reason for using the example is evident. In St. Jerome, when Jesus talks to his disciples about washing feet: “Exemplum enim dedi vobis” (John 13:15), the term is obviously entirely free from its earlier judicial contexts. In Béatrice Guion’s discussions of exemplarity, she quite rightly relies on this trans-historical meaning. When Montaigne and Pascal offer critiques of exemplarity, they also rely on this stable signification.

Orest Ranum


Most studies on corporeality in the seventeenth century focus on the radical difference of psyche and soma while accepting the hierarchization of the substances, with references to Descartes and Jansenist moralists. The history of science in early modern Europe has recently become a field of new theoretical approaches that seek to correct these hierarchical binaries and to rectify the flawed assessment of the inferior role of the body, the passions, and sensations in the Cartesian era. Erec R. Koch’s innovative study argues persuasively that the body is far from being secondary, alienated, or purely mechanical within seventeenth-century thought. By drawing on sources from the late sixteenth century and the seventeenth century, the author explores the way in which corporeal sensibilities gave rise to a subject-body that announced in a remarkable way the discoveries of corporal sensibilities by eighteenth-century thinkers. Founding his analysis on a vast array of sources (philosophical thought, metaphysical writings, theories on the cosmos, political theory, and moralistic thought), in each chapter Koch turns to one particular sense and its relation to passion-production.

Koch’s connected arguments are that for seventeenth-century thinkers, “the body becomes the source and site of passion and sensation, which the mind receives” (14), that “sensibility and passion are the products of forces of a universe of plenitude and matter in motion, which act on the body” (13), and that these two developments converge into an aesthetic body. Chapter one describes the physiological underpinning of corporeal sensibility through an in-depth analysis of its history in both the sixteenth century and the seventeenth century, culminating in Descartes’s late treatise *Les Passions de l’âme.* After a brief and pertinent review of Ancient Greek thought on the organic unity between the physical and the spiritual, as well as anatomical discoveries in the Renaissance, the chapter gives full attention to Descartes’s treatises and correspondences. Koch highlights the impor-
tance of Descartes’s insight that the body – as the source of sensibility and the passions – produces the ethical individual in society through the regulation and cultivation of that aesthetic body. It is here that the author’s argument is very persuasive in that it illustrates the priority and centrality of the body in the production of passions. For Descartes, affective responses, such as pleasure or pain, are created through the physiological domain, which becomes vital for the way in which the subject navigates his/her world and society (46). In his correspondence with the Princess Elisabeth of Bohemia, the French philosopher attributes a precise role for the body in creating affective ethical habit.

In chapter two, Pierre Corneille’s Cinna becomes the focus of attention, as the study turns to the sense of sight. Koch argues that vision produces an affective response in the spectator: namely, a corporeal catharsis or purgation. Koch engages in an illuminating reading of catharsis: According to Aristotle, purgative theory suggests the very corporeality of the audience’s experience when viewing tragedy. Catharsis passes through the body. “The aesthetic is a function of sensus communis, of sensibility and passion derived from and targeting the aesthetic body” (98) through the sense of sight. Cinna then reveals the mutual imbrications of the corporeal and the ideological/political effect of the play. The discussion of the play’s closing opens up a new direction for existing scholarship, as Koch counters the theory that the monarch’s final legitimacy is solely achieved through a mental act of recognition. Instead, purgation of the passions occurs through both aesthetics and the aesthetic body in order to produce admiration. Koch skillfully draws on Pierre Nicole and Malebranche’s works to account for the “transfer” of passions from the stage to the spectator.

In chapter three, Koch examines Marin Mersenne’s Harmonie universelle, Michel le Faucheur’s Traité de l’action de l’orateur, and Bernard Lamy’s Art de parler in order to explore the convergence of the sense of hearing and passion production. Voice becomes important in that it can create affect-effects through accent, pronunciation, and undertones. In short, rhetorical and affective responses relate to each other in the rhetoricians’ underlying mandate of movere. It is perhaps here that the scientific promise of determining the corporeal production of affect becomes the most mechanical, as the mechanisms triggered seem to relegate the body back to a machine; nevertheless, it is still a “sensory machine,” as Koch underlines (170).

Chapter four sheds new light onto corporality underlying (metaphorical) taste, and offers a stimulating read of figurative notions of taste. Koch makes the compelling argument that literal taste (linked to the body) and figurative taste (associated with intellect) do not stand in opposition to each other. Instead, the latter is infused with affective responses that require
reference to physiological processes. *Bon goût* is acquired through imitation of those individuals who embody it. Works by La Mothe le Vayer, the chevalier de Méré, and Morvan de Bellegarde demonstrate how spiritual taste is rooted throughout the century in passionate responses of the body.

The final chapter examines the importance of touch through Jansenist conceptions, in particular Pierre Nicole's essay *De la charité et de l'amour propre* and Blaise Pascal's *Pensées* and *Trois discours sur la condition des grands*. Koch starts out by exploring that topic through an explicit reference to Hobbes that he encounters in Nicole’s text. He then explains how Hobbesian theory on the external causality of motion in the universe is linked to passion production and in particular fear – a motivating force for the interaction, exchanges, and commerce of social and political life. Mechanical models of physics fuel Nicole’s and Pascal’s debate on socio-political order. Both authors conceive of how “the body in society is motivated by the force of contact-touch, which provokes sensibility and passion, and most notably the passion of fear” (288).

I can only make two criticisms: that there is no detailed delineation of the link between the seventeenth-century aesthetic body and its continuance throughout the eighteenth-century’s movement of sensibility; and that Koch’s discussion always returns to the “moderate” or “regulated” body, while the century’s perspective on untamed or unregulated passions could use some explanation. Overall, readers of this perceptive study will profit from a combination of careful reading of a diverse set of authors (including Kant and Hobbes), as well as borrowings from cultural material (Bourdieu, Elias, Habermas, Ong ...) that will appeal to a large readership within early modern literature, philosophy, the history of science, and political theory. The author demonstrates a firm grasp of his material with insightful interpretations which underscore the underlying role of the body for passion production.

Bernadette Höfer


Pourquoi rassembler dans un seul volume des articles parus entre 1974 et 2003 dans différents périodiques et actes de colloque en France et ailleurs? Si Jacques Le Brun, auteur de ces communications, a décidé de rééditer ses travaux portant sur la littérature chrétienne, il avait certainement un objec-