

## Book Reviews

of the dictionaries are decades old, and Fincke is able to bring the discussion up to date by incorporating more recent literature and enriching it with her own insights. And even where additions and corrections to the dictionaries are few (e.g. the discussion of the nuances of verbs of seeing in chapter II), her book opens the topic up to readers without access to specialist libraries.

Minor criticisms can be made. The date of *BAM* 393, a source discussed in the introduction, is suspect, because (as copied) it mixes sign forms of different periods. The efficacy of honey and liver (sources of vitamin A) as remedies for certain maladies could have been mentioned. With non-specialists in mind, the discussion of the healthy eye could perhaps occasionally have distinguished more sharply between *bona fide* optical nomenclature and words used as metaphors (e.g. *dekû* “to rouse”, p. 34, regularly used of armies).

This is definitely a book which libraries catering for ancient medicine will want to stock, and students of Mesopotamian (and Hittite) medicine will consult as a matter of course. It is, then, especially felicitous that it should contain excellent indexes (of words in ancient languages, modern medical terms, ancient sources by museum number, and ancient sources by publication).

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**Laura Garwin and Tim Lincoln** (eds),  
*A century of nature: twenty-one discoveries that changed science and the world*, Chicago and London, University of Chicago Press, 2003, pp. xviii, 360, £17.50, US \$25.00 (paperback 0-226-28415-8)

This book reproduces twenty-one papers published in *Nature* between 1925 (*Australopithecus Africanus*) and 1997 (Dolly the sheep). It covers neither a century, nor necessarily discoveries that have changed the world (Dolly the Sheep? Buckminsterfullerene?). Many of the papers are remarkably short, especially in the earlier part of the century, and indeed the accompanying commentary provided is, a quick scan suggests, in most cases longer. These commentaries are not by historians of science but by distinguished contributors to the fields surveyed. The book thus combines three old-fashioned genres, the reprint of classic papers, the practitioner history, and the anthology from a journal. It is subject to the same criticisms as each of these genres would be individually, without much in the way of compensation. Such books are usually to be dipped into, but in this case this is not so easy because of the lack of clear typographic distinctions between the reprint and the commentary.

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