

of animal descriptions in which the authors grappled with the “newness” of the creatures found by using an empirical approach, describing what they experienced or urging their readers to trust the information presented because it had come from eyewitness accounts. Chapter 4 turns to the more “utilitarian” genres of medical encyclopaedias of both Spanish and Dutch origins that would provide useful and strategic information, while chapter 5 treats various Jesuit texts, such as those of Nieremberg, Kircher, and Schott, that sought to explain New World nature and the wonders it included with mystical or natural theology. Finally, chapter 6 turns to a final phase of natural history writing in which mainly British and French naturalists made a decisive move away from earlier attempts to explain the newness of New World animals in terms of ancient models, natural theology, or Scholastic philosophy. Rather, these authors came up with a new method that eschewed the Aristotelian search for causes and developed a fully empirical, observational, and experimental method by which to record data and form new plant and animal taxonomies.

In its careful attention to detail and exhaustive sources, this work is a valuable contribution to the history of science and the history of the Americas. However, its encyclopaedic organization makes it more valuable as a reference work. It would have greatly benefited from more engagement with recent publications in the history of science, particularly those treating the history of wonder and curiosity in early modern Europe (that of Lorraine Daston and Katharine Park in particular), and those focusing on Spain’s contribution to the Scientific Revolution, especially that of Antonio Barrera. In particular, reference to Barrera’s work on the development of an empirical method in sixteenth-century Spain would have helped to clarify the significance of their findings and contextualize their discussions of empiricism. It might even perhaps have pointed to a somewhat different conclusion than the one they reach: that the later English and French methods were not so

decisively different, but rather built upon earlier Iberian precedents.

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Emilie Savage-Smith, *A descriptive catalogue of Oriental manuscripts at St John's College, Oxford*, with contributions by Geert Jan van Gelder, Peter E Pormann, Samira Sheikh, Tim Stanley, Edward Ullendorff, Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. xix, 155, 21 colour plates, 16 black and white plates, £60.00 (hardback 0-19-920195-1).

The word “Oriental”, as applied to the cultures of the East, has in recent years declined in usage, and been replaced by “Asian”, a term which does not, however, fully reflect European scholarly tradition. “Oriental” encompasses all the cultures of Asia and Africa. In many instances Asian and African cultures were interconnected, and used the same languages as, for example, Arabic Islamic culture on the Arab peninsula and in Egypt. This new catalogue is in fact a continuation of the traditional British Orientalist “*catalogues raisonnés*”, reflecting both the diversity of Oriental cultures and the “Orientalist” approach to them by European manuscript collectors.

The catalogue describes in detail twenty-six completely uncatalogued or partly catalogued manuscripts preserved in the Library of St John’s College, Oxford. Written in Arabic, Persian, Syriac, Hebrew, Ethiopian, Turkish and Gujarati, the manuscripts came to the College library through various avenues. In general they were donated by the Fellows of St John’s or other people connected to the College. Fifteen, for example, were donated by the statesman and theologian, Archbishop William Laud (d. 1645). Of these fifteen, eight belonged previously to the physicist, naval commander and diplomat Sir Kenelm Digby (d. 1665). The rest belonged to other scholars and clergymen, such as Edward Bernard

(d. 1697, Savilian Professor of Astronomy from 1673 to 1691), John Pointer (d. 1754), Matthias Turner (who was at Balliol College from 1618 to 1632), William Stoddard (Fellow of St John's from 1828 to 1853 and later vicar of Charlbury), John Trott (who in 1806 held a BA from St John's) and the otherwise unknown Charles Stafford Playdell. The whole collection encompasses forty-one works written by various authors, fifteen of whom can be identified.

The subjects and themes represented are quite diverse. They include works written in Arabic and Persian on astronomy (entries nos. 1–18), mathematics (nos. 19–21), the military arts (no. 22), encyclopaedias and compendia (nos. 23–24), belles-lettres (no. 25), *ḥadīth* and *fiqh* (nos. 26–27), Qur'ans (nos. 28–32), and the Old Testament (nos. 33–34). These are followed by a thirteenth-century bilingual Latin–Hebrew manuscript transcribed in England, which contains four books from the Old Testament; a copy of a Hebrew conveyance of land in Gamlingay (a village in Cambridgeshire) from William of Leister to Walter de Merton, founder of Merton College, Oxford; and an official letter in Ottoman Turkish from a senior member of the Ottoman government, written in Constantinople in 1618. Entries 38–41 describe a Syriac manuscript of a theological treatise known as *Causa causarum*; two Ethiopian works; and a navigational text in Gujarati. Appendix II deserves a special mention. Usually poetry, along with scribbles and occasional notes in manuscripts, are not recorded in learned manuscript catalogues. This conceals from researchers many revealing details of everyday life, traces of traditional learning, or even emotions. Geert van Gelder has collected twenty-three poetical fragments and edited them in Arabic and Latin transliterations accompanied by translations into English. The catalogue includes six useful concordances. In addition, it is lavishly illustrated with colour and monochrome photographs (altogether thirty-seven plates).

