

# Review of: "From Psychostasis to the Discovery of Cardiac Nerves: The Origins of the Modern Cardiac Neuromodulation Concept"

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The chapter is encyclopaedic in its extent and is authoritative. It is, however, remarkably difficult to digest. I wonder for whom it is written. The topic of the anatomical details of cardiac innervation is of significant interest in itself, and the chapter offers much information that was new to me. The descriptions also diverge markedly from "conventional wisdom". For example, I was still under the impression that the cardiac ganglions were essentially vagal. We are told, however, that the ganglion cells, including the small intensely fluorescent cells, are likely to be of sympathetic, rather than parasympathetic, origin. Should not the reader be offered an explanation of this fact, pointing out that this requires a total revision of "conventional thought"? The same goes for cardiac innervation as a whole. Again, the "old concept" was that the cardiac nerves were either sympathetic, having their ganglionic origin far from the heart, or else parasympathetic, with the latter nerves originating from the cardiac ganglions. As indicated above, we are now informed that such an approach is outdated. But we also know that the cardiac nerves themselves, rather than being adrenergic or cholinergic, can be non-cholinergic and non-adrenergic. Again, therefore, should not the interested reader be introduced to this "new" understanding of cardiac innervation? The multiple figures contain so many panels that it is difficult to appreciate the fine details that are discussed. At least for myself, I would have preferred to see a "simplified" account of the new approach to the anatomy of the cardiac nerves. The "modern" concept of neuromodulation surely needs to be put into the context of the outdated "sympathetic/parasympathetic" approach. There is, perhaps, too much information contained in the review. It would be better divided into sections, with the historical details separated from the anatomy, and the anatomy separated from the "psychostasis," whatever this latter term is meant to convey.