



Regimens of the Mind: Boyle, Locke, and the Early Modern Cultura Animi Tradition

Sorana Corneanu

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In *Regimens of the Mind*, Sorana Corneanu proposes a new approach to the epistemological and methodological doctrines of the leading experimental philosophers of seventeenth-century England, an approach that considers their often overlooked moral, psychological, and theological elements. Corneanu focuses on the views about the pursuit of knowledge in the writings of Robert Boyle and John Locke, as well as in those of several of their influences, including Francis Bacon and the early Royal Society virtuosi. She argues that their experimental programs of inquiry fulfill the role of regimens for curing, ordering, and educating the mind toward an ethical purpose, an idea she tracks back to the ancient tradition of *cultura animi*. Corneanu traces this idea through its early modern revival and illustrates how it organizes the experimental philosophers' reflections on the discipline of judgment, the study of nature, and the study of Scripture.

It is through this lens, the author suggests, that the core features of the early modern English experimental philosophy—including its defense of experience, its epistemic modesty, its communal nature, and its pursuit of “objectivity”—are best understood.

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