

# CONCURRENT PUBLICATION OF MEDICAL WORKS IN NEO-LATIN AND FRENCH IN EARLY MODERN FRANCE

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Credebam antea nefas esse, chirurgicae disciplinae libros  
in vulgarem linguam verti, ac publicas in manus venire.

'I previously used to believe it would be shameful for books on surgery  
to be translated into the vernacular and come into lay hands.'

In the preface to his translation of a short work of Galen, *Second Livre de Claude Galien à Glaucon* (1549), Guillaume Chrestian (or Chrestien) articulated his readiness to set aside his former scruples and join the growing ranks of humanists convinced of the need to translate certain medical works from Latin or Greek into French (Durling 240). It is scarcely a coincidence that this damascene admission occurred in the same year as the publication of Du Bellay's *Deffence et Illustration de la langue françoise*, for—despite Du Bellay's cautions at 1.5 in the *Deffence*—the development of the vernacular was intimately bound up with the tide of translations into French which honed and proved its literary credentials. Yet the movement did not operate in a single direction: in various disciplines, and medicine is a key case in point, translations from the vernacular into Latin were highly significant for the transmission of texts within and between reading communities (on the epistolary circulation of knowledge among learned physicians, see Sirasi). The pioneering recent work of Peter Burke has drawn attention to this relatively neglected field of translations into neo-Latin. He estimates there were over 1100 printed translations into Latin before 1799 (Burke 21, 65-80), a provisional figure that, from the evidence of translations of medical works, I would suggest needs to be raised. In this essay, I propose first to review general trends in the composition, publication and circulation of translations of medical works from Latin/neo-Latin into French and from French into neo-Latin in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and then to address the

specific question of why some works composed in this period in one particular area of medicine, namely reproductive medicine and women's health, circulated concurrently in both languages, and how far this reflected their movement between different reading communities.

## 1. FROM LATIN / NEO-LATIN INTO FRENCH AND FROM FRENCH INTO NEO-LATIN

A starting point for the discussion of the major trends in the translation of medical works in early modern France is the list compiled by Harold Stone (see Stone). The decades c. 1540-90 saw the burgeoning of translations across all areas of medicine: following a generation of urgent scholarly activity in western Europe, notably in Italy, to produce humanist editions of Greek and Latin texts—Calvi's Latin version of the complete works of Hippocrates, *Hippocratis octoginta volumina* (1525) was a milestone—translators looked to provide surgeons, and also apothecaries, with vernacular versions of essential works. At the same time, an increasing number of contemporary physicians, fired both by their readings of the ancients and by the new wave of anatomical discoveries (for example, Vesalius's *De humani corporis fabrica libri septem* (1543)), and with a new confidence in their own experience as practitioners, sought to publish their views. Thus, alongside the vernacular translations of classical or medieval medical texts, there appeared a parallel stream of new works composed in Latin by living authors. In his analysis of the trends in the composition, publishing and circulation of Latin medical works in the Renaissance, Maclean demonstrates a particularly sharp increase in production of medical works in Latin (some innovative, others new editions of classical and medieval works) across western Europe between 1570-1630 (100-101). For physicians in early modern France, as in the rest of western Europe, Latin remained the obvious language for publication if their anticipated readership was primarily their peers,<sup>1</sup> since Latin remained the international language of professional exchange, and had the additional advantage of excluding less-educated lay readers—precisely the concern which had initially led Guillaume Chrestian to fear allowing vernacular translations 'publicas in manus venire' ('to come into lay hands'). To cite just a few examples, leading French doctors such as Jean Fernel (1497-1558),<sup>2</sup> Jacques Houllier (1504?-62),<sup>3</sup> Guillaume Rondelet (1507-66),<sup>4</sup> and André Du Laurens (1559-1609),<sup>5</sup> penned their treatises, dialogues and commentaries in Latin, these works subsequently being republished in their collected works. Even in the first half of the seventeenth century, the conservative Dean of the Paris Faculty of Medicine, Jean Riolan the younger (1580-1657), still composed the majority of his works in Latin.

Yet, while I would agree with Maclean's judgement that 'the learned [Latin] medical book was international rather than local in character by 1600' (110), it is equally

the case that in the later sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century, the French vernacular gained ground briskly. It was not only Latin tomes from other countries which were deemed to merit translation. On the one hand, some physicians undertook the Herculean task of translating their French predecessors' *Opera* into the vernacular, largely for the convenience of surgeons, but also—and increasingly—as a tacit acknowledgement that not all physicians, in the provinces at least, would labour through long Latin treatises. Hence, for example, Simon de Provanchières (1540-1617?) translated Fernel's work on surgery in 1579, while Théophile Gelée (1566-1650), having studied under Du Laurens, produced a French version of the latter's *Opera* in 1613. On the other hand, younger physicians might choose to compose at least some of their treatises in the vernacular. In this respect, the French medical book market, like its Italian and German counterparts, differed notably from the English, where composition in the vernacular grew more slowly, leading Peter Murray Jones to conclude that 'for the whole of the period [1400-1700], you are more likely  
 458 to find a French or Italian or German medical book in an English library than such a book written in the English language' (120). Further study is required of the 'mixed economy' of the same physician publishing some works in Latin and others in the vernacular, but an illustrative case in point for the French milieu is Laurent Joubert (1529-82), Regent and then Chancellor of the Faculty of Medicine at Montpellier. Amongst his works written in Latin are the *Paradoxorum decas prima atque altera* (1566), and the *Pharmacopeia* (1579), which became a major work of reference; but he equally used the vernacular for his *Traicté des arcbusades* (1570), *Erreurs populaires* (1578), and *Traité du ris* (1579), as well as having commenced his publishing career with a French translation of the widely read work on marine zoology by Guillaume Rondelet, his tutor and predecessor as chancellor, *Libri de piscibus marinis* (1554-55), as *L'Histoire entiere des poissons* (1558). In other words, by the 1570s, a physician might publish his own scholarly tomes in Latin, translate a predecessor's work into the vernacular, while himself adopting the vernacular either for works addressed to surgeons or for those with a wider appeal.<sup>6</sup>

However, in the Renaissance, as now, the fortunes of a particular book could not always be predicted with certainty, and if it is important to note, as Maclean does, 'the hard-headedness of publishers' (102), there are cases where expectations were disappointed. If Joubert's *Erreurs populaires* enjoyed an unanticipated run-away success, the first edition apparently selling at an inflated price as copies became scarce,<sup>7</sup> it is little surprise that a neo-Latin translation followed: *De vulgi erroribus*, translated by Jean Bourgeois (Bourgesius) and published in Antwerp by Martinus Nutius in 1600. To be translated into Latin was, at the turn of the sixteenth century, to receive the accolade that one's works were important to the larger international medical community.<sup>8</sup> Bourgeois's dedicatory letter states (\*4<sup>r</sup>):

Hinc enim ad medicos universo terrarum orbe diffusos (quorum innumeri Gallicae linguae rudes) praestans et salutaris Iouberti doctrina manabit; quam (si volent) ad suum vulgus transfundent, illud nativo et patrio sermone admonentes errorum hic observatorum.

