Alcmaeon of Croton, the earliest known philosopher-cum-doctor, mentions three shadowy figures associated with Pythagoreanism in the preface of his lost treatise *On Nature*. This striking reference is supplemented with a brief statement concerning the limits of human knowledge and the empirical method of enquiry. Various interpretations have been proposed regarding the identity of these figures and their connection with the author. It has been suggested (a) that Alcmaeon dedicated his treatise to them as a matter of gratitude or admiration (Diels), (b) that his discourse was not a systematic treatise but embodied the instruction given by Alcmaeon to three disciples on one particular occasion (Gomperz), (c) and that he addresses a group of students in medicine (Gemelli Marciano). The aim of this paper is to reassess these suggestions by taking into account the fragmentary evidence concerning Alcmaeon’s doctrines, his alleged connection with the Pythagoreans, and the opening sections of contemporary philosophical and medical treatises. I suggest that the context of this reference may be polemical, as it was common in the archaic era. Alcmaeon disagreed with certain Orphico-Pythagorean doctrines and wished to reply to his addresses in a direct and emphatic manner.

Jordi Crespo Saumell (Cagliari)

The Anonymus Londinensis and the *Paideia* of the Imperial Period

The papyrus Anonymus Londinensis is an important doxographical report, reflecting contextual features of equal importance that are worth taking into account for the full understanding of this text. One such feature is the intertwining between philosophical speculation and medical art that was traditional throughout Antiquity. By dwelling on a significant passage from Aristotle’s *Politics* (III, 11, 1282a 3-5), this paper argues that the medical writings conveyed to some extent the contents with which the learned class of the imperial period had to be acquainted in view of their education. In order to support my view, I will examine some passages of pedagogical nature from the Imperial period such as Aulus Gelius’ *Attic Nights* (III, 16; XVIII, 10; XVI, 3), or Athenaeus of Naucratis’ *The Deipnosophists* (45d - 46e) against the columns IV, 26 - XIV, 8 of the Anonymus, and then I will contrast them to the way the topic of medical
etiology is addressed in the contemporary source entitled *De morbis acutis et chroniis*.

Michiel Meeusen (Leuven)

**Solving Medical Problems 101: an Interpretation of Ps.-Alexander of Aphrodisias, Med. puzz. 1, Praef. in Light of Medical School Practice**

This contribution reflects on the propaedeutic role of the preface to Ps.-Alexander of Aphrodisias’ *Medical puzzles and natural problems* in light of medical school practice. The preface has not yet been thoroughly valorized, but scholars agree that its importance for the history of the genre of natural problems cannot be denied.¹ The author there provides a classification of several kinds of problems based on criteria of difficulty and solvability, emphasizing the aetiological requirements of medical problems. The text also has methodological value in explaining how problems can be properly solved. I will try to determine, then, how the author precisely aims to regulate the reader’s reception of the work by setting out the classificatory and methodological standards for this kind of research. Finding my inspiration in recent Plutarch scholarship,² I will argue that the preface promotes an ‘active reading’ of the problems by activating the reader’s attentiveness for the strategies that are employed both in raising and solving such problems. This will be an important feature in determining the educational value of the collection as a whole.

**SESSION 2**

Lesley Dean-Jones (UT Austin)

**Extending the Family: the Protreptic Aim of some Hippocratic Treatises**

Three of the most famous treatises in the Hippocratic Corpus, *On Ancient Medicine*, *On the Sacred Disease* and *On the Nature of Man*, are usually thought to have been produced as lectures for a general audience, both to support the new ‘scientific’ medicine struggling to find acceptance among more traditional forms of healing and to attract patients to the author. Geoffrey Lloyd remarks in passing (*The Revolutions of Wisdom*, Berkley 1987, p.68, n.73) that the authors may have also hoped to attract pupils, but he does not see this as their primary purpose. However, I will argue that the structure and content of each of these treatises function best as advertisements for the authors’ ability to teach a superior form of ‘scientific’ medicine to their rivals. The structure of all three treatises (opening polemic, valorizing argument, etiology of

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disease, outline of physiology or anatomy, additional etiology and envoi) is almost identical and the contents of the works do not appeal to any demonstrable successes of the speaker as we might expect if he were trying to attract patients. The focus on an audience of potential students shows that by the end of the fifth century BCE the demand for ‘scientific’ doctors could no longer be satisfied from the hereditary Asklepiadic families.

