

passage, Craik punctuates with a full stop after the phrase *oidēmatôn anôdunôn*, while the manuscripts punctuate before it. One way to avoid the resulting tautology (as acknowledged, p. 111) might be to keep the manuscripts' punctuation, and to emend to *oidēmatôn epôdunôn*, deleting the following *kai* while keeping Craik's emendations to the sentence subsequently. This would mark a transition to a new condition (i.e. "In the case of painful swellings . . .") and make sense of the treatments newly introduced to counteract pain. I noticed only one possible error, at p. 44.2, where in the Greek text a comma is printed after *ôs malista*, but is interpreted in the translation (surely correctly) as coming before.

The introduction to *On sight* (pp. 3–27) and the discussion of *On anatomy* (pp. 155–68) seek especially to place these treatises within the wider context of the Hippocratic Corpus, of later Greek medicine and the history of ophthalmology and anatomy generally. In the case of *On anatomy*, a full survey and discussion of the evidence connecting the tract with the work of Democritus is offered. The thorny issues involved in linking groups of Hippocratic texts based on linguistic and conceptual parallels, or in tracing patterns of influence between ancient scientific texts, are fully acknowledged, and the evidence is treated with caution. Additional speculation on the origins and functions of these works is also found.

These various topics are addressed in more detail in the commentaries, in which particular attention is paid to linguistic analysis in relation to the Corpus, stylistic features, and assessment of these texts using the tools of modern ophthalmology and anatomy. Particularly welcome is the detailed discussion of the procedures of Hippocratic modes of therapy. Citations in Greek and Latin are helpfully translated in the commentary to *On sight*, though not *On anatomy*. The text is accompanied by three useful diagrams illustrating anatomical nomenclature of the eye and head, and the book is completed by two indices, one of passages cited and one general. It is perhaps to be regretted that no index of Greek words is included.

This is an excellent work of scholarship, accessible also to non-specialists, which provides a firm basis for further work on these two lesser known treatises. Its depth of analysis also makes a significant contribution to the study of the Hippocratic Corpus and the wider history of Greek medicine.

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Franco Giorgianni (ed.), *Hippokrates, Über die Natur des Kindes* (De genitura und De natura pueri), ins Deutsche und Italienische übersetzt und textkritisch kommentiert, Serta Graeca, Band 23, Wiesbaden, Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2006, pp. xiii, 363, €110.00 (hardback 978-3-89500-493-3).

Franco Giorgianni's new edition with translation and commentary of these two Hippocratic treatises appears thirty-six years after Robert Joly edited both texts for the Collection des Universités de France (Budé) and twenty-five after Iain Lonie published an exhaustive commentary on them that continues to be a reference and inspiration for scholars working on Hippocratic texts. Both writings, though transmitted separately in the manuscript tradition under the titles of *On generation* and *Nature of the child*, have unanimously been considered a single work on embryology since Émile Littré's edition of Hippocrates' *Complete works*. The text covers the human reproductive process, beginning with male and female seed and ending with birth.

Giorgianni's book is based on the reworking of his 2003 Hamburg doctoral thesis. It contains a general introduction, a German translation facing the Greek text, a thirty-page commentary dealing exclusively with textual matters, an Italian translation, and three indexes (Greek words, general index, and *index locorum*). The book is completed by a bibliography and the reproduction of some pages of the Greek manuscripts used for the edition. Though this is mainly a philological work, besides the chapters on composition, authorship, tradition and

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reception, the introduction also provides an overview of the medical ideas used by the author regarding physiology and embryology.

The author of *On generation / Nature of the child* represents an exceptional case in the context of the Hippocratic Collection, as he also wrote other works that are today extant, namely the book *Diseases IV* and some parts of the gynaecological treatises—the ones identified by H Grensemann (*Knidische Medizin*, Berlin, 1975) as the so-called C-level. This information provides an unusual tool for the Hippocratic editor, who is in a position to argue in terms of the author's style. Giorgianni makes good use of this, as he has used for the first time the parallel passages in the gynaecological treatises to support a particular manuscript reading. Moreover, his codicological description of the five main Greek manuscripts transmitting the text is very accurate and will serve as a reference for future editors, as will the results of his study of the direct and indirect tradition.

Several of the changes in the text with regard to Joly's edition are simply the result of maintaining the readings of the manuscripts instead of trying to reconstruct a more coherent Hippocratic dialect. In this sense Giorgianni dissociates himself from the trend followed by most of the recent editors of Hippocratic texts, whose work on the manuscript tradition of different texts has undoubtedly contributed to an overview of the Ionic dialect used by the Hippocratic authors. We are far from being certain when dealing with this issue, but printing a text that lacks coherence regarding orthography and morphology does not seem to be a better solution. Other changes originate from a detailed assessment of the textual tradition and a careful reading of the Greek text (for instance at 148,6, 152,24 or 162,19) confronting it with parallels in other Hippocratic writings and showing to what extent the *Index Hippocraticus* is an indispensable reference tool for scholars working on Hippocratic texts. Other authors' conjectures find a place in the critical apparatus and many textual decisions are thoroughly justified in the commentary and confronted with the alternatives. Giorgianni is to be congratulated for his

accurate philological work. His book well deserves to be placed on our shelves beside Lonie's commentary.

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Lester K Little (ed.), *Plague and the end of Antiquity: the pandemic of 541–750*, Cambridge University Press in association with the American Academy in Rome, 2007, pp. xvii, 360, £45.00, \$75.00 (hardback 978-0-521-84639-4).

Of all the pandemics to have affected Europe and the Middle East, that of 541–750 has attracted remarkably little attention. Compared with the Black Death in the 1340s, it has seemed remote from the purview of western European scholars, for several reasons. Western European sources are scanty, and suggest that recurrences of the plague after the initial outbreak were sporadic. By contrast, the plague was endemic in the Middle East for centuries, before it disappeared in almost as bewildering a manner as it had arrived. The most detailed accounts are either by Byzantine or Arab writers, few of whom have been translated into English.

This volume should help to change these perceptions. Lester Little has assembled an impressive cast, who survey the impact of this epidemic on the Near East, Byzantium and the Latin West. They raise questions about the nature of the sources, from prayers and hymns to archival and archaeological remains. Together with Little's introduction, they provide the reader with a broad overview of a major epidemic, and of its social and economic consequences. It is a pity that the conference paper by Larry Conrad could not be included, for his 1981 Princeton dissertation, and many subsequent papers, transformed historians' understanding of the Middle Eastern material on this pandemic.

But this volume is also significant because it includes two long papers, by Robert Sallares and Michael McCormick, on the impact of modern DNA studies on our understanding of the epidemiology of plague, and a third, by Jo Hays,