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a Pergamene, friend of Galen's father, who had come to Rome ten years before Galen (p. 157), and later impugns Galen's motives on the basis of the supposed family connexion (p. 160). No evidence is cited, and there is none. The background here is that J. Ilberg, *Neue Jahrb.* 1905, 15: 286-287, conjectured that Eudemus must have been part of a kind of Pergamene Mafia whose members boosted one another in Rome, *may* have known Galen's father, etc. These conjectures were presented as facts in the *Prosopographia Imperii Romani*, 2nd ed., 1944 (the 1st ed., 1897, lacks the errors). We are in difficulties where, as here, our basic reference materials enshrine misinformation, especially where, as with Galen's voluminous writings, we lack dependable texts, indices, and collections of material such as this edition by Nutton sets out to provide. Hence we may be grateful for the feast we have before us to digest.

Finally, on the subject of digesting the material, a remark about Nutton's summary statements concerning "the meaning and purpose of prognosis in ancient and Galenic medicine." Nutton seems much more inclined than I would be to take Galen at his own valuation: "There can be no dispute over Galen's skill in prognosis and of the reputation he gained thereby, even though it was occasionally attributed to magic and divination" (p.232). Galen is our only witness for his methods and for his success. He also gives us his reasoning: e.g., in an apparently malarial condition, Galen could predict that the crisis would be complete and the disease totally disappear because he felt in the artery "an upward movement even more than a lateral expansion," which informed him that the body's Nature was about to cast off the morbid element in the humours by one of the various routes for evacuating excrement (p. 85-89). Clearly we should not prefer Galen's rationality to our own. We should not lament that others chose the Methodist reasoning rather than practise feeling *that* pulse, nor that medical prediction "degenerated" into the medieval Prognostica before confirming, where we can, Galen's facts and affirming his reasoning. Short of that, we are limited to drawing the lines between what we know and do not know.

FRANCOISE LOUX, *L'Homme et son corps dans la société traditionnelle*, with a preface by Jean Cuisenier, Paris, Editions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1978, 8vo, pp. 145, illus., [no price stated].

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Although this attractively produced and well-illustrated volume was the official record of exhibitions held in Paris and Nantes in 1978, it is of far more than ephemeral interest. In her opening general essay, in the introductions to each section, and in her explanatory notes for each exhibit, Mme Loux distils the essence of the researches which she and other French scholars have been pursuing into the hermeneutics of the body in pre-industrial society. Working within an anthropology suggested by Durkheim and Mauss, Mme Loux is particularly concerned with the body as the focus of symbolic cosmological meanings (as is stressed in the conclusion: 'L'Homme, son corps, et l'univers'), and with the uses of the body to mark the passage from "nature" to "civilization" (section 1: 'Le corps, fondement de la vie sociale' and section 2: 'Le corps civilisé').

Sickness and death, health and medicine, are treated in a section on 'Risques et

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protections', where Mme Loux is especially illuminating on the traditional "sagesses du corps" of peasant society – though, as she emphasizes, the crucial divide in France was not so much between "popular" and "scientific" medicine, but between the "underground" and the "official". That is to say, élite medical practice was characterized more by its formal sanctions, than by any unique truth or efficacy it possessed. Here, as elsewhere, Mme Loux's own exhaustive researches into French proverbs about the body provide a bridge between intellectual analysis and personal experience: "Où est le corps, là est la mort"; "Trois fléaux se disputeront toujours la terre: la peste, la famine, et la guerre".

Finally, this book offers interesting food for cross-cultural thought. One is struck by how frequently traditional French representations of the body are suffused with the iconography of Catholicism. One suspects that an equivalent book about the English experience would be more secular in its orientations. And it is also noteworthy how often traditional French images of sickness and health survive in modern forms – in twentieth-century patent medicine advertisements for example. Is this specifically because of the survival of the French peasantry into the contemporary world? Or does it point to a quasi-Jungian conclusion about the archetypal nature of our symbols?

IAN MACLEAN, *The Renaissance notion of woman: A study in the fortunes of scholasticism and medical science in European intellectual life*, Cambridge University Press, 1980, 8vo, pp. viii, 199, £7.50.

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This is a very orderly and succinct book, which contains a great deal of erudition in a small space. But the virtues of tidiness and brevity are, I think, carried to excess. The numbering of paragraphs in the manner of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus* is not suited to historical writing and forces the author's thought into an over-rigid framework, with the result that important facts and aspects of his subject are either omitted or relegated to footnotes. The extreme brevity reinforces this result and also prevents frequent and extensive quotation, although there is an appendix (but of only three pages) of extracts from original sources. Thus we know most of the writers cited only through the barest, driest summary of their views. In some cases, such summaries can be extremely misleading: for example, the presentation of Guillaume's *Les très-merveilleuses victoires des femmes du nouveau monde* as a feminist tract, without any hint that this work announces the advent of a female Messiah, or the discussion of Platonic love without any mention of homosexuality.

With regard to Renaissance medicine, it seems to me extraordinary that the question of female orgasm should be treated only in a footnote. The widespread Galenic view that women emitted semen, by which was meant, not ova, but vaginal fluid, and that this was necessary to procreation, entailed the conclusion that no woman could produce a child without having experienced sexual pleasure during its conception. In Fernel's *Medicina*, which remained a standard textbook into the seventeenth century, we read of certain frigid little women (*mulierculae*) who claimed to have conceived without orgasm (*sine voluptate*); but the wise doctor knew better than to believe such prudish nonsense. This belief must have been of the utmost importance in married life, and certainly deserves fuller treatment than one footnote.