ceeds in linking the literary theme of exile and the contemporary political circumstances at the time of composition. The work will serve as a valuable contribution to both the study of exile and of Cicero’s exilic corpus.

Maridien Schneider
Stellenbosch University


Ideally, the History of Medicine is a warm collaboration between physicians and historians, or—in the study of ancient medicine—between physicians and classicists and classical historians. A mere century ago, practicing medical doctors were educated in languages and literatures before the initial stages of professional training, but the traditional multi-faceted Lycée, Gymnasion, grammar school and liberal arts high school have disappeared as essential underpinnings of western-style physicians. It was common in 1905 for a physician to read Hippocrates or Galen in the original Greek, Celsus or Scribonius Largus in Latin, and frequently that same medical professional turned energy and literary skill into books of history or some of the most luminous examples of lasting fiction (in English, Conan Doyle with his *Sherlock Holmes* is a striking example, as in Russian are Anton Chekhov’s deeply insightful plays and short stories). As late as the 1850s Greek remained a requirement for entrance into the best medical schools of Europe and America, and Latin was assumed, since the language of medicine was firmly wedded to the vocabulary of ancient Rome and its Renaissance adaptations.

By 1900 Greek had been largely dropped, with Latin not far behind, and by the end of World War II the classical languages (let alone history and literature) generally ceased to be the foundations of a medical education. Something was lost as something was gained: the new technologies of medicine demanded knowledge of physics, mathematics and chemistry so that the years spent in a pre-medical curriculum became ever more stuffed with science and less with the so-called humanities. Physicians occasionally hunger for the ‘old days’, forgetting, of course, the horrendous death-tolls among young and old before the flowering of bacteriology and, currently, the new revolution represented by molecular genetics. And frequently the new History of Medicine is bereft of medicine, as well as history, since doctors
sometimes are proudly ignorant of the history of their profession, and historians are often those who have shunned the sciences in their undergraduate careers. This collection of essays thus is a cardinal example of a truly cross-disciplinary attempt not merely to bridge the gap, but to make the telling of medical history into that which it was meant to be: a most practical exercise in how modern medicine's heritages speak cogently and precisely to the actual practice of medicine in all of its wondrous, quirky, multi-aspect, unpredictable human manners, telling us again that medicine remains an Art. And the deepest foundations of the Art of Medicine are those discerned in classical antiquity. Retief the physician, and Giliers the classicist, have provided a most welcome book that can stand as a fine model to emulate as one seeks to explicate ancient medicine with its curious similarities to the modern versions of the healing art, as well as its large differences, set firmly within the relevant historical matrix. There is no condescension here, only curiosity and a commitment to the evidence for what it says, not what we might want it to say.

*Health and Healing* is 'user-friendly': there are thumbnail sketches of some major figures in classical and medieval times (from Aelius Aristides to Vitruvius, xiii-xxii), followed by a convenient list of the Roman emperors from Augustus to Justinian. Each chapter (of twenty) has its own bibliography, so that one can immediately track individuals or subjects of personal interest. A major benefit of this collection of studies is the skilled translations from the Afrikaans by Margaret Raferty, now made available in English for the first time.

The collection is subdivided into five blocks ('The Greek World', 'The Roman World', 'The Graeco-Roman World', and 'The Biblical World'), with the 'Hippocratic Question' considered in the initial essay. 'Hippocrates: facts and fiction' reviews what ancient medical historians have concluded about the 'life and times' of the most famous practitioner in classical antiquity. In a dozen pages, Retief and L. Giliers conclude that we know very little about the life, but much about the ideals set forth in the works under the name of Hippocrates of Cos. 'The greatest gift of the Hippocratic Legacy to modern medicine lies ... in its timeless vision of ethical practice' (p. 12). One could not better this clipped encapsulation of why we honour Hippocrates and the ideal of 'Hippocratic' medicine, expressed most famously in the Oath. 'The death of Alexander the Great' offers a carefully deduced, reasonable retrospective diagnosis of why Alexander expired at age 33; easily rejected are assassination by poison and simple alcoholism, but a combination of malignant tertian malaria and sequelae of near-fatal battle wounds, plus too much wine too often, fit the descriptions in the Greek and Latin texts.
The authors review the contradictory evidence that retails the famous suicide of Cleopatra VII in 30 BC in 'The death of Cleopatra'; they indicate — rightly in my view — that the accounts in Plutarch and Galen (Strabo could have been added), supplemented by allusions in Horace, Propertius and Vergil, cannot and do not 'explain' how the queen assured herself that she would be dead indeed, before the arrival of Octavian. So much for Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor, or even Shakespeare (who gains his drama from the pages of Plutarch). Much is left unsaid in the sources, obscured by Octavian's propaganda and by centuries of speculation. To be sure, Cleopatra's suicide remains an 'unsolved mystery' (p. 87), but future research in toxicology may indicate how and why Hannibal had a ring containing poison that guaranteed his quick suicide in 183 BC, and why Mithridates VI of Pontus carried poison in his sword for such purposes (when the time came in 63 BC, such poison proved ineffective, since the king had ensured his own acquired immunity through the years). The authors delineate exactly how such research is conducted and 'The death of Cleopatra' is a fine, sceptical piece of scholarship.

Salutary, too, is the sober doubt cast upon unitary notions of the 'Fall of Rome' in 'Lead poisoning in Ancient Rome': 'It is ... unlikely that lead poisoning ... had ... any significant role in the decline of the Roman Empire in the West ...' (p. 161). 'Eunuchs in the Bible' by Retief, Riekert and J. Ciliers is a pioneering essay on a medical and social practice, common in antiquity, and this essay predates the well-received monograph by Ringrose on Byzantine eunuchs (Chicago 2004). The authors, however, link biblical accounts with the anatomy (as well as how 'healthy' were the eunuchs), much more assuredly than does Ringrose, and the existence of the article in Afrikaans prevented its wider use among scholars. It is splendid that we now have it in English. More, too, exists in the Roman veterinary medical texts (both Greek and Latin) that reinforce the basic points made by the authors: that the History of Medicine spans more than 'medical' texts, and includes the Greek of the New Testament, the Hebrew of the Old, and reflections of such practices in so-called non-medical sources. And even though the title appears to be 'tongue-in-cheek,' L. Ciliers' 'Where were the doctors when the Roman Empire fell?' succinctly summarizes the 'health benefits' of the Roman Empire, ranging from the excellent water supply (the aqueducts), the notion of a public cleanliness in a social context (the baths), disposal of sewage, to the legal texts that tell us public physicians were appointed by the state. Too frequently does one forget how Roman 'sanitation practices' were not matched again until the mid-19th century at the earliest.

There are a number of similarly stimulating essays in Health and Healing, and beginners and experienced scholars alike will enjoy, among many others,
‘The eruption of Vesuvius in AD 79 and the death of Gaius Plinius Secundus’, ‘The epidemic of Justinian’, ‘Christ’s crucifixion as a medico-historical event’, all by Retief and L. Gilliers, and ‘The illnesses of Herod the Great’, by Retief and J. Gilliers. The collaboration has engendered a splendid revival of the dual mastery of texts and sources characteristic of the History of Medicine in the 19th century, and one can only hope that many more of these cogently argued, carefully documented, and temperately concluded studies will be available soon.

John Scarborough
School of Pharmacy & Department of Classics
University of Wisconsin
Acta Classica is published annually by the Classical Association of South Africa. The journal has been in production since 1958. It is listed on both the ISI and the SAPSE list of approved publications.

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