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before it could become a fluid appropriate for each of the three systems, venous, arterial and nervous.

Rocca's findings reveal Galen's sophistication as an experimental dissector, aware of the advantages and disadvantages of a wide range of different procedures and techniques. What was suitable when investigating the heart, for instance, was not necessarily so for the brain. As some very recent discoveries in Arabic have shown, this appreciation of the value of dissection was not entirely Galen's own achievement, but one that he may well have derived from his teachers or, indeed, his opponents. His *bête noire*, Lycus of Macedon, only a few years before Galen arrived in Rome in AD 162, had published a substantial manual of dissection that included sections on vivisection as well as on dissection. Whether Galen was right to trace this revival of anatomy back to Marinus in Alexandria around AD 100, cannot be confirmed in the present state of our evidence, but it seems at least plausible.

It would be easy to be carried away by the evidence Rocca has assembled and view Galen as a very modern anatomist and experimenter. But Rocca has also seized on one crucial point of difference. Galen was less interested in anatomy for its own sake than for what it could reveal about the soul and about where this controlling power was located in the body. It was a debate that went back to Aristotle, if not to Plato before him, and helps to explain some of the peculiarities of ancient anatomical discourse. Whatever philosophical view of the soul one took led to a particular interpretation of its seat and role in the body. The search for the origin of the nerves was a philosophical, some might even say theological, enquiry as much as an anatomical one, and accounts for Galen's triumphant hymn to the Creator in the last book of *On the usefulness of parts*.

When there is so much here that is new and that successfully bridges the gap between Galen's anatomy and his philosophy, it would be unkind to ask for more. But two areas are worth further investigation. The newly "rediscovered" treatise by Galen, *Movements hard to explain*,

shows a different side to him as an anatomist, one who wishes to examine further the points at which theory seems to collide with the facts revealed by dissection. His comments in this short treatise on the role of nerves could profitably be developed along the lines Rocca has laid down. Secondly, there is still much to learn about the ways in which Galen's anatomy was used in Late Antiquity or the Latin Middle Ages. For example, Bishop Nemesius of Emesa's passing comments on the location of brain function could well go back to a lost treatise by Galen, who was the source for some of that cleric's most interesting speculations. Similarly, a new look at the pseudo-Galenic treatise *On the voice*, edited in 1962 by Hans Baumgarten, might reveal further information about Galen's methods and results.

But that is for the future. Rocca in this book has re-established Galen's credentials as an outstanding anatomist, and it is not only Galenists who will derive pleasure from this combination of learning and practical skill.

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Galen, *On the properties of foodstuffs* (*De alimentorum facultatibus*), introduction, translation and commentary by Owen Powell, foreword by John Wilkins, Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. xxvi, 206, £40.00, US\$55.00 (hardback 0-521-81242-9).

This is an elegantly produced book. John Wilkins introduces its subject by explaining how Galen arranged his work. By and large, the foods discussed are placed in discrete categories, that is cereals, meat, fish, pulses or the like. However, Wilkins suggests that some items do not fit neatly into these divisions, for example the snail. Yet the way in which Galen introduces this creature sounds humorous rather than perplexed. Aristotle (*HA* 523b11) had bracketed snails among those animals with a fleshy interior and an exterior shell. That Galen

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advises against including the snail among winged creatures suggests more than it being just an anomaly. The subsequent list of deliberately unpleasant creatures—at least to a citizen of the Roman Empire—only reinforces the point that Galen was writing both a practical manual and a work that could hold its reader through a varied style. Such variety is illustrated by scatological anecdotes (pp. 88–9) and commentaries on classical texts (p. 64). It is surely this literary ability that is the key to how Galen was able to “out-gun” his critics rather than any solution he provided to the “problem of classification” (p. xxi).

Any translator of Galen is in a dilemma as to who will read about ancient medical theorizing. The general reader might shy away from too much unfamiliar detail, whilst the classicist will demand precision. And here lies the rub: a treatise based around an outmoded science will necessarily resist attempts at a flowing translation. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that the first English translation of Galen did not appear until 1916 and then with a caveat about the attempt. Owen Powell discusses all this in his introduction, but, although he states that occasional transliteration is necessary, considerable awkwardness is apparent in such versions as “pottery-skinned animals” (p. 32), “*stomachos*” (p. 35) and “Strouthian apples” (p. 89) which, with a little adjustment, could have been avoided. Otherwise the translation, which follows the Greek text prepared by Georg Helmreich for the *Corpus Medicorum Graecorum*, is accurate.

As a physician himself, Powell approaches the text from a practical medical angle. This lends itself to some interesting nosography, for example on elephantiasis (p. 171) and jaundice (p. 178). On the other hand, the culinary side of the work can be brushed aside. Hemp seeds (p. 3) are still very much employed as a food, particularly in sweetmeats as Galen says, whilst poppy seeds (p. 3) are more than just embellishments, not only in Roman cooking with *laterculi* (Plaut. *Poen.* 325–6) but also in modern Austrian cooking with *Mohnstrudel*. The medical angle also results in glosses that are extraneous or too lengthy: for instance there is no

need to explain (p. 176) that Great Alexandria is the city in Egypt. Powell can jar with his comparisons, and the discussion about the language consciousness of the Greek élite at the time of Galen is a case in point: when Galen examines words for their precise meanings, he is not engaged in an equivalent of the recent debate between *katharevousa* and demotic; instead he is searching for linguistic precision to help in the reading earlier texts and for debating with intellectual rivals. A reference to Robert Edlow’s excellent *Galen on language and ambiguity* (Leiden, 1977) would have been useful here.

From a relative dearth a few years ago, the growing number of English versions of Galen can only be welcomed. If some translations such as this book treat works already covered, this at least allows for a comparison of translation techniques and affords suggestions as to how to tackle other such texts in the future. And even if his scientific methodology may sometimes elicit a smile, the sociological and cultural ideas that Galen conveys have enormous value for any study of the Roman world at the apogee of its power.

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Andreas Vesalius, *On the fabric of the human body. Book III: The veins and arteries. Book IV: The nerves*, a translation of *De humani corporis fabrica libri septem* by William Frank Richardson, in collaboration with John Burd Carman, Novato, CA, Norman Publishing, 2002, pp. xxxiv, 286, illus., US\$250.00 (hardback 0-930405-83-8).

This great scholarly enterprise has now passed half-way, with this translation of Books 3 and 4 of Vesalius’ *Fabrica*. The quality of translation, layout and printing remains as high as ever, although, perhaps inevitably, the annotation appears less full than before. Some of Vesalius’ opponents can be identified through his rhetoric, and a few more of his borrowings