‘For through this translation, the excellent and salutary teaching of Joubert will reach doctors throughout all lands of the entire world (many of whom are unfamiliar with the French language). If they wish, they may transmit it to their own peoples, reminding them in their native and vernacular language of the errors pointed out herein.’

Yet despite the fact that Joubert’s French works went through nearly twenty editions in the space of thirty years, the Latin translation was not reprinted. In contrast, the neo-Latin translation of the surgeon Ambroise Paré’s complete works which appeared in 1582, well over thirty years after Paré had published his first short treatise, and some seven years after the first edition of his *Œuvres* in French, was reprinted at least four times (1583, 1593/4, 1610, 1612) over the following twenty years (Doe 95-96).<sup>9</sup> As Pantin remarks, the appearance of his works in Latin was, for Paré, a kind of revenge upon those Parisian *doctores* who had considered him inadequately educated (‘The Role of Translations’ 170). The Latin *Opera* also provided the basis for translations into several other vernaculars, notably English (1634) and German (1601).<sup>10</sup>

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Although Jean Canappe, Pierre Tolet, and (slightly later) Jacques Daleschamps have been seen as the three French physicians who ‘brought ancient surgery within the view of the many surgeons without Greek or Latin’ (Wear 296), Guillaume Chrestian (Guilielmus Christianus Aurelius), also ranks among the most active Renaissance translators of medical works into French. As his publications are emblematic of the shift in attitudes during the middle of the sixteenth century, it is instructive to ask what place translation occupied in Chrestian’s professional and literary career, and what caused his change of heart in 1549. As befitted one of the leading students of Jacques Dubois (Jacobus Silvius), Chrestian’s earliest publications included a translation from the Greek of the Pythagorean philosopher Ocellus Lucanus’s *Libellus de universi natura* in 1541, which was published with Budé’s translations of ps.-Aristotle’s and Philo’s works *De mundo*.

However, once he left the humanist cocoon of Paris, Chrestian’s experience of teaching students of surgery in Orleans convinced him that many did not have the Latin (let alone the Greek) to read essential works of reference, and that some among the lowest ranks of surgeons were not competent readers even of the vernacular. Hence his new-found zeal for providing translations, initially Hippocrates’s treatises on fractures and head wounds and seven books of Galen’s *Therapeutic Method*, and then, in the 1550s, two texts by Hippocrates and two by Dubois on conception, pregnancy and gynaecology. Chrestian’s career is typical of translators of the early to mid-sixteenth century in that he embraces classical and neo-Latin texts with equal enthusiasm. What counts in his eyes is the texts’ relevance for his anticipated readership, primarily a specific professional group (surgeons), but also elite lay audiences, as

his dedication of two works to women makes clear: the Hippocratic text *De la Nature de l'enfant au ventre de la mere* (1553) to Françoise de Brézé, duchesse de Bouillon and elder daughter of Diane de Poitiers; and Jacques Dubois's *Livre de la nature et utilité des moys* (1559) to Diane de Poitiers herself.<sup>11</sup> At the conclusion of the epistle to Françoise de Brézé, Chrestian deftly brings together these different groups:

Mais si diray-je encores, ma Dame, que la lecture de ce livre peult estre tant profitable aux femmes grosses, accouchées, sages femmes, et chirurgiens, qui y sont appelez, qu'ilz pourront beaucoup mieulx faire leurs debvoirs à donner secours, et à cognoistre les maladies qui surviennent aux femmes grosses.

(Hippocrates, *De la Nature de l'enfant* 20-21)

'But I shall also assert, my Lady, that reading this book may be useful to women who are pregnant or have given birth, to midwives and to surgeons who are summoned to them, since the latter will be far better able to discharge their duty of giving help and recognising the illnesses which befall pregnant women.'

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It is important here to make a distinction between trends affecting translations of works which focus on generation or women's reproductive health, as opposed to translations of other surgical and medical texts. For example, if we look in contrast at the translations by Canappe<sup>12</sup> and Tolet, active in roughly the same period as Chrestian but translating general works on surgery, the French versions are aimed exclusively at a professional audience. It seems that fewer lay readers were interested in the action of the muscles, blood-letting and trepanation than in matters related to reproduction. True, these authors defend the principle of translating the classical languages into French, with Canappe pugnaciously declaring in his preface in 1541:

l'art de medecine et chirurgie ne gist pas du tout aux langues, car c'est tout ung de l'entendre en Grec ou Latin ou Arabic ou francoys, ou (si tu veulx) en Breton Bretonnant, pourveu qu'on l'entende bien. (Galen, *Du Mouvement*)

'the art of medicine and surgery does not depend at all on the languages used. It is irrelevant whether you understand it in Greek or Latin or Arabic or French—or if you like in deepest Breton—provided you do understand it.'

Similarly, Tolet in 1549 (once again), defended his choice to intervene in the vernacular in a barbed quarrel about the medical properties of vinegar:<sup>13</sup>

Et aucun ne trouvera impertinent, que j'aye respondu en François. Car pour mon devoir, je devois premierement satisfaire à ceux qui sont vulgairement instruits, entre lesquels la question est esmeue: joint que aussi bien lon peut ratiociner en François, ou autre langue vulgaire, que en Latin. (Tolet 10)

'And some will not judge it inappropriate that I have responded in French. For it was my duty first to meet the needs of those instructed in the vernacular, who are debating this question. And besides, one can argue as well in French or another vernacular language as in Latin.'

