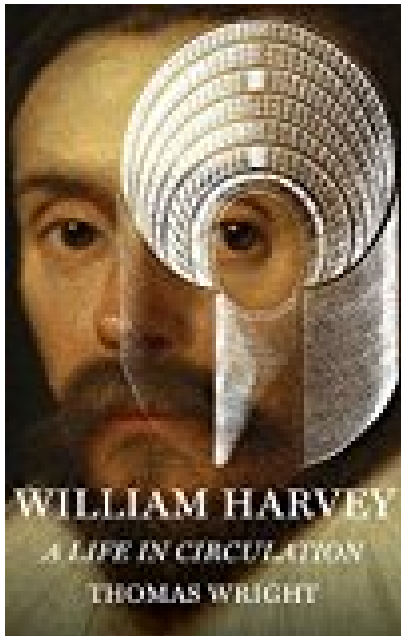


William Harvey A Life in Circulation



BOOK DETAILS

- Author : Thomas Wright
- Pages : 288 Pages
- Publisher : Oxford University Press
- Language : English
- ISBN : 0199931690

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BOOK SYNOPSIS

In 1628, William Harvey published his revolutionary discovery that the blood circulated through the body. This one theory demolished 1,500 years of medical thinking, dating back to Galen and Roman times, and introduced a radical vision of the working of the human body that had profound cultural consequences. Indeed, Harveys theory influenced not only anatomists, but also economists, poets and political thinkers. Its impact on what we now call the "history of science," and on culture generally, was arguably as great as Darwins theory of evolution or Newtons theory of gravity. Thomas Wrights biography of Harvey celebrates the meteoric rise of a yeomans son to the elevated position of Kings physician, and paints an admiring portrait of an extraordinary mind amid a fertile time in Englands intellectual history. Set in late Renaissance London, Wrights vivid portrait features an illustrious cast of historical characters, from Francis Bacon and John Donne to Robert Fludd, whose corroboration of Harveys ideas helped launch his circulation theory. Wright traces Harveys progress from the farmlands of Kent to Englands royal palace, and offers a brilliant reconstruction of Harveys epoch-making research, which involved countless dissections of human corpses and live animals. After he published his discoveries, Harvey became famous throughout Europe, where he toured the major universities, demonstrating his theory by vivisection. But when the Charles I was toppled during the English Civil War in 1649, his court physician fell too, and Harvey found himself banished from London. He would ultimately die in relative obscurity, suffering from gout and melancholy. A victim of the political turmoil of the times, William Harvey nevertheless was the mainspring of vast historical changes in medicine and anatomy, launching a revolution that would continue to run its course long after his death.

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