

One of the book's many strengths is its ability to move back and forth between different medical worlds, that of white doctors (and planters, as lay practitioners) and enslaved African Americans, each drawing on different traditions informed by the American environment. The well-established Euro-American medical infrastructure – medical schools, hospitals, and journals – produced such documentary sources as doctors' letters and medical case studies which provide a window on white medical ideas and practices. These are supplemented by plantation records, including slave owners' diaries and correspondence, and plantation reports. The picture of African American healing is crafted from a careful reading of diverse sources: Fett has used slave narratives, interviews with former slaves, and physical remains, such as medicine bowls and "conjure packets". She acknowledges that post-emancipation sources, most prominently the interviews with former slaves, are problematic but defends them as "an invaluable source for studies of African American life under slavery" (209, n.68). *Working Cures* does more than look at black healers and healing practices, it examines a southern medical culture produced by the meeting of African and European medical traditions and practiced by white Euro-Americans and enslaved African Americans, a "medical history in which human interactions, not diseases or treatments, occupy center stage" (10).

Juanita De Barros
Western Michigan University

ⁱ W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Greenwich: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1953; 1968), 144.

Pamela H. Smith and Paula Findlen, eds., *Merchants and Marvels: Commerce, Science, and Art in Early Modern Europe* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

This splendid volume of essays traces the relationship of art, science, and commerce in early modern Europe, posing important challenges to received wisdom about the Scientific Revolution and the history of collecting practices. As Smith and Findlen suggest in their introductory essay, the historical relationship between science and commerce has received rather less scholarly attention than that of science and art. While the intersection of visual representation and scientific practice remains a major theme of many of these essays, the incorporation of questions about commerce adds a significant and exciting new dimension to the history of early modern science.

Smith and Findlen note that their emphasis on the centrality of commerce in early modern scientific practice introduces a different cast of characters and a

different geographic sensibility to the study of the Scientific Revolution. This volume does not locate the Scientific Revolution exclusively at the traditional sites of Italy, Germany, and England, but extends the examinations to Spain and the Netherlands. The scientific practitioners discussed here – lofty though their humanist ideals might have been – were also intimately and sometimes surprisingly concerned with questions of trade, profit, and economic value. Commerce brought novelties to light, and novelties helped to occasion new modes of textual and visual description.

The volume has important consequences for museum historians as well. Smith and Findlen argue that historians have traditionally treated early modern wealth as starkly divided between two groups of economic actors: the nobility, who dealt in gifts, and the bourgeoisie, who dealt in cash and commodities. In turn, these seemingly opposed categories of “gift” and “commodity” have been taken as central to the history of collecting. But as Smith and Findlen remind us, it was nobles who collected convertible gold and silver, which could be melted down at will if the situation demanded. And the collections of Dutch burghers seldom fetched their calculated value at auction. Here, the editors point to the interpenetration of gift and commodity in early modern Europe, as well as the absence of polarization between noble and bourgeois collections.

The essays are uniformly strong; I will mention several here that treat the interrelationship of art, science, and commerce most explicitly. The first essay by Pamela H. Smith and Larry Silver, “Splendor in the Grass,” offers close readings of early modern depictions of holy figures in outdoor settings. The authors cite early modern artists (Dürer and Altdorfer among others) who portrayed the communion with nature by holy figures as vested with alchemical significance. These visual images were profoundly concerned with the redemption of matter: like alchemy, art was fundamentally involved with the processes of transformation. Deborah A. Harkness’s essay, “‘Strange’ Ideas and ‘English’ Knowledge,” sketches a thicket of English and alien practitioners of science in Elizabethan London, mapping the history of scientific endeavor in an urban, mercantile environment. Her impressively detailed study stresses the international composition of science in England, as English and alien practitioners competed for patents and commercial success. One of her many striking conclusions is that while English and foreign medical practitioners worked closely (though not necessarily happily) together, English instrument makers kept separate from their alien counterparts. Harkness speculates that this strict division of labor, in which alien makers dominated the clock and watch-making industries and English makers focused on mathematical instruments, may have played a part in the development of instrumental natural philosophy in seventeenth-century England. This essay therefore gives another layer of material and local specificity to the highly influential studies of English natural philosophy by Simon Schaffer and Steven Shapin.

