

preserves thirty-nine people with this title (including one Markianos and one Maurianos), while the online *Prosopography of the Byzantine World* <<http://www.pbw.kcl.ac.uk/>> preserves four *stratelatai* from 1050–1200. It is important to note that the title was no longer in use in the Palaiologan period, the supposed time of the texts' production.

The texts themselves are fairly straightforward: humoral pathology is alluded to but not explained or explored in depth. It is, however, quite remarkable that the remedies very often suggest phlebotomy, a procedure that is absent from comparable texts, the so-called *Xenonika* (manuals connected to Byzantine hospitals; see D. Bennett, *Xenonika*, PhD thesis, University of London 2003), and the medical and agricultural 'best seller' of the later Greek world, Agapios Landos' *Geoponika* (Venice, 1680).

As the texts have now become available to scholars, I expect that, taking the lead from Zipser's editorial suggestions, future researchers will strive to publish more such practical texts. They will no doubt explore and map the connections between such texts and earlier (both ancient and medieval) medical authorities. The result will place our knowledge of Byzantine medical knowledge and practice on a much more secure footing. The pioneer work of Zipser will play an important role in this process.

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**Alessandro Arcangeli and Vivian Nutton**  
(eds), *Girolamo Mercuriale: Medicina e Cultura nell'Europa del Cinquecento* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2008), pp. vii + 356, €37.00, paperback, ISBN: 978-88-222-5740-6.

The present volume demonstrates that the past decade has been a fertile one for studies of Girolamo Mercuriale, and that, over and above the important recent additions to the bibliography on *De Arte Gymnastica*, scholars

in various fields have increasingly examined Mercuriale's works on subjects from paediatrics and gynaecology to epidemiology, dermatology and toxicology.

This volume, about which the editors rightly remark that it will provide an important foundation for future study, brings together twenty papers presented at the international symposium commemorating the four-hundredth anniversary of Mercuriale's death, held in Forlì in 2006. In spite of the disparate subjects and methodologies of the essays, Alessandro Arcangeli and Vivian Nutton have organised them such that the book opens with broad contextual studies and moves to a consideration of single treatises in the order of their publication. A core group examine *De Arte Gymnastica*, raising questions regarding Mercuriale's methods (Alessandro Arcangeli), revisiting the question of the forgeries of Pirro Ligorio, Mercuriale's collaborator (Ginette Vagenheim), and assessing the treatise's impact upon seventeenth-century Roman culture, preoccupied as it was with health and classical exempla of valour and virtue (Susan Russell). In a stimulating essay that also accompanies Nutton's 2008 English translation of *De Arte Gymnastica*, Jean-Michel Agasse considers, among other questions, Mercuriale's conception of the relationship of body and soul, and his post-Tridentine perspective on the *voluptas* of antiquity. Agasse argues that the massive architectural remains of the ancient baths, which suggested that Roman culture was excessively devoted to hedonistic bodily pleasures, did not square with the sixteenth-century perception of the Romans as virtuous. Compelled to justify the enormous expense on these structures, Mercuriale made the claim that they housed schools of philosophy. Mercuriale was no neutral player in the Renaissance quarrel of ancients and moderns, yet, as recent research has demonstrated, he was not wrong in identifying these structures as multifaceted spaces. Indeed the imperial baths included 'meeting halls, lecture rooms, libraries' among their other spaces for instruction, see Fikret Yegül, *Baths and*

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*Bathing in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 130.

Gregorio Piaia adumbrates the shifting world of late sixteenth-century Europe at a moment when medical and philosophical inquiry was characterised by a plurality of approaches: a strict dependence upon ancient authorities, an experimental method, and a reliance upon the ‘magico-hermetic tradition’ (p. 5). Like other medical humanists, Mercuriale made a practice, Arcangeli notes, of constructing his books ‘from other books’ (p. 115). He drew upon a stunning array of ancient, medieval, Arab and Renaissance authorities; his learning secured him the admiration of many, even though history shows him at times to have been greatly in error. One such instance, as brought to light in Richard Palmer’s essay, occurred in 1576, when Mercuriale and his colleagues denied that Venice was victim, once again, to an epidemic of plague. Negotiating for privileged access to the sick, his team unwittingly spread the disease. But even after Mercuriale was forced to acknowledge his mistake, he maintained that the symptoms observed did not reflect the definition of plague established by the ancients. Paradoxically, with that formidable learning, Palmer concludes, he ‘substantially recovered his standing and reputation within the academic community’ (p. 64). Only exceptionally, as in his *De Venenis* (1584), do there emerge indications, as Alessandro Pastore demonstrates, that Mercuriale truly relied upon direct observation.

This volume sheds new light on the little-studied treatises *Nomothelasmus* (1552), *Variae Lectiones* (1571) and *De Decoratione* (1585), the last of which addressed the relationship between health and beauty, branching off to consider cosmetics. The essays by Enrico Peruzzi and Francesca Lazzarin on this treatise will undoubtedly spur further work in this fascinating and productive area.

Sought after by sovereigns, princes, and prelates, Mercuriale maintained an extensive intellectual network on both sides of the Alps,

which Nancy Siraisi sets forth, and he openly sought out books that had been placed on the Index (Jean-Michel Agasse). Here again, his learning apparently elevated him above any suspicion. Not all physicians at this moment of history were so fortunate.

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**Victor Mallia-Milanés** (ed.), *The Military Orders: Volume 3 – History and Heritage* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. xvii + 306, £55.00, hardback, ISBN: 978-0-7546-6209-7.

This volume records the proceedings of the third international conference on the military orders held on 7–10 September 2000 at the Museum of the Order of St John, Clerkenwell, London. Once again the organising London Centre for the Study of the Crusades, the Military Orders and the East Mediterranean Region in the Middle Ages succeeded in uniting no less than thirty well-known experts who focused their discussion on the general theme of ‘History and Heritage’. The thirty papers published in this collection reveal the continuing scholarly interest in the Military Orders as well as the large variety of topics that still demand further research. Eighteen articles concentrate on the Order of St John, six on the Temple and three on the Teutonic Order. Like the two volumes comprising the contributions of the previous conferences in 1992 and 1996, ‘History and Heritage’ will certainly be highly appreciated by medievalists specialised in the history of the crusades because of the outstanding quality of the assembled papers. They all cover recent trends of research and offer a strong basis for continuing study of the subjects treated. For those interested in medical history, however, this third volume has much less to offer than its predecessors. These put a special emphasis on *Fighting for the Faith and Caring for the Sick* (Volume 1) as well as *Warfare and Welfare* (Volume 2). The present volume, as its title indicates, mainly deals with the