Chiara Thumiger (Berlin)

The Multiple Audiences of the Hippocratic Epidemics

Theoretically aware approaches to texts have long emphasised the active role played by the participation of the reader – or, more neutrally, of the receiver – of each text in determining its effect and ultimate meaning (or meanings). A set of texts such as the Hippocratic Epidemics, with all their diversity and discontinuities of formation and transmission, are a wonderful case of audiences taking part in the creation of a text; not so much in the sense most frequently promoted by reception studies, as gaze of later readers onto an ancient story, but as dialogue between parts internal to the text, embedded in its originating occasion and guiding objectives (despite the fact that our access to these must remain limited and tentative).

In my presentation I want to look at the various audiences that cooperate in the experiences of illness and encounter to which the Epidemics bear witness, and in their translation into the texts we read: around the main binary patient-physician, in fact (the human side of the famous disease-patient-physician ‘triangle’) there are several additional facets that the famous formula underplays: the competing professionals whose work is considered, criticised, or praised; the family, friends, or perhaps bystanders offering information and judgment; the helpers, or students of the physician to whom questions or remarks are addressed; a silent, unspecified, wider scientific audience to which the author belongs, for whose benefit universal principles are stated, or mnemonic tokens sometimes appear to be offered. In this way, I seek to restore some of the ‘depth of field’ of these texts – to use a photographic metaphor - offering at the same time some hypotheses on the purposes and occasions behind their creation.

Laurence Totelin (Cardiff)

Gone with the Wind: Laughter and the Audience of the Hippocratic Treatises

The Attic comedies, roughly contemporary with many Hippocratic treatises, contain endless scatological jokes that demonstrate a certain knowledge of the body and its functioning. The comedians also at times mocked philosophers, thus showing that they had a concrete knowledge of ancient physiological theories. The audience of the comedies and that of the Hippocratic treatises must sometimes have overlapped.
Indeed, some Hippocratic treatises claim to be written for the layman, the idiotēs. In this paper, I want to investigate how the context informs the reaction to similar physiological issues. Thus, farting jokes in the comedies would no doubt raise laughter, but how did the reader of the Hippocratic texts react to the numerous allusion to winds and bloated bellies? In order to answer this question, I will also look at the mentions of laughter and laughing in the Hippocratic texts. While many of these mentions are concentrated in the Hippocratic epistles (which are quite late), there are scattered mentions throughout the corpus.

Daniel Bertoni (Miami, FL)

A Popular History of Medicine

The history of medicine presented in the Hippocratic De Vetere Medicina (§3) has long been understood as a medical writer’s response to burgeoning Greek interest in Kulturgeschichte. But this history of medicine is only a short passage in a much longer text: what is its significance for the text as a whole and what would be its effect on the text’s audience?

I argue that by constructing a developmental story for the science of medicine, the author of VM not only enters into a dialogue with contemporary writers and theorists, but also writes to an audience that would be familiar with such accounts. The function of this history of medicine in the text is to engage the audience’s interest from the outset. The familiarity of the topic and the style of argument predisposes the audience to ‘buy in’ to the rest of the text, where the author puts forth less orthodox opinions about medicine. This can be seen, for example, in the author’s insistence that it is the developmental history of medicine that makes it a technē (§7) or in the recurrence of the example of bread when the author refutes theories that attribute disease to an imbalance of opposites (§15).

SESSION 3

Antoine Pietrobelli (Reims)

Galen’s Books and Friends

A common prefatory topos stressed by ancient authors is that they wrote their book in order to fulfil the request of friends. Galen is no exception in pretending to have written books under the pressure of his entourage. These assertions are usually considered by modern scholars as not completely truthful, not to say fallacious. I would like to emphasize Galen’s claim. We first ought to place Galen’s book production in the particular spotlight of Roman amicitia. In premodern society, books were part of a social practice: they were gifts for friends interacting in a negotiation of status and an exchange of benefits. On the other hand, through all the dedicatees of Galen’s books it is possible
to identify some of Galen’s friends and to draw the contours of Galen’s aristocratic circle.

