

## Book Reviews

impression of unfinished business persists. A proper description of the Middle English manuscripts and a much more detailed exposition of their relationship remain essential desiderata. One can accept the decision to print a single witness, but preference for the Wellcome MS over all the others would have been more comprehensible if a fuller picture of their character had been allowed to emerge. The description of the MS itself unfortunately displays the same kind of inaccuracy as bedevils the edited text. The question of common sources, a vital problem in any consideration of the vernacular English writer's procedure, is obscured by the fact that the editor divulges nothing concerning Gilbertus's sources, yet his incorporation of significant portions of Salernitan texts such as Roger Frugard's *Chirurgia* or Johannes Platearius's *Practica brevis* is a salient feature of the *Compendium*. Although the editor has compared the 1510 print with London, B.L. MS Sloane 272, the textual tradition is not discussed and my own impression is that the text of the print is susceptible of much improvement. Another omission which calls for future remedial work is the complete lack of any reference to Anglo-Norman (the single reference to "Norman French" on p. xvii is antiquated and inaccurate)—no mention of Rothwell's extensive work on the linguistic concurrence of Anglo-Norman and English, no awareness that major medical treatises in Anglo-Norman existed almost two centuries before the work studied here, no acknowledgement that over a third of the lexical items asterisked in the glossary as being first usages not in the MED, or unique usages not in MED or OED, already appeared in Anglo-Norman in the thirteenth century. We must be grateful for Faye Getz's labours, whilst regretting that in the ten-year interval following its acceptance as a PhD thesis her study has not been more carefully revised.

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GERHARD ENDRESS and DIMITRI GUTAS (eds), *A Greek and Arabic lexicon: materials for a dictionary of the mediaeval translations from Greek into Arabic*, Fascicle I, Leiden and New York, E. J. Brill, 1992, pp. xxxii, 96, Gld. 40.00, \$23.00 (90-04-09494-6).

Over the past 150 years many editions of eighth- to tenth-century Arabic translations of Greek texts have included valuable Greek-Arabic glossaries. As materials increase, so also, of course, does their potential usefulness, and it is precisely this potential which the editors of *A Greek and Arabic lexicon* seek to exploit. Conceived over a decade ago, the work represents an effort to unify and analytically present all the material found in the various glossaries of Graeco-Arabic translations.

This first fascicle of the *Lexicon* is of a very high critical standard. The editors have wisely opted to include only texts for which the original Greek survives, so that all the materials in the *Lexicon* reflect actual documented correspondences, with speculations (however attractive) based on Arabic versions of lost Greek texts being entirely excluded. Published materials have been carefully checked before inclusion, and the inevitable imbalance dictated by the range of usable glossaries has to a great extent been redressed by making use of unpublished ones donated by various colleagues, and by preparing new word-by-word glossaries for important texts in areas for which material would otherwise have been very thin, or even non-existent. The texts thus covered here for the first time include Aristotle's *Physics*, *Categories*, and *Meteorology*, and Book III of his *De partibus animalium*, Porphyry's *Eisagoge*, Euclid's *Elements*, and Galen's *De theriaca ad Pisonem*, and in all, nearly fifty translated Greek texts have been incorporated into the editors' materials.

The main body of the *Lexicon* is arranged according to Arabic roots, and within each entry one has immediate and easy access to the range of Greek words and expressions (with English definitions) which a given Arabic word translated. Where passages of text are of some particular interest, they are cited rather than just referred to, with the Arabic given in transcription. A Greek-Arabic glossary (Part B), keyed to the Arabic entries, enables one easily to find any Greek word mentioned in the *Lexicon*, and there are also indices of Greek proper names and transliterated words, variant Greek and Arabic passages, and Greek quotations.

The importance of this work cannot be overemphasized. In essence, researchers are presented with a clear analytical assessment of materials crucial to lexical studies in Classical and Middle Arabic and Classical and Middle Greek, and a corpus from which all future studies of the Arabic translation movement will derive profound benefit. This benefit will of course be very great in

philosophical and scientific studies, with medicine especially well represented, but the work's usefulness will not be limited to these areas. Endress and Gutas have registered every word in most of the texts they have included; their *Lexicon* is thus not only a dictionary of technical and scientific vocabulary, but covers ordinary discourse and literary language as well. In this regard it is very significant that many Greek words have been found which, viewed within the context of the Arabic translation movement, prove to bear meanings either unattested or poorly attested in the standard lexica of Liddell and Scott for Classical Greek and Lampe for Patristic usage. It must also be stressed that this work is of great importance to the fixing of Greek texts and their Arabic translations. The editors have frequently found cases where readings in the published editions of both Greek and Arabic texts can be emended or improved; these cases are clearly indicated in the main body of the *Lexicon*, and are listed separately in Parts D (Greek variants) and E (Arabic).

Endress and Gutas stress the provisional and incomplete character of their enterprise. The absence of a word or meaning from the finished *Lexicon*, for example, will not mean that such a word or meaning appears nowhere in any extant source, and the range of usage for a given word attested in the work may not be exhaustive. On the other hand, the editors are perhaps overly modest. The first fascicle of 96 pages extends to the Arabic root '-kh-r, i.e. through about the first one per cent of the potential range of Arabic vocabulary. One of course cannot take this calculation too literally, but it does serve to indicate the enormous scale of the project as envisaged. While completeness may be desirable in principle, its achievement is not always practicable in terms of the available materials, or even a worthwhile end in terms of the time, labour, and resources required to attain it. Those who do not expect to benefit from a work completable in a hundred years will welcome the editors' sound judgement in the conception of this work, as well as appreciate the keen insight, solid scholarship, and hard work evident throughout it. There can be no doubt that their *Greek and Arabic Lexicon* will prove to be an authoritative reference aid indispensable to Graeco-Arabic studies, and extremely valuable in numerous adjacent fields as well.

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JUDITH A. OVERMIER and JOHN EDWARD SENIOR, *Books and manuscripts of The Bakken*, Metuchen, NJ, and London, The Scarecrow Press, 1992, pp. xvii, 512, illus., £59.65 (0-8108-2570-8).

"The Bakken: a Library and Museum of Electricity in Life", Minneapolis, is not concerned with the domestic uses of electricity but with the relationship between electricity and the life sciences. Earl Elmer Bakken began the collection in 1969 and The Bakken now operates as a non-profit educational research centre with an active outreach programme. This impressive catalogue is intended to publicize the Library's holdings and also serves as a reference work in its own right. A companion catalogue of electro-medical instruments is projected. Existing guides to historical electrical literature cover a wider field, and the focus of this catalogue will make it of particular interest to medical historians. Topics represented include electrotherapeutics, mesmerism and radiology, and the amount of bibliographical data provided is admirably full (if not too full: much space seems wasted on excessively long titles and on garbled provenance notes which should have received far more editorial work).

In spite of all the hard work that has clearly gone into it, the catalogue has some disappointing features. It is divided into four periods (early period, eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries) and is alphabetical within each. This is the only approach and the catalogue is limited almost entirely to main entries. Some analytical entries are provided but there is no access to editors, translators, joint-authors, subjects, titles or provenance, and only the first two sections are small enough to browse. Manuscripts are scattered under headings that are not always obvious.

A subject index, admittedly, is easier said than done, though it is not an unreasonable expectation with such a specialized collection, but a chronological approach would have been a useful substitute and should have been relatively easy to create. The index provided covers only the author-headings and adds little to the catalogue itself.

Each section has an introduction giving some key to its contents. The illustration captions are also useful in this respect: a fifteenth-century manuscript of Petrus Peregrinus is thus shown to be