

volume, however, is the balance between east and west, and this is exemplified by Johannes Pahlitzsch's fascinating exploration of the mobility of Christian, Jewish and Samaritan doctors in the east across political and religious borders.

Jewish doctors, this time in the west, are also the focus of Peter Kay Jankrift's contribution. The mobility of these doctors in the west, however, means that evidence about their activities is sparse and Jankrift persuasively argues that historians should respond to this by taking a broad comparative approach between regions. Piers Mitchell also grapples with a lack of direct evidence for types of elective surgery performed in the Frankish states and instead he mines court records, chronicles and Arab sources to infer the types of elective surgical procedures (such as cauterization, treatment of haemorrhoids and possibly also cutting of gums for scurvy) that patients expected surgeons to perform successfully.

The early modern section of the volume opens with John Henderson's paper on early modern hospitals. In a welcome departure from the overwhelmingly literary source base of the volume as a whole, he draws on iconographic as well as textual evidence in order to attempt to reconstruct a patient's experience from entry to discharge (or death) in Renaissance hospitals in Florence. This is followed by a timely look by Renate Wittern at the contemporary reception of Andreas Vesalius' famous anatomical work *De fabrica*, not least by Vesalius' own former teacher, Jacobus Sylvius. Florian Steger focuses on a perhaps less universally famous, but nevertheless important, figure of the medical Renaissance, Georgius Agricola, and specifically his 1528 dialogue 'Bermannus sive de re metallica'. Steger argues that Agricola's dialogue should be viewed as part of the ongoing contemporary debate on what constituted "true" or "right" anatomy or medicine.

Daniel Schäfer's paper is the most closely focused in the collection on the concrete transmission of medical texts from antiquity to the Renaissance. Sensibly, rather than attempting a complete survey, he focuses on a single theme which is now receiving increasing attention from

historians, namely texts relating to ageing and prolonging life. Sandra Pott, in contrast, considers poetry about the plague and "paleness". She argues that not only did a "medicalization" of poetry take place in the early modern period, but that in turn medical discourse was influenced by poetry.

Overall, this collection has some strong contributions and although few contributors discuss it explicitly, they collectively deal with the concept of "transmission" in a creative way, considering the transmission not just of medical texts but also of medical personnel, medical knowledge and language across linguistic, chronological, political and religious boundaries.

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**Philip J van der Eijk** (ed.), *Hippocrates in context: papers read at the XIth International Hippocrates Colloquium, University of Newcastle upon Tyne 27–31 August 2002*, Studies in Ancient Medicine, vol. 31, Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2005, pp. xvi, 521, €149.00, US\$199.00 (hardback 90-04-14430-7).

The XIth International Hippocrates Colloquium focused on the contexts in which the Hippocratic texts were written and read. The organiser, Philip van der Eijk, chose this broad theme in order to encourage contributions from a wide range of disciplines. The proceedings, divided into five sections, open with a study of the notion of cause in the contemporary works of historians (Thucydides and Herodotus) and medical writers by Jacques Jouanna, who usefully reminds the reader that comparisons across genres should not always be conceived in simplistic terms of influences. The remainder of the first section, devoted to the epistemological context of Hippocratic medicine, is heavily centred on the much-studied treatise *On ancient medicine*, although Daniela Fausti examines some more neglected texts in her study of the use of signs in prognostication.

The second section, exploring the social context of Hippocratic medicine, includes some

of the most innovative essays of the volume. Maria Elena Gorrini offers an impressive study of the archaeological evidence for healing cults in Attica. She stresses that these cults developed contemporaneously with ‘Hippocratic medicine’, often used the same methods of healing, and were not in strict opposition—she shows how medical doctors made dedications to the God Asclepius. Julie Laskaris also investigates the links between religious and Hippocratic medicine, focusing on the use of excrements and kourotropic milk (the milk of a woman who has borne a male child) in the Hippocratic gynaecological recipes. She suggests that the use of kourotropic milk shows the influence of Egyptian medicine, which made use of the milk of the Goddess Isis feeding her son Horus. In incorporating that ingredient in their pharmacopoeia, the Greeks misunderstood or ignored the Egyptian ritual connotations of kourotropic milk. Finally, in her contribution on the largely unknown treatise *On the organ of sight*, Elizabeth Craik ventures the hypothesis that this text was composed by someone whose first language was not Greek, maybe someone from Egypt.

The third section explores the links between “Hippocratic” and “non-Hippocratic” medicine, that is, the medicine expounded in the writings of *inter alia* Aristotle (Frédéric le Blay), the *Anonymus Londinensis* (Daniela Manetti), and Theophrastus (Armelle Debru).

The fourth section, devoted to the linguistic and rhetorical context of Hippocratic medicine, is—unfortunately—the shortest. Detailed linguistic and literary studies can yield important information on the socio-cultural context in which the Hippocratic texts were produced, as shown most prominently by Tim Stover’s study of discursive practices and structural features exploited in *Prorrhetic 2*. Through the use of particular rhetorical features, the author of *Prorrhetic 2* produced a proreptic text destined to win over a clientele of pupils in the context of competition between medical practitioners.

The final section, focusing on the later reception of Hippocratic medicine, opens with a study of the medical papyri from the Egyptian village of Tebtunis by Ann Hanson, and is

followed by essays on the reception of Hippocratic theories by later medical authors, such as Celsus (Muriel Pardon), Aretaeus (Amneris Roselli), and Galen (Ivan Garofalo).

The division of the proceedings into sections is at times artificial, and it is regrettable that the section on the epistemological context is so centred on *On ancient medicine*; but altogether this volume testifies to the very positive evolution of Hippocratic scholarship in recent years. Hippocratic scholars are no longer afraid to use archaeological and papyrological evidence; they study linguistic features in innovative ways; they do not shy away from neglected texts such as *Prorrhetic 2*, *Internal affections* and *On the organ of sight* (as shown by the index of passages cited); and they fully embrace the possibility that Greek medicine was influenced by Egyptian medicine. In short, Hippocratic scholarship has truly become interdisciplinary.

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**Pedanius Dioscorides of Anazarbus**,  
*De materia medica*, transl. Lily Y Beck,  
introduction by John Scarborough,  
Altertumswissenschaftliche Texte und Studien,  
Band 38, Hildesheim, Olms-Weidmann, 2005,  
pp. xxviii, 540, €78.00, US\$90.00  
(paperback 3-487-12881-0).

Finally we Anglophones have a reliable, competent translation of Dioscorides, called by G E R Lloyd perhaps the most important scientist in classical antiquity. In five books, Dioscorides’ *Materia medica* summarizes more than 1,000 drugs of which at least 700 are botanicals. Over the last half century of delving into ancient and medieval medical lore, I often cringed when a modern writer quoted “Dioscorides” from the only previous English translation, that produced by John Goodyer some time between 1652 and 1655, but not published until 1934 (Oxford University Press), lightly edited by Robert T Gunther (reprinted in 1959 and 1971). Goodyer based his translation on a woeful edition