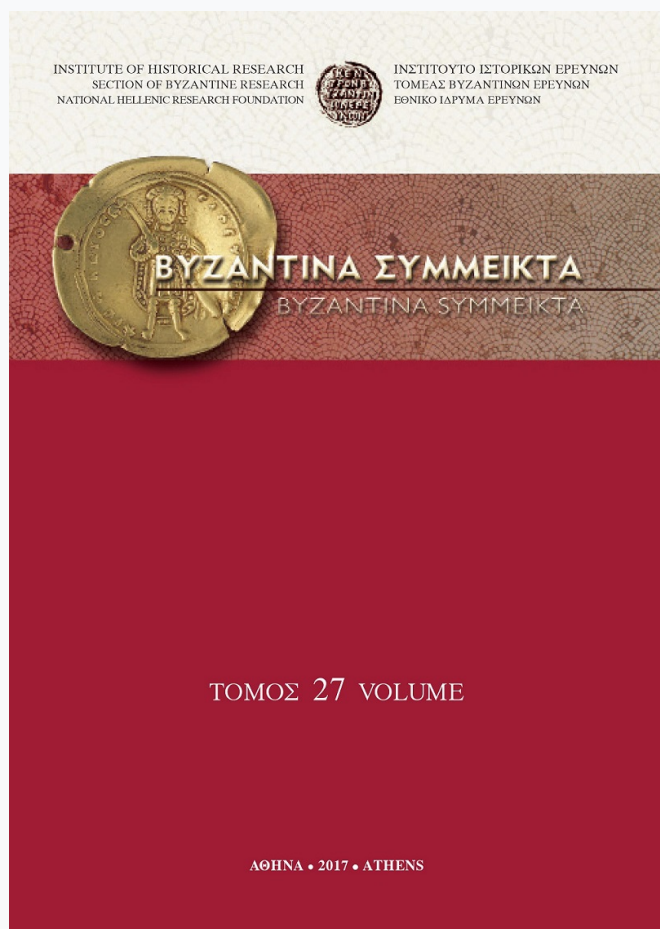


Byzantina Symmeikta

Vol 27 (2017)

BYZANTINA SYMMEIKTA 27



Book Review: ANDREAS K. DEMETRIADES (ed.),
latrosophikón. Folklore Remedies from a Cyprus
Monastery: Original text and parallel translation of
Codex Machairas A.18, Foundation Anastasios G.
Leventis, Nicosia 2015, lx+654 pp. ISBN
978-9963-732-15-9

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doi: [10.12681/byzsym.15492](https://doi.org/10.12681/byzsym.15492)

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To cite this article:

BOURAS-VALLIANATOS, P. (2018). Book Review:ANDREAS K. DEMETRIADES (ed.), latrosophikón. Folklore Remedies from a Cyprus Monastery: Original text and parallel translation of Codex Machairas A.18, Foundation Anastasios G. Leventis, Nicosia 2015, lx+654 pp. ISBN 978-9963-732-15-9. *Byzantina Symmeikta*, 27, 485–498. <https://doi.org/10.12681/byzsym.15492>

ANDREAS K. DEMETRIADES (ed.), *Iatrosophikón. Folklore Remedies from a Cyprus Monastery: Original text and parallel translation of Codex Machairas A.18*, Foundation Anastasios G. Leventis, Nicosia 2015, lx+654 pp. ISBN 978-9963-732-15-9

This is a long book, which presents the first edition of a collection of remedies (*iatrosophion*)¹, mainly of therapeutic focus, preserved in Codex no. A.18 (henceforth the Codex) of the Machairas Monastery in Cyprus. It is the product of a collaboration between four individuals: Andreas K. Demetriades, a neurosurgeon, who served as editor and also wrote the Introduction; Kyriacos Demetriades, a graduate in geography and retired civil servant in Cyprus, who undertook the translation of the collection into English; Georgios N. Hadjikyriakou, author of several books on the botany of Cyprus, who has written a long account of the identification of the vegetal *materia medica* of the collection; and Georgios Chatzikostis, a philologist with publications on the Greek Cypriot dialect and the local history of Cyprus, who wrote a brief introduction to the language of the collection and is also responsible for identifying similarities between this edited collection of remedies and the collection published by Metrophanes (1790-1867) in 1924². The authors were awarded the prestigious “Ελένης και Πάνου Ψημμένου” Award for Modern Greek History or Philology by the Academy of Athens³. The book was published

1. I use the term “remedy” with reference to a particular piece of medical advice, either diagnostic or therapeutic. The term “recipe” is used to connote the preparation of a certain composite drug.

2. PHILARETOS (ed.), *Ίατροσοφικόν. Συνταχθέν υπό του σκευοφύλακος της εν Κύπρω Γεράς Μονής Μαχαιρά Μητροφάνους 1790-1867*. Έκδίδεται νῦν τὸ πρῶτον ἐκ τοῦ πρωτοτύπου χειρογράφου ὑπὸ τοῦ ἱερομονάχου καὶ διδασκάλου τῆς Μονῆς Μαχαιρά κ. Φιλαρέτου, Nicosia 1924.

