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foetus and neonate and not to the degree of pigmentation of the substantia nigra itself as Stern implies.

If we now turn to the 1778 version (Liber I, Sect. II, 11 and 12) we find that the Latin text of both these paragraphs is identical with that of the 1791 version except in two particulars. The earlier version lacks a phrase describing the groove behind the infundibulum (XII 11 2–3 1791) which is irrelevant to our argument—and it lacks the crucial two-and-a-half lines ‘Medio . . . demonstrandam’ in which, in the 1791 version, the substantia nigra is described.

It is thus clear that confusion has arisen as a result of the failure of later writers to refer to the text of 1778; that Soemmerring had every reason not to claim priority and did not in fact do so; and that Sano’s account of the matter was correct and should be recognized as such.

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PRE-SURGICAL SEDATION, MONTPELLIER c.1393: TESTIMONY OF LAWRENCE OF LINDORES

THE narcotic properties of certain plants—mandrake and poppy, for instance—were well known in ancient and medieval times. Some medical writers mentioned the use of such properties for surgery; among them Dioscorides, whose work was used by both ‘Arabian’ and western Christian physicians in the middle ages, and Celsus, whose work suffered such ill-merited oblivion until it was rediscovered by Pope Nicholas V (d. 1455). But not only medical men were interested in the matter.

Other writers of antiquity, including Demosthenes (Pseudo-Demosthenes?) and Plato, referred to such narcotic properties; as did Christian preachers, among them Ambrose, Clement of Alexandria and Cyril of Alexandria. The last-named mentioned that physicians in his day used mandrake as a soporific.

Allusion, therefore, to such properties on the part of medieval writers is of little or no historical interest, as it could indicate no more than that the writer making the allusion was aware of this ingredient of the cultural stockpot of the middle ages. (Shakespeare's allusions are of this kind.) Nor can too much be made of statements like the one in the well-known passage from Michael Scot, explaining how to use narcotics in surgery; since such statements do not imply that narcotics were actually being used in the manner explained at the time in question. (For that matter, such statements do not necessarily imply that the preparations described *could* be used in the manner explained!)

Nevertheless, in view of assertions still sometimes made that in the middle ages the practice of giving narcotics before surgery (or penal mutilation) was abandoned, the passage which follows may be of interest. It seems to indicate that pre-surgical, or pre-mutilation, sedation was being practised at Montpellier towards the end of the fourteenth century. The passage comes from the *De anima* commentary of Lawrence of Lindores, a Scots philosopher of nominalist tendencies, who composed the commentary in Paris during the last decade of the fourteenth century. He himself is not known to have been at Montpellier, but there was much academic coming and going between that university and Paris. Moreover, although the medical schools of Montpellier were already ceding eminence to those of Padua or of Paris itself, they were still of considerable standing; and a practice sanctioned by use at Montpellier would not improbably be followed in other places.

This is the passage. What is under discussion is the necessity of the sense of touch to an animal.

Item medici dant hominibus quasdam herbas per quas homines fiunt insensibiles sic quod nec tangunt nec sentiunt. Bene moris est in [*understand: studio*] Montis Pessulanae quod quando est ibi homo forefaciens illum sumunt medici, et dant illi herbas per quas fit insensibilis, et illi tunc scindunt ipsum, sic quod non tangit. (Lawrence of Lindores, Commentary on the *De anima* of Aristotle, Book III, question 21. At present available only in ms. (ten mss extant). E.g., Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliotek, ms. Thott 580, 347r. Other mss: Cracow (3), Erfurt (2), Karlsruhe, Munich, Poznan, Wurzburg (1 each).)

Verbal similarities with passages from older writers, Michael Scot, for instance, or indeed an Apuleian document from around 200 B.C, must put the reader instantly on guard. Yet the testimony to the practice of Montpellier remains, and may be of interest to medical historians.

Lindores himself later became an inquisitor, Scotland's first. (Later still he had the more pleasing distinction of being the first Rector of St. Andrews University.) Pavel Kravař, one of the two men for whose death by burning Lindores was responsible, was said to have had a brass ball put into his mouth, before he was burned. Contemporary records do not mention the detail but Knox, who does so in the early pages of his *History*, could well be recording a local St. Andrews tradition. Knox assumes that the purpose of the brass ball was to prevent Kravař from proclaiming his faith to the common people. Now Kravař, a Moravian but recently arrived in Scotland after some ten years in the service of the King of Poland, had come to Scotland in connection with the Council of Basle, and his business was principally with the academics of St. Andrew's, where his Latin would have sufficed; and it is doubtful whether

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he could have acquired enough of the local English to be seen by the most scrupulous inquisitor as a menace to the faith of the common people. Was the brass ball, perhaps, given as bullets were given, to bite on? If so, the example of the practice of Montpellier may not have been entirely lost on the philosopher turned inquisitor who had recorded a practice of thoughtfulness for the *forefaciens*.

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- For classical and Christian writers, see RAHNER, HUGO, *Greek Myths and Christian Mystery*, London, 1963, pp. 258f. (Clement, Ambrose, Cyril).
- For Lawrence of Lindores see *Scottish Historical Review*, 1911, 8, 225–46, 333–58 (ANDERSON); *Philosophical Quarterly*, 1955, 5, 348–54 (BAXTER). The content and temper of the *De anima* commentary can be seen in chs. 6 and 7 of MOONAN, LAWRENCE, 'Lawrence of Lindores (d. 1437) on Life in the Living Being' (unpublished doctorate thesis, Louvain, ISP, 1966). The present writer is now working on a larger scale examination of the life and thought of Lindores.

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THE new Rare Book Room of the Biomedical Library, UCLA, was formally opened 5 February, 1968 during inaugural ceremonies for a five-day International Symposium on the History of Medical Education sponsored by the Department of Medical History, UCLA, and supported by the Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation. A bronze plaque was unveiled by Chancellor Franklin D. Murphy as an expression of appreciation to Dr. and Mrs. John A. Benjamin of Rochester, New York, for their extensive and distinguished contributions to the historical holdings of the Biomedical Library. In their honour also the Catalogue and First Supplement of the John A. Benjamin Collection of Medical History was reprinted and a Second Supplement issued. Compiled by Martha Teach Gnudi, the latter lists some fifty books presented by the Benjamins during the past two years. An exhibit of manuscripts, incunabula and first editions from the Benjamin Collection was mounted in the Rare Book Room.

A large exhibition of books, manuscripts, scrolls and artifacts illustrating the traditional medical system of the Chinese people, on loan from the Wellcome Historical Medical Museum, was opened with a talk by Dr. John Z. Bowers, President of the Josiah Macy, Jr. Foundation on the Sunday afternoon preceding the Symposium.