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sortes lindeboomianae, which will introduce the non-Dutch monoglot to a new cast of characters, from Albert, a sixteenth-century barber-surgeon who drew up a death-certificate, to the cancer pseudo-therapist Jules Samuel (1888–1975), and including many doctors whose international careers are far from predictable, such as A.G. van Onsenoort (1782–1841) and Peter Pincoffs (1815–72). The latter was born in Rotterdam, worked in Brussels, Dresden, Manchester, and Chorlton (not Charlton)-upon-Medlock, founded the Medical Association of Constantinople, established a vaccination centre in Beirut, settled in Naples, and died in a shooting accident (?) in Germany. Again, we learn that one doctor wrote plays, another was taxed at so much, and a third never attended conferences. Thus, Lindeboom's fully rounded portrayal of the profession will assist in the frustration of partisan writers who try to fob off their readers with stereotypes or caricatures.

W. Schupbach
Wellcome Institute

ROBERT JOLY (editor, translator and commentator), *Hippocratis De diaeta*, Corpus medicorum graecorum, I.2.4, Berlin DDR, Akademie Verlag, 1984, 8vo, pp. 332, M.98.00.

For almost a quarter of a century, Professor Joly has worked on problems concerned with the text and interpretation of a work in the Hippocratic Corpus, *On regimen*. His first major study appeared in 1960, and he published an annotated edition in the Bude series in 1967. His CMG edition, in which he acknowledges the considerable assistance given him by Dr Simon Byl, is thus in more than one sense the fruit of mature reflection. The actual Greek text shows little change from that of 1967, but elsewhere there are many improvements. The apparatus criticus is avowedly fuller and more accurate, the discussion of the various Latin versions, some of which go back to late antiquity, is more extensive, and the discussion of influences and dating somewhat more subtle than before. The Hippocratic connoisseur will find much to his liking; an elegant French translation, a mass of valuable information on dialectal and stylistic usage, an excellent index, and valuable remarks on the *recentiores* of Book IV. For all this one can but express profound gratitude.

Yet much still remains to be done. The commentary, with its excessively philological bias, says almost nothing about the medicine of the treatise; the importance of dreams in Greek medicine, for which this treatise is our earliest substantial witness, is scarcely discussed; and the whole social and intellectual context of the treatise disappears from view. Far too often, too, the discussions of date and influences end with a dogmatic conclusion that is not warranted by the fragility of the evidence put forward. The ease with which generally sound scholars can reach diametrically opposed positions on such matters suggests a need for a fundamental re-examination of many of the pre-suppositions of Hippocratic studies. In this context it is regrettable that more space was not given to a discussion of the most daring of modern hypotheses about this treatise, that of W.D. Smith, who in 1979 proposed that this was the very work of Hippocrates that elicited Plato's approval. Even if this theory is wrong - and few have since been found to support it -, Smith's arguments raise more basic questions about our criteria for "genuine" Hippocratic treatises than is apparent here. Given the space allocated to the refutation of the views of others, it is sad that, in this instance, the reader is merely referred to another journal for arguments on such a central issue.

Vivian Nutton
Wellcome Institute

CHARLES LICHTENTHAELER, *Der Eid des Hippokrates, Ursprung und Bedeutung*, Cologne, Deutscher Ärzte-Verlag, 1984, 8vo, pp. 392, illus., DM148.00.

The Hippocratic *Oath* is the most famous of all medical documents. It is regularly cited in modern discussions of medical ethics, and has served as one of the foundations of the Western tradition of medical deontology. Yet its complexities have often escaped those who have

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chosen to claim it for their own, and the meaning of many of its phrases has long been the subject of doubt and discussion. This beautifully produced edition will go far towards informing the German reader of the difficulties of interpreting the *Oath*, and will alert him to some of the dangers of an eager identification of ancient and modern. He will also gain from some of the commentators' subtle insights an appreciation of just how much new information can be gained by the application of scholarly reasoning to even the best-known of texts.

Yet he should also be warned of some of the interpretations put forward here. The author's passionate involvement with Hippocratic studies and his desire to restore the ethical basis of modern medicine by a return to the proven values of old do not always make for a sober judgement of probabilities. The sections on the religious beliefs of the Dorian communities are filled with exaggerations and circular argument, while not everyone will be convinced of the parallels supposed between the playwright Menander, fl. 300 BC, and the *Oath*. Even if one is prepared to date the *Oath* to c. 400 BC - which is likely but on present evidence totally beyond proof - then it is still necessary to explain away the evidence of Plato before the *Oath* can be accepted as the creation of Hippocrates the Asclepiad of Cos. The *Oath* represents a transition from a group of medical practitioners who kept their knowledge closed within the family to a looser situation in which those who wished to learn were taken in, almost adopted, into the family, which, in return, they were to consider as their own. Medical learning is thus still kept secret, available only to the family. Yet Plato, in one of the only contemporary references to Hippocrates, declares that he was a famous teacher of medicine for money. Lichtenthaeler rightly rejects the old attempt to reconcile the evidence of Plato with tradition by setting the *Oath* early in Hippocrates' career (and by implication allowing him to violate it in his old age), but his own suggestion, that all the many students of Hippocrates were all adopted into the Asclepiad family and all in turn continued to administer the *Oath* to their descendants and pupils, is equally unlikely. Plato's description of Hippocrates is as a medical sophist, dispensing his learning for cash for the benefit of mankind, a public performer very different from the quasi-secretive doctor of the *Oath*.

Vivian Nutton
Wellcome Institute

PER-GUNNAR OTTOSON, *Scholastic medicine and philosophy*, Naples, Bibliopolis, 1984, 8vo, pp. 322, [no price stated] (paperback).

The historian of medieval medicine may appear to be faced with an equally unenviable choice. He may study the so-called Dark Ages, in which he will find a horrendous gaggle of semi-illiterate monks, usually Irish, or he may turn his eyes to Salerno, Bologna, Montpellier, and Padua, where his companions will be better educated, but no less trying in their endless sophistries. When faced with such alternatives, the medical historian has usually decided to abandon the enterprise and to leave medieval medicine to the hidebound or the foolhardy. Yet, as this Uppsala dissertation shows, he would thereby miss much of interest and importance for the understanding of the development of Western medicine.

Dr Ottoson has chosen to study the commentaries on one of the central texts of learned medicine from late antiquity to the seventeenth century, Galen's *Tegni*, the *Art of medicine*. The commentators range in date from Taddeo Alderotti, c. 1280, to Giovanni Sermoneta, c. 1410, and include the three great names of Pietro d'Abano, c. 1300, Torrigiano de' Torrigiani, c. 1310, and Jacopo da Forlì c. 1410. Dr Ottoson, in excellent and fluent English, shows how each commentator endeavoured to interpret the words of Galen to take account of his predecessors as well as of other intellectual and philosophical developments going on about him. He argues convincingly that the earlier commentators were convinced that by lecturing in this way they were also helping to improve the actual practice of medicine. But their own long training in logic often led them to interpret Galen's apparently contradictory statements in philosophical terms as a study of the universals of health and disease, rather than of the individual patient and his illness. At the same time, the format of the commentary led to the