3. <http://www.academyofathens.gr/el/awards/laureates-2016> (accessed 16 December 2017).

thanks to the generous support of the A. G. Leventis Foundation, which, *inter alia*, has provided substantial funding for numerous projects and academic positions in Byzantine studies in Cyprus and abroad since its establishment in 1979.

It is almost a century since the publication of the *iatrosophion* compiled by the priestmonk Metrophanes of the Machairas Monastery, an invaluable source in relation to practice of medicine in the Cypriot countryside in the nineteenth century. Metrophanes, a healer without any medical education, who also acted as a copyist of liturgical manuscripts and a bookbinder, became well known for his ability to cure not only within the monastery but also lay people who visited him and sought his advice (pp. xxx-xxxii). Metrophanes' original manuscript (dated to 1849), on which the 1924 edition is based on, is lost. The present volume contains the edition of the *iatrosophion* in the Codex produced in 1865 by the archimandrite Philotheos, a healer himself. In the absence of Metrophanes' original manuscript, we are not able to make any judgements about the actual editorial interventions of the 1924 printed edition; nor can we be certain whether a substantial part of the Codex is a direct apograph of Metrophanes' lost autograph or to what degree the version in the Codex was elaborated by Philotheos. Nevertheless, Andreas Demetriades has rightly mentioned in his introduction that a substantial part of the contents of the Codex correspond closely with the printed edition of 1924, which confirms the close dependence of the version in the Codex on that in Metrophanes' autograph (pp. xxxiv-xxxvi).

The volume consists of three main parts: i) general introduction to the reader, ii) edition and translation, iii) identification of plants. Demetriades must be congratulated for taking the initiative in providing the first ever edition and English translation of this *iatrosophion*. Taking into consideration its great length (144 printed pages in the current edition), this must indeed have been a laborious task.

In Part I there is a brief discussion of several issues related to the practice of medicine in Cyprus under Ottoman rule (1571-1878), including the role of the Machairas monastery in the wider socio-cultural life of the island. The monastery is situated in a mountainous place about 40 km from the capital of the Republic of Cyprus, Nicosia. The establishment of the Machairas monastery goes back to the twelfth century following the arrival of the Palestinian monk Neophytos. His disciple Ignatios together with an elderly monk, Prokopios, managed to secure the patronage of the Byzantine Emperor Manuel I Komnenos (r. 1143-80) in the 1160s. The surviving foundational charter (*Typikon*) dates to 1210, a period when

Cyprus was ruled by the Lusignan dynasty (pp. xxv-xxvii). After a long period of decline the monastery was revived in the eighteenth century and has functioned continuously ever since. Apart from its significant role in the spiritual life of the island, the monastery was also important for its contribution to healing. There were several monks who practised medicine there up to the early twentieth century, not only at the monastery itself but also at its metochion of St Eleutherios in Nicosia (pp. xxviii-xxix).

There is a lack of overall contextualisation in respect of the various kinds of healers and methods of practice in the island. For example, there is no reference to the considerable influx of European-trained physicians, mainly Heptanesians, who were constantly arriving and settling in the island's big towns in the eighteenth and nineteenth century⁴. Although only a limited number of citizens could afford these physicians, the professional pyramid in medicine was characterised by a multitude of healers, from barbers, who undertook a range of tasks from cutting hair to amputating limbs, to local priests and exorcists, midwives, herbalists and local healers recommending traditional folkloric remedies. Although the options of ordinary countryside people were limited, a wealthy patient in a big town might be able to consult a well-known, educated physician, but s/he could also seek the advice of other kinds of healers, if the former was not successful.

This *iatrosophion* can be seen as a practical manual used by the latter category of healers. It belongs to a category of medical texts composed for daily practice, the so-called *iatrosophia*. Unfortunately the section on *iatrosophia* (pp. xxix-xxx) lacks a thorough treatment of the subject and mostly paraphrases an earlier, short and inadequate discussion of the topic, as is acknowledged in footnote 9⁵. Helpful recent studies on the topic are not mentioned⁶. *Iatrosophia* became extremely widespread

4. N. G. KYRIAZIS, Ἱατροὶ τινες καὶ ἡ ἐξάσκησις τῆς Ἱατρικῆς ἐν Κύπρῳ κατὰ τὸν ΙΖ'-ΙΘ' αἰῶνα, *Κυπριακὰ Χρονικὰ* 11 (1935), 177-245.

5. A. P. CLARK, *A Cretan Healer's Handbook in the Byzantine Tradition: Text, Translation and Commentary*, Farnham 2011, 3. See also, P. BOURAS-VALLIANATOS, book review of A. P. CLARK, *A Cretan Healer's Handbook in the Byzantine Tradition: Text, Translation and Commentary*, Farnham 2011, in: *Social History of Medicine* 26 (2013), 809-811.

