the case of Trosse, actual travelling through Europe. Writing down this experience was perhaps of help too. Unfortunately, little is said about the authors themselves and their texts. Is it important that the first has survived only in manuscript and the two other texts were published in print? In fact the existence of fair copies of a manuscript point to a form of manuscript publishing still common in the seventeenth century. In the other two cases, the possible role of an editor or publisher is not even mentioned. The text of Trosse is obviously studied only from a modern edition. The important work by Michael Mascuch in this field is mentioned, but not really used. However, the next publication by Katharine Hodgkin will be an edition of the manuscripts of Dionys Fitzherbert, which will offer an opportunity to return to this aspect of madness and autobiographical writing.

Rudolf Dekker,
Erasmus University Rotterdam

Lucia di Palo, *Le* Recherches physiologiques sur la vie et la mort *di François Xavier Bichat: un lessico fisiologico*, Bari, Cacucci Editore, 2005, pp. 224, €25.00 (paperback and DVD 88-8422-398-9).

The situation of the history of science and, in particular, of the history of medicine in Italy reflects some contradictions that are typical of the discipline. Researchers from a variety of fields work in the history of medicine. Doctors, biologists, historians, sociologists, philosophers and philologists are the main actors in the discipline. Very often in Italy the different methodologies are not harmonized into an interdisciplinary approach, with the result that there are various strands to the history of medicine that have not yet come together. On one side there are the histories written by doctors, which focus mainly on medical ideas, theories and technical concepts; on another there is a more general approach to the history of ideas, in which medical theories are studied in relation to philosophy and culture; and on yet another there are some historians—still rare in Italy—that concentrate on sociology or philology. In general these three approaches, of the technical and the more general history of ideas, and the history of the conditions of the production of such ideas—that is, the history of society and language—have not yet converged.

The University of Bari is one of two institutions in Italy that offers a PhD in history of science (the other is Florence and there are also some possibilities at Bologna and Naples). As a consequence, Bari has the advantage of appealing to many researchers from a variety of fields, and of supporting an interdisciplinary approach in history of science and medicine. Over the last few years, the Interdepartmental Centre of History of Science in Bari has promoted a computational analysis of scientific languages for historical purposes. Researchers at the Centre have created software that allows users to take a document converted into an electronic format (txt) and scan it for exact word position and frequency.

The first two significant publications resulting from the application of this type of software are: *Jean-Martin Charcot e la lingua della neurologia* by Liborio Dibattista (Cacucci, Bari 2003), and *Le* Recherches physiologique sur la vie et la mort *di Francois Xavier Bichat*, the text reviewed here, which studies Bichat's physiology. Charcot and Bichat are considered the founders of two disciplines: neurology and physiology respectively. The basic hypothesis of both texts is that the creation of a new discipline corresponds to the creation of a new language, the analysis of which can give us further indications of the processes by which the new discipline has arisen.

The software that Lucia di Palo has used is INTEX (created specifically for the French language), by which it is possible to find, for each word, the more frequent correspondences with other words, verbs or constructions. By analysing the words *function*, *organ*, and *ownership*, which appear very frequently in Bichat's *Recherches physiologiques sur la vie et la mort*, di Palo tries to analyse how Bichat built a new physiology. This physiology

is based upon the concepts of animal and natural vital *functions* and upon the experimental analysis of the *ownership* of these functions. The *organs*, built by specific tissues, are the seats of these *functions* and through experimental analysis it is possible to understand how each *function* is put to use, that is, the nature of the *ownership* of each *organ*. The experimental analysis is lead by the selective suppression of the function of an organ in a given animal and by the observation of the functions that as a result are suppressed. Di Palo analyses also the experimental language of Bichat, in which we find a new relationship between observation and experimentation. Experimentation and observation are no longer in contrast, as in previous French natural philosophy, because Bichat presents the experiment as a more wide ranging form of observation.

The most valuable aspects of di Palo's book are, first, that it gives quantitative proof concerning the way in which this new physiology emerges, based on a computational analysis of the language (the book is sold with a DVD containing the results), and, second, this analysis is placed in a classical historical perspective, offering some excellent chapters on the culture, medicine and philosophy of Bichat's epoch. The only drawback to this focus on linguistic analysis is that the complete conceptual explanation of Bichat's text is not given due consideration.

Fabio Zampieri,
Université de Genève

A catalogue of printed books in the Wellcome library, vol. 5: Books printed from 1641 to 1850, S–Z, London, The Wellcome Trust, 2006, pp. x, 532, £80.00 (+ £5 p&p) (hardback 1-84129-061-0). (Orders to: The Wellcome Library, 183 Euston Road, London NW1 2BE, UK.)

The publication of this volume completes the five-volume catalogue of printed books 1641–1850 in the Wellcome Library, begun in 1962. The scope and size of the Wellcome's collection ensures that its catalogue also functions as an essential bibliography of the history of medicine. The completion of the fifth volume finally removes the difficulties always experienced in using an incomplete published catalogue. At last the user can follow up the cross-references to Sir James Young Simpson, and other authors, from volumes 1–4. The richness of the Wellcome's collections is now fully displayed with the incorporation of Thomas Sydenham, the many entries for G E Stahl and G W Wedel, and others. The range of material is illustrated by six editions of Eliza Smith's *Compleat housewife*, twelve entries for Joanna Southcott, the prophetess, and numerous works of travel and botany.

For the user there is both pleasure and utility in the presentation of an author catalogue. One of the principal benefits of a printed catalogue is in the layout, giving the opportunity to see all the works of the chosen author in a single sequence. The ubiquitous online catalogue does not do this; indeed it can be difficult to obtain a full list of an author's works in a comprehensible order. From this point of view the completion of the catalogue in printed form is all the more welcome. However, this volume relies on being used alongside the online version, lacking as it does added entries and translators. It also lacks shelfmarks, which were sometimes noted in previous volumes: these too must be sought in the online catalogue.

The introduction recognizes that a number of compromises have been necessary in order to complete this catalogue. Some of these lead to incompatibilities and inconsistencies. The lack of added entries and cross-references has been mentioned. Title entries and institutional entries appear at the end of the volume. The arrangement of entries under author is alphabetical by title, while in previous volumes it was chronological—a potential trap for the unwary. The forms of names now follow AACR2 and are not necessarily consistent with those found in the earlier volumes.

To illustrate further how changes in practice over a period of time have created

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0025727300002271 Published online by Cambridge University Press