Sophia Xenophontos (Glasgow)

Philosophical Protreptic in Galen’s Exhortation to the Study of Medicine: Construction of Authority and Audience Response

The Exhortation to the study of medicine is a short treatise classified under Galen’s works related to the Empiricist medical school. In the first section, the author discusses the importance of one’s engagement with the arts in general, preparing the ground for a specialised exaltation of medicine in the second half (now lost). In my paper, I want to look closely at Galen’s encouragement towards philosophical education and the heightened interest in his readers’ acculturation. I shall primarily focus on the moralising techniques that permeate the Exhortation to the study of medicine, and the construction of Galen’s authority within the genre of the protrepticus. I additionally wish to discuss Galen’s relation to his young audience, and the implication this bears for the tailoring of his advice and the selection of relevant material from a long-established protreptic tradition. My aim will be to emphasise Galen’s identity as an ethical philosopher – a less familiar feature of his intellectual image in current scholarship.

Maria Luisa Garofalo (Rome)

The De Propriis Placitis: Evolution and Systematisation of Medical Doctrines in Galen’s Medical and Philosophical Testament

Galen’s effort to provide his contemporary and later readers with a systematic organization of his texts is undeniable and renown. The aim of inspiring treatises such as De libris suis (LS) and De ordine librorum suorum (OLS) is exactly that of outlining the structure upon which Galenic medicine is conceived, and of suggesting an approach to its study.

In the Galenic Corpus yet, another text contributes to this purpose. The De propriis placitis (PP), in fact, works towards the same goal, although from a thematic more than structural point of view. The recent discovery of a manuscript containing the Greek text of Galen’s PP has allowed scholars to analyse the connections between this text and other Galenic treatises. Very different in form and content, the PP represents Galen’s effort to offer to his successors an overview of his theories and to make sure that no misinterpretation of his doctrines might arise from future readings of his works.

The aim of this paper will be to highlight the treatise’s characteristics and themes - such as the threefold definition of knowledge and the anatomy of the soul, in order to
understand the role and purpose of the *PP* in Galen’s medical and philosophical thought.

**Dimitris Karambelas** (London)

**Greek Medicine and the Law: Juristic Readings and Reception of Medical Texts in the Imperial Age**

The deep symbolic links between ancient Greek medicine and law are usually traced in the double – legal and medical – meaning of ‘κρίσις’, or in the representation of agents of law – lawyers or *synegoroi* – in the social imagination as ‘doctors’ or ‘healers’. However, in the textual level, we have to examine whether the reception of medical texts by Roman jurists and Greek theorists of rhetoric has been a significant factor in the development of legal reasoning. Can we argue that, not only did physicians use rhetorical schemes in constructing their expert opinions, or discrediting the opinions of their rivals, while addressing the elite audience of *pepaideumenoi*, but also that medical texts affected directly the formation of classical legal thought?

In our paper, we will engage in a two-directions survey: a) firstly, we will examine structural similarities and analogies between medical and rhetorical or legal discourses, with a comparative study of issue-theory handbooks (Patillion 1988; Heath 1995) and also the Ulpian corpus, survived in the Digest (Honoré 2002), on the one hand - and medical treatises of the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE (esp. Galen and Rufus of Ephesus; Nutton 2013, Pormann 2008) on the other b) secondly, we will try to demonstrate how jurists incorporated narrative and formal strategies by their selective readings of medical texts, while visualizing legal opinions as a quasi-medical discourse.

**SESSION 4**

**Uwe Vagelpohl** (Warwick)

**The User-Friendly Galen:  Ḥunayn ibn Isḥāq and the Syro-Arabic Translation Tradition**

Translation is in some respects the most fundamental act of audience accommodation: ideas are transposed into an entirely different language, often involving a substantial

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historical and cultural separation. One translator who successfully bridged the gap between ancient Greek medicine and medieval Syriac and Arabic readers was the celebrated Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq (d. ca. 870). He and his associates almost single-handedly re-created the Galenic corpus in Syriac and Arabic in the service of fellow physicians and court officials.