6. For example, S. OBERHELMAN, Towards a Typology of Byzantine and Post-Byzantine Healing Texts, *Athens Journal of Health* 2.2 (2015), 133-146; A. TOUWAIDE, Byzantine Hospital Manuals (*Iatrosophia*) as a source for the studies of Therapeutics, in *The Medieval Hospital and Medical Practice*, ed. B. BOWERS, Aldershot 2007, 147-174; and A. TSELIKAS,

in the late Byzantine period. They show attempts to provide easily consulted manuals of mainly diagnostic and therapeutic focus, while theoretical accounts on specific medical topics are mostly absent. They vary in length and content and most of their material is based on earlier Greek and early Byzantine authorities, such as Galen, Paul of Aegina and Aetios of Amida. However, they were often elaborated with new recommendations derived from the daily experience of Byzantine practitioners; sometimes they were also written in the vernacular. They were important vehicles for the dissemination of medical knowledge newly imported to Byzantium, mainly from the Islamic world, consisting of information on new forms of composite drugs (such as syrups and juleps) and recently imported substances from Asia and Far East (such as amber, sandalwood, musk, and myrobalan). Another notable confusion in the book under review is the failure to clarify the complicated meaning of the term *iatrosophion*, which according to the editor simply “refers to the Greek tradition of medical writings and compilations of remedies brought together into a book of medical wisdom” (pp. xxix). However, the term can be used with reference to both an actual collection of remedies and, especially in the post-Byzantine period, a medical codex as such. Another misconception arises with regards to content with superstitious connotations: “Despite their [i.e. the *iatrosophia*’s] piecemeal compilation, they preserve elements of centuries-old knowledge and practice experience, often married with spells, magic and sorcery (*sic*), especially where there was no good understanding or simple solution, such as in the treatment of epilepsy” (p. xxx). Alternative therapeutic approaches, including the use of amulets or incantations were sometimes included in the treatises of great medical authorities, such as Galen, or later authors, such as Alexander of Tralles, but without any explanation of how they work⁷. Some of these remedies in the *iatrosophion* in question do indeed originate from these authors, as I shall show below. What is more, such recommendations were included in the recommended treatment for a large number of different ailments in various *iatrosophia*, not because “there was no good understanding”, but mostly in cases of common diseases that were hard to cure, in an attempt by practitioners to use all possible means to cure their patients.

Τὰ Ἑλληνικὰ γιατροσόφια: Μία περιφρονημένη κατηγορία χειρογράφων, in *Ἱατρικὰ Βυζαντινὰ Χειρόγραφα*, ed. T. DIAMANTOPOULOS, Athens 1995, 57-70.

7. On this, see P. BOURAS-VALLIANATOS, Clinical Experience in Late Antiquity: Alexander of Tralles and the Therapy of Epilepsy, *Medical History* 58 (2014), 337-353, at 348-352.

Lastly, the book's introduction is often pervaded by misconceptions as result of lack of familiarity with the secondary bibliography available. For example, in the section on the relationship of the Church to medicine in the Byzantine Empire (pp. xxiv-xxv), the editor is clearly unaware of the current heated debates on the actual degree of medicalisation of Byzantine "hospitals"⁸; there are also small inaccuracies here and there, as for example in referring to the late Byzantine scholar monk Neophytos Prodromenos (who was never canonised) as "St Neophytos Prodromenus" (p. xxv).

Part II consists of two sections, the edition and the English translation of the *iatrosophion* of the Codex (pp. 1-291), and an appendix in which those remedies from Metrophanes' 1924 printed edition that are not found in the Codex are reprinted and translated into English (pp. 296-371). It is worth mentioning that the term *iatrosophikon* is not, in fact, found in the Codex, but refers to the title of the lost 1849 manuscript. In the Codex, we can only see one mention of the term *iatrosophion* in the table of contents at the end ("Πίναξ τοῦ Ἱατροσοφίου") (p. 272). And this should have been transliterated as *iatrosophion* not "Iatrosophikon" (p. 273). It is also worth noting that there is no clear reference throughout the book as to which of the authors is responsible for the transcription of the manuscript. The only reference that I found is in the title preceding the edition, where Kyriacos Demetriades, presumably the transcriber, is credited for "the manuscript and its translation into English". However, in his brief but useful philological overview Georgios Chatzikostis states that "Idioms, spellings and misspellings are preserved, with an adjustment of the text to the historical spelling – with the exception of a few cases where the author's handwriting is maintained as a specimen, e.g. ταῖς ἡμέραις (*in the days*)...ἡ (=αἱ)" (p. xlv), thus implying his involvement in the transcription and edition. His observation raises another important point, that concerns the actual editorial intervention in the edition of the manuscript. It is not clear to the reader to what degree the spelling, punctuation, and accentuation has been corrected or standardised, since there is no introductory discussion on this (apart from the short note just mentioned) or any indication of corrections in

