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about to Oxford pathology when he arrived in 1935, developing a whole new programme of teaching and research and continuing it long after the penicillin story was all over bar the squabbles about priorities. Florey's characteristics, of objective honesty, research flair, and prodigious industry and technical skill, were partly innate and partly developed in earlier posts, including those at London, Cambridge, and Sheffield. Never were these more needed than in the early work on penicillin, initially only 2–3 per cent pure. And once the potential of penicillin had been recognized from the pilot trials, then much persuasion was needed to establish large-scale production and use—something that could be done only by the man at the top. Florey did this consummately well, travelling widely, to the USA, to the battlefields in North Africa, and to the USSR; it was something he always enjoyed and he was to continue with often gruelling schedules until the end of his life.

Ultimately, however, the popularity of a scientific biography does not wholly rest on its subject's achievements—men (such as Lord Adrian) with comparable merits instantly spring to mind who have not been commemorated in this way. Like the Bloomsbury movement in literature or the struggle for priority in establishing the genetic code, part of the attraction of a book about Florey must be the personalities concerned. What emerges from Dr Williams's beautifully written and scholarly book, and Macfarlane's recent sequel on Alexander Fleming, is that the Nobel committee got things right by splitting the award among the three principals. We now need a biography of Ernst Chain to complete this eternal triangle.

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PIERO CAMPORESI, *La carne impassibile*, Milan, Il Saggiatore, 1983, 8vo, pp. 300, L.25.000 (paperback).

We lack integrated historical accounts of attitudes towards the body—popular, medical, ecclesiastical, aesthetic, and so forth—in the development of Christendom and then in post-Christian culture. In 300 pages, Camporesi cannot be expected to have written the definitive, fine-textured account of this vast and intriguing theme, but he has produced a work, novel, exciting, provoking, which raises all the key questions and provides some suggestive hypotheses. Camporesi's point of entry is to probe some of the fundamental paradoxes within Christian theology and culture. On the one hand, distrust of the flesh. On the other, the doctrine of Christ incarnate. Put together, they lead to an uneasy conjoining of attitudes in which (with one breath) the distrust for the distastefulness of the flesh is continually emphasized—man riddled with worms—leading to orgies of mortification; while (with the next breath) Christianity also felt obliged to glory in incarnation, in the flesh, not least as an anti-Manichean ploy. Hence a whole range of popular and ecclesiastical miracles actually centred on the *wonders* of the flesh (corpses that wept, bled, moved, that never decayed, despite the decay of all flesh). Hence Christianity, in some of its popular medieval phases, became (Camporesi argues) a religion approximating to flesh-worship, with its endless preoccupations with the bones of the saints, with burial procedures, with opening coffins, and the like.

So central to Camporesi's book is a fundamental ambivalence in Latin Christendom: a distrust of the flesh that engenders a fascination for the flesh, amounting at times to obsession, fully as morbid and Romantic as those sentimental and erotic modes of infatuation with death which we associate (via the work of Praz and Ariès) with "the Romantic agony" of the early nineteenth century. This provides the jumping-off point for a whole range of fascinating, labyrinthine investigations into subsequent practices concerning, and doctrines regulating, the flesh. The account is broadly chronological. Camporesi casts his net extremely wide; he takes in dimensions of the history of saints and martyrs, fads in food, not least the semeiology of meat and vegetables, bodily eroticism, embalming practices, the hagiography of convulsionaries and similar ecstatic religious movements (he asks whether trances were induced by food cults, and comes up with no clear answer)—and much more besides.

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Camporesi integrates into his account insights from social and cultural anthropology (not least, Levi-Strauss and Mary Douglas), and maintains a wholesome balance between a concern with the symbolic meaning of the cultural systems of the flesh, food, etc., and, on the other hand, a more materialist account banalistically concerned with what people ate, what made them sick, and what they died of.

What Camporesi shows particularly well is that—at least throughout the Middle Ages and early modern times—attitudes towards the flesh were shared over a social continuum which spread up the scale from popular to ecclesiastical religion, from vernacular folklore (concerned with monsters, the terms of health, the signs of death) right up to the theories and investigations of the learned. The history of medicine and the history of biology are most frequently written as ropes of theory and interpretation stretching back to Aristotle and Hippocrates and forward to today's science. What we less often see are attempts to integrate medico-scientific doctrines (e.g., on generation, on fermentation, on death) within the vernacular culture of their own times. But that is precisely what Camporesi has attempted, suggesting many ways in which popular attitudes towards the body should be seen as part of a continuum which includes the speculations of the philosophers and the experiments of the scientists, and trying to relate (for instance) the Bernardine vision of man as a sack of worms to seventeenth-century natural philosophers peering down their new microscopes for intestinal worms to resolve the spontaneous generation issue.

Not least, rather in the manner of Dulumeau and Mandrou, he suggests that in various important ways, both the post-Tridentine Catholic Church and secular élite culture were attempting, from the seventeenth century, to distance “proper thought” from the vulgar materialism of the people. This is a valuable point. The liberal historiography we took in with our mothers' milk told us that medieval thought was idealistic and other-worldly, and that one of the legacies of the so-called Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century has been the emergence of “materialism”. Camporesi's study—with its obvious affinity here to *Montaillou* or *The cheese and the worms*—shows us just how inadequate such a reading would be.

Camporesi's book, deeply stimulating though it is, is not without its shortcomings. Its method relies heavily upon narrative and evocation; there is little formal analysis, and no systematic presentation of factual material. It is a shame that Camporesi chooses to engage with the existing secondary scholarly material so little. And some of his accounts of popular Italian saint-cults presuppose a familiarity with the vagaries of traditional Italian popular culture which this reviewer, at least, did not possess. Nevertheless, it is a work which should be required reading for any medical historian aware of the need to understand that bodies have their own history. Let us hope it will soon be translated.

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DONALD K. GRAYSON, *The establishment of human antiquity*, New York, Academic Press, 1983, 8vo, pp. xii, 262, illus., [no price stated].

Oddly, given the interest in human origins, few have braved a full historical critique of the subject. Recent reinterpretations of key figures like Lyell and Falconer (by William Bynum and Patrick Boylan) only serve to emphasize this lack. Grayson's aim is not to plug a sociological gap, however, but to provide an “analytic review” for the archaeologist, by way of a sharply defined tunnel history. One wonders, too, whether this approach doesn't serve a double purpose. His wariness of moral-majority Creationism means that, while ostensibly eschewing a science vs. religion paradigm, he nonetheless emphasizes geology's progressive uncoupling from Mosaic chronology, and in its Comtean way this obviously legitimates modern secular palaeoanthropology. As a result, perhaps, his historical categories are partly informed by modern priorities. For example, his later discussion rarely strays outside the palaeo-, archaeo-, and morphological ambit, avoiding the deeper complications of Biblical exegesis, philology, or the antiquarian pursuit of ancient civilization, although these remained of great contemporary concern.