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The Peripatetic Hippocrates and other Monists in the *Anonymus Londinensis*

This paper will consider the Peripatetic intervention, as we might call it, into the transmission of Hippocratic doctrine on the monism or pluralism of humoral (and physical) constitution of the human body and aetiology of disease. Both Galen and the writer of *Anonymus Londinensis* are firmly committed to the view that Hippocrates held the four-humour theory as described, and polemically defended, in *On the Nature of Man*. Yet the “Aristotle” cited in *Anonymus*, whom we take to be his Peripatetic pupil Menon, attributes to Hippocrates a doctrine preserved in the treatise *Breaths*, which makes air the single cause of disease (V.35-VI.43). When Galen, in his commentary on *On the Nature of Man*, describes the “Menoneia biblia” containing the doxography of ancient doctors which is the basis for our association of Menon with the papyrus, he notes that none of the ancient books which Menon excerpts spoke of yellow or black bile or phlegm as an element of human nature, but only blood was identified as a single constituent, and that by writers after Hippocrates. Galen then disagrees that this could be an accurate report—although Menon was diligent, he had deficient sources—and cites the opening of *On the Nature of Man* as his refutation. Aristotle, as we know, attributed *On the Nature of Man* to Polybus; meanwhile, blood is the single most important bodily “humour” in his own doctrine. *Anonymus Londinensis* discusses many brands of monism and rejects them in favor of a theory of pluralism and balance attributed variously to Hippocrates, Polybus, Plato and others. This paper will trace the appearances of two these two apparently Peripatetic monisms—that of air and that of blood—and their confluences (e.g. in the views of Erasistratus, XXVI.1-XXVII.24) in the treatise of *Anonymus* and attempt to discern a particular antagonism between the “Hippocratic” pluralism of the writer or his proximate source, which takes Plato’s *Timaeus* as its ally, and a monism of air, blood, or their conflation that may be consistent enough to look like a tradition. This monism, as the writer of *On the Nature of Man* already pointed out, is committed to certain schematic or theoretical principles to describe changes in health and variations in disease and identify their causes. If this bent which is rejected can be called philosophical or “rational,” then a defining feature of Hippocrates’ persona is the anti-rationalist and pro-empiricist streak that characterizes pluralism of constitution and emphasis on regimen for causing health and disease. Both the strange Hippocratic “canon” that appears in *Anonymus—Diseases*, *Breaths* and *On the Nature of Man* – and the conflicting ancient evidence about the authorship of *On the Nature of Man* are results of a core quarrel about which side of the debate between monism and pluralism Hippocrates should be aligned with, and the Peripatetics were the chief advocates of Hippocrates the monist.