variety of medical theories over the centuries. After all, the mere act of writing down 'case histories' already constitutes a selection: they are realistic only insofar as they reflect reality as experienced by the writer.

The central section of the book discusses the possibility and methodology of retrospective diagnosis, beginning with an explanation of the term 'diagnosis' in modern medicine, and questioning whether the ancient term corresponds to this. Given the importance of prognosis (which included present and even past conditions) in Hippocratic medicine as reflected in the texts, diagnosis was at any rate subordinate to it. According to G., it is only in the surgical treatises that one can speak of anything approaching the modern meaning. In the case of internal diseases, the name that was the result of the 'diagnosis' was often not so much a clearly defined nosological entity as a description of a symptom or the simultaneous presence of symptoms, comparable to the modern concept of syndrome.

Although attempts at retrospective diagnosis were already being made in antiquity, in these cases the person making the diagnosis still had the same framework of medical concepts (e.g. Galen writing about the *Epidemics*). It is therefore only from the second half of the nineteenth century that one can speak of retrospective diagnosis in the modern sense, which is made on the basis of palaeopathology and iconographical or textual material. G. sets out the main guidelines for attempts at this, i.e. 'forgetting' modern medicine, avoiding value judgements (such as 'unscientific'), making use of one's knowledge about the way of life or the epidemiology of the period in question, and making it clear that the interpretation always has to remain subjective.

G. also presents an outline of M. D. Grmek's thoughts about retrospective diagnosis. However, he doubts the existence—postulated by Grmek—of a group of terms whose meaning has remained unchanged (e.g. *karkinoma* or *haimorrhoides*). The fact that modern medical terminology is based on (often latinized) Greek can mislead the researcher into 'finding' a modern disease entity in the ancient texts, but G. repeatedly warns the reader of this danger: often the concept behind the name has changed (e.g. words ending in *-itis*, which did not have the meaning of 'inflammation'), other disease concepts (e.g. *kausos*) are no longer in use, one has to take into account the phenomenon of pathomorphosis, etc. He finishes by demonstrating on a concrete example (*Epid.* 7.83) the possibilities and limitations of retrospective diagnosis, concluding the book with about eighty pages of tables. This is an insightful and important book, which should be made required reading for medical historians, especially those with a medical background.

University of Cambridge CHRISTINE F. SALAZAR

DE MORBO SACRO

J. LASKARIS: *The Art is Long.* On the Sacred Disease *and the Scientific Tradition*. (Studies in Ancient Medicine 25.) Pp. ix + 172. Leiden, Boston, and Cologne: Brill, 2002. Cased, €69/US$81. ISBN: 90-04-12152-8.

The small essay *De morbo sacro* may be called with confidence a star among the variety of works that form the *Corpus Hippocraticum*. It is undoubtedly its most read part—no doubt often in translations—and thus for many people represents the Hippocratic writings as a whole. What scholar would not be fascinated by the

The Classical Review vol. 54 no. 2 © The Classical Association 2004; all rights reserved

https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/54.2.295 Published online by Cambridge University Press

peculiar symptoms of epilepsy which gave rise to endless puzzles and hypotheses? Hardly any other illness has influenced world literature so deeply (cf., for example, O. Temkin, *The Falling Sickness* [Baltimore and London, 1971^2]; H. Schneble, *Krankheit der ungezählten Namen* [Bern, Stuttgart, and Toronto, 1989]; D. von Engelhardt, H. Schneble, P. Wolf [edd.], *'Das ist eine alte Krankheit'. Epilepsie in der Literatur* [Stuttgart and New York, 2000]). Philologists value the ancient monograph: well rounded, not too wide in scope, carefully written, sometimes even a little bit amusing. The modern physician, too, feels directly addressed. He expects to find here strikingly modern ideas, because the unknown author attacks magic and supernatural conceptions in the aetiology of the falling sickness. No wonder that the rational physician of the present is charmed to espy such a bright star at the dawn of scientific medicine. However, one must be cautious and not overestimate this piece of ancient rationality.

J. Laskaris presents in her study, a former doctoral thesis, a noteworthy contribution to the interpretation of the *De morbo sacro*. She relies on the approved edition of H. Grensemann (*Die hippokratische Schrift 'Über die heilige Krankheit'. Herausgegeben, übersetzt und erläutert von H. G.* [Berlin, 1968]), introducing only inessential modifications (cf. pp. 85, 87–8). Nonetheless, she has indulged in a very detailed interpretation of the text.

First, L. summarizes the history of Greek medicine from the beginnings in the Bronze Age until the fifth century B.C. Then she presents its state in the times of the author of the *De morbo sacro*, when it can be recognized as a conglomeration of practical medicine, magic, and religion that developed over centuries. L.'s survey of the influence of the *De morbo sacro* brings a great surprise: the writing was hardly read or quoted in antiquity; only in modern times did it become the popular and much discussed gem of the *Corpus Hippocraticum*.

