have an unpleasant psychological response, when the behavior or state of affairs that prompts the attention is “up to me” and entails discreditable “lowering” of the self.’⁵¹ This experience of shame (albeit a virtual one in the Galenic passage quoted above) occurs when one’s feeling of esteem is imperilled, and this is particularly crucial in a society in which sanction lies in public opinion: ‘What will people say?’. The Stoics envisioned shame as an *eupatheia*, a commendable emotion that denoted watchfulness for the prospect of justified castigation.⁵² This was, to their minds, a strategic means of protecting one’s self-respect, not an egocentric sense of pride and self-

⁴⁷ This captures the two basic definitions of the term as set out by Cairns (1993: 2–3): ‘the verb *aideomai* . . . is used in two more or less distinct ways, either to convey inhibition before a generalized group of other people in whose eyes one feels one’s self-image to be vulnerable, or to express positive recognition of the status of a significant other person; the two stock English translations, “I feel shame before” and “I respect”, thus succeed in isolating distinct senses of the Greek term. Yet there is unity in this distinctness . . . the feeling of *aidos*, entailing concentration on the self and one’s own status, is prompted by and focuses on consideration of the status of another, a person of special status in one’s own eyes.’ See also Dover’s discussion of honour and shame in his classic study on Greek morality (1974: 226–242) and Dodds’ analysis of shame-culture (1951: 28–63) that was especially important in making this concept familiar to classicists.

⁴⁸ Benedict (1946).

⁴⁹ The entanglement of fear and shame is reflected in the definition of shame as ‘fear consequent upon the anticipation of censure’ (αἰδώς δὲ φόβος ἐπὶ προσδοκίᾳ ψόγου), which renders shame ‘the finest passion’ (καλλίστον δὲ τοῦτο τὸ πάθος); Nemesius of Emesa, *On the Nature of Man* ch. 21, Chrysippus, fragm. 416 SVF.

⁵⁰ And not of hearing as in a guilt-culture. ‘Fantasy of an audience’ comes from Benedict (1946), whereas ‘imagined gaze’ or even ‘imagined lookers’ or ‘imagined viewers’ from Williams (1993).

⁵¹ Kaster (2005: 31, 47–48).

⁵² On shame as a good emotion in Epictetus, see Kamtekar (1998). On the problematic classification of shame as an emotion in Stoic philosophy, see Wray (2015).

confidence, but rather a feeling of behaving with honour and dignity in performing one's assigned universal or cosmic duties as a rational human agent.⁵³ Those conceptual parameters, and especially the externalised character of shame, fit comfortably with Galen's own understanding of shame in several places in his corpus (more on this in Chapters 4 and 5), including in the passage cited above.

Galen, then, for the sake of his readers, exploits the sense of being ashamed by making it an instrument for avoiding imprudent actions. This course of action, with its strong philosophical antecedents (especially in Aristotle),⁵⁴ enables Galen to articulate a brief moral commentary in this health-centred context. Thus he uses the ideal of an honourable death as opposed to a disgraceful life (ἐλέσθαι δὴ μυριάκις τεθάναι, πρὶν τοιοῦτον ὑπομεῖναι βίον in the *San. Tu.* extract above). This brings to mind the morality generally held to be associated with Homer's heroes (e.g. Ajax or Achilles), as mediated above all by the Socrates of *Apology* 28b-29a, that was kept alive in subsequent Greek popular ethics. Galen transposes this ideal to the domain of decision-making on health issues: this time shame due to incontinence that upsets one's bodily temperament elicits strong social accusation (and not just ridicule as previously seen in *The Capacities of the Soul*).

The same heroic ideal of the honourable death features in another passage from *The Capacities of Simple Drugs*, where shame due to bodily deformity is also in play. However, in this case there is no suggestion that the patient is to be condemned for erroneous preferences. For the text does not cast him as culpable for suffering from *elephas*,⁵⁵ despite the fact that this skin disease was generally known to have originated from the patient's lifestyle, including their diet.⁵⁶ On the contrary, the emphasis is on the

⁵³ Kamtekar (1998: 148–149) briefly analyses the Stoic theory of the four personae/roles an agent was expected to perform.

