

of movement itself. Amidst the flux of the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic and of early eighteenth-century Naples the *Lex Regia* debate and the development of a 'Vichian moment' provided counterpoints of stability.

Simultaneous to this historical argument, Lomonaco also construes a methodological understanding of philosophical history that might be placed in the same frame as John Pocock's 'Machiavellian moment' and his 'Barbarism and Religion' volume dedicated to enlightened histories. Lomonaco's approach also has the advantage over Pocock's perspective that it is less liable to distorting eighteenth-century political debate through the imposition of simplified historical schemes onto given facts. Reading Michael Sonenscher's recent study, *Sans-Culottes: An Eighteenth-Century Emblem in the French Revolution* (Princeton 2008), one actually recognises connections between Lomonaco's post-Cartesian Pyrrhonism and the post-Rousseauian intellectual horizons of Revolutionary France.

For all its sophistication many readers will, however, be troubled by the inaccessibility of this book. Undoubtedly, the five main chapters display great scholarly refinement and will be eagerly read by pockets of specialised historians of philosophy and law. Yet, it takes effort to grasp the historical and methodological innovations of the book as a whole. The literal style and some idiomatic and syntactic Italianisms in the translation may also deter some readers. Presumably to help out the reader a second, autobiographical, introduction was included, along with a foreword by Leon Pompa and an afterword by Fulvio Tessitore. The contribution by Tessitore, a former senator and noted public intellectual, forms an intriguing pointer. It remains not to be underestimated how much weight historical-philosophical analyses carry in present-day Naples where academic learning about law and philosophy feeds into political debate in a more comprehensive fashion than one imagines.

Kooijmans, Luuc, *Death Defied: The Anatomy Lessons of Frederick Ruysch* (History of Science and Medicine Library 18; Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2011, xi + 470 pp., ISBN 978 90 04 18784 9).

One of the many curious consequences of the fall of the Berlin Wall was the renewal of interest in the anatomical specimens of Frederik Ruysch. His famous collection was purchased by Tsar Peter, and could be seen in his capital city from 1719 onwards; parts of it were known to have survived into the later twentieth century, and in 1960 a Frankfurt physician, Günter Mann, reported having seen many of Ruysch's preparations in the Leningrad Kunstkamera. Unfortunately, the famous compositions of virtuosity made from fetal skeletons and dried body parts that taught moral lessons (such as the shortness of life), had perished, but many of the wet specimens survived. When a large exhibition on early modern Dutch *kunst- en rariteitenverzamelingen* was mounted at the Amsterdams Historisch Museum in 1992, then, further lines of communication were opened to explore the possibility of bringing back some of the items to Amsterdam for display. In the same year, some of Rosemond Purcell's photographs from the Russian collections (among others), including some of Ruysch's preparations, were published in her *Finders, Keepers: Eight Collectors*. In 2003, a new permanent exhibition of Ruysch's work, as restored by Willem J. Mulder, opened in St Petersburg.

Ruysch's legacy at the beginning of the twenty-first century therefore properly opens and closes this book, an English translation of the definitive biography of Ruysch, first published by Luuc Kooijmans in 2004. It will be welcomed by the many without access to the Dutch original. There are some slight differences between the two versions. A few illustrations (such as some of Purcell's photographs) have been dropped while others have been added (such as Ruysch's coat of arms, 204), and all now appear in black-and-white. Some other silent changes have been made for the sake of the reader: for instance, Kooijmans' original

indication of the painting of the anatomist Tulp which he saw in the surgeons's guildhall (in the Amsterdam Waag) is now specified as Rembrandt's 'The Anatomy Lesson of Dr Tulp' (202). At the same time, however, some information is silently dropped, such as the renovation of the guildhall in 1700, no doubt because it seemed extraneous to the subject at hand. A short section of chapter 4, 'Heibel in de hortus' (following Commelin's death in 1692) has also been cut, as has some material in the last chapters, which are merged into one. Anyone seeking every possible bit of information should therefore consult the original. But for everyone else, the translation is almost complete, and is both faithful to the original text and to modern English usage.

Kooijmans organized his book according to a traditional biographical structure. Much of the information is well known, but the author has read carefully and thoroughly, and brought it together masterfully. Given the length of Ruysch's life and the importance of his work, the work can be treated as an excellent introduction to some fundamental aspects of the natural science of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. A few of the other major figures who make an appearance here include Bidloo, De Bils, Blasius, Swammerdam, Huydecoper, Commelin, Bontekoe, Blankaart, Boerhaave, Seba, and Tsar Peter. Ruysch's interest in the curious art of Otto Marseus, and his encouragement of his daughter Rachel's development as a painter, is also well handled. Other topics that enter the biography and are treated carefully include vivisection, midwifery, literary societies and free-thought, surgery (including lithotomy), and of course the medical faculties, guilds, and other institutions of the period; Kooijmans also gives much careful attention to Ruysch's intellectual interests, not only anatomy and botany, but the lacteal vessels, reproduction, plant anatomy, the study of the brain, and the argument that the body is composed of glands. No wonder that Ruysch was considered to be one of the greatest natural scientists of

the period, succeeding Isaac Newton in the Paris Académie des Sciences in 1728. My only personal disappointment is that Kooijmans offers no new insights into the methods of preparation that Ruysch kept secret but which not only made his *rareitenverzamelingen* famous but helped in making many of his most important factual discoveries; the details may be lost forever.

Because of the book's biographical framework, Kooijmans does not offer an argument about the nature of historical change in the period. But he raises some questions. He is clear that he does not think that Ruysch's achievements were due to religion; perhaps this leaves politics and personal networks as possible explanations, but Kooijmans does not go there, either. Was Ruysch's work possible, then, because of urbanization, printing and the emergence of a Republic of Letters, a new kind of commercial economy, or an information revolution? This descriptive biography does not answer that question but it does provide the kinds of examples that allow further speculation about such larger forces in the world. And in the meantime, Ruysch has been treated in a way that he himself would have appreciated: that fact is stranger than fiction, and can be discovered by human art, even displayed for all to see.

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Hunt, Lynn, Jacob, Margaret C., Mijnhardt, Wijnand, *The Book that Changed Europe: Picart & Bernard's Religious Ceremonies of the World* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010, xi + 383 pp., ISBN 978 0 674 04928 4).

Between 1723 and 1737 there was published in Amsterdam a multi-volume, lavishly-illustrated survey of the rites and rituals of all the world's religions. The book, *Ceremonies et coutumes religieuses de tous les peuples du monde*, was a