

particular examples of each, and then at how statues related to one another – ‘Singularity and series’, ‘Sedimentation and horizontal stratigraphy’, ‘Unity and segmentation’, to quote some chapter subtitles.

In the third pair of chapters Ma draws attention to the existence, often overlooked, of honorific statues put up, in precisely the same locations, not by cities/communities but by private individuals, and in particular by families. ‘We witness, by the end of the late Hellenistic period and into the Roman empire’, he suggests (238), ‘the take-over of the public genre and the appropriation of its meanings into the private sphere’.

The last pair of chapters (before the useful conclusion with which readers should begin) finally allows the statue itself into view, giving an account of how a statue came to be put up (the decisions that had to be made, the civic actions and expenses involved and the way in which the work of art was physically created) and exploring some particular portraits in context. As Ma has revealed much earlier, this is no easy task, since the number of honorific portrait statues surviving with their bases and *in situ* is vanishingly small – he ends up giving pride of place to an honorific relief portrait of Polybios of which we can be confident only that it is not remotely typical of the genre.

Ma is a marvelous conversationalist, brimming with *aperçus* and ideas, and the book sometimes seems like an extraordinarily high-grade television programme in which Ma walks through the sites in question pointing out features of interest (oh for decent illustrations!). But for various reasons Ma opens the subject up rather than nailing it down. This is a very French book. The intellectual heroes are all French (Robert, Gauthier, Vernant, Henri ‘Lefebvre’ (as the index terms him)) and the dialogue is primarily with French scholars. Consequently the questions an Anglophone scholar wants to ask (including, ironically, ‘what about Bourdieu?’, who, extraordinarily, is never cited though *habitus* is used once (209) and indexed) go unanswered. It is also an unsystematic book, for all the insistence on laying out the ‘grammar’, giving what Ma himself calls a ‘handbook feel to some of the chapters’ (viii). Few conclusions tie back tightly to the observations made (Ma makes nothing, for example, of his observation on pages 169–75 that family honours are particularly for priestly services). In the end it is a sloppy book – sloppy at the level of copy-editing (is the tyrannicide from Erythrai –

mentioned rather more often than the three times indexed – Philitas or Philetas?) and proof-reading (especially of the Greek), but sloppy too over contexts. Despite wanting to draw conclusions about change over time, Ma makes many of his points on the basis of material drawn from well back into the fourth century BC and well on into the Roman empire. Nor, despite his case-studies, is there any consistent separation of material by place of origin. For all the, often very enlightening, minute analysis of particular texts, the brush strokes end up being so broad that every group between family and city gets assimilated to the one or the other, and even the arrival of the Roman emperor is invisible (Ma’s foray into Aphrodisias does without the Sebasteion). By treating honorific statues in isolation from other statues, Ma’s conversational book deprives them of their voice – a voice which could out-shout any honorific inscription.

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LANG (P.) **Medicine and Society in Ptolemaic Egypt** (Studies in Ancient Medicine 41). Leiden and Boston, Brill, 2013. Pp. xii + 318, illus. €1100/\$151. 9789004218581.
doi:10.1017/S0075426914001980

Lang’s work comprises six chapters: ‘Greeks and Egyptians’; ‘Medicine and the gods’; ‘Theoretical perspectives’; ‘Responses to illness’; ‘Identifying medical practitioners’ and ‘Medicine in Alexandria’. Each chapter is then subdivided into detailed investigations of a variety of topics which the aforementioned list cannot easily convey. Some examples include: ‘Demography: patterns of immigration’; ‘Ethnicity, ideology and identity’; ‘The sanctuaries and roles of Sarapis’; ‘The Ptolemaic pharmacy’; ‘Evolving perceptions and medical choices in the Greco-Roman Fayum’; and ‘Elite medicine as an exclusive system’. The division of chapters with subheadings orders the material in most cases, though occasionally the result feels somewhat disjointed. The regular cross-referencing to sections from other chapters is helpful but not always a substitute for brief reiteration. The absence of a conclusion, with chapter six ending somewhat abruptly, is to be lamented. It would have been the best place to collate and contextualize Lang’s main observations. A glossary of medical terms (particularly for

chapter one) would have made the work more immediately accessible to non-specialists and general readers.