Nonetheless, Tolet makes it clear that he is expecting his *Paradoxe de la faculté du vinaigre* to be read by those who are ‘vulgairement instruits’, in other words the professional group comprising surgeons and barber surgeons. Moreover, the fact that various of his translations and of those by Canappe were re-edited in a compilation for surgeons published by Jean de Tournes in 1552, *Opusculs de divers autheurs medecins*, suggests that their translations found a ready market. However, in the case of works concerned with reproductive health, like those translated by Chrestian, the reading communities are more diverse, and this adds an additional layer of complexity to the circulation of such translations.<sup>14</sup>

## 2. WORKS ON REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH: LATIN OR FRENCH VERSIONS, ORIGINAL TEXTS OR TRANSLATIONS

The history of the parallel circulation of French and Latin editions of this group of medical works is particularly important, for several reasons. First, when measured against publishing trends for the rest of western Europe, significantly more works on these subjects were penned by authors in France than in other countries (Worth-Stylianou, *Les Traités d'obstétrique* 44-46). Secondly, these areas uniquely combined the interests of both professional and elite lay reading communities. In at least seven cases, works primarily on these subjects circulated (or in one case was claimed to circulate) concurrently in French and neo-Latin between 1540 and 1600.<sup>15</sup> From Table 1, it is immediately clear that exchanges operate both from neo-Latin into French and from French into neo-Latin, and that the interval between the publication of the original work and the translation can range from a matter of months to several decades. This raises the question of which version, Latin or French, original text or translation, was the more successful in each case, and whether general trends can be discerned across the group of texts.

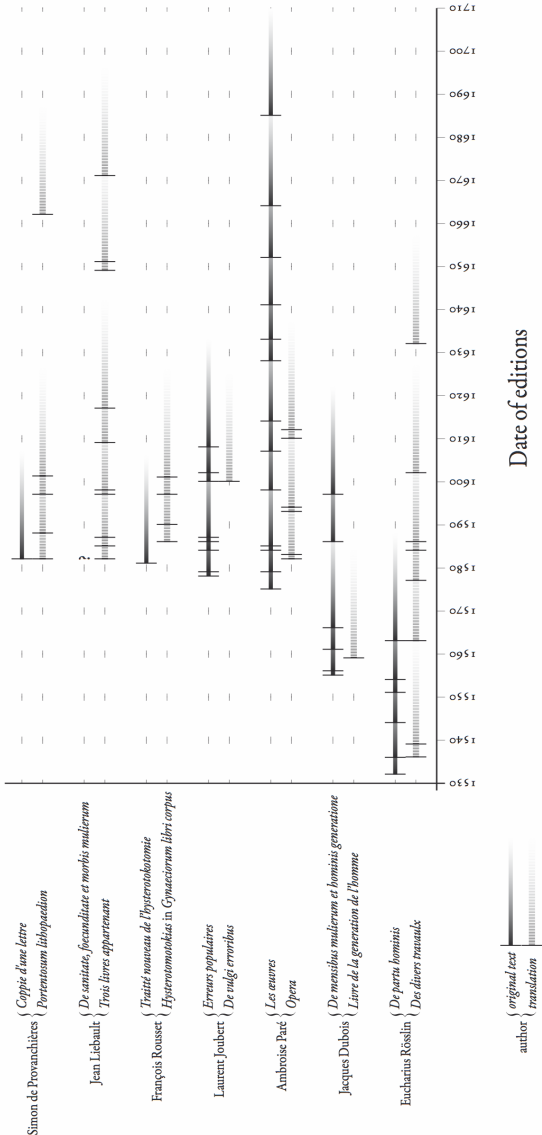
Let us start with two cases where the neo-Latin and French versions of a work circulate concurrently, but the version in the original language appears to have been more successful than the translation, suggesting that the new reading community was perhaps less extensive or receptive than anticipated. Chrestian's French translation of Jacques Dubois's *De mensibus mulierum et hominis generatione* was not republished after 1559, whereas the Latin work was printed in Paris in 1555, in Basel (revised by Alexandre Arnould) and Venice in 1556, and again in Paris in 1561, before being absorbed into the *Gynaeciorum libri* (edited by Hans Kaspar Wolf) in 1566, and then republished in this compendium in 1586/8 and 1597 (King 34). As Helen King has convincingly demonstrated, the prestige of the *Gynaeciorum libri*, particularly the 1597 folio edition, made it an indispensable text for physicians; in many cases, it continued to be passed down through families or acquired and displayed as a sign of status over the next two or three centuries (44-52). Thus, the circulation of the Latin text of Dubois extended across both a geographical and temporal range

quite distinct from that of the single vernacular edition. Although King's analysis of Chrestian's translation demonstrates his willingness to make some adaptations to accommodate a broader, less expert new reading community (glosses of technical terms, some vernacular equivalents for plant names, omission of some specific references to Hippocrates) (39-40), I would suggest that ultimately Dubois's text may have been too narrow and too unsensational in its specialism to attract a wide vernacular readership. Conversely, while Laurent Joubert's *Erreurs populaires* (1578) fared so well in the original French, and in various vernacular translations, we have seen that the neo-Latin translation was confined to only the single edition of 1600. It probably lacked the flair of the original, the colloquial and sometimes racy French style of which had so aptly suited the subject matter.

462 In some other cases, the concurrent circulation of the vernacular and Latin versions suggests that both these reading communities co-existed in balance. It is, for example, difficult to separate the reception of Simon de Provanchières's brief French report of the sensational case of the stone foetus of Sens, *Coppie d'une lettre...lettre faisant mention d'un enfant conservé en la matrice*, from the slightly longer Latin version by Jean Ailleboust, *Portentosum lithopaedion*, both works first appearing in 1582 at Sens from the presses of Savine. In this case, the authors lived in the same town and were aware of each other's writings, exchanging discussions of the case (in Latin). Ailleboust's Latin text became subsumed first (in 1585) within the text of a commentary by Maurice de la Corde on Hippocrates, and then as an appendage to de la Corde's commentary within the *Gynaeciorum libri corpus* (King 120). Both Ailleboust's and Provanchières's record of the event, meanwhile, percolated through other vernacular medical writings, as Holly Tucker has shown (17-42), and this case of the foetus which 'would not come out' generated such excitement both within France and more generally in Europe that its textual presence enjoyed an afterlife quite out of proportion to the scale of the short French or Latin pamphlets which had announced it to the world.<sup>16</sup>

Finally, I propose to examine in more detail cases in which both the Latin and vernacular editions are successful in their own right, but where one language then becomes dominant, suggesting that the reading communities polarise. I have already cited the case of Paré's *Œuvres*, which enjoyed more enduring popularity than the neo-Latin translation. However, Paré's works encompassed far more than women's reproductive health, whereas my other two examples fall squarely in this field, and the comparison between them is thus particularly instructive. In the first, Eucharius Rösslin's handbook on childbirth and deliveries, the French (and English) versions circulate well beyond the lifespan of the neo-Latin version; in the second, François Rousset's treatise on caesarean childbirth, the French text appears initially to reach a fairly wide readership, but is then overtaken by the publication of a neo-Latin version.

