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fool” or the wily “artificial fool” like Friedrich Taubmann who served as “merry counselor” to the electors of Saxony. Midelfort’s discussion of court buffoons, like his closing chapters on pilgrims and hospital inmates, exploits little-known, or insufficiently utilized, archival and printed literature in ways that help overturn facile generalizations. ‘Pilgrims in Search of Reason’ mines miracle books to round out the picture of the mad in the sixteenth century. Although the percentage of the mad who went on pilgrimages or who were cured at healing shrines was always small (only 7 per cent of all cases reported in the Franconian miracle books), these sources expose the madness of simple men and women and how they and their families sought cures for mental disturbances.

The final sort of “madness” to which Midelfort turns is madness defined as “simple helplessness”, that is, the madness of those who found their way into hospitals. Midelfort uses the records of two reformation hospitals, one in a Catholic and one in a Protestant part of Germany, to discuss the relative medicalization of madness in the sixteenth century. Not surprisingly, Midelfort’s findings support what is now pretty much a new orthodoxy on early modern hospitals: medical treatments were attempted, conditions were not horrible, and the mad were neither mistreated nor forced to labour. They were “certainly not part of any ‘great confinement’” (p. 383).

The strength of Midelfort’s book rests to a large extent on the deep knowledge of sixteenth-century society, legal thought, and religion he brings to the subject. His earlier work on witchcraft informs his lucid treatment here, allowing him to weave witchcraft persecutions into the larger fabric of madness in the sixteenth century without naively claiming that “witches were mad”. The sweep of his inquiry, his willingness to open the boundaries of madness beyond our

contemporary understanding of it and to see the mad with sixteenth-century eyes make the book absolutely compelling and overwhelmingly persuasive. If one might quibble that not quite everything he treats—such as social impotence or contrived folly—fits so neatly within the domain of madness, or that in expanding the frontiers of madness, its definition also begins to blur, Midelfort would only reply that if we restrict madness to “a few categories that serve our political or moral purposes . . . we do it an injustice” (p. 321) and simultaneously deny the validity of sixteenth-century reality and the subtlety of sixteenth-century thought.

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David Gentilcore, *Healers and healing in early modern Italy*, Social and Cultural Values in Early Modern Europe, Manchester University Press, 1998, pp. xiii, 240, illus., £45.00 (0-7190-4199-6).

This book is conceived as a comprehensive description of medical and other healing practices, together with the institutions that shaped them, in the kingdom of Naples between about 1600 and 1800. The region, Gentilcore argues, was awash with sources of healing; these included not only the relatively well defined occupational groups of physicians, surgeons, barbers, and apothecaries, but also monastery and hospital infirmarers and nurses, midwives and itinerant sellers of nostrums, cunning men and women in city and countryside, and a variety of saints and holy people, both dead and alive. These healers formed a highly pluralistic therapeutic network, which offered three distinct, though overlapping

types of healing, medical, popular, and ecclesiastical. Each realm had its characteristic disease categories and etiologies, as well as its characteristic therapeutic techniques.

Gentilcore's account of this rich and complicated world of healing rests on a wide variety of sources: institutional statutes, judicial records, hagiographical works, and medical and demonological treatises. (The licensing records for this period have unfortunately not survived). Although a capable writer of institutional history, Gentilcore's heart lies with the methods of medical anthropology, and his last two chapters, on illness narratives and religious healing, are the most successful and original in the book. In them, he offers both a convincing account of the dramatic shifts in ecclesiastical healing associated with the Counter-Reformation—most notably an increasing reliance on exorcism—and a splendid example of medical history written from the patient's point of view.

Gentilcore's book is more focused on religious healing than Gianna Pomata's pathbreaking study, *Contracting a cure: patients, healers, and the law in early modern Bologna* (English translation published by Johns Hopkins University Press in 1998). Despite this, and despite important political and institutional differences between Naples and Bologna, Pomata and Gentilcore come to a number of similar conclusions. In particular, both reject the characterization of early modern Italian medical practice as professional in any meaningful sense of the word. As Gentilcore argues, the Neapolitan medical authorities, which were drawn from the highest ranks of the kingdom's university educated physicians, did not aim to monopolize or even to control the business of healing as a whole (though they were very concerned to monitor the work of apothecaries). Nor did they attempt to impose any kind of unity on the various forms of medical practice.

Rather, they defended the distinctness of each, reinforcing the boundaries between them, while simultaneously protecting their own status and prestige.

