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**VINDICIANUS' *GYNAECIA*: IN SEARCH OF THE
MOST RELIABLE TEXT**

Vindicianus' *Gynaecia* was due to its practical nature a very popular treatise in the early Middle Ages – in fact, it was, according to Langslow (2000:65) “one of the standard texts on anatomy and physiology in the pre-Salernitan period”. Consequently many copies were made at an early stage: the text of the *Gynaecia* was transmitted in 13 manuscripts which are greatly divergent regarding scope and formulation and in most cases very poorly copied. To make matters even more complicated, various other manuscripts contain texts which are alleged to be related in content to the *Gynaecia* and are thus attributed to Vindicianus.

In this paper I would first like to delimit the field by determining which of the texts attributed to Vindicianus were really written by him. The main part of the paper will be an investigation of the section on conception and embryology in the texts of the *Gynaecia*. The texts containing this section are those in the 12th century Codex Monacensis (=M) and the five manuscripts assembled by Valentin Rose (the Codices Sangallensis [10th c.], Laurentianus [11th c.], Parisinus 11218 [8th/9th c.], Parisinus 4883 [9th c.] and Casinensis [10th c.]).

Possible explanation for the divergence in the texts are remarks added by readers, such as medical students, or lay persons and traveling doctors, all of whom, we may surmise, would have added remarks from their own experience. Scribes in the monasteries would also sometimes have added remarks and analogies/examples to explain the text. Many of these additions eventually found their way into the MSS. And as the MSS to be copied deteriorated, fanciful reconstructions crept in. It is thus not possible to make a unified text. The best that can be done, is to find the most reliable text, and in my paper I intend to demonstrate that the best text is that in the 12th century Codex Monacensis. In the chapters on conception and the development of the fetus it nowhere differs radically from the five Rose MSS, the Latin text makes sense, and it is the most complete.