8. A good starting point on Byzantine medicine is provided by the contributions edited by J. SCARBOROUGH (ed.), *Symposium on Byzantine medicine* [Dumbarton Oaks Papers 38], Washington D.C. 1984; and the recent volume by B. ZIPSER (ed.), *Medical books in the Byzantine World*, Bologna 2013. On the medicalisation of Byzantine hospitals, see P. HORDEN, How medicalised were Byzantine Hospitals?, *Medicina e Storia* 5 (2005), 45-74.

the edition. This will make any future work on the collection by linguists in particular harder, since it is not certain to what degree the printed text follows that of the manuscript. A codicological description of the Codex remains a *desideratum*. The only indication about foliation/pagination comes from the numbering of folia/pages in the right margin of the current edition. Accordingly, it seems to me that the Codex consists of 153 leaves (foliated α-θ, then paginated 1-287).

The names of vegetal substances are translated into English (in accordance with their identification in Part III), and a transliteration together with the nominative form of the term in monotonic Greek provided in parenthesis in the translation, violating the rules of linguistic economy, usually acknowledged a virtue in academic writing; e.g. pp. 146-147, edition: “ἀσβάιν”, translation: “*aloe (asváin, ασβάιν)*”. A transliteration is also given in other cases, such as incantations. The editor states that “The names of the plants ... [are] transliterated vocally in the Romanic writing system ...” (p. xlv). Unfortunately, the transliteration does not follow any standardised system and there are often inconsistencies⁹. For example the authors have for the most part transliterated “η”, “ι”, “οι”, but not “ει” and “υ”, with an “ι”; for example: “Despinou” for “Δεσποινού” (pp. 4-5), “*kikkidia*” for “κηκίδια” (pp. 34-35), but “*potamogeítonas*” for “ποταμογείτονας” (pp. 166-167) and “*krommýdin*” for “κρομμυδιών” (pp. 46-47). Yet sometimes “η” is transliterated differently even on the same page: “*ithápsi*” for “ἰθάψη” [note also the failure to transliterate the tau here], but “*paraclétes*” for “παράκλητους” (pp. 52-53), an inconsistency unless “*paraclétes*” is actually a translation, in which case it should not have been accented or italicised.

From my research into the contents of the *iatrosophion*, I was able to detect that a great degree of heterogeneity as regards its contents, arrangements and recommendations has resulted from the various stages of compilation. As the volume under review does not include a proper synopsis and analysis of the contents of the *iatrosophion* I will provide a brief overview, which might be helpful for future studies on the topic. The *materia medica* consists mostly of vegetal substances; sometimes there are mentions of substances that are clearly not derived from plants indigenous to the island, such as cubeb pepper, galangal root, and tamarind pulp. There are occasional references to various animal substances, from fresh goat’s

9. See *United Nations Romanization Systems for Geographical Names. Report on Their Current Status* (Version 4.0, March 2016), http://www.eki.ee/wgrs/rom1_el.pdf (accessed 16 December 2017).

milk to donkey dung. Interestingly, there is also a special section devoted solely to animal *materia medica* (pp. 190-198). Minerals are also mentioned in many recipes, including copper sulphate (καλαγκάθι or καλανκάθι) and magnesium carbonate (μαγνησία ὑπανθρακική). Some recipes can be short and very straightforward, as in the case of the use of a simple mixture of cold water and fennel seeds for the treatment of nausea (pp. 76). At other times, we find complicated compound drugs often with details of their preparation, including measurements, and dosage. For example on pp. 96-8, the recipe for a pain in the abdomen involves 13 ingredients, including opium, camphor, saffron and rhubarb; a process of distillation is also part of the preparation in this case.

Moreover, instructions with strong religious connotations may be found, as for, example when the Lord's Prayer is made part of the therapeutic process: "Pull out a squirting cucumber plant with its branches and fruit. Boil water in a cooking pot and dip it in long enough as to say the prayer 'Our Father who art in Heaven'" (pp. 108-109). In another example, the consumption of "holy [blessed] water from the Epiphany Day" is recommended (pp. 168-169); the latter is, in fact, mentioned even in some collections dating as far back as the thirteenth century, such as the *iatrosophion* by John Archiatros¹⁰. Incantations are sometimes prescribed as part of the therapeutic process too (e.g. p. 52); another notable instance of superstition is on p. 162 where a silver bracelet, inscribed with a sequence of letters composed by a certain Patriarch of Jerusalem, is recommended as a prophylactic agent against plague. Other recommendations also have a strong superstitious nature as in the case of the little stones taken from the stomach of young swallows that needed to be hung around the necks of those suffering from epilepsy. Readers would have profited from the inclusion of a basic *apparatus fontium*, or at least some attempt to make comparisons with other examples of published *iatrosophia*¹¹. There are some references to similar recommendations found in the *iatrosophion* published by Patricia Clark¹², but these are in Part III in the discussion of the identification

10. B. ZIPSER, *John the Physician's Therapeutics: A Medical Handbook in Vernacular Greek*, Leiden 2009, 164, 29-30: μετὰ ἀγίασματος τῶν ἁγίων θεοφανίων.