# Publication of original works and of translations (1530-1700)



## A. RÖSSLIN'S *DE PARTU HOMINIS* / *DES DIVERS TRAVAUXX ET ENFANTEMENS DES FEMMES*

464 Rösslin's German treatise, *Der Swangern Frawen und Hebammen Rosegarten*, first published in 1513, has been described as 'the foundational text of early modern European obstetrical literature' (Green 192); it was one of the first printed works to offer detailed guidance on normal as well as difficult births—an aspect of women's healthcare which had received surprisingly little attention over preceding centuries.<sup>17</sup> As such, it was promoted as a work designed for midwives, but its widespread circulation throughout western Europe over the next century and a half was due to its favour with a broader readership, both medical professionals (apothecaries, surgeons and even physicians, as well as midwives, are known to have possessed and cited it) and laypersons. The inclusions of some twenty images, derived from Muscio's *Gynaecia* (composed in North Africa in the fifth century) added to the work's appeal, and Green has argued that Rösslin 'moved beyond the medical understanding of the images as being aids to obstetrical intervention, into a Renaissance fascination with monsters and marvels' (180). Rösslin's work circulated in German for nearly twenty years until being translated (probably by his son, also Eucharius) into Latin. In the light of Burke's conclusion (69) that translations into Latin from German were far less common before 1799 than those from Italian, French, English or Spanish, Rösslin's text seems to have been an honourable exception. Whereas the German work had been translated into related vernaculars earlier (Czech in 1519, Dutch in 1528), it was the neo-Latin version, *De partu hominis* (Frankfurt, 1532)—republished a number of times in its own right in various countries until at least 1563—which provided the basis for a series of translations into other vernaculars: French in 1536, Italian in 1538, English in 1540, Spanish ?1538 and ?1580, and Danish (Green 167, fn. 2).

The translations into French (*Des diuers trauauxx et enfantemens des femmes*) and English (*The byrth of mankynde*) were particularly successful (Hobby xxxviii-xxxix, 243); the English version, for example, was revised for republication in 1545, then reprinted in 1552, 1560, 1565, ?1572, ?1574, c. 1585, 1598, 1604, 1613, 1626, 1634 and 1656. The first anonymous French translation of 1536 was superseded by Paul Bienassis's version in 1563 (Bienassis is often wrongly assumed to be the translator of the earlier French version), and this later version was regularly reprinted into the early seventeenth century. Does a comparison of the two French versions demonstrate an evolution in the practice of the translation of medical works from neo-Latin into French? Both French translators worked from the Latin text, a fact they advertise in the titles to their work, misleadingly asserting that Rösslin's work was written in Latin.<sup>18</sup> The translator of the 1536 version is notably tentative in his prefatory materials, excusing his translation of 'aucuns grans secretz de medecine' by arguing that because physicians cannot attend childbirth, 'les gardes d'acouchées et celles que l'on appelle saiges femmes ou matrosnes' ('nurses for newly delivered mothers and

those who are called midwives or attendants’) must be instructed (Rösslin 1536, i). Yet the theoretical reading community is extended significantly in a second letter to the reader, at the conclusion of the treatise, to include ‘toutes femmes en general’ (lxxxvii). However, in this second letter, the translator still apologises for having been unable to overcome one specific difficulty, the translation of Latin terms for medicines and herbs:

tu dois entendre qu’il n’est pas possible convertir les termes des medicines et herbes si expressement en françoys que chascun les peust entendre: et pourtant si à la lecture des receptes tu trouves quelques motz difficiles, ne fault que avoir recours à l’apothicaire, et il te enseignera le cas: car il y a maintes choses qui ne se peuvent pas tourner en françoys, davantaige sçaiches qu’il y a d’aucuns motz desquelz use le present autheur qui luy sont seulement congneuz ou bien aux allemans: car ce sont motz vulgaires d’iceulx, et ne les avons peu tourner que selon la lettre, toutesfois il sera facile avec l’ayde du medicin changer une herbe pour autre. (lxxxvii)

‘you must understand that it is not possible to translate the terms for medicines and herbs into French so precisely that they will be understood by everyone. However, if you encounter some difficult words when you read the prescriptions, you have but to consult the apothecary and he will explain to you. For there are many things which cannot be translated into French. In addition, be aware that some of the words used by the present author are known only to him or to German speakers, for they are vernacular words used by them, and we have been able to translate them only word for word. But with the help of a physician you will be able to substitute one herb for another.’

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Almost a generation later, when Bienassis revisited the same text, the French language had undoubtedly become a more flexible instrument of translation (and he had the additional advantage of keeping an eye on his predecessor’s vernacular version). His preface gives the impression that this is a confident, urbane humanist, able to drop in a literary allusion to Horace, or pluck a reference from Galen. He defines his reading community by language, not gender:

non pour ceulx qui sont instructz en la langue Latine, lesquels ne pourroient avoir grandement affaire, de ceste traduction (sinon que pour estre relevez de labeur, ilz y trouveront diverses appellations, d’aucunes maladies, extraictes des œuvres de Galien) mais pour ceulx, qui n’ont eu l’opportunité, de vacquer en icelle langue. (1563 aii’)

‘not for those educated in the Latin language, who would not have much need of this translation (unless, to spare themselves some labour, they use it for the various references taken from the works of Galen to certain illnesses), but for those who have not had the opportunity to acquire this language.’