⁵⁴ E.g. *Nicomachean Ethics* 1128b12 (shame engenders a fear of bad reputation), *Rhetoric* 1383b15 (shame caused by bad deeds that bring one into disrepute). On shame in Aristotle, see Higgins (2015). On shame in ancient Greece, see Cairns (1993) and Konstan (2003).

⁵⁵ Can be translated as 'elephant disease', most probably to be identified with leprosy; see Bouras-Vallianatos (2016).

⁵⁶ Siegel (1968: 295–300). Plutarch mentions *elephantiasis* together with *hydrophobia* among the 'new' diseases appearing in the Imperial period, which were assumed to arise from changes in regimen; see *Table Talk* 8.9 (731A-734C), especially 734C. Cf. Anonymous Parisinus 51.1-3 (258.1-260.19 Garofalo), Caelius Aurelianus, *Acut. Morb.* 3.15.118-125 (362.11-366.33 Bendz). See also Alexopoulos (2015: 59–70), who argues that Gregory of Nyssa, possibly influenced by Galen's causation of disease, exhorts the audience of his *On the Love of the Poor* not to reject lepers (those suffering from *elephas*), on the grounds that their suffering is the natural consequence of the mutability of human nature, which, it is implied, absolves them of responsibility for their disease.

patient's rare philosophical consciousness ('he was more philosophical than the majority of other men', φιλοσοφώτερος ἢ κατὰ τοὺς πολλοὺς, *SMT* 1.1, XII.314.11-14 K.; cf. *SMT* 1.1, XII.313.8-10 K.; transl. mine) that instinctively leads him to opt for death rather than a life of pain, disfigurement and, ultimately, dehumanisation.⁵⁷ The implication is that even if this patient was indeed responsible for his disease, owing to some form of lack of self-discipline, he had the philosophical stamina to bear the consequences of his actions, thus retaining his self-respect. Both sections, then, underscore, from distinct viewpoints, the role of high-mindedness in issues of the body: the former passage, taken from *Matters of Health*, shows that self-control is needed to prevent the onset of disease, the latter, from *The Capacities of Simple Drugs*, that nobility of spirit is needed to face up to disease when it occurs. Remarkably, Aretaeus, who provides the longest surviving nosological testimony on the so-called elephant disease, does not discuss issues of moral responsibility or philosophical attitudes to the disease, which further highlights the markedly moralising aspect of Galen's disease narratives.⁵⁸

It is in contexts such as those just examined that Galen introduces moral uprightness to medical treatment of the body. In doing so, he goes beyond the clichéd – often brief – emphasis of other authors on the importance of moral life to psychosomatic wellbeing.⁵⁹ Galen probes the philosophical aspects of moral life in a variety of perceptive ways, informed by his programme of practical ethics, as recorded in other parts of his oeuvre, for example, in delving into the particulars of social shame or in sketching individuals as moral entities and not just embodied ones. Similarly, he

In adopting this position, Gregory refutes the biblical understanding of skin disease as arising from moral or spiritual impurity.

⁵⁷ Gleason (2020: 174): 'Elephas is a totalizing transformation of human into sub-human.'