11. Among the dozen or so edited examples of post-Byzantine *iatrosophia*, see, for example, K. ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΟΥ, Δυὸ ἡπειρωτικὰ γιατροσόφια, *Δωδώνη* 7 (1978), 239-301; L. ΜΑΝΟΥ, *Γιατροσόφια 16ου αιώνα*, Thessaloniki 2008; A. ΤΣΕΛΙΚΑΣ, *Το γιατροσόφι του Χιώτη Ταπεινού Παντολέοντα*, Athens 2012; and K. ΜΙΝΑΣ, *Ιατροσόφιον του δεκάτου ογδόου αιώνα*, Rodos 2012.

12. CLARK, *A Cretan Healer's Handbook*.

of plants and do not take the form of a systematic investigation. For example, the advice mentioned above referring to stones from young swallows is obviously taken from Alexander of Tralles' *Therapeutics*, most probably transmitted indirectly through other earlier *iatrosophia*¹³. Coincidentally the name of Alexander appears on the next page of the manuscript. Apart from Alexander, we can also see a reference to the "most wise" Galen in a chapter on "whether a sick person will live or die, depending on the day of the month he falls sick" (p. 180), but in this case the content does not seem to derive from any genuine Galenic work.

It is worth mentioning that there are many remedies connected with gynaecological diseases, including a special section (pp. 146ff), and special provision is also made for children (e.g. p. 40), thus confirming the audience of this collection extended beyond the monastic circles of Machairas. Special mention should be made of a small but very practical section on repellents for getting rid of fleas, lice, mosquitoes, ants, and mice (pp. 264-266). The mention of burning the dung of various animals, horns of he-goats, and horses' hooves, as something that can help get rid of foul air (*μολυσμένον ἀέρα*) (p. 260), is a direct reference to *miasma* theory, which was prevalent in ancient and medieval times. Brief mentions of animal diseases (e.g. p. 170) show a notable desire to provide cures for the entire household. In addition to pharmacology, which receives the lion's share of space in the collection, there are also special recommendations about bathing (p. 158) and the performance of venesection (e.g. p. 214). Apart from the medical content, this manuscript includes a collection of question and answers on biblical figures, such as Adam, Moses and John the Baptist (pp. 6-10), an opuscle on lucky days (p. 20), and a short excerpt from the anonymous late Byzantine *Πωρικολόγος* or *Fruit Book*, satirising legal procedures and court ceremonial (pp. 268-270).

As mentioned above, in addition to the brief note that is included on the language of the collection (pp. xliii-xliv), the reader would have benefited from a discussion of various other interesting linguistic elements. For example, the text is characterised by the strong presence of elements of the Greek Cypriot dialect, including the use of geminate consonants (e.g. *πίννης*, p. 74; *σκυλλίν*, p. 192) and the alternation of /i/ with [k] (e.g. *καππαρκᾶς*, p. 34; *πιπέρκα*, p. 48). Sometimes the standard Greek term is given after the Greek Cypriot term, prefixed by "in Greek", e.g. "*μαυρόκοκκον* (ἐλληνικὰ ἐλλέβορος καὶ μελάνθιον)" (p. 56) or "*ἀναγουλίαισιν* (ναυτίασις ἐλληνικά)" (p. 76). Even more interesting are the terms

13. T. PUSCHMANN, *Alexander von Tralles*, 2 vols, Vienna 1878-1879, I, 561, 3-9.

of Italo-Romance and Turkish origin, denoting the periods of Latin and Ottoman rule on the island respectively. In the former case, for example, “τζορόττο” (sticking plaster, p. 138) from “cerotto”, actually a reborrowing from the Greek “κηρωτή”; and “ζαμπούκκον” (common elder, p. 285) from “sambuco”. In the latter case, interestingly enough I note that sometimes there is an indication of the corresponding Turkish word, as, for example in the case of herpes *κακούς έρπητας...τούρκικα τουσλήμ-πακκάμη* (p. 170), thus referring to “tuzlu balgam”, but at other times the Turkish word has clearly become part of the Greek Cypriot dialect, as in the case of “χαβλιτσιανή” (p. 157) from the Turkish “havlican” for galangal root. In this respect mention must also be made of the two glossaries of synonymous terms for various elements of *materia medica* which contain a large number of terms originating in Turkish (pp. 10 and 284). I am quite reluctant to share the assumption of Kyriacos Demetriades on p. xxxviii that terms of Arabic origin go back to the devastating raids on the islands by Muslim armies between the seventh and the tenth centuries, an assumption which he fails to support with any examples. It is more likely that they were introduced for the most part through Turkish; for example, “άφχιόνιν” (opium) derives from the Arabic “afyūn” through the Turkish “afyon”.