There is much more to praise in this broadly conceived and nuanced book. Gentilcore offers a useful critique of the idea of the "medical marketplace", pointing out that patients were motivated in their choice of healers at least as much by cultural allegiances as by economic concerns. (Indeed, the services of cunning folk and religious healers might be as expensive as those of licensed surgeons and physicians). His discussion of the differences between ecclesiastical and popular models of saintly healing is as much a contribution to the history of Counter-Reformation spirituality as to the history of medicine, and his analysis of pre-modern patient narratives is unique in its subtlety and detail.

If this book has a weakness, it is in the relatively static character of the story it tells. Gentilcore is more interested in laying out the logic and the contours of the therapeutic network that shaped southern Italian healing practices than he is in analysing change over time. Toward the end of *Healers and healing*, he notes that the eighteenth century saw the decline of medical pluralism, as embodied in the interrelationship between the semi-autonomous realms of medical, ecclesiastical, and popular healing, and the emergence of a "medical consensus" and of two separate healing cultures, high and low. Yet he offers no explanation for this important development, other than vague references to the "enlightenment spirit" or "enlightenment trends" (p. 198). This is, however, a minor criticism in the context of the book as a whole. *Healers and healing* is not a historical narrative but a convincing portrait of a rich therapeutic world, which shows the impossibility of isolating the practice of learned physicians from the universe of religious, magical,

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commercial, and technical traditions in which it was so deeply embedded.

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Jonathan Woolfson, *Padua and the Tudors: English students in Italy, 1485–1603*, Cambridge, James Clarke, 1999, pp. xii, 322, £40.00 (0-2276-7942-3).

Given the importance of Padua in the English renaissance of the sixteenth century, it is surprising that there has been no detailed study of just what English students, travellers, and spies learned when they were there, or of their impact once back in England. Medical historians have long been familiar with “Linacre tradition” and “the lure of Padua”, but Jonathan Woolfson puts their conclusions into a wider context. He shows that more lawyers than intending physicians studied at Padua, and makes out a strong case for the influence of Paduan legal thought on English law, especially at the end of the sixteenth century. He also explores, more suggestively, the various ways in which the returning students interpreted to their fellow Englishmen the lessons they had gained from Italy about state organization or simply the latest in literary trends. The book concludes with a very valuable listing of all Englishmen known to have been in Padua in the sixteenth century. It deliberately excludes English travellers known only from records of stays in Venice, although most would have passed through Padua, and names only doubtfully associated with Padua. Here one might feel that the line has been too narrowly drawn. Thomas Vavasour and George Turner, Catholic exiles who took a medical degree from the Studio in Venice, will almost certainly have studied in Padua, and Edmund Fornell, or Tornell, of Salisbury, graduated in philosophy in Venice in 1593 and in theology at Padua in 1594,

see Richard Palmer, *The studio of Venice*, 1983.

The role of Padua in the development of English medicine is generally well covered, although interesting details are missed, and the name of J J Bylebyl disappears completely on page 178. The Italian bias imparted to the College of Physicians by Linacre, Chambers, and many early members is rightly noted, but the increased support given to the College by Cardinal Pole under Mary Tudor is passed over. Given how many of the College’s leading members had been Pole’s friends in Padua, it is not surprising that he took the College’s side in its attempts to impose its will on the recalcitrant English universities. Reference to Sir George Clark’s *History of the College* or to Christopher Brooke’s *History of Caius College* would have helped to explain the influence of Padua and medical teachers like Da Monte, while at the same time also pointing out what was not brought back. John Friar’s Greek library may also have included an important volume (or two) of Galen, the mysterious Codex Adelphi.

One major theme hardly discussed is religion. Numbers of Englishmen at Padua fluctuated considerably, a fact not entirely explicable by a definition of the English Nation that might include Bretons, Burgundians, and Piedmontese. Several Marian exiles, like William Turner, made their way briefly to Padua, but many of those who studied there in the 1560s onwards were Catholic exiles or had Catholic sympathies. William Harvey in 1602 took the oath of Catholic faith while obtaining his degree from the count palatine, but the notary deliberately left that incriminating detail off his official degree certificate. But apart from a passing reference to the 1560s and 1570s as an age of religious Cold War, Woolfson does not expressly look at the religious affiliations of Paduan students, or seek to explain the increase in numbers of Englishmen from 1580 onwards (including Edward Jordan,