

tion of a clear and straightforward connection to present biology serves well to advocate the relevance of the history of science for those in the sciences.

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**Kimberly Anne Coles; Ralph Bauer; Zita Nunes; Carla L. Peterson** (Editors). *The Cultural Politics of Blood, 1500–1900*. xvi + 274 pp., figs., index. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. \$95 (cloth).

This collection of essays, edited by former and current professors of English at the University of Maryland, is the result of the 2011 conference “Bloodwork: The Politics of the Body, 1500–1900.” The authors aim to “explore how ideas about ‘blood’ in science and literature have supported, at various points in history and in various places in the circum-Atlantic world, fantasies of human embodiment and human difference that serve to naturalize existing hierarchies” (www.palgrave.com). The circum-Atlantic world, it should be noted, is limited here to the Anglo-Iberian world. The editors argue that this choice has been made owing to the similar colonial interests and the resulting complex political relationships of England and Spain. However, other seafaring nations with colonial interests and complex political relations with these countries, such as the Low Countries, France, and Portugal, have not been taken into account.

In the introduction, the editors claim that the book explores how medical theory concerning the nature of blood has been used to naturalize hierarchies of human difference already in place and how it shaped cultural and political agendas. The essays in the first part of the book, “Race and Stock,” do so only to a limited extent. Although Rachel L. Burk’s discussion of the body/book discourse in seventeenth-century Spain draws fascinating parallels between the role of documents in the establishment of “blood purity” of books and human beings, the role of contemporary medical theory remains underexposed. The same goes for Jean E. Feerick’s otherwise interesting essay on the questioning of “hereditary race” in Fletcher’s and Milton’s pastoral plays. Ruth Hill argues that “folkbiology” became harnessed to the ideology of Eurocentrism in the early modern Spanish world, but although she invokes recent debate on the innateness of the human tendency to categorize other humans as kinds, what is lacking are references to recent work on the early modern development and fluidity of categories of plant, animal, and human and an explanation of the necessity of the neologism “folkbiology.” Lyndon J. Dominique’s reflection on the tensions between African blood and colonial money in eighteenth-century English novels is excellent. He shows how in many of these novels blood is a self-reflexive political tool, reinforcing rather than deconstructing notions of African (dis)respectability. It would be fascinating to explore further the connections between contemporary medical theories of blood and these works.

The second part of the book focuses on the relation between blood and moral constitution. M. Lindsay Kaplan argues that the Jewish somatic inferiority constructed in medieval theology through the anal bleeding of Jewish male bodies as a punishment from God for the crucifixion could not be supported by medical theory but eventually disappeared because of changing social structures rather than because of scholarly disqualification. It is a fascinating argument, although Kaplan wrestles with the anachronistic use of the term “scientific.” Anna More’s piece on sensory perception and desire in Sor Juana’s seventeenth-century “First Dream” poem is interesting but seems to have little to do with the central topic of the volume. Hannah Spahn’s chapter on blood and character in early African-American literature, by contrast, offers a meticulous analysis of the intersections of medical and metaphorical understandings of blood in this genre.

The third part of *The Cultural Politics of Blood, 1500–1900*, focuses on the medicalization of the political body. Robert Appelbaum convincingly argues that William Harvey's discovery of the circulation of blood in 1626 not only thoroughly changed the medical understanding of blood but also heavily influenced Hobbes's and Burton's ideas about the body politic. Subsequently, Staffan Müller-Wille explores why the concept of human variety, which formed the basis for the concept of race, played only a minor role in Linnaeus's physiological and medical ideas about the human body. James Downs discusses the meanings of "blood" and "bloody" in sources describing the Civil War and Reconstruction and the shocking lack of accounts of the blood of blacks that was shed in this period. The book closes with an interesting essay by David Sartorius, who links changing concepts of blood, race, and political allegiance in nineteenth-century Cuba to one another, using theories from semantics as well as the history and philosophy of science.

This volume definitely has its merits, although a historian of science may feel that it lacks links to relevant recent work in the field, in terms of both historiography and bibliography. This can be explained from the background of the authors: of the fifteen contributors, only three seem to identify as historians or historians of science. However, for anyone interested in how ideas about blood, medical and otherwise, were historically reflected in literature in the Anglo-Iberian Atlantic world, this book, with its list of suggested further reading, forms an excellent starting point.

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**Benjamin A. Elman** (Editor). *Antiquarianism, Language, and Medical Philology: From Early Modern to Modern Sino-Japanese Medical Discourses*. (Sir Henry Wellcome Asian Series, 12.) viii + 232 pp., figs., index. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2015. \$135 (cloth).

Scholarship in the field of East Asian medical history was long concerned with reconstructing singular systems of knowledge, such as "Chinese medicine," "Ayurveda," or "Kanpo." Only in the 1970s was the process of collecting and evaluating historical sources challenged by an orientation toward the varieties of medical practice. Along with this growing concern for concrete medical actions and practices, historians began to realize the significant role of entanglements between places, people, and medical practices. Academic publications on the history of Chinese medicine nowadays span huge distances within changing Chinese borders and into Europe, America, Africa, and Australia, across the course of two thousand years.

The book under review is seemingly concerned with entanglements and dynamics between different regions. However, its scope is restricted in space to China and Japan and in time to the period from early modern (twelfth century) to modern times. With a strong focus on the domain related to working with texts, terms, grammatical structures, chronologies, translation, and the transmission of knowledge, it deals with the role of philology as a force of decanonization and delegitimation of conventional knowledge. The essays are the outcome of a series of research seminars on "East Asian medical philology" held at Princeton University from 2009 to 2012. In his introduction, "Rethinking the Sino-Japanese Medical Classics: Antiquarianism, Languages, and Medical Philology" (pp. 1–18), Benjamin Elman addresses the overall topic of the book: How did physicians in early modern China and Japan, who eagerly searched for a perfect philology in order to reduce confusion and misunderstanding in medicine, make use of philology? How did they read, reread, and compile ancient texts from different genres, and how did they put these texts into medical practice?