



Isaac Beeckman in Context

Science, the Arts, and Culture in the Early Dutch Republic

Middelburg, The Netherlands, 27-28 September 2018

1618 was a crucial year in what is now known as the Scientific Revolution. In September of that year the Dutch artisan, theologian, schoolmaster and natural philosopher Isaac Beeckman (1588-1637) was promoted to doctor of medicine in the French city of Caen. Beeckman added a number of Corrolaria to his dissertation in which he laid down the principles of a new and revolutionary way to account for natural phenomena, the mechanical philosophy. Then, in November 1618, Beeckman met the young military officer René Descartes in the city of Breda. In a series of highly stimulating conversations he put Descartes on the track towards his own philosophy of nature. The rest is history.

On September 27 and 28, 2018, an international conference, to be held at the premises of the University College Roosevelt in Middelburg, the Netherlands, will commemorate these pivotal moments of 1618. Beeckman was a native of Middelburg and it was in this bustling commercial city that he was groping with his revolutionary insights in the years before 1618. Here he was deeply embedded in a cosmopolitan culture, a world in which sophisticated artisanal skills, riches from the overseas trading routes, humanistic culture and the study of nature were merging into a new culture of knowledge. Our conference aims to put Beeckman in the context of this new culture of knowledge and more specifically 1) to investigate how this world interacted with Beeckman's mechanical philosophizing in form and content, 2) to study Beeckman's role in the shaping of the new philosophy of nature, 3) to evaluate how Beeckman's role in the development of the mechanical philosophy was viewed, both by his contemporaries, such as Descartes, and by modern scholars, especially in France.

Programme

Thursday 27 September

9.30 Welcome

9.45 Opening

10.00 Keynote lecture

Huib Zuidervaart Middelburg, city of scientific knowledge around 1600

10.45 Session 1

Isabel Casteels Different city, different science: cultures of knowledge in Middelburg and Enkhuizen

Bram van Overdijk Finding Lime Street. The Republic of Letters in Middelburg

Edouard Mehl Looking for spots in the Sun. Hortensius, Beeckman, Kepler and the accuracy of the telescope in 1630

12.15 Lunch

13.30 Session 2

Frédéric de Buzon Beeckman's theory of music, before and after meeting

Albert Clement Musical life in Middelburg in the times of Isaac Beeckman

Jelle Kalsbeek Translating geometry into astronomy through the symbolic language of music

N.B. This session will take place in the St. Augustinus Church, Zuidsingel 70, Middelburg

15.00 Tea break

15.30 Session 3

Elisabeth Moreau The physiological theory of Isaac Beeckman (1616-1627)

Dániel Moerman When a physician becomes a patient: Isaac Beeckman's accounts of illness and death

Djoeke van Netten To publish or not to publish?

18.00 Diner for speakers and organizers

19.30 Public lecture

Floris H. Cohen Verkenningstocht door de Beeckmanstraat (in Dutch)

N.B. This lecture will take place in the Zeeuwse Bibliotheek, Kousteensedijk 7, Middelburg

Friday 28 September

9.30 Keynote lecture

John A. Schuster Isaac Beeckman in the context of the Scientific Revolution

10.15 Session 4

Fabrizio Baldassari Beeckman's mechanical philosophizing with plants: a source to Descartes?
Fokko Jan Dijksterhuis Beeckman and the braving of the elements

10.45 Coffee break

11.15 Session 5

Arjan van Dixhoorn The *consten*-culture of Isaac Beeckman
Bart Ramakers "Only iambs and trochees". Isaac Beeckman, Dingman Beens
and the question of meter
Semra Meray What is in a language? Dutch and Latin in Beeckman's *Journal*

13.15 Lunch

14.15 Keynote lecture

Sophie Roux Descartes and Beeckman: the epistemological motives of a
posthumous priority dispute

15.00 Session 6

Raffaele Pisano, Antonella Mastrorilli Reading Tartaglia's and Beeckman's geometrical and
mathematical modelling applied to natural phenomena
Tiemen Cocquyt Beeckman gaining an understanding of the telescope
Klaas van Berkel The enigma of Cornelis de Waard

16.30 Concluding remarks by H.F. Cohen

17.00 Closing of the conference, reception



Isaac Beeckman in Context

Science, the Arts, and Culture in the Early Dutch Republic

Conference

Middelburg, The Netherlands, 27-28 September 2018

The conference is organized by the Isaac Beeckman Foundation in cooperation with University College Roosevelt at Middelburg. It is held under the auspices of the Royal Zeeland Society of Sciences and the Royal Holland Society of Sciences and Humanities.

Admittance to the conference and the public lecture is free, but registration is required. Please send your registration to: a.vandixhoorn@ucr.nl

A booklet with abstracts will be handed out to the participants. Included in this brochure will be the short 'Beeckman City Tour' through Middelburg, with places of interest related to the history of science, the arts and culture in Middelburg in the seventeenth century.

Middelburg can be easily reached by train. For accommodation we can recommend:
Hotel De Spreck, Seissingel 4, 4333 GV Middelburg (just outside the city centre)
Hotel-Brasserie De Huifkar, Markt 19, 4331 LJ Middelburg
Amadore Hotel-Restaurant Arneville, Buitenruststraat 22, 4337 EH Middelburg (not far from the railway station)
Fletcher Hotel-Restaurant Middelburg, Loskade 1, 4331 HV Middelburg (just renovated)

For further information, please contact one of the organizers:
Prof. Albert Clement: a.clement@ucr.nl (tel. +31(0)640298192)
Prof. Arjan van Dixhoorn: a.vandixhoorn@ucr.nl (tel. +31(0)642191879)
Prof. Klaas van Berkel: k.van.berkel@rug.nl (tel. +31(0)643702941)



See also: www.isaacbeeckmanstichting.nl