Yet if he envisages his primary readership as non-Latinists, he nonetheless opines that some capable Latinists may also refer to his work because of the additional references he has included. This is a salutary reminder that translations often included a degree of extension of, or commentary on, the original text, and so shaded into critical editions or commentaries. When one compares Bienassis’s version with the earlier French version or the text of *De partu hominis*, in addition to his reorganiza-

tion of the chapter divisions of the earlier French version, there are also expansions, which are particularly striking in some chapters, notably chapter 1-3, 10-12 of Book 1 and Book 2 of 1563. For example, he includes in chapter 1 of Book 1 several pages on the nature of conception, with references to Galen and Hippocrates, and at the start of chapter 3 discourses on the length of pregnancy and the possibility of pregnancies of ten or eleven months. In contrast, the earlier translator adds far less substantial material, and never with the same authority.<sup>19</sup>

466 A comparison of the 1536 and 1563 French versions bears out the impression that the latter is both more technically assured and linguistically adept; a greater concision lends an impression of ease—a fact common in many later sixteenth-century reworkings of early Renaissance translations. But we should not lose sight of the fact that the earlier translator, with the linguistic tools at his disposal and in a period in which scientific or medical translations were only just becoming established, provided a serviceable and fairly accurate rendering of a major neo-Latin work. The Latin of Rösslin's translator is not, in fact, particularly elegant: rather, it is correct and clear, with fairly short sentences and relatively uncomplex syntax, making it easier to render into French than more rhetorical texts. Bienassis leaves some traces of Latinity in his French version: rather than seeing it as a shortcoming on the part of the translator or a sign of the immaturity of the vernacular, he argues (in a manner reminiscent of Du Bellay's injunctions on the illustration of the French language) that this is the mechanism through which French can properly express scientific notions:

Et si quelqu'un repliquoit, qu'en nostre version, nous avons laissé plusieurs termes Grecz, et Latins, leur donnant seulement la terminaison françoise, non pourtant intelligibles à un pur François: La response est, que ayant esgard à la dignité des sciences, nous n'avons pas voulu legierement nous departir des propres termes.

(Rösslin 1563, aiv<sup>r</sup>-aiv<sup>v</sup>)

'And if someone objected that in our translation we have left some Greek and Latin terms, just giving them French endings, without making them comprehensible in pure French, I would reply that we have respected the status of learning, and have not wished to depart lightly from the terms used.'

Thus, to take one unremarkable but representative example, in chapter 3 (1536)/chapter 5 (1563) of Book 1, the list of the various reasons for a difficult labour is rendered as follows:

Quarto, quod interdum circa posterior evemunt ulcera, fissurae, ac tumores haemorrhoidum venarum, sive obstricta alvus, ex quibus fit, ut mulier conniti facile nequeat, et ita matrix certo suo officio destituatur. (Rösslin 1532, ch. 3)

Quartement adviennent plaies aucunesfois au fondement et parties posterieures: fissures: et tumeurs et enfleurs de hemorrhoides: ou que le ventre est restraint: parquoy est faict que la femme ne se peult facilement efforcer: ne esprandre et en ceste maniere

la matrice ne peult faire son devoir. (Rösslin 1536, ch. 3)

III. Quand il advient des ulceres, fistures, et tumeurs, ou hemorrhoides, aux parties de derriere, ou quand la femme a dreté, et adstriction du ventre, dont s'ensuit, qu'elle ne peut aysement s'efforcer, et ainsi la matrice, est destituée de son devoir.

(Rösslin 1563, ch. 5)

'Fourthly, when there are ulcers, fissures and haemorrhoidal tumours present in the rear passage, or when the womb is constricted, as a result of which the woman cannot easily strain, and thus the womb is unable to fulfil its duty.'

The 1563 translator has dropped the first figure of reduplication ('aux parties de derriere' in place of 'au fondement et parties posterieures'), probably because it used only two familiar, vernacular terms, but he added a new reduplication pairing a vernacular and learned term ('dreté, et adstriction du ventre' for 'le ventre est restraint'). He has preferred the scientific term 'ulceres', a calque from 'ulcera' rather than the less specific 'plaies', and a final scientific calque to close the sentence ('destitué de son devoir' in place of the simple 'ne peult faire son devoir'). In other cases, the gap between the 1536 and 1563 versions is more extreme, as in the second item from the same list, in which one of the impediments to a normal labour, 'mariscae', is translated by a vernacular equivalent, 'broches matrisses', in 1536, but by a calque followed by periphrasis in 1563: 'et marisques (qui sont froncles) ou petites tumeurs rondes, dures, et rouges, qui font grande douleur'.

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How might we account for the fact that the French vernacular versions (like their English equivalents) outlive their neo-Latin counterpart by several generations? It is likely that by the later sixteenth century, for professional physicians who were competent readers of Latin, the *De partu hominis* (translated from a German text which Rösslin had never envisaged as a scholarly work) was increasingly supplanted by newer, more detailed neo-Latin works, such as Jacob Rueff's *De conceptu et generatione hominis* (1554), which was included in the *Gynaeciorum libri corpus* from 1586. In the vernacular languages, however, *Des Divers Travaux/The Birth of Mankind* continued to provide the kind of domestic manual which sat comfortably alongside such other popular vernacular translations as the French version by Jean Liebault, of Charles Estienne's *Praedium rusticum* (1554), which appeared as *L'Agriculture et maison rustique* in 1564, in turn serving as the basis for Richard Surfleet's English version of 1600, *The Countrey Farme*.

Although Rösslin addressed his German text to women, whether midwives or mothers, translation into other languages could have altered its intended readership. Whereas the titles of both the 1536 and 1563 French translations also explicitly foreground women ('Des divers travaux et enfantemens des femmes'), the Latin title uses the generic form 'De partu hominis' (as, indeed, does the English translation, 'The Birth of Mankind'). However, in the case of Bienassis, I suspect the decision to retain the 1536 title may be a shrewd choice in order to profit from the familiarity

the work already enjoyed among French readers. In fact, there is good evidence that Bienassis's version became established among surgeons, and probably also those physicians not minded to consult Latin tomes. Based in Poitiers rather than Paris and so, like Chrestian, knowing the mindset of provincial colleagues at first hand, he makes no mention of midwives in his preface of 1563, and dedicates his work to Jacques Galloys, a surgeon (emblematic of his ideal readership?) 'affecté envers la médecine, tellement que je ne fais aucun doute, que ce petit livre qui traite de ceste science, en laquelle vous vous delectez le plus, ne vous soit agreable' (Aiv<sup>r</sup>) ('so well disposed towards medicine that I have no doubt you will take pleasure in this small book which deals with this branch of learning which most delights you'). In improving on and correcting the work of the anonymous translator of 1536, he adds marginal notes to his translation (not taken from any of the Latin editions I have traced), both summarising the points under discussion, and also in some twenty cases identifying the classical source for Rösslin's views (Worth-Stylianou, 'Du parcours d'un traité d'obstétrique'). The small format of the last two French editions, in 1602 and 1632, and the striking sobriety of the lay-out in the latter case (no marginal notes or index, no ornaments at the head of chapters) indicate that the vernacular work became a staple of students of surgery or medicine several generations after the Latin from which it was translated had disappeared from circulation.

