

of acupuncture was mediated. But despite being practised quite widely by moderate medical reformers and the odd medical luminary such as John Elliotson (1791–1868), Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Professor of Medicine at London University, 1828–77 saw a decline in academic interest. Bivins examines the records of isolated centres where interest and experiment persisted, particularly into sciatica, at UCH and the Leeds General Infirmary.

In the process of transmission, the practice of acupuncture became severed from its native Chinese theories. But it is a testimony to the very patchy treatments of the history of Chinese medicine available in European languages that Bivins sometimes sets the fragmented European conception of “acupuncture” (surgery, venesection, pain relief) against the, now out-dated, image of an unchanging theoretically driven Chinese system of medicine “2000 years old” (an image challenged in Elisabeth Hsu (ed.), *Innovation in Chinese medicine* [Cambridge University Press, 2001]).

The history of the third and on-going wave of interest in acupuncture, after the 1970s post-Cultural Revolution “opening up” of China, gets a brief mention in the conclusion and is a story that remains to be told in detail. Anyone embarking upon it will benefit from this well written, solid contribution to contemporary debate about innovation and the cultural specificity of medical knowledge.

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Rebecca Flemming, *Medicine and the making of Roman women: gender, nature and authority from Celsus to Galen*, Oxford University Press, 2000, pp. xii, 453, £55.00 (hardback 0-19-924002-7).

In spite of the increased interest in both ancient medical science and the history of women, Rebecca Flemming’s book covers a still quite neglected field by combining both of them. The book is the further development of Flemming’s PhD thesis and it is intended for not only classicists, but also all readers concerned with the relationships between women and medicine, and, in a wider sense, with women and their place in society.

The book is divided into three parts, each with two chapters and Flemming examines an impressive number of texts in an attempt to establish the role of women in society through the study of medical contexts.

The first part is an introduction to Roman medicine and the second and third examine the role of women in medical texts. In the first of these three major parts, the author tries to identify and locate female medical practitioners and patients within the Roman social context (chapter 1) and the medical knowledge of the time (chapter 2), considered as the heritage of a long tradition. Thus, figures such as the *medica*, *obstetrix* and *maia* are investigated in relation to their male counterparts, for whom there is much more evidence.

The second part, on the Roman period before Galen, leads us into a discussion of women’s role in two different types of sources, for Flemming separates the texts located within the sectarian tradition from the ones outside it. In chapter 3 she looks for evidence in the works of Celsus, Pliny the Elder, Dioscorides, Thessalus and Scribonius Largus. The conclusion of this part is the clear contribution of women to the literary works of these medical authors, but strictly in a subordinate sense, for the texts are explicitly orientated to a male audience. Women are considered in this context either as dubious sources of knowledge (they are always lesser practitioners) or as indirect recipients of medical services.

The second type of source assessed in this part (chapter 4) are the texts belonging to

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the sectarian tradition. Firstly, Flemming considers a corpus of imperial rationalist or eclectic texts, which includes the work of Rufus of Ephesus, Aretaeus the Cappadocian, the pseudo-Galenic *Introduction* and *Medical definitions*, as well as the works of the authors called *Anonymus Londinensis* and *Anonymus Parisinus*. Secondly she studies the *Gynaecology* of Soranus of Ephesus, the only extant methodist author of this period. The construction of women in the whole of the sectarian tradition is quite uniform: woman's health is relativized, for she is considered more female than human. Men and women have implicitly different positions in the medical goal of human health.

The last part of the book is devoted entirely to Galen and his treatment of women. Even though Galen was not systematic in this and none of his treatises was explicitly devoted to gynaecology, the whole of his extant work gives a rich description of the role of women in that period. In chapter 5, Flemming writes an introduction to the works of Galen where she summarizes the justification of authority based on his identification with the perfect practitioner and his understanding and construction of medical art. In Galen's works men are presented as objects of medical knowledge in so far as they understand themselves as such. Women were simply not included in this pattern. The last chapter presents a selection of Galen's texts dealing with female anatomy, pathology and therapeutics.

In her conclusions, Flemming provides an overview of all the topics considered previously: female practitioners treated women and were present to minister to female patients, but always subordinated to an *iatros*. The goal of the medical art was, indeed, human health, but women were relegated to an inferior position; a sexual asymmetry is present in the sources analysed. This sexual difference is hierarchical: women differed from men, and

not vice versa. These are some of the particularities of Roman medicine which contributed to the gendering of society and therefore to the making of Roman women.

The authors and works used as evidence are listed in an appendix, where the editions and translations used are also indicated. As a second appendix Flemming includes a collection of imperial inscriptions (with translations) which contain references to *medicae* or *iatrinae*.

One of the major merits of this research consists of its being based upon texts which in part have not been translated and for which there is no reliable edition. This applies above all to the majority of the works of Galen, for which the use of Kühn's edition is unavoidable. Flemming claims to have gone through all the works of Galen to write the third part of her book. She lists in the appendix 49 works that she has used and for some 22 of them there is no edition after that of Kühn. Flemming's translations are accurate and some of these texts have not been translated into a modern language before. The book is therefore very useful because it makes all these materials accessible to the non-classicist and offers an overview to those more familiar with classical texts.

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John R Millburn, *Adams of Fleet Street, instrument makers to King George III*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2000, pp. xxii, 420, illus., £59.50 (hardback 0-7546-0080-7).

John R Millburn's latest book considers leading figures among British eighteenth-century instrument makers. He has collected and blended together a large amount of data from a rich variety of archives (parishes records, corporations and private archives, military records, etc.), and of