

## Book Reviews

predecessors in the field have been confined to Latin texts from Antiquity and the early Middle Ages; here there is consideration of Greek material as well. The main theme is clear from the title. Most ancient authorities in the Hippocratic-Galenic tradition considered naming the disease essential, both intellectually and therapeutically. They bequeathed a large and florid vocabulary, many of the nuances and developments of which have yet to be fully mapped. That task becomes a good deal easier, of course, in the age of the CD-ROM and the data-base—the *Thesaurus linguae latinae*, the PHI disk of Latin literature and, not least, *Esculape*, which is being developed at the CNRS as a corpus of Latin pathological terms and is both described and put through its paces near the end of the present volume. Juxtaposing medical and non-medical texts, several early papers in the collection have specific lexis in their sights—of, among other disorders, catalepsy (Françoise Skoda, who nicely punctures Galen's claim to terminological innovation here), incubus, intestinal obstruction and diabetes (Anna-Maria Urso), various vocal disorders (Frédérique Biville), and epilepsy—under the grammatically puzzling designation *morbus maior* (the comparative argued by Anna Orlandini to be in effect a superlative). Two highly worthwhile contributions of a different kind might seem to have strayed in from some parallel collection, *Nommer le remède*. Patricia Gaillard-Seux surveys recipes for glaucoma involving the green lizard. Alain Touwaide proposes that Isidore of Seville's account of snake poison (*Etymologiae* xii.4) reveals a more creative and coherent engagement with ancient medicine than the bishop is often given credit for. Of equal interest, but closer to the book's ostensible theme, is a demonstration by Anne Fraisse of the ways in which Cassius Felix's Hellenism paradoxically enriched Latin medical vocabulary. The volume also includes a brief if unfocused account of Caelius Aurelianus as medical philologist (Françoise Gaide), and a survey of the lexical interplay of human and veterinary medicine in Pelagonius (by Valérie Gitton), which does not, however,

add much to the sixth chapter of J N Adams's magisterial *Pelagonius and Latin veterinary terminology in the Roman empire* (1995). The volume concludes with a bibliography compiled by Danielle Gourevitch of works on Latin pathology.

**Peregrine Horden,**

Royal Holloway, University of London

**Annette Müller, *Krankheitsbilder im Liber de Plantis der Hildegard von Bingen (1098–1179) und im Speyerer Kräuterbuch (1456). Ein Beitrag zur medizinisch-pharmazeutischen Terminologie im Mittelalter, I: Textband, II: Indexband*, Schriften zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte, 2 vols, Hürtgenwald, Guido Pressler, 1997, vol. 1, pp. 239, vol. 2, pp. xvii, 557, DM 380.00 (vol. 1: 3-87646-083-2; vol. 2: 3-87646-084-0).**

This is a comparative study of the lexicon used for the therapeutic indications of *materia medica* in the *Liber simplicis medicinae* by Hildegard von Bingen and in the *Speyerer Kräuterbuch* (completed in 1456), derived, at least in part, from a twelfth- or thirteenth-century German translation of the *Liber*. The textual data from the sources are presented in the second volume in four lists: (1) contains indications (in Latin or German in alphabetical order, with references) and therapeutic agents; (2) gives the activity attributed to the *materia medica* with the original text, with references if different from those in list 1; (3) contains a translation of list 1 in German or Latin, as appropriate (again with references); and (4) provides synonyms of list 1, if any. In addition there are three more lists which give the *materia medica* with Latin or German names in alphabetical order, with indications; the Latin or German names and their variants or synonyms; and botanical or pharmacological explanations in alphabetical order of plant names in Latin or German.

Volume one analyses this material from a lexicological point of view, with medical considerations (ancient and modern) when they

## Book Reviews

are necessary. The study covers affected organs (*a capite ad calcem*), general anatomical and/or pathological categories, the humoral system, general designations of health problems and therapeutics, prophylaxis, side effects, magic, and veterinary medicine. Both volumes open with a brief introduction, mainly methodological, and volume one ends with a bibliography.

The scope of the work is far wider than the "description of diseases" announced by the title. It furnishes the material for a study of the medical tradition of the West in the late Middle Ages. The material can be compared with its classical equivalent by tracing the persistence or transformation of terms and concepts. Moreover, the data allow a reconstruction both of the therapeutic system underlying the text, and of the pathological one—list 2 in volume two contributes much to this.

One could argue, however, that the introduction to volume one is too brief, and that the data in volume two, list 1, have been increased to no advantage by the use of both Latin terms and German translations. Moreover, it is difficult to read; the brief quotations and references in short lines in columns, separated by large blank spaces create confusion between the lines. Finally, the presentation is not consistent; for example, in volume one (p. 194): *latere, dolet in/sitten, we in der*; (p. 289) *sitten, we in der/latere, dolet in*; (p. 367) *we in der sitten/dolet in latere*; the materia medica (*Persico, gummi de*) is presented in two ways: (p. 367) the preposition *de* is printed just under *Persico, gummi*, in column 3, while on pages 194 and 289 it appears in column 1, just under the indication; consequently, at pages 194 and 289 the text of column 1 (*latere, dolet in/de*) is incomprehensible, and that of column 3 (*Persico, gummi*) is incomplete and may give rise to errors.

Nevertheless, the work constitutes an indispensable tool for further research in the field of medieval therapeutics and pathology, though it should be used with care. It will be especially useful to historians concerned with terminology, provided that they have an

excellent knowledge of Latin, and possibly also of medieval German, and are accustomed to working with such lexical lists.

**Alain Touwaide,**  
Consejo Superior de  
Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid

**Anna Manfron** (ed.), *La biblioteca di un medico del quattrocento. I codici di Giovanni di Marco da Rimini nella Biblioteca Malatestiana*, Turin, Umberto Allemandi, 1998, pp. 257, illus. (88-422-0814-0).

The north Italian town of Cesena is famous for two things, its restaurants and the Biblioteca Malatestiana. This beautiful library, still with its chained books in its original renaissance building, deserves to be much better known, not least because a substantial number of its manuscripts belonged to a doctor, Giovanni di Marco of nearby Rimini (d. 1474). The importance of this collection to historians of medicine was first made clear by Gerhard Baader in 1977, who showed how Giovanni's interests were typical of the transitional period between the High Middle Ages and the full-blown medical humanism of the sixteenth century. The quality, as well as the quantity, of his codices is impressive: several are illuminated, and one of the Galenic manuscripts, S.V.4, is a prime witness for many texts of the Latin Galen.

In 1988 an exhibition at the Biblioteca offered the opportunity for a major reassessment of Giovanni and his circle at Rimini and Cesena. This catalogue, lavishly produced with large, clear pages, is also a fine work of scholarship. It contains essays on the culture of the Malestata lands in the fifteenth century, on the various miniatures in the codices, and two on Giovanni himself. One, based on new archival research, shows that he was far from a provincial backwoodsman, but had a reputation well beyond the Rubicon. The other discusses the formation of his library, and his use of it, for Giovanni left several annotations in its margins and there are also