**B. ROUSSET'S *TRAITTÉ NOUVEAU DE L'HYSTEROTOKOTOMIE* / *ΥΣΤΕΡΟΤΟΜΟΤΟΚΙΑΣ*. *ID EST, CAESARI PARTUS ASSERTIO HISTEROLOGICA***

However, it was not always the case that a vernacular version was destined to displace a neo-Latin text. Another complex example, which demonstrates a shift in the opposite direction, is provided by François Rousset's treatise on caesarean sections, the first published work on the subject (Rousset, *Caesarean Birth* 1). Rousset had himself attended the lectures of Sylvius in Paris, and clearly moved in humanist medical circles. A printed edition of the work first appeared in French, in 1581, but Rousset indicates in his preface 'Au lecteur' that he had originally drafted his arguments in Latin for circulation in manuscript form, and that the French volume is a summary of these:

J'en ay dressé un plus ample traitté que paravant; et ce en Latin, tant pour ainsi satisfaire plus decentement à leur respectable qualité, que pour obeir au commandement qu'il pleut à l'excellence du feu Madame et maistresse, Madame RENÉE de FRANCE, Duchesse de Ferrare, de m'en faire, quelque peu avant son decez, afin que les nations estranges (et specialement entre les Italiennes sa Ferraroise) en eussent la communication....J'ay mis en cest abregé François une bonne partie des principaux points de ce plus long discours la, auquel (comme à cestuy-cy) je proteste d'avoir esté contraint de mettre la main non par curiosité, ou presomptueuse ambition, mais pour

le merite du necessaire sujet (avi<sup>r</sup>-avii<sup>r</sup>).

'I have drafted a fuller treatise than previously, in Latin, both to do due justice to the status of the subject matter and also to obey the order which Madame Renée of France, Duchess of Ferrara, my former mistress, had been pleased to give me shortly before her death, so that other nations (and especially among the Italians her duchy of Ferrara) should be able to read it.... I have included in this shorter French version the majority of the main points of this longer treatise which, I must avow, I had been obliged to compose—as I have this present French one—not motivated by curious speculation, or arrogant ambition, but because of the value of this important subject.'

Although the French *Traité nouveau de l'hysterotokotomie* is widely cited and referred to, there is no evidence that it was reprinted in the vernacular. Instead, it was supplanted by not one but two Latin 'translations'. Initially, Caspar Bauhin, a professor of Greek at the University of Basel from 1582, translated the vernacular text into Latin, added an appendix (listing more reported cases of caesareans) and included it in editions of the *Gynaeciorum libri* compendium from 1586.<sup>20</sup> In this form, its international circulation was assured—just as Rousset's original patron, Renée of Ferrara had wished—for a long time. Bauhin's translation gives a close rendering of Rousset's text, with only occasional scholarly additions, such as supplying the full Latin text when Rousset referred to an aphorism of Hippocrates,<sup>21</sup> and some clearer subdivision and numbering of chapters.<sup>22</sup> Curiously, in 1590, a second Latin version of the text was also published, *ΥΣΤΕΡΟΤΟΜΟΤΟΚΙΑΣ. Id est, Caesari partus assertio hysterologica...Fr. Rosseto auctore*,<sup>23</sup> far longer than the text in the *Gynaeciorum libri*, and this time by Rousset's own hand; moreover, Denys du Val was the printer of this Latin version, as he had been of Rousset's original French text. In his preface Rosset graciously concedes the stylistic superiority of the version by Bauhin (now Professor of botany and anatomy at Basel):

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Audio enim iam cœptum fuisse in Germania, et apud Italos à quibusdam, ut suo idiomate tractatulum nostrum donaverint, et à Do. Gaspares Bauhino Basilensis academiae professore perfectum, ut eundem latino sermone transtulerit, et inter sui gynecii claros auctores immerentem locaverit, eo se dimittens, ut quod fidi est interpretis verbum verbo reddere sibi imperaret, sed splendidius id acturus, si susceptam prius eam materiam seque primo auctore tractandam, stylo elegantiore id est suo, ac libero fuisset prosequutus. (Rosset, *ΥΣΤΕΡΟΤΟΜΟΤΟΚΙΑΣ* aiii<sup>r</sup>)

'For I hear that in Germany and among the Italians, some persons made a start on translating our small treatise into their own tongue, and this was completed by Caspar Bauhin, a University Professor, who translated it into Latin, and included it—unworthy though it is—among the illustrious authors in his *Gynaeciorum Libri*. He took upon himself the task of a faithful translator, rendering it word for word, but it would have been done more splendidly had this material been composed under his original authorship in a more elegant and fluent style, that is, his own.'

Yet he claims that he wished to publish the fuller version now (presumably the original Latin manuscript, or a modified version of it) in order to respond to those who

criticised his controversial views. The fact that his adversaries are French physicians appears immaterial; the professional defence must be made on the international stage, and so in Latin.<sup>24</sup> The final salvo in the dedication implicitly recommends both this new 'authentic' version and Bauhin's elegant epitome:

Boni ergo consulite cum Do. Bauinio aequissimi lectores, quod ea quae a me primum vere prolata, et ab eo ornatius exulta, a vobisque plus satis fortasse lectitata fuerunt, rursus similibus fide confirmatoria in publicum latine produco. Habes (Lector benevole) quid voluerim, his nostris qualibuscunque utere favens, et non ingratus, dum in hoc genere meliora tua protuleris. Vale (aiii')

'Fair-minded readers, therefore consider well, following Professor Bauhin, that those things which were first expounded by myself, and more elegantly polished by him, and perhaps reviewed and improved by yourselves, I again publish in Latin, corroborated by proof of similar cases. You have, good reader, what I would wish; use these small offerings of ours favourably, and not ungratefully, until you may produce better treatises of your own on this subject. Farewell'

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In the event, it was Bauhin's version which gained the wider circulation, the *ΥΣΤΕΡΟΤΟΜΟΚΙΑΣ* (*Hysterotomotokias*) surviving as an integral part of the *Gynaeciorum* corpus.

