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points of similarity as difficulty of the problem, method of investigation and proof, style of organization, and writing techniques are highlighted in each work. Finally, in her conclusion, the author contends that the greatest similarities between the scientific and poetic works of Haller are in their subject matter, but that philosophical and religious themes are common to both as well.

This study unfortunately has many weaknesses, the most serious of which is its simplistic level of analysis. The author does not really go beyond the obvious comparisons, such as listing words used to describe natural objects that are common to the early poems and the botanical works, or pointing out that Haller discusses the sensory and reasoning processes in both 'Gedanken über Vernunft, Aberglauben und Unglauben' and in the *Elementa physiologiae*. Analogies are often forced, for example when, in the last chapter, the experimental method in Haller's investigation of irritability and sensibility is likened to the detailed enumeration of events and the repetition of key ideas in the poem 'Ueber den Ursprung des Uebels'. There is no attempt to venture beyond the realm of similarities between the two classes of works to analyse causal influences or even common roots.

Furthermore, the portrait painted of Haller as scientist is equally simplistic, which is difficult to understand with such studies as those of Hintzsche, Sonntag, and Toellner at hand. Haller's scientific method is presented quite naïvely, for example, in the first chapter, where we are told that Haller's scientific world view was based on compiling, naming, experimenting, organizing, and theorizing. This is not necessarily wrong, but the author simply presents these concepts with no attempt to analyse their meaning or function.

Finally, it is surprising that the author makes no mention of a long-standing debate in Haller scholarship, brought to a head with Toellner's monograph of 1971, over whether there is unity or disharmony between Haller's scientific and poetic writings. (One has only to recall the title of Hochdoerfer's 1932 work, *The conflict between the religious and scientific views of Albrecht von Haller*.) Nor is there any discussion of the fact that the poetic works are all early writings, ending in 1736, whereas the scientific works cited are principally from the 1750s and 1760s. This does not necessarily mean that a discontinuity between the two classes of works exists. But to use, for example, a discussion of perception and sensation published in the 1760s to illuminate a poem of 1729 requires justification.

Haller is admittedly a many-faceted and complex figure, as the enormous amount of secondary literature on him demonstrates. Yet the level that Haller scholarship has attained in recent years with the work of Guthke and others previously mentioned is unfortunately not equalled in this study.

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WILLIAM HARVEY, *Disputations touching the generation of animals*, translated, with introduction and notes, by Gweneth Whitteridge, Oxford, Blackwell Scientific Publications, 1981, 8vo, pp. lxvi, 502, £25.00

The appearance of a new edition of Harvey's last work makes the heart of the historian beat a little faster. *On the generation of animals* has tended to be neglected in our obsessive concentration on Harvey's earlier book, on the heart. Certainly it has been relatively neglected as a book in its own right – though it has been widely plundered for information which might "throw light" on *De motu cordis*. An edition of *On the generation of animals* which claims to be translated from the Latin, and to be furnished with an introduction and notes, seems especially to be welcomed.

Unfortunately, this book, though beautifully produced, is not the edition we were hoping for. In the first place, it is not in fact a translation from the Latin after all. Instead, Dr Whitteridge has taken the anonymous English translation of 1653 and "updated" it. It is thus a curious amalgam of seventeenth- and twentieth-century prose. No indication is given of where departures either from the Latin or from the 1653 English edition have been introduced. So one

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cannot tell, just by looking at it, what the *status* of the work is. Comparison with the Latin and with earlier translations reveals that it can lay claim only to being a “version”, and a very idiosyncratic one at that. Certainly it makes reasonably smooth reading, but if we are interested in what Harvey said or meant, it will still be necessary to go back to the Latin; and going back to the Latin reveals that Dr Whitteridge’s readings are sometimes questionable and occasionally downright wrong.

The editorial apparatus makes matters no clearer. Harvey’s text is pre-eminently *technical*, and it has a terminology to match. This applies to Harvey’s own extensive Preface as much as it does to the body of the text itself. If we fail to understand the account Harvey offers of his enterprise in the Preface, because it is expressed in technical language, then we are unlikely to make much sense of the hundreds of pages which follow (except at the most superficial level as a series of experiments and observations). Yet the technicalities of the Preface are left completely unexplained. Instead of glossing the text, Dr Whitteridge has simply glossed over the difficulties it presents to the twentieth-century reader. At least in the 1653 English version the technical terms were rendered into an equally technical English!

So the text has been briskly revamped, and the textual difficulties have been elided. An equally radical solution has been found for the problems presented by the very title of the book: Harvey’s *Exercitationes* has simply and boldly been transformed into *Disputations*. If this is what Harvey meant to call the book, why did he not do so? The two words are different because they mean different things: they are not synonyms.

It would seem that Dr Whitteridge undertook this project primarily because it is associated with that great name, Harvey. (Let us be honest, it would be hard to persuade a publisher to give this treatment to a seventeenth-century work on generation if it were by any other author.) But her working image of Harvey – as a modern scientist before his time – just is not broad or dispassionate enough for her to make much sense of this book, and it is remarkable that she nowhere offers any suggestion as to why anyone today should read it. Instead she apologises for it, as if it were the work of a great scientist in his dotage: Harvey had to “fall back on logical argument, and appeal to reason and probability to support his conclusions” (p. xxx). It is clear that this is far from the right way for a scientist like Harvey to go about things, in Dr Whitteridge’s view. The most she can offer to make the work seem significant is to pull out a tired old list of Harvey’s supposed “contributions to the future study of embryology” (p. lii). But whether “the future study of embryology” was in fact affected by these “contributions” of Harvey is an *empirical* matter; yet no evidence is offered to support the case. It is such a pity that so many chances have been lost here, and that we are still in need of an adequate new translation and edition of *On the generation of animals*.

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JACQUES POSTEL, *Genèse de la psychiatrie. Les premiers écrits de Philippe Pinel*, Paris, Le Sycamore, 1981, 8vo, pp. 312, [no price stated].

Jacques Postel’s *Genèse de la psychiatrie* traces the career of Philippe Pinel, and the development of his writings on madness, prior to the publication of the *Traité médico-philosophique sur l’aliénation mentale* in 1801. The approach which Postel, a practising psychiatrist, adopts in his study is that of the demythologizer. He is forthrightly critical in his analysis of Pinel’s famous act of unchaining the insane who were placed under his care at Bicêtre, seeing this much-heralded liberatory gesture as a minor episode in the context of Pinel’s own career, but one which became inflated with mythical significance as the substantive content of Pinel’s work on insanity was abandoned by successive French psychiatrists.

More than a third of this book consists of reprints of Pinel’s early writings, a fact which is signalled by Postel’s subtitle. These texts are introduced and interconnected by Postel’s commentaries; and although many of them have previously been published by other scholars in various journals, it is nevertheless convenient to have them assembled here in chronological