In consequence of a detailed analysis of the rhetoric and thematic conception of the treatise, different intentions on the part of its author can be perceived: the *De morbo sacro* is not a definitive statement on the sacred disease and surely not a handbook of any specific therapy, but a *προτρεπτικός*. Its aim is to convince possible students and patients and convert them to Hippocratic medicine. The author, possibly a medical practitioner himself, is first and foremost not a physician but a master of elaborated sophistic argumentation. Through his work he aims to deliver arguments in favour of a rational medicine. He characterizes Hippocratic medicine as such: it is a *τέχνη* that can be taught and learnt and thus opposed to 'magic' therapies. In this particular context, we can better understand the earnestness with which the author fights against the magic healers. Through this attitude, he indirectly attests their importance and popularity. In terms of economic success, the rewards of those magic healers must have been excessively high. Therefore Greek medical practice in the fifth century B.C. was far from being entirely rational, although the *De morbo sacro* shows in parts a rational medicine based for example on ideas of the Presocratic philosophers and naturalists. This is, nevertheless, only a harbinger in a world mostly governed by prerational and magical concepts of illness and healing. Thus we have to accept a long period in which both attitudes coexist and compete against each other. Physicians may have got used to performing some manifestly irrational practices like spells and incantations only because patients asked for them. On the contrary, skilled priests and magicians may have acquired respectable medical knowledge which they applied in their ceremonies. The author of the *De morbo sacro* endeavours to defeat the latter with their own weapons, but in doing so he intelligently avoids any suspicion of *ἀσέβεια*. This is a strong reference to the intellectual climate in the fifth century B.C., especially in Athens.

https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/54.2.295 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Too progressive thoughts and too rapid scientific advances could have fatal effects, as in the case of Socrates.

Unfortunately L. could not take J. Rudolf, 'Das prärationale Konzept der Heiligen Krankheit und seine Darstellung in der attischen Tragödie des 5. Jahrhunderts vor Christus', *Schriftenreihe der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Geschichte der Nervenheilkunde* 7 (2001), 267–77, into account. Rudolf's paper helps us understand the 'sacred disease' from both neurological and literary points of view, for its author applies both aspects to the analysis of poetic texts. The best place to refer to him would have been the section on the *Geschlechterfluch* (p. 148), a motif often found in Attic tragedy. L. gives also a wide and detailed analysis of the peculiar rôle of goats in regard to the 'sacred disease', but she does not discuss veterinary aspects in this context.

The *De morbo sacro* is an important witness of the far-reaching influence the sophists had on public and private life and even on non-fictional literature. It is a kind of sophistic apology that could have been delivered as a speech in either this or quite a similar form.

L.'s study illuminates especially the rhetorical aspects and the composition of this Hippocratic text. Her formal analysis is a useful contribution to the understanding of the treatise in all its facets. Therefore, whoever wishes to comprehend the *De morbo sacro* in its complexity and literary charm can now refer to L.'s monograph.

University of Cologne FERDINAND PETER MOOG

ANACREON AND ANACREONTEA

G. LAMBIN: *Anacréon. Fragments et imitations.* Pp. 327. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2002. Paper, €14.50. ISBN: 2-86847-740-2.

The popularity of certain ancient poets waxes and wanes with the preferences of the ages, and to ask why we are seeing a flurry of attention awarded to Anacreon and the Anacreontic poets in the last decade is to ask a question about ourselves. (In addition to the book under review, we have Patricia Rosenmeyer's *The Poetics of Imitation. Anacreon and the Anacreontic Tradition* [1992] and John O'Brien's *Anacreon Redivivus* [1995]; the status of the *Anacreontea* was assured in the classical community only in 1984, when Martin West produced the first Teubner edition.) Part of our interest is of course piqued by the poetic virtues and defects of the texts, and L. is well situated to illuminate these, as a scholar well versed in the musical and poetic nuances found in other Greek poetry (L.'s dissertation [Lille, 1986] was a study of the Attic skolia; in 1992 he published *La chanson grecque dans l'antiquité* and *Homère, le compagnon* and in 1999 *L'épopée: genèse d'un genre littéraire en Grèce*). But why, he invites us to consider, should those in the Anacreontic vein have particular appeal at the moment? The corpus of the *Anacreontea* was condemned by Wilamowitz as insipid, *matte Limonade*. This stands at odds with their great popularity among poets from Ronsard and Corneille to Goethe, who continued the process of imitation begun with the Anacreontics. The contrast in reception between the scholar and the poet was predicted by Henri Estienne in his preface to the first edition of the Anacreontics, where he acknowledged that their appeal would be greater for the reader who was *philomousos* than the one who was *philoponos*. Where do we situate ourselves? It is perhaps Lambin's greatest gift in this book, that in exposing the poetic virtues of

The Classical Review vol. 54 no. 2 © The Classical Association 2004; all rights reserved

https://doi.org/10.1093/cr/54.2.295 Published online by Cambridge University Press