Why, in this case, should the neo-Latin version of the French text have circulated for longer and more widely than its French counterpart? The answer lies primarily in the nature of the work: unlike Rösslin's midwifery manual, Rousset's volume was addressed fairly and squarely to professionals, primarily to those surgeons who might be called upon to conduct the controversial operation, and secondly to physicians who would need to recommend it. Although minor parts of the treatise undoubtedly interested some lay readers fascinated simply by case histories of abnormal births,<sup>25</sup> much of the work consists of technical explanations of how the operation should be conducted, and of comparisons with other operations in the abdominal cavity. This should have made it attractive to surgeons, and thus ensured its survival in the vernacular. However, because the operation was denounced by most professionals, sometimes in measured tones, sometimes harshly, and thus remained exceptional until recent times, Rousset's precise instructions probably found few surgeons willing to risk their reputation by following them in practice. Thus, the interest of the treatise—contrary to Rousset's initial *skopos*—soon became purely theoretical, and hence it was once again confined to the language of scholars.<sup>26</sup>

### C. LIEBAULT'S *TROIS LIVRES APPARTENANT AUX INFIRMITEZ ET MALADIES DES FEMMES*

In conclusion, I want to draw attention to one of the most successful French works on women's medicine, which posed as a translation from Latin.<sup>27</sup> When Jean Liebault's

*Trois livres appartenant aux infirmités et maladies des femmes* first appeared from the Parisian press of Jacques Dupuis in 1582, the work bore the subtitle, in large capital letters ‘Pris du Latin de M. Jean Liebaut docteur medecin à Paris, et faicts François’. The prefatory letter to the reader, unsigned but which reads as though written by the printer, also invites the reader to admire this translation from Latin: ‘Jouis donc, amy lecteur, du labeur, diligence et erudition de M. JEAN LIEBAUT, et ne faicts mal ton prouffit de ce françois tourné du latin’ (iiii) (‘May you enjoy, dear reader, the work, diligence and erudition of Monsieur Jean Liebaut, and benefit from this translation from Latin into French’). Yet no Latin original has ever come to light<sup>28</sup>—and in 1609 Lazare Pena, a physician who revised and extended the work, revealed, with some sense of outrage, that Liebaut had in fact drawn most of his material from a recent Italian source, Giovanni Marinello’s *Le Medicine partendenti alle infermità delle donne* (Venice: Giovanni Bonadio, 1563):

et neantmoins, par la conserance de l’un et l’autre, j’ay descouvert qu’il avoit tiré toutes les matieres de Marinello; changeant en certains endroits l’ordre: et y adjoustant quelque peu du sien pour mieux le desguiser. Mais il faut que la gloire retourne à l’auteur, et que neantmoins nous donnions quelque loüange à Liebaud d’avoir poly, amplifié et rendu François ce livre. (ävii<sup>v</sup>–äviii<sup>v</sup>)

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‘and yet, when I compared the two texts, I discovered that he had taken all the subject matter from Marinello, in places changing the order and adding a little of his own composition the better to disguise this. But the honour is due to the original author, although we should accord some praise to Liebaud for having translated this book into French, refining and extending it.’

Why in 1582 should an author as experienced as Jean Liebaut—or a printer as established as Jacques Dupuis—have claimed a neo-Latin antecedent for this vernacular text? We must suppose that if a medical work was believed to have originated in Latin, it was still considered to be more serious, more authoritative. In this case, the work did not have the honour of being translated back into Latin, any more than did Guillemeau’s extremely successful French obstetric treatise of 1609, *De l’heureux accouchement des femmes*. That both these works on women’s reproductive health circulated widely in the vernacular alone throughout the first half of the seventeenth century is an important indication of the shifting balance of linguistic power.

As the detailed examples I have discussed above have demonstrated, the transmission of medical works between Latin and French reading communities leaves a fascinatingly complex trail. Several different factors are at work, including the content of the work, its perceived purpose, and the specificity or diversity of its appeal. While the first author must make the choice between Latin or the vernacular for the original text, it is translators and publishers who determine the language of a work’s afterlife—or, indeed, whether translation will afford the work an afterlife. On a broad level, for the period 1550–1650, we can draw a distinction between theory and practice. Well into the first half of the seventeenth century, Latin retains its status

among men of letters, including leading physicians, as the international language in which to pursue theoretical claims and debates. From the middle of the sixteenth century, the French vernacular gains substantial ground, conversely, as the language in which to disseminate medical and surgical practice, whether to barbers, surgeons, midwives, provincial physicians, or lay readers. Because reproductive health crosses so many boundaries, not least those of gender, and professional/lay interests, it is unsurprising that works in this area move regularly and often fluidly between reading communities. Chrestian's defence in 1549 of the use of French for instructing surgeons heralded the rise of the vernacular over the next century, but it is important to restate in conclusion that this did not spell the immediate demise of Latin, whose enduring authority and international status as a *lingua franca* continued to draw some leading physicians to use it either to put forward new ideas or to defend the old order. Not until the later seventeenth century would the pendulum swing decisively in favour of the vernacular.

