

Book Reviews

publication (after seventeen years' work) though it is neither complete nor uniform in style. Other faults are perhaps less excusable on this basis. The descriptions of the earlier manuscripts are meagre, and we still have to look to de Ricci or, in the case of the Galen, to the notes of a previous librarian (*Transactions and Studies of the College . . . 1941–42*, 9: 187–190) for details such as width, binding, and provenance. Readers might willingly have sacrificed the alphabetical arrangement of the catalogue descriptions for a decent index. The two indexes which we are given are at times slipshod or eccentric (omitting, for instance, names of places). Anyone interested in the Paduan lecture notes, for example, should note that they are hidden in the text under the heading "Sixteenth century lecture notes", and cannot be found in the index under Padua or under the name of one of the two identified lecturers.

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MICHAEL HUNTER, *The Royal Society and its Fellows. The morphology of an early scientific institution*, Chalfont St Giles, British Society for the History of Science, 1982, 8vo, pp. v, 277, £5.90 (paperback).

Dr Hunter has made another solid contribution to our knowledge of the early Royal Society. The appendices, tables, notes, catalogue of Fellows, and index, which make up more than four-fifths of this book, provide more information than we have had before concerning the Fellows and the varying degrees of their participation in the Society. The author is to be especially commended for his diligence and imagination in compiling his lists and making the data so accessible for further study.

The remainder of the book sets about to provide an assessment of the data and to draw tentative conclusions. Hunter is the first to admit that much more information concerning the most active Fellows will have to be gathered if we are to go beyond "morphology" to a "more sophisticated sociology of knowledge". Even so, whatever he tells us is interesting and useful. He provides a statistical breakdown of membership by status and occupation and shows how the pattern of participation changed over time. He also sheds light upon the question of who joined and who did not. The variety of political and religious outlooks represented in the Society tells against those interpretations that suggest that the Society was ideologically homogeneous. Hunter calls attention to "accidental" factors at work in determining membership – the London location and the clubby nature of the enterprise. The dues structure also helped to define the membership, and in this regard the Society was more exclusive "than it liked to think of itself".

Rarely, however, does Hunter consider such matters as self-image, public image, shared ideals, and values. These are not covered by what he takes to be "morphology". He eschews hasty and unwarranted generalizations. But under his microscope the Royal Society emerges as a rather disparate collection of individuals and groups, and it is difficult, as a result, to understand what, if anything, held them together. As Hunter remarks, even the scientific interests of many Fellows were negligible. But the Society was more than the sum of its parts; it achieved coherence and was important. The reason for this – the glue – has been left out, perhaps intentionally, of Hunter's account. A morphology this may be, and a good one, but the histology remains unexplored.

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RICHARD OLSON, *Science deified and science defied. The historical significance of science in Western culture. From the Bronze Age to the beginnings of the modern era ca. 3500 BC to ca. AD 1640*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, University of California Press, 1982, 8vo, pp. xv, 329, £27.50.

Every American university used to have – perhaps still has – a freshman course called "Western Civ" which covered "everything" from the beginnings of things to yesterday. Richard Olson has written a textbook for the first half of such a course with emphasis on a particular kind of intellectual history. Like many young Americans, he is worried about the ethical role of