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World after 1492 and their adoption or rejection; and, finally, their views of the three great Enlightenment stimulants: tea, coffee and chocolate. All this is covered with gusto and not a little scholarship: a wide reading of the original sources as well as of modern literature, drawn from many countries. It will surprise no-one that the doctors knew little of what they wrote. Yesterday's axiom was today's object of derision. Anyone who has suffered trying to keep up with modern dietetic opinion will sympathize. But these manuals, like the slimming schemes of today, had large sales and were widely translated. The great imponderable, however, is the degree to which any of the advice was heeded. There are moments when the influence of Galenic theory can be seen to have had real influence: the Balkan taboo against serving yoghurt with fish may be an example, two cold moist foods would be sudden death to a phlegmatic. But all too often Gentilcore records (with regret perhaps) the trimming of medical advice to the realities of the patients' appetites. In part this was due to the decline of Galenic medicine and the adoption of a chemical or mechanical view of the digestive process. This liberated the doctor, and the diner, from concerns for particular foodstuffs and allowed them to target lifestyles in general such as the perils of over-indulgence and over-complication. That a preoccupation with health is central to our approach to the table is illustrated by the emergence of the modern restaurant, the first instance of which was indeed to *restaurer* the failing bodies of its customers with nourishing broths. So perhaps the doctors are our guides after all.

Helen Caruana Galizia: *The Food and Cookery of Malta and Gozo*: Midsea Books, Malta, 2016: 288 pp., paperback, £19.50 (Amazon).
The first new edition since the last century of this work which saw the light in 1973 (in co-authorship with her sister Anne), then appeared as a Prospect Book in 1997. It has grown quite a lot, and has gathered some excellent photographs from Darrin Zammit Lupi. Pages are either blue or white. If white, they are occupied by recipes; the blue are reserved for lexical, encyclopaedic or informative items on ingredients, food customs, history, and much else besides. Helen Galizia has always been an enthusiast and it shows. Malta is really interesting as a showpiece island cuisine that may be dissected rather as naturalists and Darwinians analyse island ecologies.

Eric C. Rath: *Japan's Cuisines: Food, Place and Identity*: Reaktion Books, 2016: 280 pp., hardback, £30.
To the ignorant, Japan always seems a complex society, yet often susceptible to shorthand definition and explanation. The various styles of Japanese cuisine are defined by single words whose meanings are clearcut. The history of those cuisines also seems explicable by strong timelines and easily identifiable cause

and effect. This book goes some way towards complicating matters and is therefore the more welcome. The prose is strong and clear, the explanations convincing: it should be recommended. He looks at various definitions of Japanese cooking for example the tea cuisine (*cha kaiseki*) or the overarching UNESCO definition of Japanese traditional food culture, *washoku*, as well as the Imperial Rule Assistance Association's wartime 'national socialist' definition of 'national people's cuisine', *kokuminshoku*, and how far these are constructs by internal or external agencies and to what extent they reflect dietary realities. Then he examines the complexities of Japanese diet, both in history and across geographies, and how many aspects of these have gone missing in the last century or two. Here he is really rewarding on the question of grains other than rice, for instance millet. Then, too, he traces the appearance of novelties in the Japanese kitchen such as foreign foods and new meals such as the boxed lunch or *bento*. All this he tries to tie together into a nuanced portrait of attempts to categorize Japan's cookery and food as it really is, and was, and the relation of all these elements to concepts of Japanese identity. Great stuff.

The Colloquia of the Hermeneumata Pseudodositheana. Edited with translation and commentary by Eleanor Dickey. Cambridge University Press.
Vol. 1: *Colloquia Monacensis-Einsidlensia, Leidense-Stephani, and Stephani*: 2012: 275 pp., hardback, £103.
Vol. 2: *Colloquium Harleianum, Colloquium Montepessulanum, Colloquium Celtis, and fragments*: 2015: 356 pp., hardback, £93.00.
It's not a catchy title. Nor is it a typical choice for a review in *PPC*, but anyone interested in ancient Roman food needs to know about these six texts. They are bilingual Latin-Greek conversation manuals and each includes at least two food scenes. They tell us some things about Roman dining that we could hardly know from any other source. This is the only accessible edition there has ever been, and who knows whether there will be another?

The obscurity of these texts explains why my review begins with a confession. When researching for *Empire of Pleasures* (2000) I came across one of these manuals, the *Montepessulanum* or Montpellier text, in its rare first edition, on a dusty shelf in a dark corner of the London Library. I saw its importance for food history, and I could tell that the editor's dating (late second century AD) was reasonable, but I couldn't immediately connect it with any similar texts or find any other edition. I simply translated the text as I saw it. By the time I completed *Food in the Ancient World from A to Z* (2003) I had found the standard edition (in the *Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum*) and at least knew about the other related texts, but I only wish Eleanor Dickey's edition of all of them had appeared about fifteen years earlier.

Here it is now, thank goodness. All six of the known conversation manuals from the Roman Empire are included (but not the glossaries that were