The translation is generally of good quality with some exceptions. I give some representative examples in which the Greek has not been rendered into the most appropriate (or indeed standard) English term or cases where the English reads awkwardly:

–The lack of familiarity with fundamental medical concepts, such as the names of the basic humours, is regrettable. “χολής ξανθής καὶ χολής μελαίνης” should be translated as “yellow bile and black bile” not “fair bile and dark bile” (pp. 354-355).

–“Εἰς προΐσμιαν λαμποῦ ἀπὸ μέσα” is translated as “For internal swelling of the neck”, but the term “λαμποῦ” refers here to “throat” not “neck” (pp. 66-67).

–“...ἤγουν ὅπου ἔχει πέτραν ἔσσωθεν καὶ δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ κατοικήσῃ” should be translated as “that is when someone has a stone inside and is unable to urinate” instead of “i.e. stones inside, hindering the passing of water” (pp. 98-99).

–“Πομάδα σαρκωτικὴ καὶ αὐξητικὴ τῶν τριχῶν” should be translated as “Pomade making flesh and hair grow” not “Pomade for the skin that thickens the hair” (pp. 34-35).

–Overtranslation: “τὸ ἄνωθεν ἱατρικόν” should be translated as “the above medicine/medicament” not “the above medicinal concoction” (pp. 34-35). “Ἐτερον. Νερὸν ὅπου νὰ πίνῃ ὁ πάσχων καὶ ἡ δίαιτα νὰ κάμνῃ” is translated as “Another. Concerning water drinking and dieting by those suffering from laryngitis”, where

“by those suffering from laryngitis” has been deduced from the title of the previous remedy (i.e. “another for sore throat [laryngitis]”); in this case the implied phrase should be given in square brackets (pp. 68-69). The same applies to “βουλόμενος κοιμηθῆναι” which is rendered as “when a man wants to sleep with a woman” (pp. 244-245); the last five words of the translation should be in square brackets.

–Undertranslation or omissions: “Διὰ τοὺς λεβήθας ἤτοι σκουλούκια τῆς κοιλίας, κοινῶς ἄρμυγους” is simply translated as “For tapeworm [intestinal worms]” (pp. 96-97). It would be more convenient for the reader if the translator had simply left the terms transliterated and explained any possible identifications in a footnote, e.g. “For *lebēthas*, these are worms of the belly, commonly [called] *armingous*” with a note to the effect that “ἄρμυγοι” might refer to “helminths”¹⁴. Furthermore, “καὶ μαυρόκοκκον (ἐλληνικὰ ἐλλέβορος καὶ μελάνθιον)” is translated as “*black cumin (mavrókokkos, μαυρόκοκκος/melánthion, μελάνθιον)*”, omitting the important clarification of the original text: “ἐλληνικὰ ἐλλέβορος”, i.e. “hellebore in Greek” (56-57). “Διὰ τὸν σεληνιασμὸν ἢ ἐπιληψίαν” should be rendered as “For lunacy or epilepsy” not “For epilepsy” (pp. 118-119).

–“Περὶ τοῦ βήχα” should be translated as “On cough” instead of “Concerning cough” (pp. 70-71).

–“Σήμαντρον” should be simply “semantron” instead of the rather inappropriate “church gong” (pp. 6-7).

–“Ἐκθεσις σύντομος” should be “Brief account” rather than “Brief narrative” (pp. 268-269).

–“Εἰς πόνον ὀδόντων, ἡγουν Νουσλάν” is rendered in English as “For toothache (Nouslan)” which gives the impression that “Nouslan” is not part of the original and is likely to be confusing for someone with little or no knowledge of Greek. This should be simply “For toothache, that is *Nouslan*” (pp. 34-35).

–There are several cases where vernacular Greek terms for diseases/affections are translated into modern equivalent names of diseases, which involves a highly debatable process of retrospective identification. For example, on pp. 70-71, there are two notable, interrelated cases. “Διὰ τὴν σκαραντζίδα ὅπου πρήσκεται ὁ λαμῖς καὶ δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ καταπῇ” and “Ἐτερον τῆς σκαραντζίδας” are translated as “When the throat is swollen and one cannot swallow [σκαραντζία/skarantzia=quinsy

14. K. MYRIANTHOPOULOS, Ἑρμηνευτικὸς Πίναξ τοῦ Ἱατροσοφικοῦ Μαχαιρᾶ, in *Ἱατροσοφικόν*, ed. PHILOTHEOS, Nicosia 1924, 165-191, at 167: “ἄρμυγγοι οἱ Ἐλμινθες” σκόληκες τῆς κοιλίας”.

