

## BOOK REVIEW

*Galen: Three Treatises: An Intermediate Greek Reader.* By EVAN HAYES and STEPHEN NIMIS. Oxford, Ohio. Faenum Publishing, 2014. Pp. xiii + 165. Paperback, \$14.95, Print on Demand. ISBN 978-1-940-99702-5.

**G**alen, although his works comprise roughly ten percent of extant Greek literature, is not an author often read by undergraduate students. This could change with the publication of this text and commentary by Hayes and Nimis. The editors present three works by Galen (“On My Own Books,” “On the Order of My Own Books,” and “That the Best Physician is also a Philosopher”) accompanied by a grammar- and vocabulary-based commentary that will enable undergraduate students to read Galen efficiently while also learning about ancient medicine, philosophy, and the intellectual culture of the Second Sophistic.

The front matter is comprised of acknowledgements, an introduction, select bibliography, instructions for use, and a list of abbreviations. The three texts with a running commentary and list of vocabulary at the bottom of each page follow. Back matter includes a list of verbs (with their principle parts, meanings, and compound forms), an index of proper names found in the texts with dates and basic information for each figure, and a thorough and practical alphabetical glossary. Interspersed throughout the commentary are boxes devoted to “Grammatical Topics” (e.g., “The Different Meanings of αὐτός”) and “Special Topics” (e.g., “The Antonine Emperors”).

The first of the “Grammatical Topics” boxes lists common vocabulary sorted by part of speech (e.g. ἀνατομή, ὀστέον, θεραπευτικός, and ἀναγιγνώσκω). A separate section of this box notes the numbers one through 11 in their cardinal and ordinal forms—helpful since Galen so frequently lists the number of books or chapters in his works. Students are urged in the introduction to commit the common vocabulary words to memory and one of the final pages of this volume is a removable bookmark including the common terms and numbers. The Greek text is based on Mueller’s 1891 edition and at certain junctures the editors include italicized headings in English that foreground the material that follows. Lacunae in Galen’s text are supplied by English translations of Arabic renderings of the original Greek.

The format makes for quick reading and translation, but at times the commentary does not strike a balance between providing necessary information and challenging the translation skills of students and their understanding of Greek grammar and syntax. Reviewers of other texts in the series by Faenum have commented on the frequent use of “translationese” in the commentary section and this persists in the current edition (e.g., “having x-ed” for almost all aorist participles). In a “Grammatical Topics” box on “Participles: general principles” (39) the editors state that non-idiomatic renderings of most participial constructions will indicate syntactic relations more clearly, however an intermediate Greek student should be comfortable with translations of participles that convey time, manner, means, cause, etc. The editors actually do include a “Topics” box much later (106) that provides descriptions and examples of circumstantial participles that could have been introduced earlier in order to remedy instances of “translationese.” Many of the “Topics” boxes are placed randomly – for example, the initial box on participles is found on a page (39) of text that includes no participles and the misprinted references to examples direct readers to page “000.”

The page-by-page vocabulary sections are helpful and thorough, if not repetitive to the point of being a crutch. Occasionally vocabulary entries do not correspond precisely to the translations given in the commentary, e.g. προεληλύθει is given in the vocabulary section as [προέρχομαι: to go forward, go on, advance] but is translated more figuratively in the notes as “it had progressed” (6). Many of the words used by Galen have technical meanings, however the vocabulary entries in the commentary sometimes give basic definitions that will not help students understand the terms in a medical context (e.g., ὄξύς is given as “sharp, keen” and κρίσις as “crisis” in the vocabulary notes on page 51, but in a medical context these words have technical meanings, “severe, acute,” and “the turning point of a disease.”)

The text is easy to read with one exception. The titles of books make up a large part of the material in all three works. Early in the commentary the editors provide a useful note on the conventions of titling that focuses mainly on περί + genitive (10). In this edition book titles are identified with small capitals; at the conclusion of “On My Own Books” Galen lists his titles and the capitalized type makes for difficult reading. This is unfortunate because many of the titles contain developed constructions and syntactical arrangements that are worth studying (e.g., “About the things being indicated by speech according to genus and species and the things related to them” [73], “How much should honor and reputation be thought about by the many” [75]).

My primary concern about this text is that the style of the commentary and the repetitive nature of the vocabulary sections may strike more accomplished Greek students as monotonous and take away from the challenge of reading an ancient language. In many instances, the commentary makes reading Galen a mechanical rather than an intellectual task. Because of this edition's status as a "Print On Demand" book there are many typographical errors. Corrections and suggestions are solicited by the editors for future versions of the text.

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