

Galen's Approach to Psychotherapy: *Avoiding Distress and Psychological Affections*
Christopher Gill (University of Exeter)

Key passages from *Avoiding Distress* (= *peri alupias/De Indolentia*).

Text: Boudon-Millot, V., Jouanna, J., and Pietrobelli, A (eds.), *Galien: Ne pas se chagriner* (Paris, 2010)

Translations from Singer, P. (ed.) *Galen: Psychological Writings* (Cambridge, 2013) (trans. V. Nutton).

50-1: *megalopsuchia*: Stoic sense; cf. *SVF* 3.264-5, Cic. *Off.* 1.13, 15, Posid. *Ap. Sen. Ep.* 87.32, 35 (52 refers to Stoic/Cyrenaic method of 'preparation for future disasters').

57-68: precepts only effective for those who already have right nature and upbringing (67, cf. 60) (Platonic-Aristotelian view). G.'s father's (non-philosophical) (59) advice translated into philosophically evocative language (59-68). Connotations: 61 (despising human affairs): *Republic* 486a: the world-view of the 'philosophical nature' is characterised as including the kind of 'magnificence' (*megaloprepeia*) that makes one regard human life as nothing great (*mega*); 604b-c: the rational response to misfortune includes seeing human life as not 'worth great seriousness' (*axion ... megalēs spoudēs*). 62: critique of vulgar and philosophical (Epicurean) hedonism. 63: knowledge of matters human and divine; not Aristotelian but Stoic, cf. *SVF* 2.35, 36, 3.362 (thanks to T. Tieleman). 63-4 implies Stoic wise/non-wise contrast. 65: cf. Stoic indifferents (LS 58). 67: For contrast between *spoudē* and *paidia*, cf. *Phaedrus* 276c-e, philosophical writing (as opposed to oral dialectic) should not be done as something worthy of seriousness (*spoudē*) but as a 'hobby' (*paidia*), 276c7, d3, e1, 5. 68: Aristotelian-style critique of Epicurus: *energein* strongly evokes Aristotle, e.g. his idea of happiness as *activity* in accordance with virtue (*EN* 1.7, 1098a16-17), a theme reiterated by some later Peripatetics (e.g. Stob. 2.46.1017 Wachsmuth).

74-5: pragmatic ideal of minimum conditions for happiness, cast in personal terms, cf. 78, but evocative of Platonic-Aristotelian approach: 3 kinds of good (psychological, physical, external), contrast Stoic-Epicurean ideal of invulnerability to *any* external loss (repudiated in 71-3)

Key passages from *The Diagnosis and Treatment of the Affections and Errors Peculiar to Each Person's Soul* (*Aff. Pecc. Dig.*): short form: *Psychological Affections* (= *Aff. Dig.*), first part of two-part work.

Text: *Claudii Galeni Pergameni, Scripta Minora*, vol. 1, eds. I. Marquardt, I. Mueller, G. Helmreich (Leipzig, 1884, repr. Amsterdam 1967). See also CMG edn. By De Boer (1937), Magnaldi (1999); on text see Singer introd. in Singer (ed) 2013. Translation: Singer in Singer (ed.) 2013.

All refs to Kühn pages in vol. V:

14-17: broadly Stoic (-Epicurean) view of life-long training (possible for everyone); improvement possible at 50 (14); body-psyche analogy: wise person as goal (15), (recognition of grades of improvement more Galenic) (15); passion as 'madness' (for incident in 16, here presented as autobiographical, cf. *PHP* V.414-15 (there ascribed to Chrysippus). Recurrent themes in *Aff. Dig.*: constant self-monitoring (alongside use of supervisor/guide), behavioural advice (do not strike servants in anger; father's advice, 17).

27-8: introduction of (Platonic-Aristotelian) bipartite and tripartite psychology (contrast Stoic unified model), with ref. to *peri ēthōn* which combines P-A part-based psychology and P-A account of development (inborn nature, habituation, education), cf. C. Gill, *Naturalistic Psychology*: 268-72. Distinction between ‘education’ (*paideusis*) of rational part and ‘disciplining’ (*kolasis*) of non-rational part (28).

30-32: despite this psychological distinction and use of non-rational language for (non-rational) psychological parts, the therapeutic method recommended remains cognitive/rational and consists in deliberate self-monitoring/monitoring by others.

37: introduction of second addressee, disturbed young man seeking help; P-A account of ethical development (nature, habituation, education).

40-1: G. as exemplar of P-A account of development; father as exemplar.

42-5: G.’s father’s guidance: ‘consensus’ approach to philosophy: goal of life expression of virtues combined with being *alupoi* (43). Section 41-45 is close in content to *Ind.* 57-68, 78-9, but (I think) more coherent, with themes more smoothly integrated. 43-44: no mention of losses in great fire of 192 – significant or not? On G.’s having sufficient resources, cf. *Ind.* 46, 78, but here with the further point that those with enough should use the excess for good works (44, cf. 48, the good works in G.’s case include medical practice). Here insatiability theme interwoven with avoidance of distress and parental upbringing theme (45 ff.) more smoothly than in *Ind.* where it appears twice as a distinct theme (39-48, 79-84).

51-2: treatment for insatiability, purely cognitive/rational’; note (Stoic) idea that being *alupon* is entirely ‘up to us’ (*eph’ hēmin*), in spite of P-A psychology and account of ethical development offered earlier.

53-4: third addressee/interlocutor: question of whether ingrained faults can be removed after a certain point in life, even if one wants to (cf. Arist. *NE* 3.5, esp. 114a3-21); caution about scope for correction contrasts with 14, which stresses scope for life-long correction.