or cynache]” and “Another for quinsy or cynanche” respectively. First, there is an issue of undertranslation as regards the first three words in the first title. Second, the translator having speculated on the meaning of “σκαραντζίδα” (within square brackets) in the first case, which might be helpful as a sort of explanatory information, he then goes on to translate the same term as “quinsy or cynanche” in the second case. The translator is most probably basing himself on the glossary printed at the end of the 1924 printed version of Metrophanes’ text, which refers to “σκαραντζία, ἢ κυνάγχη” (p. 185), but this is not explained explicitly to the reader¹⁵. This glossary is dominated by the author’s (Konstantinos I. Myrianthopoulos) attempts to give an equivalent medical technical term in Standard Modern Greek for the corresponding Greek Cypriot term wherever possible, even though Metrophanes’ *iatrosophion* was obviously destined for uneducated healers who were not in a position to use formal medical terms in diagnosing their patients’ ailments or to distinguish between various possible diseases using a systematic differential diagnostic procedure. This particular chapter of the Codex lacks any details on symptomatology, which makes it rather difficult to make any conclusive identification of the disease(s) in question. It would be less risky to simply transliterate the term “skarantzida” and give a possible explanation as a sort of commentary, referring, for example, to a possible inflammation of the larynx. Other examples include the translation of the puzzling term “σκορδαψούς” as “trachoma” (pp. 42-43), although it can also, for example, simply refer to a “stye”¹⁶. More intriguing is the case of the term “πούντα”: “Διὰ τὸν πλευρίτην ἢ πούνταν” translated as “For pleurisy or pneumonia” (pp. 104-105), “Πάρασμον τῆς πούντας” translated as “Balm for pneumonia and pleurisy” (pp. 202-203), and “Διὰ τὰ κρυολογήματα – πούντα” translated as “For cold” (pp. 236-237). As we can see “πούντα” in this case is either translated as “pneumonia” or “pneumonia and pleurisy” or left untranslated. Due to the semantic flexibility of this term, a good solution would be simply to transliterate it each time, since it can undoubtedly refer to a severe illness such as pneumonia, but also a heavy cold.

The edition and accompanying translation is followed by an index of the English terms for diseases (pp. 373-376) and a Greek-English glossary of substances and diseases (pp. 377-385). The index is not very helpful, as its monolingual nature means it does nothing to assist those looking for references to the original Greek

15. K. MYRIANTHOPOULOS, Ἑρμηνευτικὸς πίναξ.

16. On this term, see M. ALEXIOU, On σκορδαψός: gut-knot or eyesore? A tribute to *BMGS*, *BMGS* 40 (2016), 49-54.

terms for these diseases; moreover, substances are not listed in the index. Anyone who wants to locate references to specific ingredients must first consult the index at the end of the book referring to plant terms in Part III (pp. 605-625) and then turn to the specific discussion about the identification of any given plant (Part III), in which the corresponding pages of the edition are referenced. Editions of Greek texts should have an index of Greek terms, which in this case would mean including at least all relevant substances and ailments.

Part III discusses 239 vegetal substances mentioned in the Codex (pp. 395-554). Hadjikyriakou provides an entry for each of them, consistently arranged with the scientific name and the family, followed by either the letter “C” = “certain” or “R” = “reasonable” or “P” = “possible”, referring to the level of certainty of the identification, the Greek terms in Greek and transliteration, and discussion of the relevant primary (mostly Galen and Dioscorides) and secondary sources that helped him identify the plant in question. Although I am in general against the retrospective identification and subsequent translation of ancient and medieval plant names into modern equivalents, as this is not regulated by definite botanical and pharmacognostic criteria¹⁷, I think that in this case an adequate identification can be made, since there are nineteenth- and early twentieth-century studies on the *flora* of Greece and Cyprus in which common Greek names were recorded (pp. 397-404). Furthermore, a large number of the plant names used in the *iatrosophion* of the Codex have remained in use up to the present day in Cyprus. Thus, Hadjikyriakou must be congratulated on undertaking this task and generally coming up with satisfactory identifications. I would simply mention one example where I disagree with him and that is in relation to myrrh (p. 443), which should most probably be identified with *Commiphora myrrha* (Nees) Engl. not *Commiphora abyssinica* (Berger) Engl.¹⁸.

Nevertheless this Part is not free of regular mistakes and inconsistencies, which detract considerably from its scholarly quality, something which could have been prevented if the book had been properly peer-reviewed in advance of its publication. For example, the author often makes use of the alphabetical recension of Dioscorides

17. On this see, for example, J. STANNARD, Hippocratic Pharmacology, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 35 (1961), 497-518, at 499-502.

18. E. LEV – A. ZOHAR, *Practical materia medica of the medieval eastern Mediterranean according to the Cairo Genizah*, Leiden 2008, 221-223. Cf. D. J. MABBERLEY, *Mabberley's plant-book: a portable dictionary of plants, their classification and uses*, Cambridge³2008, 206.

