

Intersections, Vol 21: Blood, Sweat, and Tears

Claus Zittel

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Call for papers: 'Blood, Sweat, and Tears. The Changing Concepts of Physiology from Antiquity into Early Modern Europe' (Intersections, volume 21)

While the topic of anatomy, the structure of the body, has been the subject of considerable recent study, that of physiology, the theory of the normal functioning of living organisms, has received much less attention. To reach a better understanding of what was new in Early Modern Europe we need a thorough contextual interpretation of Ancient, Medieval ? including the Arabic tradition ? and Renaissance theories.

If we try to apply the concept of physiology to Ancient (Greek and Roman) medicine, we encounter some difficulties. Where we would expect causality, we meet ?only? with analogy. By the Early Modern era ancient explanations of physiological phenomena existed alongside newly emerging methods of explanation based on the study of nature. To what extent were these two models of explanation in dialogue? How was early modern physiology represented? What was the interrelationship with art? William Harvey mentioned the fire hose, but to what extent were such new technological models, such as those derived from hydraulics, applied? In meteorology, geology, cosmology, and political and economic theory, metaphors derived from physiology gained popularity. The tension and interplay between experimental practices and metaphysical concepts could also be an interesting topic.

Finally: in what way, if at all, did the new discoveries influence general culture? Is it possible to argue that people could see, hear, smell, feel and taste in different ways in, say AD 1650, in comparison with the Augustan era?

Volume 21 will be edited by Manfred Horstmanshoff, Helen King and Claus Zittel, and is scheduled to appear in 2010. The volume editors organize a conference to be held at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies (Wassenaar, NL), 16-18th April 2009. Proposals, about 300 words,

should be sent (preferably electronically) no later than 1 November, 2008, to either:

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Intersections brings together new material on well considered themes within the wide area of Early Modern Studies. Contributions may come from any of the disciplines within the humanities: history, art history, literary history, book history, church history, social history, history of the humanities, of the theatre, of cultural life and institutions. The themes are directed towards hitherto little explored areas or reflect a lively debate within the international community of scholars.

General Information about Intersections or specific issues of the series are to be had from:
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