Tilney, Nicholas L.: **A perfectly striking departure.** Surgeons and surgery at the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital 1912–1980. Sagamore Beach, Science History Publications, 2006. XI, 282 p. Ill. \$ 35.–. ISBN 0-88135-382-5.

The author writes that the generation of 20th-century surgeons witnessed «a period of growth and discovery so unique that it may never be repeated». He may be right and at least 10 other retired surgeons have written memoirs about those years. I mention only 3 of the most significant ones: Rudolf Nissen's "Pages in the History of Chest Surgery". Nissen's memoirs are important as he was one of the fathers of thoracic surgery. Of interest in relation to the present memoirs are the ones by Claude Welch "My Life at the MGH", and Herbert Adams' about his life at the Lahey Clinic, both equally world famous Boston institutions, almost within walking distance from one another. Undoubtedly all three surgical autobiographies should be of interest to future generations.

However, the very special interest of Dr. Tinley's book lies in the historical documentation of the Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, beginning with its construction by a private grant from 1910 through 1913, and of course of the careers of 3 important pioneers, successive chief surgeons at the PBB: Harvey Cushing, Elliot Cutler and Francis Moore. Equally interesting is the documentation on the parallel construction of the classical building of the Harvard Medical School across the street, surprisingly far away from the Cambridge Harvard University. The relative importance of the MGH and the PBB hospitals as teaching institutions of the Harvard Medical School is also clearly explained.

Of special interest to the reviewer is the chapter on R. Gross and Ch. Hufnagel and the story about the first Patent Ductus operation by Gross. It is well known that Gross, at the time still a resident, performed this "world premiere" operation against the strict orders of his chief who was then conveniently out of town. Having known Dr. Gross 10 years later quite well, I nevertheless never dared ask him about his chief's reaction to this daring insubordination. Now Dr. Tinley fills in the rest of this quite unique story: in fact, on his return, chief Ladd furious fired his "brilliant" resident. However, when persuaded by the rest of the staff to take him back, Bob Gross, in a way typical of his character, responded: "No, you fired me and I am building a barn. I will return when the roof is on." Si non e vero, e ben trovato!

Andreas P. Naef, Pully

Vallisneri, Antonio: **Epistolario, 1714–1729.** A cura di Dario Generali. Firenze, Leo S. Olschki, 2006. 13 p. 1 CD-ROM. (Edizione nazionale delle Opere di Antonio Vallisneri. Carteggio). € 50.–. ISBN 88-22-5509-7.

This is a CD-ROM edition of 1,100 letters of Vallisneri completing the two printed editions of the earlier 476 letters (1679–1713) published in 1991 and 1998. The digital edition consists of a simple pdf-file with a list of the correspondents and the transcription of the letters, mostly without any commentary. The reason for such a plain scheme is obvious: the edition is a provisional product which on the one hand makes the letters accessible to a wider audience and on the other hand serves as an aid

for all those many scholars participating in the *Edizione nazionale delle Opere di Antonio Vallisneri*. The commission of this large-scale project (more than 60 volumes are planned) came to the conclusion that an edition of Vallisneri's letters without those of his correspondents was neither in line with today's editorial standards nor with the interests of modern historiography. The letters should not only serve as a mirror of Vallisneri's thought but also as a rich source illustrating manifold aspects of science. The 12,000 preserved letters written to Vallisneri will certainly do that. The next step is a complete inventory of all the letters (almost 8,000 are already catalogued on www.vallisneri.it). After that the critical edition in approximately 20 volumes will get started.

The editors could have done well without the CD-ROM which with its limited life-span and lack of commentary cannot serve as a true completion to the printed books. An internet publication of the pdf-file would have sufficed. The CD-ROM is, however, a good opportunity to make known an ambitious and promising project. The reconstruction of the world of an eminent and yet typical scholar like Vallisneri is of international interest even if his correspondence was – as the edited letters and the list of correspondents on the website show – mainly restricted to Italy. A critical discussion of Vallisneri's correspondence has to be postponed until the edition of the first volumes: only then will we be able to get a reliable picture of its content and character.

Hubert Steinke, Bern

Winkler, John J.: **Désir et contraintes en Grèce ancienne**. Traduit de l'anglais (Etats-Unis) par Sandra Boehringer et Nadine Picard. Paris, EPEL, 2005. 445 p. € 44.–. ISBN 2-908855-59-3.

Publié aux USA en 1990, l'ouvrage de John J. Winkler rassemble une série d'essais écrits entre 1978 et 1989, peu avant sa mort prématurée. Ce livre a constitué dans le monde anglophone une étude pionnière sur les formes de l'expérience érotique et la construction du genre en Grèce. On doit à Sandra Boehringer et à Nadine Picard de nous en livrer enfin une traduction française.

L'originalité de John J. Winkler est d'avoir cherché à saisir les pratiques sociales au-delà du filtre imposé par les sources traditionnelles en recourant, à côté d'Homère, Sappho et Longus, à des textes moins canoniques, souvent négligés par les historiens, tels *L'interprétation des rêves* d'Artémidore, les textes médicaux ou les papyrus magiques. Sa démarche, alliant philologie et anthropologie, puise aussi dans les travaux d'ethnologie contemporaine (Michael Herzfeld) et des sciences sociales (Michel Foucault). Il démontre que la sexualité constitue un objet d'histoire culturelle à part entière, trop souvent biaisé par une utilisation sélective des sources, réduite aux grands auteurs.

A la recherche de l'individu et de l'expérience vécue, au-delà du discours normatif et des convenances, Winkler propose un parcours en deux parties, l'une centrée sur les hommes (*andres*), l'autre sur les femmes (*gunaiques*) dont il dévoile les ruses pour résister, voire échapper aux pressions d'une société patriarcale. La première partie, composée de 3 chapitres (Actes contre nature: conventions érotiques dans *L'Interprétation des rêves* d'Artémidore. Faire la loi: la supervision du comportement sexuel