

Miriam Nicoli, *Apporter les lumières au plus grand nombre: médecine et physique dans le Journal de Lausanne (1786–1792)*, Lausanne, Editions Antipodes, 2006, pp. 260, €22.00, Sw Fr 33.00 (paperback 2-940146-82-9).

One of the interesting trends in early modern history of late has been the proliferation of studies describing the evolving patterns of communication and sharing of information. With respect to eighteenth-century history, this work dovetails with a more traditional interpretation of the Enlightenment as a project of cultural and social modernization. According to this latter point of view, advocates of the Enlightenment set themselves the task of freeing culture from the pernicious influence of religious superstition, reducing the influence of traditional, hereditary social elites, and promoting social progress via what they considered useful knowledge.

Miriam Nicoli's study of the *Journal de Lausanne* offers an example of this kind of crossing of interests. Edited by the Huguenot pharmacist and popular scientific lecturer Jean Lanteires, the *Journal de Lausanne* was a quarto-sized weekly that appeared between 1786 and 1792. Typical of many periodicals published with such frequency, the *Journal de Lausanne* was short, consisting of four pages printed in double-column format. Lanteires' expressed interest for his product, as Nicoli's book makes clear, was to make itself a mediator between elite scientific and scholarly knowledge and a literate audience constituted by "the people".

To a noteworthy extent, Lanteires succeeded in his aim, although the evidence for this is indirect. Regrettably but not unusually, no archival records of the editorial and production sides of the *Journal de Lausanne* have been preserved—no subscription lists, account books showing how the journal was distributed and to whom payments were made for its production, or other "behind the scenes" glimpses into a journal's material existence. What Nicoli did have instead were the published traces of the extensive back-and-forth exchange between Lanteires and his readers. More than any other periodical I know of, the *Journal de Lausanne*

appears to have succeeded by persuading its readers to voice their thoughts in print. This is not just a matter of producing a supplement to the journal, a widely used device whereby individuals could post notices and advertisements for a small fee. Although Lanteires began issuing such a supplement late in 1787, the reader-generated content that I am referring to came in the form of published letters that were part of the journal's main content.

And what were readers interested in? After providing an overview of the cultural and educational context in Lausanne and the Swiss Pays de Vaud in one chapter and a review of Lanteires' life and career as a popularizer of science in another, Nicoli devotes her longest chapter to an analysis of the journal's contents. The topics included there will come as no surprise to anyone familiar with the cultural landscape of eighteenth-century science and medicine: electricity and the latest experiments with lightning rods; ballooning; women's health, often in conjunction with reproduction, birthing, and care of infants; women and male medical practitioners, including the touchy subject of midwifery and the access sought by males to birthing; public health and the urban environment; prevention of premature burial; rescue of drowning victims, and somnambulism and animal magnetism. In moving through each of these topics, Nicoli often departs from what appeared in the pages of the *Journal de Lausanne* to draw in the wider social and cultural environment. This certainly helps her better to contextualize the various topics, but it also has the effect of diverting attention away from the question of what distinctive role the journal may have played in these issues.

One recurrent matter of concern to Nicoli is the relationship between the popularizing interests of the *Journal de Lausanne* and its editor on one side, and the professional interests of the scholarly and especially the medical community in Lausanne. She suggests that Lanteires' journal may not have been entirely welcomed by the community of physicians, especially because of its publication of remedies intended for use by the journal's readers. This, she claims, may have put Lanteires on the wrong

side of physicians' efforts at "professionalization" (p. 173) and laid the journal open to charges of charlatany. I found this argument unpersuasive. To be sure, there were indeed voices raised against the practice of self-medication by patients, as Nicoli points out, and it requires no great stretch of the imagination to suppose that such considerations would find common cause with opposition to charlatany. Yet considered against the background of the large and growing genre of medical advice literature, much of which contained recipes for home remedies, and in the context of the flourishing marketplace for medical products and services of the late eighteenth century, much of which was conducted by physicians themselves, Lanteires' efforts scarcely seem either unusual or likely to attract much censure. This rather small quibble aside, I think Nicoli has done us all a great service by making this most interesting publication more widely known.

Thomas Broman,
University of Wisconsin–Madison

Misia Sophia Doms, "*Alkühmisten*" und "*decoctores*": *Grimmelshausen und die Medizin seiner Zeit*, Beihefte zu *Simpliciana*, vol. 3, Bern, Peter Lang, 2006, pp. 248, £32.10, €45.80, \$54.95 (paperback 978-3-03910-949-4).

This is a study that relates to issues of medical "intertextuality" (defined in the broad sense of textual influence and allusion) in the work of the German Baroque author Hans Jacob von Grimmelshausen (1621/22–1676), best known to English readers as the creator of the satirical *Simplicius simplicissimus*. The main questions are these: how far do the concepts of health, sickness, prophylaxis and therapy expressed by Grimmelshausen through the figures and narrative voices within his writings correspond to medical understanding and debate in his own day? And do the episodes and satirical comments related to his characters indicate personal criticisms of medical theory and/or practice? The book thus takes a place among other efforts to explore the relation between literature and medicine. In many of these the focus is upon

establishing the meaning of illness within a specific time and place or upon determining the role that medicine plays in constructing particular themes and structures. Doms, however, selects another, more specific, task—to determine the most likely sources for the medical elements in Grimmelshausen's writings and to ascertain something of his own medical-critical views. While some light is shed in relation to the first undertaking, the second, Doms admits, remains obscure.

Although careful not to assume too much about Grimmelshausen's personal knowledge of individual medical texts, Doms maintains that there is enough evidence to suggest connections, directly or indirectly, to a variety of medical sources. These include more or less contemporary German language texts and translations, especially those falling into the genre of advice literature, as well larger, more encyclopaedic medical accounts. Grimmelshausen must also have been aware of older, well-established texts such as the *Regimen of health* (his source, Doms thinks, for information about the six non-naturals and diet), and earlier sixteenth-century works, especially the pharmaceutical texts of writers like Christof Wirsung, Hieronymus Bock, Johann Coler, Walther Ryff, Lorenz Fries, and Hieronymus Brunschwig. References to Paracelsian medicines stem most likely from Oswald Croll's *Basilica chymica* (1609).

A passage from Grimmelshausen's *Satyrischer Pilgram* indicates that he viewed medicine as divided into five parts: *physiologica* (human anatomy, physiology including the theory of humours and temperaments), *hygiaena* (the six non-naturals), *aethiologica* (causes of illness and concepts of disease), *simiotica* (symptoms and courses of illness, also diagnostic practice), and *trapestica* (methods of treatment, including diet, medicaments, and surgery), and the main part of Doms's study follows these divisions.

In none of Grimmelshausen's writings are there descriptions of medical proceedings that contradict the medical practices of his time, although there are instances in which he uses satire to illustrate contemporary controversies