Harold J. Cook's fascinating study, "Time's Bodies," deals with scientific efforts to manipulate the processes of ordinary time through the artificial preservation of bodies and body parts. Cook's essay is particularly strong in showing that the science of preservation often had unintended consequences (a theme of the volume overall), such as allowing for new techniques of anatomical observation. As Cook notes, early modern science and capitalism were united in working against the forces of transitory nature, as capitalists depended on regularizing work time and ensuring the durability of material goods to calculate properly their future value. In the same section, Chandra Mukerji's essay on the Canal du Midi (built in Southwest France in the 1660s-1680s) investigates the relationship between state-based entrepreneurialism and engineering in producing a more "Edenic" landscape: a new "nature" that offered wealth to rich and poor alike. Mukerji suggests that the enormous labor force – 40,000 people – marshaled to build this canal helped to constitute a working-class in this area at a very early historical moment. Like Cook, then, Mukerji begins to explore the role of scientific practice in creating complex relations between labor and capital.

Paula Findlen's lively essay, "Inventing Nature," revisits one of the central figures of her much-acclaimed book, *Possessing Nature* (1994): Ulisse Aldrovandi. Here, she focuses on the intersection of commerce and cabinets of curiosity, showing how the scientific desire for curiosities created specialty markets and curiosity traffickers. Drawing on correspondence between Aldrovandi and his sellers, Findlen traces the life of objects before and after they became valuable "curiosities." She notes that faked or fraudulent specimens (the hydra and the basilisk are two key examples) had their own important place in cabinets of curiosity. The process of inventing these objects as "natural," which depended in part on the visual representations of artists, held great interest for early modern collectors. This concern with the vagaries of value in the world of scientific objects is echoed in Anne Goldgar's excellent case study of the tulip, a preview of her forthcoming book on tulip-mania. Goldgar outlines key factors in the tulip "craze" of early modern Europe: namely, that the tulip was prized for its unpredictable and exciting capacities for variation, as well as its reputation for "outdoing" the work of any painter. The tulip was thus interpreted as both nature and art, constantly linked to man-made luxury objects (like marbled paper) and also praised for its ability to stimulate sociability among its collectors.

Another standout essay is Benjamin Schmidt's "Inventing Exoticism," which builds on his recent prizewinning book *Innocence Abroad* (2001), and gives a new historical specificity to that increasingly popular trope of "the exotic." Schmidt marks the traits of Dutch exoticism via a study of Dutch geography and identifies an intriguing paradox: the expansion of Dutch geography (circa 1700) was coincident *not* with Dutch imperial expansion, but rather with the

contraction of the global powers of the Republic. Dutch geography was characterized by a “soft internationalism” and a tendency towards the generic rather than the aggressively national: specific to none, thus palatable to all (361). As Schmidt concludes, the Dutch were marketing an image of the globe – “cannily decentered and politically decontextualized” (362) – rather than colonizing the world. Schmidt’s essay thus identifies an important disjunction between the practices of geographic exploration and the marketing of geographic images, bringing an element of counterintuitive history to this volume on commerce, science, and art.

Every essay in the volume contains treasures of its own. Other noteworthy topics include the relationship between visual representation and scientific “truth” in the works of Leonardo and Dürer (Pamela O. Long), the use of sea charts to make territorial claims in sixteenth-century Spain (Alison Sandman), the use of classificatory images like tables and mimetic pictures in the seventeenth-century Netherlands (Claudia Swan), a case study of the scientific investigation and commercial marketing of Santo Domingo balsam (Antonio Barrera), the role of trade objects and business practices in making of the *Wunderkammer* (Mark Meadow), debates between philosophical and practical alchemists in the Holy Roman Empire (Tara Nummedal), artistic renderings of the experimental sciences by the Dutchman Cornelius Meijer in Rome (Klaas van Berkel), and the use of instrument shops in Paris and London as sites of public demonstrations in natural philosophy (James Bennett).

