

Note on MS Vlatadon 14: a Summary of the Main Findings and Problems

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The Galenic manuscript fortuitously discovered by Antoine Pietrobelli in a Greek monastery in 2005 contains four items with significant new Galenic material: an entire text which had previously been lost to us, *περι ἀλυπίας* (*Ind.*); the full Greek text of a work which had been available in Greek only in small part, the rest having to be supplied from an Arabo-Latin and a Graeco-Latin translation, *My Own Doctrines* (*Prop. Plac.*);¹ and an additional version of the Greek text of two works which were already extant, but with significant lacunae, in the only previously-known Greek manuscript, *My Own Books* (*Lib. Prop.*) and *The Order of My Own Books* (*Ord. Lib. Prop.*).²

In the case of the last two works mentioned, then, the Vlatadon manuscript was able to fill these lacunae. The discovery of the wholly new text, *περι ἀλυπίας*, has given rise to a veritable flurry of international scholarly activity, including both a great deal of philological work on problems in the text and a number of analyses of the new light – and of the questions and puzzles – which the text sheds and raises. Meanwhile, the full Greek version of *My Own Doctrines* has attracted some, though comparatively much less, attention; and discovery of some missing sentences from the two works of auto-bibliography, *My Own Books* and *The Order of My Own Books*, has gone more or less unnoticed. In

1 The *editio princeps* of the partial Greek text supplemented by Latin sources was produced by Nutton, V. (1999). *Galen: De propriis placitis*, and that of the full Greek text, with French translation, by Boudon-Millot, V. and Pietrobelli, A. (2005). ‘Galien ressuscité: édition princeps du texte grec du *De propriis placitis*’, *Revue des Études Grecques* 118, 168–213; the latter scholar is preparing a full critical edition of the text. See Nutton’s edition, 14–45 and Pietrobelli, A. (2013). ‘Galien agnostique: un texte caviardé par la tradition’, *Revue des Études Grecques* 126, 103–35, at 106–9, for further detail on the textual tradition (which also includes a section in Hebrew translation).

2 A peculiarity of the nature of the damage to the single previously known manuscript of these two texts that it gave rise to *lacunae* covering significantly overlapping material in the two texts, which both list Galen’s own works. The edition and translation of Boudon-Millot, V. (2007). *Galien, Tome 1*, takes account of the new material; see also Boudon-Millot V. (2014). ‘Vlatadon 14 and Ambrosianus Q3: Two Twin Manuscripts’. In Rothschild, C. K. and Thompson, T. W. (eds) *Galen’s De indolentia*, 41–55.

view of the wealth of scholarly publications that have already appeared, in a wide range of different languages, books and journals – and especially in view of the fact that in some cases these have appeared after the publication of the critical editions of *περι ἀλυσίας*, or at least too late to be fully taken into account by their various editors – it may be helpful to offer an overview both of the new information and fresh insights that have accrued from research on the manuscript thus far, and of the chief problems and areas of dispute. This chapter attempts such an overview, considering both the main research findings and controversies and, in the context of a highly problematic and already much discussed manuscript, the most significant and/or debated textual cruces in the text of *περι ἀλυσίας*.

1 Main Findings

The main gains and research findings arising from the discovery may, I think, be listed under five heads or topics:

- (i) archaeology: the location, and nature, of Roman libraries and storehouses in the imperial period;
- (ii) scholarship and bibliographical practice: specific features of manuscript collection and scholarly traditions in second-century-AD Rome, as well as the nature of book production and book distribution;
- (iii) Galen's practices of book-study and of book-composition;
- (iv) moral philosophy: Galen's contribution to the genre;
- (v) Galen's summation of, and attitude to, his own central philosophical doctrines.

While the text of *περι ἀλυσίας* sheds new light on topics (i) and (iv) above, both this and the texts of *My Own Books* and *The Order of My Own Books* shed light on topics (ii) and (iii).³

A considerable amount of recent scholarship has been devoted to (i), exploring the location and nature of both the public imperial library collections mentioned by Galen and his own private storehouse, as well as the nature and extent of the damage inflicted in this geographical area by the fire of 192. Some clarity has emerged – we seem for example to have a fairly clear idea of the

3 But the list is not exhaustive. Another debate re-ignited by the codex concerns the vexed question of Galen's *gentilicium*: is it possible that he was called Claudius after all? See Alexandru, S. (2011). 'Newly Discovered Witness Asserting Galen's Affiliation to the *Gens Claudia*', *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, ser. 5, 3/2, 385–433 and Nutton, V. (2015). 'What's in a *Nomen*? Vlatadon 14 and an Old Theory Resuscitated', in Holmes, B. and Fischer, K.-D. (eds), *The Frontiers of Ancient Science: Essays in Honour of Heinrich von Staden*, 451–62.