Ḥunayn's determination to communicate Galenic medicine to readers with varying levels of understanding, linguistic competence and medical experience comes out most clearly in a letter he wrote to one of his sponsors in which he took stock of available Syriac and Arabic translations of Galen. The letter shows that he often tailored his translations to the individual needs of his clients; where mere terminological or stylistic adjustments did not suffice, he also added separate explanatory notes. Translating Galen was just the first step: Ḥunayn authored a wide range of original medical writings and digests that were clearly meant to be used in medical training and practice.

A survey of these sources illustrates the strategies Ḥunayn employed to address the needs of his readers. In balancing these against his respect and admiration for Galen, he struck a delicate compromise between faithfully translating Galen’s writings and efficiently communicating medical knowledge that was meant to be put to immediate practical use.

Elvira Wakelnig (Lausanne)

Arabic De Natura Hominis-treatises: their Tradition, Scope and Audience

Nemesius’ De natura hominis, which combines medical, philosophical and theological elements to enlighten man’s destination with regard to his body and soul, was rendered from Greek into Arabic more than once and as early as in the eighth century. One of its alleged translators, Ḥunayn ibn Ishāq is said to have composed a nowadays unfortunately lost treatise entitled On the Nature of Man and that it is in his Interest and for his Benefit that he is made Indigent which may have been directly influenced by Nemesius. In the following centuries the Arabic Nemesius was excerpted in several compendia, but not much is further known about its usage and influence. It is therefore particularly interesting that in the eleventh and twelfth centuries two Arabic works on the nature of man were composed by Christian physicians, namely the Book of the Exposition of God’s Wisdom with regard to the Nature of Man by ʿĪsa ibn Yaḥyā Abū Sahl al-Jurjānī al-Masīḥī and the Book on the Nature of Man by Abū al-Ḥasan Saʿīd ibn Hibat Allāh. The proposed paper will focus on these two compositions with regard to their tradition, scope, aim and intended audience.
Katherine van Schaik (Boston, MA)

Text-less Medical Instruction? The Evolving Role of Texts in an Experiential Profession

Modern medical education often expounds clichés that privilege learning through experience. ‘Medicine is a contact sport’ and ‘See one, do one, teach one’ are commonly-deployed phrases which emphasize the value of experiential learning to a developing physician. Examination of the texts of the Hippocratic Corpus, of Galen, and of Ibn Riḍwān reveals a similar tension between ‘learning through text’ and ‘learning through experience’ among physicians-in-training. Tracing medical training from the pre-Hippocratic apprenticeship model discussed by Temkin and Drabkin, up to more modern considerations of the late antique and early Islamic Alexandria medical curriculum, we will see that our primary sources emphasize the role of texts as repositories of information yet note – occasionally with reticence – that supervised time in front of patients is ultimately necessary for a complete medical education. This paper will discuss the relative importance accorded by physicians and medical educators to text and to practical experience through time (up to the present), also touching upon the role that issues of specialism versus generalism played in ancient medical education and continue to play in medical schools today.

Joshua Olsson (Cambridge)

Medical Tetrads in Medieval Islam

My paper will explore a fairly complex tetradic diagram which appears in several Arabic sources. The diagram outlines the tetradic divisions of twelve different qualities (the elements, temperaments, directions, humours, seasons, stages of life, winds, hours, tastes, faculties, celestial bodies, and the signs of the zodiac), and it groups the qualities that resemble each other together on each side of its quadripartite structure.

The diagram contains various omissions and corruptions in all of its manuscript forms, with some qualities organised differently in different versions and some qualities missing altogether. Part of what my paper seeks to do then, is to recreate the urtext of the diagram with a close reading of the medical theory of the person I believe to be its creator, Ibn Rabban al-Ṭabarī (fl. 850), and the Greek tradition he utilised, including Hippocratic texts such as De Natura Hominis and Galenic texts such as De Placitis Hippocratis et Platonis.