⁵⁸ Aretaeus, *Chr. Morb.* 2.13 (85.16-90.32 Hude) and *Ther. Chr. Morb.* 2.13 (167.27-170.24 Hude). The same can be said of the account of the disease in Caelius Aurelianus, *Chr. Morb.* 4.1.1-13 (774.13-782.7 Bendz). Interestingly, the only disease in Caelius Aurelianus which has a strong ethical quality is homosexuality, which is thought to arise from uncontrollable lust and immoderation, and thus attracts moral disapprobation, being described as a disgraceful mode of life, *Chr. Morb.* 4.9.131-137 (848.14-852.25 Bendz). Overall, Galen's preoccupation with individual responsibility tends to be methodical, as can also be seen from *On Problematical Movements*, an anatomical work that compares responsibility in physiological processes (e.g. walking, running, voice and speech) with similar cases of moral accountability. Galen brings up the debatable issue of whether the absence of activity (unlike the agent's active intervention) could be considered a cause in medicine as much as in society. He thus provides examples of a moral nature with important religious, philosophical and legal ramifications. For instance, he problematises whether a man who did not help his friend in a moment of deadly danger is pure enough to enter Apollo's temple or whether the soldier who did not join the army in battle deserves punishment when that army is defeated (*Mor. Dub.* 8.1-10, 154.1-156.6 Nutton).

⁵⁹ E.g. Coughlin (2018: 135).

insists that the philosophical responses to disease seen above do not come about all of a sudden, but demand long-engrained training in philosophical education and sustained efforts at shaping proper moral habits. His focus on the social and cultural aspects of health is also decisive. We have seen that it is the social environment responsible for the disruption of the body's normal function that attracts Galen's attention and makes him venture into the ethical sphere, often quite unexpectedly given the technical nature of his works. This aspect underpins his self-projection as a moral authority, another trait not found in other medical authors concerned with similar issues.

The final sentence of the passage from *Matters of Health* quoted above portrays Galen as a moralist renouncing his ability to correct intemperance, stating that this is not a suitable occasion to do so. This points allusively to Galen's activity *qua* ethicist proper in his ethical works, but in the context of *Matters of Health* it may also be seen as a sophisticated tactic of self-effacement. By mapping out the community's inimical responses to incontinence (ἀκολασίαν) as well as shamelessness (ἀναισχυντίαν) and moral weakness (μαλακίαν), vices that play a central role in his adversaries' (un)ethical portrait too, Galen does in a sense correct (ἐπανορθοῦσθαι) incontinence in readers on a metanarrative level, on the assumption that they would have exercised their comparative and abstractive abilities discussed in the previous Chapter, and have had the appropriate reaction – in this case recognising the need to avoid shamelessness. So by bringing out the ethical connotations of incontinence in his technical discussion of hygiene, Galen makes use of the prospect of a metatextual development of character. And that he assigns a naturalistic substrate to character in *Matters of Health* does not mean that the salience of moral philosophy in individual thriving is readily dismissed from his account.⁶⁰

In fact, ethics also forms a close alliance with Galen's medical science when it comes to the learning and teaching of medicine, as we can see from the relevant remarks in *The Different Kinds of Fever*. In describing the characteristics of students of medicine who only have a conceit of medical knowledge (οἴησιν δ'ἐπιστήμης) but are ignorant of a significant amount of the true art, Galen lists a number of vices associated with their ignorance: boastfulness (ἀλαζονείας), insensitivity (ἀναισθησίας), rashness (τόλμης), vain prattling (ματαιίας φλυαρίας). He then clarifies that his writings on medicine are aimed specifically at passing on true knowledge

⁶⁰ 'Good health is his constant concern, as philosophy or virtue would be if he were a young man in a philosophical treatise.' Wilkins (2016: 427). 'His' refers to Galen's ideal reader in *Matters of Health*.

(ἐπιστημονικόν) and offering instruction in a didactic manner (διδασκαλικόν) (*Diff. Feb.* 1.3, VII.280.8-281.5 K.), which in general he considers philanthropic (φιλόθροπον, *Diff. Puls.* 4.17, VIII.764.1-3 K.), most probably on the grounds that his teaching – albeit indirectly – eradicates the damaging passions triggered by ignorance. In punctuating his medical texts with relevant moral reflections, Galen renders them more intellectual, philosophical and fashionable, thus widening the appeal of his art to a larger group of followers. These are issues explored in more detail in the Chapters that follow.

In the next Chapter we will investigate another important respect in which Galen differs from other medical authors in his treatment of ethics, and that is in his conceptualisation of the role of medicine in society and culture.