

Zitierhinweis

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PAUL POTTER (ed., trans.), *Hippocrates: Volume X*. Loeb Classical Library 520, Cambridge, Mass. – London: Harvard University Press, 2012, pp. xxii + 432, ISBN 978-0-674-99683-0.

With its tenth volume, the ongoing Loeb edition of Hippocratic texts reaches near completion. This is Paul Potter's fifth contribution to the series¹. The present offering features five treatises, four dealing with human reproduction (*Generation and Nature of the Child*) and female reproductive disorders (*Nature of Women* and *Barrenness*), the fifth, *Diseases IV*, developing a general theory of physiology and pathology. The volume is prefaced by a general introduction which includes short synopses of the individual works, a brief account of the manuscript tradition and a *stemma codicum*. A short section is also devoted to an explanation of some problematic technical terms. Also provided is a list of references and bibliography to earlier editions, translations and commentaries, and to more general works. The volume concludes with a lexicon of the therapeutic agents included in the text, both in Greek to English and English to Greek format. As almost all agents are also included in the index, this is a most useful feature.

Textual correspondences, cross-references and common theories unite all five treatises in this volume² but, since no consensus has been reached as to whether any or all are linked to a common author or form a single work, they are treated here as independent texts. Volume and page references to Littré's nineteenth century edition are made in the margins. The individual treatises are each preceded by a short introduction that outlines the historic evidence for the text's connection to the Hippocratic corpus, and a summary of previous editions, translations and studies. Also include is a handy outline of each text's organization. Potter has made full use of previous editions where available, but has supplemented these in the case of the *Nature of Women* by a collation of manuscripts Θ, M and V from microfilm. His edition of *Barrenness* is based entirely on the collation of M and V (Θ ends

¹ Potter's previous contributions are *Hippocrates Vol. V* (1988) (*Diseases I & II*, and *Affections*), *Hippocrates Vol. VI* (1988) (*Disease III*, *Internal Affections*, and *Appendix to the Regimen in Acute Diseases*), *Hippocrates Vol. VIII* (1995) (*Places in Man*, *Glands*, *Flesh*, *Prorrhetic I & II*, *Physician*, *Use of Liquids*, *Ulcers*, *Haemorrhoids*, and *Fistulas*) and *Hippocrates Vol. IX* (2010) (*Anatomy*, *Nature of Bones*, *Heart*, *Eight Months' Child*, *Coan Prenotions*, *Crises*, *Critical Days*, *Superfetation*, *Girls*, *Excision of the Fetus*, and *Sight*). *Hippocrates Vol. VII* (1994) (*Epidemics II*, *IV-VII*) was edited and translated by Wesley D. Smith. *Volumes I-IV* date to the 1920's and 1930's.

² Potter (p. viii) notes that *Superfetation* and *Diseases of Women I* and *II* are also related to the five treatises under discussion here.

after chapter 95 of *Nature of Women*), since its previous editors, Littré and Ermerins, had access to neither of these independent witnesses. As is usual for the Loeb series, the *apparatus criticus* is not comprehensive, but does note significant variants.

Potter's clear translation does not stray very far from the Greek text. Expansions necessary for sense, but not present in the Greek, are bracketed off. He also notes useful cross-references to the other texts. Occasionally, the translation gives the impression that Greek medicine had a more technical vocabulary than it did, as in "she suffers dyspareunia" (ἀλγέει *Nat. Mul.* 7), for example. In places, the translation could also have benefitted from an explanatory note; some may be unfamiliar with the term "treated with tents" (ἔμμοτοι *Nat. Mul.* 6) for instance, or may be puzzled by the rendering of νομὸς μὲν πάντα κρατύνει (*Genit.* 1) by "now whereas food gives everything strength" rather than the footnoted "law rules all things." The inclusion of the table of weights and measures that appeared in the volume *Hippocrates: Volume VI* would also have been appreciated. But these are minor blemishes on an otherwise important offering.

This volume should appeal to classicists, social historians and anyone interested in the history of science and ideas, as well as historians of medicine, since the treatises also touch on themes of philosophy, biology and gender. Together, *Generation* and *Nature of the Child* form a speculative system of embryology. It explains the origin of strong and weak seed in both men and women, and how the relative mixing of the two influences sex determination and inherited characteristics. The roles of heat, breath, and blood in the formation and development of the infant are expounded, with birth occurring, generally after ten months, because of diminished food supply. Validation of the theory is argued through a series of analogies, and by experimentation with hen's eggs. *Nature of Women* and *Barrenness*, by contrast, are in a much more practical vein, dealing with diseases of the womb, and disorders leading to menstrual and fertility problems. A variety of treatments are outlined, mostly pharmacological, through an assortment of douches, suppositories, fomentations and fumigations, but also minor surgical procedures, and marriage and pregnancy. *Disease IV* is notable for one of two Hippocratic accounts of humoral theory, whereby food and drink in the stomach are separated off into phlegm, blood, bile and, in this version, water (or, a watery substance ὕδρωψ *Morb.* IV 1), to be stored in the head, heart, gall bladder and spleen respectively. Evacuation of these humours occurs through four routes, the mouth, nostrils, anus, and urethra. If the equilibrium is disturbed, a propensity to illness ensues which surfeit, violence or bad weather can bring to pass. The treatise ends with a discussion of specific diseases, those of intestinal worms, bladder stones and dropsy.

There is much in this volume for specialist and non-specialist alike. Both text and translation are commendable, and *Nature of Women* and *Barrenness*

are now available in English for the first time. Potter has made a potentially difficult set of treatises accessible to a modern audience and, hopefully, this ready availability will encourage close analysis of these under-studied texts.

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