

pleasant to the eye and a manageably spaced apparatus. It should become the standard edition of Strato.

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## GALEN

JOHNSTON (I.) (ed., trans.) *Galen: On Diseases and Symptoms*. Pp. x + 334. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Cased, £55, US\$99. ISBN: 978-0-521-86588-3.

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This volume contains translations of four Galenic texts on diseases and symptoms (*De morborum differentiis*, *De causis morborum*, *De symptomatum differentiis* and *De symptomatum causis*) together with an introduction to Galen, a discussion of causation in antiquity and an analysis of the four texts. The book is a revised version of J.'s doctoral thesis.

The first section starts with a general introduction to Galen's life and works, followed by a chapter locating Galen within the context of medical and philosophical history and discussing the roots of his medical mindset. This is followed by what is in fact a combined analytic glossary and commentary to the translations: groups of key philosophical terms from the four treatises, for example *energeia*, *hexis* and *dunamis*, are discussed. The focus is not only on their use in the translated texts, but also on their relevance in earlier writings. The chapter is rounded off by a list of diseases and other medical terms.

Given the difficulty, indeed the impossibility, of briefly defining most of these terms – the list also contains such words as *aition* and *prophasis* – the glossary is very knowledgeable and clear, and it is certainly based on J.'s own research in Galenic works. It profits from the fact that passages from related texts are quoted in translation; many treatises J. quotes are not available in English, and even if they are, they might not be accessible. The glossary not only serves as an introduction to the content of the treatises, but for a non-classicist audience it illustrates peculiarities and characteristics of the Greek terms. In the conclusion, J. states that in the four texts presented in the volume Galen gives an 'empirical and common sense account of disease and symptom causation' with a terminology that is fact 'inconsistent' (p. 64).

There follows an analysis of Galen's logical approach to diseases and symptoms in each of the four treatises. The Introduction is rounded off by a comprehensive and detailed chapter on the concept of causation of disease in earlier authors, including philosophers, and in other Galenic works.

The second half of the volume begins with a brief outline of the problems of establishing a text: the translations are based on Kühn's nineteenth-century edition, which is still the best available; a collation with two manuscript witnesses (Laurent. plut. 74.16 and 74.12) has not yielded any significantly better readings. Next follow the actual translations, each accompanied by a brief synopsis.

The translation, though very close to the Greek, is elegantly formulated, and a few random checks did not reveal any inaccuracies; footnotes provide a commentary on the content and a discussion of textual problems. A number of key terms difficult to

grasp in a modern language are presented both in a tentative translation and in a transliteration of the Greek. The book ends with a general conclusion.

Overall, the volume presents a full and knowledgeable introduction to Galen, his works and other influential medical and philosophical authors of the period along with four texts on causation. The sequence and arrangement of the content makes sense, and the book is an interesting read for the non-specialist as it does not require any background knowledge of ancient philosophy or medicine.

Some structural aspects remain unclear. According to the Preface, ‘the central purpose of the present work is to provide translations’ (p. 4), whereas the introductory remarks are just given ‘brief consideration’ (p. 6). In fact, the Introduction comprises almost half of the volume and presents significant leads for the interpretation of the treatises. In its current form, the volume is a monograph divided into chapters containing, besides some extracts, translations of entire treatises. Confusingly, however, the title page suggests a more source-based work, a mere translation with some introductory material, and in particular of a work called *On Diseases and Symptoms* (which does not exist). To add to the confusion there appears to be no consistent form of the title; it is printed with a colon after the word ‘Galen’ on the back of the volume.

This is obviously an error of the typesetter, but this glitch on the title page reflects another more general issue. Although the author examines the four works separately, in places they appear to merge into one coherent treatise rather than being independent texts. Galen certainly designed his works to form a comprehensive corpus without discrepancies in content, and he linked them with cross-references, yet it was entirely possible for two distinct works to present the same topic from a different angle with an emphasis on aspects necessary to illustrate a specific point. In these cases, reconstructing an underlying, coherent system of terminology can sometimes prove impossible.

None the less, the volume presents a highly complex and controversial topic in a comprehensible and readable way, and with enthusiasm. It aims to interest a broader public in the philosophical concepts of ancient medicine and in ancient medicine itself. Three of the treatises are now, for the first time, accessible in a modern language, with a very helpful commentary.

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## SCHOLIA

AVEZZÙ (G.), SCATTOLIN (P.) (edd.) *I classici greci e i loro commentatori. Dai papiri ai marginalia rinascimentali. Atti del convegno Rovereto, 20 ottobre 2006.* (Memorie della Accademia Roveretana degli Agiati 206.) Pp. 245. Rovereto: Accademia Roveretana degli Agiati, 2006. Paper, €30.  
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The papers collected in this volume originate from a conference held in collaboration with two research projects at the universities of Verona and Florence which treat