in Neapolitanus ex Vindobonensis gr. 1 through a facsimile reproduction¹⁹. The text of this version (RV) is indeed printed in Max Welmann's edition, which is often cited in the discussion but only in connection with the mainstream version of Dioscorides' text²⁰. I would note that *De remediis parabilibus* is not a genuine text by Galen (as is assumed throughout the volume) and the current version in Karl Gottlob Kühn's edition is characterised by occasional late Byzantine interpolations. Theophrastus' work was consulted through the Loeb edition²¹, not through the most recent critical edition by Suzanne Amigues, which is especially helpful on the identification of plants²². Important works on the identification of ancient references to plants have also not been consulted²³. It is regrettable that important post-Byzantine glossaries of Greek and Turkish terms for plants that would have been helpful in avoiding long discussions have not been consulted either. For example, the eighteenth-century glossary by Nicholas Hieropais from Agrapha gives "χαυλιτζάν" (a very close variant to terms used in the Codex, i.e. "χαβλιτσιάν/χαβλιτσιάνη/χαβλουκίνη") as a synonym for "γαλαγγά" (discussed on p. 411)²⁴, and "μαχμουτέ" (a close variant to the term used in the Codex, i.e. "μαχμουδιά") as a synonym for "σκαμμωνία" (discussed on p. 444)²⁵.

Part III also includes Appendix 1 (pp. 557-72) on some plants that are found in the 1924 printed edition, but not in the Codex; Appendix 2 (pp. 575-583), which presents in tables, in a conclusive manner, the results of identification by categorising plants according to their origin; and Appendix 3 (pp. 587-603) which gives high quality colour images of indigenous plants in Cyprus. The appendices are followed by two indices of plants names referring to the discussion in the various entries of Part III (pp. 605-640).

19. A. TSELIKAS (ed.), *Περί Ὑγίης Ιατρικῆς. Ο ἑλληνικός κώδικας 1 τῆς Εθνικῆς Βιβλιοθήκῆς τῆς Νεαπόλεως*, Athens 2000.

20. M. WELMANN, *Pedanii Dioscuridis Anazarbaei De Materia Medica Libri quinque*, 3 vols, Berlin 1907-1914.

21 A. HORT, *Theophrastus. Enquiry into plants and minor works on odours and weather signs*, 2 vols, Cambridge, MA 1916.

22. S. AMIGUES, *Théophraste: Recherches sur les plantes*, 5 vols, Paris 1988-2006.

23. E.g. J. ANDRÉ, *Les noms des plantes dans la Rome antique*, Paris 1985; and G. ALIOTTA – D. POMELLI – A. POLLIO – A. TOUWAIDE, *Le piante medicinali del Corpus Hippocraticum*, Milan 2003.

24. A. DELATTE, *Anecdota Atheniensia*, 2 vols, Liège 1927-1939, II, 397, 22.

25. DELATTE, *Anecdota Atheniensia*, II, 413, 22.

The book comprises two bibliographies, one for Parts I-II (pp. 387-389) and one for Part III (pp. 641-652). Entries are often duplicated in the two bibliographies, and they show no consistency internally or between the two of them. For example, the publisher's name is sometimes given, sometimes not (e.g. "Knobloch" for Kühn's editions or "Clarendon Press" for Alderson's dictionary). There are also some common spelling errors such "Kuhn" not "Kühn"; furthermore, Galen's *De Antidotis* is in volume XIV of Kühn's *Galenī Opera Omnia* not in volume XI as is erroneously suggested. The titles of bibliographical items in Greek are either given in transliteration or in English translation; the latter is highly problematic since it makes it hard for anyone unfamiliar with Greek to be able to identify these publications, some of which have appeared in highly inaccessible journals, e.g. "Kyriazis, N. G., Popular Medicine in Cyprus [in Greek], *Kypriaka Chronika*" for "Δημιώδης Κυπριακή Ἱατρική" (note also the inconsistency in the transliteration of the Greek letter kappa as either "k" or "c" in the journal's title). Furthermore, Greek is often not accented properly, e.g. "Θηριακά τῆς Κύπρου" for "Θηριακά τῆς Κύπρου" or "Περὶ Ὑλῆς Ἱατρικῆς" for "Περὶ Ὑλῆς Ἱατρικῆς". Page numbers are rarely given for articles in the first bibliography of the volume, which suggests little familiarity with common practices of referencing in scholarly publications and casts doubt on whether the authors actually consulted the articles cited. The volume also has a good number of typos, e.g. "archmandrite" for "archimandrite" (p. xxxii), "information" for "information" (p. lix), "phlebotimise" for "phlebotomise" (p. 351), "Kriaras 1969-2021" for Kriaras "1969-2012" (p. 404), "snd" for "and" (p. 411), "bsides" for "besides" (p.460), "drivative" for "derivative" (p. 529). Finally, it is also worth mentioning that phrasal adjectives are consistently not hyphenated (e.g. "19th century Cyprus", "19th century medicine", p. xxi) in contravention of standard English grammar rules.

In conclusion, this is a welcome edition, which adds to our knowledge of medical practice in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Cyprus and opens up new avenues for future studies in this area. It also supplements the evidence on the reception of Greek and Byzantine medical tradition in the early modern period and beyond. Regrettably, however, the lack of consistency, economy, accuracy, and the inadequate consultation of primary and secondary material severely erode the scholarly value of this book.

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