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Author(s): James P. Holoka

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close connection between Empedocles and medical thought, he is, I believe, mistaken to try to identify a particular individual as the target of the polemic of *On Ancient Medicine*. The author mentions Empedocles once by name in chapter 20, but only to illustrate the *kind* of theorizing to which he objects; he is attacking a type of theorizing, not any particular thinker. In the area of Hippocratic *Rezeptionsgeschichte*, H.-U. Lammel contributes a fascinating piece on the German physician August Bier (1861–1949) and the affinities between his reading of the Hippocratic Corpus and the “Third Humanism” of Werner Jaeger.

Methodist medicine is represented by V. Nutton’s study of the meaning of the term *contagio* in Caelius Aurelianus, a fifth-century A.D. writer who draws heavily on the Methodist Soranus of Ephesus (*fl.* 100 A.D.), and who, unlike most ancient medical authors, recognizes the phenomenon of contagion. Four textual studies round out the volume: A. Garzya on Cassius Iatrosophista, K.-D. Fischer on the *Quaestiones Medicinales* falsely attributed to Soranus, D. Nickel on Galen’s *De foetuum formatione*, and P. Potter on the first printed editions of Hippocrates and Galen. These studies do not make easy reading for the nonspecialist. But the quality of all the contributions is very high, and scholars working on any of the texts or issues treated here will need to consult this volume. On the whole the book seems a fine tribute to its distinguished dedicatee, whose wide-ranging publications, together with those of the late Georg Harig, are listed in an appendix.

Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte, Berlin      MARK SCHIEFSKY  
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John M. McMahon. *Paralysin Cave: Impotence, Perception, and Text in the Satyrica of Petronius*. Mnemosyne Supplements, 176. Leiden: Brill, 1998. Pp. xii, 272. \$111.00. ISBN 90-04-10825-4.

The title of this volume, a revised doctoral dissertation (Univ. of Penn., 1993), does not convey the breadth of information presented in it. *Paralysin cave* is a quotation from Petronius’ *Satyrica* (129.6: Circe admonishing Encolpius suffering from aggravated impotence); the subtitle indicates a focus on the same work. But McMahon in fact devotes 191 of this book’s 219 pages of text proper to laying groundwork for that climactic analysis, in the process shedding light on many other topics.

In the introduction, McMahon sketches an “interdependent network of substance and suggestion” in the popular mentality of ancient Greece and Rome. This links specific plants, animals, and stones/amulets with male sexuality, in particular sexual dysfunction. Such associations presume a “belief in the actual exchange of magical influences in the physical world” (12–13). Their proper appreciation will improve our grasp of certain literary texts as cultural artifacts, despite the obstacles of the paucity and androcentrism of extant sources.

Chapter 1, “Surveying the Landscape,” rapidly reviews an array of documents: literary (e.g., Homer, Hesiod, archaic lyric, the *Greek Anthology*; Horace, the *Carmina Priapea*, the *Appendix Vergiliana*, Martial, Apuleius), subliterate (e.g., the Orphic *Lithica*, curse tablets, magical papyri), and scientific/medical (e.g., Aristotle, Theophrastus, the *Corpus Hippocraticum*, Galen)—all relevant to male sexual dysfunction and habits of popular thought pertaining to it.

Chapter 2, “Methodologies and Conceptual Foundations,” foregrounds in

the literary record a popular substrate of beliefs regarding impotence and its causes and cures. Passages in Herodotus and the Hippocratic Corpus (on the impotence of the Scythians) as well as Tibullus 1.5, Ovid, *Amores* 3.7, and the *Satyrica* (the Circe, Oenothea, and Proselenos episodes) are scrutinized to reveal details and dimensions of the substrate.

Chapter 3, "Flora and the Perceptions of Virility," reconstructs popular causal and curative associations of certain plants, especially garlic and onion, with male sexual (dys)function. McMahon shows that the physical appearance of the plants, hitherto insufficiently stressed or discussed, suggested their connection with conditions or maladies. Specifically, the (phalluslike) structure, growth habits, and real or putative innate properties of the plants are critical (eight helpful illustrations are included).

In chapter 4, "Serpents, Sexuality, and the Power of Stones," the already detailed plant traits are shown to have correlated in ancients' minds with those of, for example, birds, lizards, and, especially, snakes/serpents. Like the featured plants, these animals were thought to exert powerful sympathetic influences. Such paranormal processes also often are activated by magically charged stones and amulets.

Chapter 5, "Συμπάθεια: Recognition and Rejection," draws on these preliminary cultural investigations to reinterpret some key literary texts: Catullus 67, Horace, *Epode* 3, Ovid, *Amores* 3.7, and, at greater length, the Quartilla and Circe episodes of the *Satyrica*. McMahon proves conclusively the value of his carefully excavated complex of interrelations for fuller appreciation of each text. For the *Satyrica*, however, he claims an exceptional status: Petronius, thanks in part to the flexibility permitted by the dialogic and narrative potentials of the proto-novel genre (Bakhtin here invoked), is able both to parody popular notions of sympathetic influences and concomitantly to privilege his narrator Encolpius, who "steps outside the limited realm of specific discourse about impotence . . . into the wider range of reflective comment about its effects on personal and social status" (209).

McMahon achieves in spades his goal of enriching our comprehension of the impotence theme in the *Satyrica*. But no less compelling in his study are the fascinating lore and revelations building up to that literary critical finale. The book will, therefore, reward reading by students not only of literature, but also of natural history (especially botany), ancient scientific thought, magical practices, and folk medicine.

Eastern Michigan University  
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JAMES P. HOLOKA

David Cherry. *Frontier and Society in Roman North Africa*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998. Pp. xvi, 291. \$82.00. ISBN 0-19-815235-3.

The degree to which Roman rule changed or transformed political, social, and economic life in the Roman provinces is an area of intense scholarly debate among historians of the Roman empire. Cherry's new book adds to this debate by focusing on the transformations that the Roman military presence brought to the frontier zone in North Africa, which represents more or less the southern frontier of the provinces of Numidia and Mauretania Caesariensis, located in what is now Algeria (viii). Tracing the gradual extension of the Roman military presence in this area from the first to the third centuries A.D., Cherry seeks to determine how and to what extent the Roman military occupation fostered the process of "Romanization."