The second aspect I wish to treat is the function of the diagram in terms of memorisation, reference and tadbīr (divine order). This will lead me to consider other Arabic tetradic diagrams, and particularly al-Balkhī’s (d. 934).
SESSION 5

Petros Bouras-Vallianatos (London)

Reading Galen in Byzantium

The Galenic corpus influenced the works of Byzantine medical authors in a variety of significant ways. By focusing on the reception of Galenic works in Byzantium, I would like to draw attention to the role of the authors’ background and professional expertise, as well as to that of the contemporary audience(s). For example, authors such as Oribasios (ca. 325 – after 395/6) and Aetios of Amida (first half of the sixth century AD) condensed Galenic knowledge to ensure its transmission and preservation for centuries to come. On the other hand, Alexander of Tralles (ca. 525 – ca. 605), as an outcome of his rich practical experience, did not hesitate to disagree with Galen’s views where common sense required it. In the next few centuries, Symeon Seth’s (fl. second half of the eleventh century) refutation of Galen on theories of human physiology stands out. His criticism is not based on practical experience, but is rather highly rhetorical. Later on, John Zacharias Aktouarios (ca. 1275 – ca. 1330) praises Galen’s contribution to the study of crises and critical days, calling him ‘most wise’, but he is caustic about the fact that Galen had never treated the field of uroscopy properly.

The above comparisons raise the following questions: To what extent is Galenic reception affected by the background of its intended audience (e.g. specialist versus non-specialist)? Were Byzantine medical authors conscious of the circulation of pseudo-Galenic material? What is the importance of receiving proper medical education (as in the case of Oribasios) versus apprenticeship (e.g. Alexander of Tralles)? How far was Galen criticised about his ideas and in what contexts? Can we identify any transcultural influence in the origin of the criticism, especially from the tenth century onward?

Christophe Erismann (Lausanne)

Medicine and Philosophy according to Meletius’s *De Natura hominis*

In Byzantium there existed a vivid interest in Greek medical writings. One testimony of this is a treatise of uncertain origin and dating, but of fascinating doctrinal content, the *De Natura hominis* ascribed to the monk Meletius, written probably during the ninth century. This text offers a successful fusion of the Galenic tradition and Christian anthropological thought. It is inscribed in the tradition of Christian iatrosophy, i.e. medico-philosophical thought considering the nature and constitution of man as well as his position in this world. In addition to strictly medical matters, the *De Natura hominis* offers a final section dedicated to the soul. This rich chapter contains an analysis of psychological, logical and ontological key concepts developed by Patristic authors and the first Byzantine thinkers. It clearly shows that Meletius...
was convinced that understanding man could only be achieved by combining medical, philosophical and theological approaches. The accurateness of his philosophical understanding is testified by several definitions and characterisations of *ousia* and *hypostasis*. The presence of this section raises two questions we would like to deal with in our talk: what is Meletius’s perspective on the relation between medicine and philosophy and how does it compare to the earlier Greek medical tradition? What can we learn about his readership on the basis of this technical philosophical section?

**Erika Gielen (Leuven)**

**Physician versus Physician. A comparison of On the Constitution of Man by Meletius and On the Nature of Man by Leo Medicus**

In early Byzantine times, systematic accounts of diverse nature on man’s constitution turned up, which voiced personal answers of people to the question of what a healthy body should be like. They were characterized by an intriguing mix of philosophical and Patristic doctrines and medical assumptions, relying heavily on Galen. This paper focuses on two representative texts - Meletius’ *On the constitution of man* and *On the nature of man* by Leo Medicus, who amply excerpted Meletius – and in a few case studies analyses their interaction with one another and their audience. Meletius, having in mind a public of non-specialist readers, adds poetical and biblical quotations to make the difficult matter on human physiology more accessible. These were removed by Leo, who intended his work to play a part in medical education. Instead, he adds erotapocritic formulas, a popular didactic method since late antiquity. In Meletius, writing for pious Christians wanting to understand man’s body as created by God, one time, ancient medical ideas are confirmed by quotations from Church Fathers, another, theological/philosophical statements are supported by medical quotes. Leo strongly reduces this theological and teleological bias of his main source, as being unnecessary for medical students.