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## NOTES

1. Burke's sampling of types of translations into neo-Latin puts works of natural philosophy (a category including medicine, mathematics and magic) in third place, just behind history, but nowhere near the level of translations into Latin of works on religion. Burke (71) notes 135 printed translations into Latin of works of natural philosophy out of a total of 1140 translations into Latin published before 1799.
2. Fernel's compendium *Medicina* (containing his *Physiologia* and *Pathologia*), first appearing in 1554, was republished in 1567 as *Universa medicina*, and then regularly until the mid-seventeenth century. A French translation of the *Physiologia* appeared in 1655, just over a century after the original Latin text.
3. Houllier's *Opera omnia practica*, which appeared posthumously in 1623, was reprinted in 1635 and 1674.
4. Joubert published Rondelet's *Methodus curandorum omnium morborum corporis humani* posthumously in 1573; new editions appeared up to 1603.
5. Individual works by Du Laurens were published throughout the 1590s until his death in 1609, then the posthumous two-volume folio, *Opera omnia anatomica et medica* (Paris, 1627-28).
6. In the period 1550-1650, I have not observed a notable correlation between the use of the French vernacular and the expression of views dissenting from institutionalised academic medicine. In contrast, Murray Jones (120) points to the choice of the English vernacular by some authors between 1650-1700 as a vehicle to express such dissent.
7. 'Ce livre ha eu si grande reputation, que n'estant au commencement qu'à dix ou douze sols, il s'est depuis vendu jusques à un escu, voire à quatre francs: tout ainsi qu'en la cherté (espece de famine) le prix de bled se haulte tous les jours', Prefatory letter by Barthélemy Cabrol in the *Segonde Partie des erreurs populaires* (Paris: pour Abel L'Angelier, 1579), eiii<sup>v</sup>-eiv<sup>r</sup>.
8. Burke's sample of works translated into Latin across western Europe demonstrates a sharp rise in the second half of the sixteenth century (220 works as opposed to only 61 in the previous half century), with an even greater number in the first half of the seventeenth century (387), before falling back gradually over the next 150 years. Thus the period 1550-1700 looks the most promising for further

detailed research on translations into neo-Latin.

9. On the Latin translation of Paré, see Pantin, 'La traduction latine'.
10. In contrast, the Dutch translation of 1592 was based on the French text of the *Œuvres*, according to Doe (96-99), and even gave rise to Japanese translations over a century later (1706, 1735, 1769) when Dutch traders took the work to Japan.
11. On Chrestian's translations of these works, see Worth-Stylianou, *Les Traités* 143-72.
12. On the career and publications of Canappe, see Gerig.
13. For discussion of the debate and Tolet's work, see Lastraioli and Mayer.
14. On the controversies over both women and lay men reading works in French on reproductive health, see Valerie Worth-Stylianou, "Que tout cela eust mieux esté en latin, que en François": l'emploi de la langue française dans la diffusion du savoir obstétrical au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle en France.' *Actes du Colloque Pratique et Pensée Médicales à la Renaissance, Actes du 51<sup>e</sup> Colloque international d'études humanistes* (Tours, 2-6 juillet) Ed. Jacqueline Vons. Paris: De Boccard, 2009. 173-86.
15. I leave aside here, for reasons of space, two other important categories: (1) translations into French of classical Greek or Latin works on reproductive or women's health and (2) translations into French of neo-Latin works which contain some sections on these areas, but the predominant remit of which is broader, such as Levinus Lemnius's *De miraculis occultis naturae* (1559), of which two French translations appeared in the next decade, *Les secrets miracles de nature* (1566) and *Les occultes merveilles et secretz de nature* (1567).
16. On the history of the exhibit itself, the survival of which can be traced up to the end of the eighteenth century (when it had reached the Royal Museum in Copenhagen), see Jan Bondeson, *The Two-Headed Boy and Other Medical Marvels* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 2000. 41-45); it should be noted, however, that Bondeson gives no evidence to support his assumption that Provanchières simply translated Ailleboust's published text.
17. Green refers to the dichotomy whereby in the Middle Ages 'theoretical gynaecology became more and more the province of learned male physicians, while [normal] childbirth management remained in the hands of women' (172). On the practices and perceptions of women's medical work in early modern France, see Broomhall, and Klairmont Lingo for the politics of print in this context.
18. The 1536 title-page includes the phrase 'livret fort utile et duysant pour survenir a beaucoup de necessitez composé premierement en latin, par excellent medecin de Francfort, maistre Euchaïre Rodion, et depuis tourné en langue francoyse à l'utilité de plusieurs personnes'. This formula is modified slightly by Bienassis in 1563: 'Premierement composé en latin, par Maistre Euchaïre Rodion, Docteur en Medecine, et depuis tournez en nostre langue Françoisse, et augmenté de Annotations, par M. Paul Bienassis de Poitiers, à l'utilité de plusieurs personnes'.
19. For example, the excursus in chapter 1 (1536), on whether the reader should believe illustrations of the position of the foetus, is expressed as personal opinion, without reference to classical *loci* (Rösslin 1536, vi'-vii').
20. Renate Blumenfel-Kosinski (167, fn. 129) refers to Bauhin's translation of 1582, but I have found no trace of an edition before 1586. See also Rousset 2010.
21. Compare Rousset's *Traitté nouveau de l'hysterotokotomie* 5 and 195 with the *Gynaeciorum libri* (1597) 448 and 474.
22. In one case, a new title is used: 'Histoire concernante ce propos' (*Traitté nouveau de l'hysterotokotomie* 192) becomes 'superfetationis historia' (*Gynaeciorum libri* [1597] 474), perhaps reflecting Bauhin's interest in this phenomenon, of which he cites additional cases in his Appendix to the translation of Rousset.

23. The Latin text of Rousset's preface is available in Worth-Stylianou, *Les Traités d'obstétrique* 254-56.
24. In the 1590s, Jacques Marchant, a surgeon (and son-in-law of the royal surgeon Jacques Guillemeau) published a series of increasingly vitriolic attacks on Rousset's advocacy of caesareans, in the form of several poems and two prose works, *In Fr. Rosseti apologiam, declamatio* (Paris: Nicolas Delouvain, 1598) and *Declamatio III in Fr. Rosseti* (n.d.). For a summary of this exchange, see Blumenfeld-Kosinski 43-45.
25. See the excerpts on my 'Birthing Tales' research website, <www.birthingtales.org>, and also the sections included in *Pregnancy and Birth in Early Modern France*.
26. Ironically, a later translation into English in 1723 promoted the treatise's practical values—but by translating almost exclusively the section referring to the removal of stones.
27. At least ten further editions of the work were published over the next century (the last appearing in 1674), and under several variant titles. On the history of and revisions to the work, see Worth-Stylianou, *Les Traités d'obstétrique* 257-89; sections of the *Trois livres* are translated in *Pregnancy and Birth in Early Modern France*.
28. Many library catalogues still list the French version as a translation of a (hypothetical) Latin work published in 1582 under the title *De sanitae foecunditate et morbis mulierum*.

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