

Julianus, instead of paying interest, surrenders for the duration of the loan his right to two bread distributions. These, like the Apionic settlement, are full of details of interest and contributions to many problems.

This volume is a worthy monument to R.'s three and a half decades of distinguished editorial work on the Oxyrhynchus Papyri and a rich source of knowledge about late antiquity.

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## GREEK TOXICOLOGY

S. IHM: *Der Traktat περι τῶν ἰοβόλων θηρίων καὶ δηλητηρίων φαρμάκων des sog. Aelius Promotus. Erstedition mit textkritischem Kommentar.* (Serta Graeca. Beiträge zur Erforschung griechischer Texte, 4.) Pp. 169, 4 pls. Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert, 1995. Cased, DM 78. ISBN: 3-88226-822-0.

This is a revised version of I.'s doctoral dissertation. It is also the first complete edition of the Greek toxological treatise (I. uses *iologisch*, a term coined by O. Schneider) discovered in the sixteenth century by Hieronymus Mercurialis, who also published the first passages from it; larger extracts were published in 1873 and 1901 by Erwin Rohde.

In the MSS the treatise is transmitted anonymously, but it has often been attributed to Aelius Promotus, a first/second-century Alexandrian doctor, because of its position between two of his works in two of the MSS. Rohde, who doubted the attribution, regarded the treatise as a collection of excerpts from Archigenes. I.'s opinion is that there are no certain criteria for determining the author, but that possible clues can be gleaned from an investigation of the more general chapters and their relation to therapeutical methods and medical schools. (However, this assumes both that we are in possession of exact information about various schools and that there was a clear distinction between them in the first place.)

The treatise contains references to Arabia and Egypt, a fact that, according to I., may suggest a geographical connection, at least for some of the sources. She does not take the hypothesis any further, and it is unlikely that much can be made of the evidence. While the author mentions crocodiles and lions, he also speaks of panthers and bears, thus of wild beasts in general, without any particular Egyptian connection. The chapter *πρὸς αἰλουροθήκτους*, surprising in the context of poisons and dangerous bites, cannot be taken as an argument for Egypt either, since the keeping of cats as pets would have been widespread even if one assumes the earliest possible date.

The title now in use was created by Mercurialis, by a combination of the opening of the first part (on poisonous animals) and that of the second (on poisonous substances). It would seem that an overall title was not transmitted together with the text, for the first line, that looks like a title, is only the first chapter heading.

In the introduction, I. also discusses the structure of the treatise. It divides into two main parts, the first dealing with poisoning caused by the bites of animals (including humans), the second with poisoning caused by the ingestion of plants, minerals, or

small animals. Each of the seventy-nine (in I.'s edition) chapters is subdivided into two or three sections—description/characteristics of the poisonous substance or animal, symptoms of poisoning, and, finally, remedies—with only the last section present in all chapters.

The discussion of the work's structure is followed by a brief survey of secondary literature, and a more detailed one of what I. calls *Parallelüberlieferung*, i.e. other sources dealing with the same material. These are used for the reconstruction of the treatise and vice versa. I. divides them into two classes by their degree of relatedness: on the one hand, very closely related texts, and on the other, works which were written for different purposes, but present some points of contact. The first group includes, for example, Book 13 of Aetius, Philumenus, Nicander, Pseudo-Dioscorides, and Galen, the second authors such as Celsus, Theophrastus, Oribasius, and Pliny.

I. dates the text between the second and sixth centuries A.D., i.e. between the latest date for cited medical writers and Aetius, the first author known to have used the treatise. She postulates an older source, common to the present treatise, and to Nicander, which was then elaborated by the anonymous author. As I. adds, if the *καί* in the first sentence is not an interpolation, it may well indicate that the treatise was originally part of a more extensive work. This would also explain the absence of the author's name.

The introduction also contains a particularly useful table juxtaposing the treatise with the corresponding chapters in the works of nine other authors, as well as a list of Greek terms for animals, plants, minerals, and other substances, with their equivalents in Latin and German.

I. gives a brief description of the three MSS used for the edition—Vat.gr. 299, Ambros.gr. S3, and Laurent.gr. Antinori 101—and of those used for comparisons with Aetius and Pseudo-Dioscorides. She then discusses linguistic aspects of the edited text, such as unusual spellings (e.g. *ὀξόμελι* for *ὀξύμελι*) and grammatical peculiarities (e.g. *μή* with the indicative).

The Greek text is printed subdivided into chapters, with the chapter numbers added by I. As mentioned above, it contains some emendations based on other authors, which are often obvious improvements: e.g. *φθαρτικὰ ἰοβόλων ζώων* (instead of *καθαρτικὰ*) for the heading of Chapter 3.

Each section of the detailed commentary opens with an enumeration of similar passages, graded as A, B, or C according to the degree of similarity. In some cases the parallel texts are printed in two, three, or four columns for easy comparison. Finally, specific terms or phrases are explained in a third subsection. The text and commentary are followed by a bibliography, an *index verborum*, and the four plates.

In view of the, alas, increasing number of historians and medical historians without a sufficient knowledge of the ancient languages, it may be preferable to publish new editions with a translation into a European language. However, this suggestion should not be seen as a criticism of I.'s excellent work. This scholarly, meticulous edition of a text hitherto not known in its entirety will be of great interest to historians of ancient medicine and also to linguists.

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