

**Norbert Marxer**, *Praxis statt Theorie! Leben und Werk des Nürnberger Arztes, Alchemikers und Fachschriftstellers Johann Hiskia Cardilucius (1630–1697)*, Studien und Quellen zur Kulturgeschichte der Frühen Neuzeit, vol. 1, Heidelberg, Palatina, 2000, pp. 285, DM 88.01, SFr 78.00, €45.00 (hardback 3-932608-07-0).

Among historians of medicine, the Nuremberg seventeenth-century physician Johann Hiskia Cardilucius (1630–97) is not widely known. Marxer's study of his life and writings, however, shows that this is perhaps unjustified. In his own time, Cardilucius was renowned not only because of his medicine and chemistry, but also for his "reforming" efforts. According to Marxer, these last efforts were centred on the notion of "*Nützlichkeit*" (usefulness) in medicine and education. He promoted the use of the vernacular and, in addition to the teaching of classical subjects, he promoted the nationwide education of "useful" topics, such as mathematics, the arts of building, medicine, waterworks, farming, etc. He published his own works in German and, moreover, translated important works in to the vernacular. Cardilucius, in other words, was for Nürnberg what the members of the Hartlib circle were for England. It is not surprising therefore, that Cardilucius was acquainted with Hartlib himself.

With respect to his medicine, Marxer calls Cardilucius an eclectic. He promoted a medicine based on the classical idea of the four humours, supplemented with elements of Paracelsian and Helmontian iatrochemistry. Marxer argues that although medicine at the time moved away from classical and Arabic-medieval sources, remedies continued to be based on the doctrine of the four humours. The work of Cardilucius illustrates this inclination, for his (spagyric) remedies do not show any awareness of the new mechanical philosophy, but are still rooted in classical and/or iatrochemical ideas.

The book is a good starting point for anyone wanting to know more about Cardilucius. It is well researched and richly footnoted. Unfortunately, however, as a biography it is not much more than a summing up of the life and

work of Cardilucius. There is little analysis and the author hardly ever attempts to pose, let alone answer, the question of why Cardilucius acted the way he did. Although historians of science and medicine have become increasingly aware of the philosophical and religious significance of early modern natural philosophy, not much of this awareness is visible in Marxer's *Praxis statt Theorie!* In other words, little is done to set Cardilucius' work in context. The title, for instance, hints at an association between Cardilucius and Leibniz. Indeed, we discover that Cardilucius moved in the philosophical circle around Leibniz and, according to Marxer, Cardilucius' motto "Practice not Theory" was a variation of Leibniz's motto *Theoria cum praxi*. Yet, no more is said on the matter and the reader is left wondering how much of the philosophy of Leibniz is visible in the ideas of Cardilucius. Similarly, the reason why Cardilucius was keen on reform in education is not explained. Moreover, stating that Cardilucius was an eclectic is an easy way out of difficult questions—the reader, still, wants to know why Cardilucius adopted certain ideas in his medicine and chemistry.

Still, perhaps one should not blame Marxer for not doing more than the subtitle of his book promises, i.e. to give an account of the life and work of the Nürnberg physician Cardilucius. As such the book is useful for anyone researching the Germanic "reform movement" in medicine and education. It also illustrates the adoption of iatrochemical ideas in medicine. Most notably, Marxer's annotated bibliography of Cardilucius' works invites further research.

**Rina Knoeff**,  
Maastricht University

**M J van Lieburg**, *Nieuw licht op Hendrik van Deventer (1651–1724)*, Rotterdam, Erasmus Publishing, 2002, pp. 120, €17.50 (paperback 90-5235-163-5).

In medical historiography, Hendrik van Deventer was traditionally praised as the most important representative of early modern obstetrics in the Netherlands. His book *Manuale*

*operatien, zijnde een nieuw licht voor vroed-meesters en vroed-vrouwen*; (Manual Operations which are a New Light for Male and Female Midwives), which appeared in 1701, was hailed as the first work in the Dutch language to have considerable influence on the practice of obstetrics in the eighteenth century. It was translated by contemporaries into Latin, German, French and English. In 2001, it was reprinted with an introduction as volume 20 of the Dutch Classics in History of Science.

Now Marius Jan van Lieburg, an expert in Dutch medical history, sheds “new light” on the author of this famous gynaecological treatise. Deliberately leaving aside Van Deventer’s significance for the development of early eighteenth-century obstetrics—already extensively treated in the historiography—Van Lieburg’s thorough archive research has led him to the discovery of important, hitherto unknown, sources. Among these finds were a thesis by Van Deventer long believed lost, a chemiatic treatise, probably published in 1680, and nine manuscripts, including his remarkable treatise *Eerste beginselen der ware natuurkunde* (First Principles on true Physics) on physics and chemistry.

Van Lieburg, who also gives a genealogical overview and a bibliography of Van Deventer’s works, places Van Deventer in the cultural and scientific contexts of the Dutch Golden Age. He emphasizes the importance of Van Deventer’s religious views in the context of previously unknown facts of his biography. According to Van Lieburg, Van Deventer joined the Labadist sect in 1670 and lived with them until the 1690s before he started to practise medicine in The Hague. Van Deventer is presented not only as a surgeon, orthopaedist and obstetrician who was capable of improving his personal expertise, but also as a physician who developed a flourishing trade in spagyric remedies, and as a chemist belonging to a fascinating group of Dutch researchers inspired by the English Paracelsist George Starkey (1628–65). Analysing the treatise on physics and chemistry, Van Lieburg shows that Van Deventer was a Christian philosopher intent on devising a

strictly biblical cosmogony on the basis of revised physical science, and employing to this end a theory of five elements and an amended pneumatic theory.

The book is worth reading by all scholars interested in early modern Dutch medicine. It is one of several recent publications which point out that science and religion were not separate realms with their own questions and solutions and that historians have neglected the importance of theories and ideas which modern science has conveniently forgotten. Unlike Rina Knoeff’s doctoral thesis, *Herman Boerhaave (1668–1738): Calvinist chemist and physician*, also published in 2002, Van Lieburg’s *Nieuw licht* so far shares the same fate as many other Dutch scholarly works. Because of the language barrier, it is not widely accessible to the international community of scholars—an English translation would be very welcome.

**Christoph Schweikardt,**  
Ruhr University Bochum

**Françoise Gaide and Frédérique Biville** (eds), *Manus medica. Actions et gestes de l’officiant dans les textes médicaux latins. Questions de thérapeutique et de lexique*, Collection Textes et Documents de la Méditerranée Antique et Médiévale, Aix-en-Provence, Université de Provence, 2003, pp. 272, €24.00 (paperback 2-85399-549-6).

This volume contains the papers of a conference held in 2001 that brought together linguists and historians of medicine to consider the ancient evidence for the actual activities and gestures involved in the life of a Roman doctor. Veterinary medicine is also included, as well as magic, alongside more familiar medical authors such as Celsus and Pliny. The range of activities discussed here is substantial, from touching and bandaging to cauterization and the preparation of a variety of drugs in a variety of forms. The best papers are those that go outside the strictly philological to introduce epigraphic, artistic or archaeological information to explain or to develop accounts