

German as *Gerettet vor dem Holocaust*, an investigation based on documents in the Wiener Library, London). And there were at least some medical "Resistance fighters".

This book is certainly an *Arbeitsbuch* which can help to provoke further research, but in itself it is rather one-sided: the (scarce) attempts at interpretation it offers should especially be read and used with critical caution. But, as far as it goes, it has its merits and deserves wide attention.

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ALAN SHERIDAN, *Michel Foucault. The will to truth*, London and New York, Tavistock Publications, 1980, 8vo, pp. x, 243, £10.50 (£4.50 paperback).

Alan Sheridan is responsible for many of the translations of the work of Michel Foucault that have been made into English. As one might hope from a translator, a hope not often rewarded, he has produced a lucid and thoroughly comprehensible study. Foucault's work has been too much the child of both inaccessibility and of rumour: this introductory work puts an end to this hiatus. Sheridan reviews the range of Foucault's concerns, from his interest in madness and the birth of reason through to the history of classification in the sciences, culminating in his present concerns with the history of sexuality in society. Sheridan performs his exegetical task with a maximum of self-effacement and a minimum of obfuscation. It now becomes clear how influenced Foucault seems to have been by a taxonomy of human knowledge that might be called "Cuvieriste", in the sense that unlike Marxian or Whiggish philosophies of history which stress both revolution and continuity, Foucault sees complete breaks in the historical record, from the early modern period to the present. Within this method, Sheridan conveys powerfully the achievement of Foucault's method: how it addresses itself to the question of cultural representation, both of man to himself and of man reading nature, in coherent and original ways. One of the advantages of a Foucaultian method is its concentration, for example, on power, and the relationship between power and knowledge. For historians of science and medicine this concentration on the languages of power in such fields as psychiatry is of great interest.

The usefulness of Sheridan's book will particularly tell in his discussion of Foucault's studies on classification, especially as they appear in *Les mots et les choses* of 1966, which Sheridan translated as *The order of things* in 1970. This difficult book should have many arguments illuminated for a wider readership as a result. But a book sub-titled "the will to truth", of course, leads to other questions. The most important of these is what exactly Foucault is suggesting can happen next in the human sciences, given that many of the answers to that question are couched in precisely the "progressive" mode that the archaeological approach to knowledge has rendered redundant. To put it more simply, are the sciences of man exhausted? And who is best equipped to explain why this might be the case? Sheridan shows convincingly how it is the philosophy of Nietzsche that may provide the last word on this matter, given that Nietzsche had argued that man as he has come to represent himself,

particularly in the biology of the nineteenth century, is a played-out force. It is Nietzsche who interests himself in the political task of avoiding that most disliked of scientific activities as Foucault sees it: the activity of investigation, of surveillance, and of containment. Foucault in that sense is an advocate of a number of tactical responses to the invasive strategies of the human sciences; an advocate of secrecy, as against statistical science; an advocate of immediate punishment as against the humanitarian impulse of a reforming judiciary and an optimistic psychiatry; an advocate of pleasure as against pointlessly accumulated knowledge. The exact nature of Foucault's politics are obscure and will no doubt remain so, but his translator has done him valuable service. Foucault's philosophy has been explicated without being appropriated. And his place as a figure whose theoretical task awaits completion will now be understood by many who may come to feel that they can now join with him, and in that sense aid the completion itself.

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LUCILE H. BROCKWAY, *Science and colonial expansion: the role of the British Royal Botanic Gardens*, New York and London, Academic Press, 1979, 8vo, pp. xvi, 215, illus., \$21.00.

What was it about greenhouses that appealed so much to Victorian imagery? Like a gigantic conservatory, the Crystal Palace was erected in Hyde Park as an architectural monument to Britain's domination of world trade. Not so far away, another glass dome served a similar purpose. The great Palm House at Kew trumpeted the achievements of British botany in the commercial arena, achievements that laid the foundation for a number of highly profitable and strategically important plant-based industries across the globe. Indeed, much of the wealth of the Empire originated from the Royal Botanic Gardens. Great fortunes were built on the transfer of rubber, tea, sugar, coffee, bananas, and other commodities from their native habitat to British dominions and colonies where a similar environment was combined with large pools of available labour. The gardens at Kew played a major role in advising on and supervising such transfers. By studying the horticulture, the plantation management, the harvesting, and replanting of crops, Kew's botanists made it possible to convert scientific knowledge into hard cash.

Lucile H. Brockway's book *The role of the British Royal Botanic Gardens* takes a long cool look at the social and economic effects of such government-sponsored botany. She describes three case histories – rubber, cinchona, and sisal – in an attempt to explain the build-up of colonial industries, the flow of information and advice from Kew, and the changing social relations of the people and nations involved. Her intention is to document the part played by Kew Gardens, and thence science, in the expansion of the British Empire. For the historian of medicine, her book is at its most interesting in its analysis of the dual role of quinine (cinchona bark) as an economic commodity and a life-saving drug. This, and the subsequent chapters on rubber and sisal, are clear and comprehensive. But the author's account of the early history of the gardens is not very original, and she displays little finesse in assessing