Les Médecins dans l'Occident romain: Péninsule Ibérique, Bretagne, Gaules, Germanies. By B. Rémy with Patrice Faure. AUSONIUS Publications: Scripta antiqua 27. Ausonius, Pessac / Diffusion de Boccard, Paris, 2010. Pp. 222, illus. Price: €20.00. ISBN 978 2 35613 026 6.

This is a useful up-to-date inventory of all Roman inscriptions so far identified, dating from the first to the third century, in which medical personnel are mentioned. Most are epitaphs written by family members, with the second largest group being dedications to gods. The focus is on the term *medicus*, although a list of all known oculists — based on J. Voinot's work on *collyria* stamps — is included; they are not treated in the detail given to *medici* because the difficulty in dating oculists means that records of them will have less historical value. 66 inscriptions, 62 in Latin and 4 in Greek, naming 69 *medici*, are discussed, with some of those claimed by previous authors rejected here. For each, a photograph of the inscription is given where this is possible, together with a full description, transcription and translation, information on findspot and context, and existing bibliography. Tables include a chronological one of all inscriptions used, with a full explanation of the criteria on which dates have been given.

The findings are used to discuss long-standing questions such as the social and legal status of *medici* — for example, whether Greek names indicate servile origins, those who spoke Greek, or simply a belief that such names sounded more 'medical' — and the nature of army medicine. On the basis of how they give their names, 55 of the *medici* here were Roman citizens or the freedmen of citizens, and 12 were army doctors. The issue of how far medicine was a 'profession' in the Roman Empire is one on which there may be some disagreement with the authors, who use the phrase 'les professionnels de la santé' for doctors, midwives and nurses. They speculate about medical education; for example, Sextus Iulius Felicissimus (no. 25 here) who died at the age of 19 trained for the arena but was also a *medicus*, and this is seen as evidence that training started very young (45); however, the evidence given for training beginning at the age of 15 comes only from Late Antiquity, and one could more reasonably use this inscription to suggest that the label *medicus* was applied to anyone with some skill in healing, regardless of training. Rémy also suggests that a place-name coming after '*medicus*' rather than after the individual's name indicates that 'une "école de médecine" réputée' must have existed there (46). Again, this is quite a leap to make without other supporting evidence.

Medicae are also discussed, although with only four inscriptions the conclusion that 'elles avaient seulement travaillé dans les capitals de cités' (39) does not seem worth reaching. The very indistinct epitaph of Julia Saturnina (no. 5 here) is included on the assumption that the illegible letters of line 5 should be reconstructed as MEDICAE OPTIMAE, although R. notes that this means she is (unusually) praised as uxor and mulier but not as mater (95). While restoring MATRI rather than MEDICAE would bring the inscription back into the usual pattern of praise of women, R.'s reading means that he needs to speculate that Julia Saturnina died childless.

The sections on military doctors are the main responsibility of Faure. The 16 found here were in all types of army unit, and there is discussion of whether there was any underlying principle of how many soldiers were cared for by each doctor, what the status of doctors was in the army, and whether there was a form of cursus by which they were trained on the job.

The theme of religion also plays an important part here. A table lists the deities to whom doctors dedicated. Inscription no. 57 (from Obernburg) is particularly interesting because the *medicus* of a cohort dedicates to Apollo, Asclepius, Salus and Fortuna to protect the cohort prefect, in fulfilment of a vow. But how far should doctors' devotion to the gods be pushed? R. discusses doctors who are 'conscients des limites de leur art' (65), but this seems to be going too far when there is just one example of a *medicus* dedicating after a vow for the cure of an individual, and two of appeals to the gods to protect a whole unit. And is a dedication to Venus Victrix to be seen as a reference to 'victory' over a disease (90)?

The Open University h.king@open.ac.uk

HELEN KING doi: 10.1017/S0068113X11000286