A section called “Epilogues” contains two concluding essays by Lissa Roberts and Thomas Dacosta Kaufman; the latter linking the historical material in this volume to broader questions about the role of representation in the contemporary world. Roberts’ essay, “A World of Wonders, A World of One,” provides a valuable reflection back on the themes of the volume by identifying two prior historiographical “clefs”: between historians of mathematical sciences versus those of the experimental sciences, and between scholars who discuss the arts and sciences of early modern Europe as under girded by aesthetic principles of unity and order versus those who emphasize variety and uniqueness. One section of Roberts’ essay called “Toward a History of Doing” offers a particularly useful way to view the contributions of this volume. Roberts suggests that tension between the principles of unity and variety was recognized and debated in early modern Europe, and that this tension was provisionally resolved through the notion of activity. The focus on scientific practice in *Merchants and Marvels*, therefore, is both an extension and productive reformulation of early modern questions.

Indeed, unity and variety are helpful terms for framing this terrific collection of essays. The volume is delightfully varied in terms of geography and chronology, yet tightly focused and unified in terms of theme. *Merchants and Marvels* suffers from none of the typical problems of edited collections; the

quality of the contributions is admirably even, and the coherence of the volume is impressive. This is both an accessible and sophisticated volume, organized by two leading scholars. The book will be of very great interest to scholars in the history of science, collecting, and early modern Europe, as well as anyone interested in following the twists and turns of how value – both spiritual and economic – has been assigned to objects and knowledge alike.

Jordanna Bailkin
University of Washington.

Michael Löwy and Robert Sayre, *Romanticism Against the Tide of Modernity*, translated by Catherine Porter (Durham/London: Duke University Press, 2001).

Michael Löwy and Robert Sayre first formulated their thesis about Romanticism as an anti-capitalist and anti-modernist *Weltanschauung* in a 1984 article called “Figures of Romantic Anti-capitalism” (*New German Critique*). The response to their intervention by British and North American academics was somewhat delayed. But when G.A. Rosso and Daniel P. Watkins reprinted the article as the opening chapter in a 1990 volume entitled *Spirits of Fire: English Romantic Writers and Contemporary Historical Methods*, a lively and informative debate was opened up. Following “Figures of Romantic Anti-capitalism” in the Rosso and Watkins volume is a substantial and friendly but dissenting response by Michael Ferber, and then a brief “Answer to Michael Ferber” by Löwy and Sayre themselves that culminates in the assertion, “The fire is still burning.”

This tone of affirmation and advocacy runs throughout the book-length version of Löwy and Sayre’s case, published in French by Payot in 1992 and now available in Catherine Porter’s able English translation. I emphasize the chronology of genesis and publication of their argument because it has an important bearing on connections to – and particularly on disconnections from – key developments in the Anglo-American scholarship with which I am most familiar. When the *New German Critique* article appeared in 1984, Jerome McGann’s *The Romantic Ideology* (1983) was just beginning to be read and assimilated. So Löwy and Sayre engage only briefly and in passing with one of the decisive influences in turning Romantic studies towards historicist and materialist critique. Other contributors to the 1990 volume in which “Figures of Romantic Anti-capitalism” was reprinted, such as Daniel Cottom and Marilyn Butler, are prominent participants in the historicist turn signaled by McGann’s book, but their work too figures hardly at all in *Romanticism Against the Tide of Modernity*. In the nine years separating the French and English versions of the book an extensive and complex body of critical and methodological analysis has foregrounded questions about Romanticism as a historical category and cultur-