Emilie Savage-Smith has specified two important parameters to the conventional form

of entry: paper and script. Traditionally the compilers of learned manuscript catalogues have dealt only with the written word. They forget that every manuscript is a complex object, which, in addition to that of the authors, bears traces of the activity of other people, such as scribes, binders, paper-makers, dyers, illuminators, etc. Their endeavours, as evidenced in the binding, paper, and handwriting, was generally referred to only to ascertain the date or the authorship of the written work. It is not by chance that, for example, palaeography and metrology were considered “auxiliary disciplines” (cf. the German: *Hilfsdisziplinen*). A modern historian or a specialist in paper who would like to study, for example, medieval paper-making or palaeography in the relevant entries of such catalogues will find only such “informative” remarks as “thick yellowish paper” or “small elegant naskh”.

By contrast Savage-Smith has made a successful attempt to clarify these two aspects. She has introduced an effective system of measurement to identify the size of the script and paid special attention to the description of paper according to colour, thickness and opaqueness. The paper colour has been determined by comparing pages towards the inner part of the manuscript with fan decks of colour samples (in the 5Y and 10Y range) using the “Munsell system” (formerly known as the Centroid Colour Charts devised by the US National Bureau of Standards), grouped into six sets defined as “ivory”, “cream”, “beige”, “biscuit”, “brown”, “grey”, within each of which there are a range of tones. The thickness of the paper was measured by a micrometer; a range of values was given. For identification of opaqueness (or translucency) the recently devised Sharp Scale (named after its inventor Henrietta Sharp) has been used, according to which the paper can be categorized in terms of the number of folios required before the outline of the dowel held behind the folio(s) is no longer visible when illuminated from behind with a constant light of 60 watts at an approximate distance of 15 cm.

To sum up: this catalogue is not only a helpful reference-tool but also that rare thing, a very interesting read indeed.

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Jarrett Rudy, *The freedom to smoke: tobacco consumption and identity*, Montreal and London, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2006, pp. xiii, 234, £57.00, \$75.00 (hardback 978-0-7735-2910-6); £17.95, \$27.95 (paperback 978-0-7735-2911-3).

The central argument of this book is that liberal ideals—of the individual as a “rational”, “self-possessed” person—structured rituals of smoking in turn of the century Montreal: “from the purchase of tobacco, to who was to smoke, to how one was supposed to smoke, to where one smoked” (p. 5). Tobacco connoisseurship emphasized moderation and exemplified gendered spatial and social norms. Until the First World War, smoking was almost wholly a masculine pastime; and tobacco connoisseurship was founded on a hierarchy of products and tastes, symbolizing wealth and power. The Cuban cigar topped the hierarchy, and Rudy provides a fascinating analysis of how “Cuban” as a cultural category was created through the imagining of race, gender and *terroir* (the knowledge of the farmer, the quality of his soil and the suitability of the climate for growing tobacco). For working-class men, pipe smoking was a central part of cultural life, although there is less evidence of the hierarchies and rituals involved.

Through the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, as Rudy shows, these liberal notions of smoking were challenged from three directions: the Women's Christian Temperance Union's (WCTU) anti-smoking movement, the growth of mass produced cigarette consumption, and an increase in smoking among women. In broad outline, *The freedom to smoke* recalls Matthew Hilton's *Smoking in British popular culture 1800–2000*,

and Rudy acknowledges this influence. However, the distinguishing feature of *The freedom to smoke* is its permeating analysis of ethnicity; indeed, the backdrop of Montreal is perfect for cross-cultural comparisons. Differences between Anglophone and francophone female smoking are tantalizingly touched upon, and racial and religious differences teased out in discussion of oppositional discourses to smoking more generally. As in the United States, the WCTU's prohibitionist stance was shaped by social gospel Protestantism, but also by national concerns about physical and moral degeneration. French Canadian Catholics opposed juvenile smoking on degeneration grounds, but supported moderation among adults. But most compelling is Rudy's analysis of the social position of rural French Canadian tobacco, *le tabac canadien*, which provided a counter culture to liberal smoking norms.

The liberal construction of smoking appears to be an Anglophone one, and while elements of the Francophone population subscribed to these notions, Rudy details the enduring popularity of rural French Canadian tobacco. Although rejected by the urban liberal bourgeoisie, rural French Canadian tobacco had a rich heritage. Home-grown and characterized by small-scale distribution methods, it remained untaxed by the Canadian government until well into the twentieth century, an anomaly in the western world. Rudy explores the clash of urban and rural cultures, as many rural French Canadians migrated to the city. He also shows the march of industrial agriculture and the influence of multinational corporations, as distinctive French Canadian tobacco was transformed into a blander product, suitable for cross-cultural, even international, tastes.

The chronology is hard to follow at times, because many developments were contemporaneous, and the interwar period is only sketched in. Detail on the multinationals and their history in Canada is frustratingly thin: it is not clear, for example, what, if any, relation