Some of Lang's more significant arguments, in my opinion, redress the balance in favour of a more cautious and nuanced appreciation of ancient texts previously interpreted in a rather simplistic fashion. The first of these cases concerns the role of incubation in Egyptian temple sanctuaries, which in previous works has been discussed rather too broadly. Lang's treatment of the materials emphasizes the variety of practices attested at the specific Egyptian sanctuaries under examination and at the same time suggests that incubation has generally been assumed to have been practised in temples for which there is no substantial evidence (95). The second instance relates to the controversial theories that equate the Egyptian term *whdw* to Greek *περίττωμα* and claim the transmission of Egyptian physiological theory to Greek medical discourse. While conceding that Egyptian and Greek notions of physiology and disease had much in common, Lang argues that the extant evidence for transmission comprises a series of rather weak parallels that could be otherwise explained (123). The third case pertains to the approach of the older tradition in the secondary scholarship by which Egyptian medicine is characterized as fundamentally 'irrational' and then contrasted with 'rational' Greek medicine. Lang's debunking of these particularly unhelpful and inaccurate terms (127) is most welcome. The observation that earlier characterizations of Egyptian medicine regularly regurgitate the ethno-cultural stereotypes prevalent in Greek discourse (125) certainly gives food for thought.

Restricted space permits a few specific criticisms. Plutarch's fairly elaborate treatment of Egyptian *κῦφι* (*De Iside et Osiride* 80: 383e–84c) is missing from Lang's discussion (175). The characterization of the larger temple-based Horus *cippi* as 'more potent' than the smaller amuletic forms (190–91) requires reconsideration in light of J. Draycott's analysis ('Size matters: reconsidering Horus on the crocodiles in miniature', *PALLAS* 86 (2011) 123–33). The portrait of Egyptian practitioners in chapter 5 follows previous works such as J.F. Nunn, *Ancient Egyptian Medicine* (London 1996). An opportunity to present new material published by J.F. Quack outlining the duties of the *wab* priest of Sakhmet and the scorpion-charmer from the Egyptian treatise the *Book of the Temple* has been missed; see further J.F. Quack, 'Tabuisierte und

ausgegrenzte Kranke nach dem "Buch vom Tempel"' in H.-W. Fischer Elfert (ed.) *Papyrus Ebers und die Antike Heilkunde* (Wiesbaden 2005) 63–80 and 'Le manuel de temple. Une nouvelle source sur la vie des prêtres égyptiens', *Égypte Afrique & Orient* 29 (2003) 11–18. The general silence concerning the Greek and Demotic magical papyri, a corpus that serves as an important intersection between Greek and Egyptian traditions, is somewhat uncharacteristic of an otherwise comprehensive analysis of ancient materials. I feel more discussion of these sources building upon the summary (59–60) would have further benefited the work.

After reading the book, it feels less like a study of medicine in Ptolemaic society and more like an interdisciplinary comparison of Greek and Egyptian medicine in general; Ptolemaic Egypt is just one of several carefully considered topics. In this respect the title hardly does justice to the breadth of the study and the sheer amount of collated materials. Readers will find the comparison of the Greek and Egyptian medical traditions both insightful and illuminating.

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MONSON (A.) **From the Ptolemies to the Romans: Political and Economic Change in Egypt**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Pp. xvii + 343, illus. £60. 9781107014411.

doi:10.1017/S0075426914001992

This dense and complex book alters the terms of the debate about the transition from Ptolemaic to Roman Egypt. It is not an easy read – often repetitive, sometimes inconclusive or inconsistent. The clearest statement of its content and argument comes at pages 282–88; Monson's 'preview' in *Tyche* 25 (2010) 55–71 is also helpful. Building on the trend begun by N. Lewis in 1970 to argue for the 'Romanity' of Roman Egypt (see his *On Government and Law in Roman Egypt* (Atlanta 1995) 138–49), Monson envisages a change from a redistributive state, based on subsistence agriculture, using an elite of office or service, to a more free-market state with a private landowning elite obliged to act as administrators by liturgic obligation. Monson's contribution is to challenge the standard explanation of this change, that the Romans made