

## **Mental Disorders in Galen.**

### **A Study of Philosophical and Medical. Investigations into the Problem of the Soul.**

The study examines Galen of Pergamon's philosophical, physiological and clinical ideas at play in his approach to psychic disorders; it is based on a commentary of texts collected from the entire available corpus. Disturbances of the soul are giving rise to a conflict of authority between medicine and philosophy in Antiquity. Galen's engagement in both fields of knowledge as well as apparent tensions within his views on the soul expose the consistency of his works. The first chapter presents his theoretical approach to the problem and argues that the materialistic and teleological perspectives are indeed compatible both with each other and with his agnosticism about the nature of the soul. The second chapter shows that it is not an admission of weakness which would be at odds with his practice; it thus dismisses the idea that the doctor would aim to replace the philosopher. The last two chapters look into the reasons for it and underline a number of factors inhibiting the creation of an overbearing psychopathology; it is first shown that the physician assigns cognitive and emotional disorders to different categories and will mostly take direct action on the first one; a detailed reconstruction of the etiological theories engaged in his diagnostic and therapeutic practice then shows why it is nonetheless deemed difficult to take care of such disorders. The study thus aims at contributing to an unified reading of the Galenic corpus by showing that the tension between systematic thought and theoretical cautiousness finds solution in his practical goal.