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JOSEPH LOEWENSTEIN

In a year in which academic labor power has been rigorously concentrated on pedagogy, and in which social, political, and ecological emergencies have challenged and galvanized those scholarly communities that they did not overwhelm, a review essay of monographs and essay collections cannot but seem a long letter from a distant place. A rubric like “Recent Studies in the English Renaissance,” will seem cast in foreign patois at once quaint and exotic. We can expect the travel ban to be lifted in a matter of months, so perhaps this letter will eventually become an informative guide.

The books are often exciting and often quite wide ranging; many seem heartfelt (usually, but not always attractively so); and most compel admiration. Yet because several share some recurring lapses, this review will occasionally be interrupted by fretfulness and grouch. They were provoked by certain identifiable guild mannerisms, some related lapses in communal intellectual hygiene, and an understandable, but still worrisome deterioration in the professional practice of academic publishing. No need to lead with these things.

EDITIONS

The Essential Works of Thomas More, a very generous collection, seems to have been conceived as a more affordable proxy for the Yale *Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, on which it is natu-

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rally based. It is slightly mistitled since it includes not only works of Thomas More, but also a good deal of supplementary Moreana, both images and texts. In a few cases, the translations provided in *Complete Works* have been supplanted: *Essential Works* offer new translations of More's Latin translations of Lucian and Clarence Miller's translation of *Utopia* replaces Edward Surtz's.

Essential Works depends somewhat oddly on *Complete Works*, as the handling of More's Latin epigrams makes clear. Many of More's Latin epigrams are translations from the Greek, most are brief, a great many are quite brief, and several make minute variations on each other, yet *Essential Works* provides only English translations. Since these inevitably reflect More's Latin at a distance, and since *Essential Works* provides hardly any linguistic commentary, readers interested enough to read the provided English translations as they vary and vary will be unable to gauge the force of those variations. One feels as if one were reading labels for an exhibition of pictures that have been kept in storage. Epigrams themselves are strange exercises, strenuously arch displays of intimacy with a culture to which few could claim or would even wish to claim access. Though they are proposed as "essential," the epigrams seem inscrutable as printed. Such inscrutability is perhaps strangely appropriate. More's verbal manner on the page—and, apparently, his spoken manner on many occasions—was notoriously and perhaps "essentially" slippery.

But the inscrutable *Essential Works* is not published merely in print. The editors make More's Latin originals and, occasionally, the Greek texts from which he is working available via a website (essentialmore.org), together with an index of the themes of the epigrams. The website does not fully substitute for the *Complete Works*, however, since it provides no commentary whatsoever, so readers with an internet connection but without good classical educations will remain baffled. We are obliged to consult *Complete Works* if we are to learn anything about what a poem might or might not derive from a source or what to make of the craft of variation to which More's efforts intricately gesture.

The rationale of many editorial decisions is not fully clear. *Essential Works* substantially abridges More's "Response to Luther"; "The Confutation of Tyndale's Answer," More's longest work, is even more sharply curtailed; while the "Apology," a shorter work than either, is given in its entirety. "The Letter Against Frith" is dropped, although we are given two of More's more mature works on "the everlasting lively bread" of the Eucharist (p. 936), the "Answer to a Poisoned Book" and the "Treatise to Receive the

Blessed Body.” Written in the year after his resignation as Lord Chancellor, the “Apology” captures something of the controversialist, but it is also a self-defense and is assimilable to the tragic narrative of More’s fall.

Taken as a complex whole, *Essential Works* is unsurprisingly apologetic: the essence on offer is that of a classicist, wag, and martyr; more a specialist in dialogue than in animadversion; and less obtrusively a controversialist than the historical More—or another historical More—was. The editorial introduction to the “Dialogue against Heresies,” here “The Dialogue of Sir Thomas More, Knight,” is startlingly evasive, focusing on More’s “flashing and challenging wit” while neglecting to mention the many pages More devotes to a defense of violence against heretics (p. 525). More’s bitterness is also consigned to the shadows by the decision not to include the “Letter to Bugenhagen,” reflecting on the Peasants’ War in Germany.

Although essentialmore.org imperfectly supplements the printed *Essential Works*, the imperfect execution does not discredit the general good sense of building a modern edition as a print and digital amalgam. Such an amalgam might have made the John Donne Variorum easier to navigate. Volume 5, *The Verse Letters*, is judicious, staggeringly meticulous, and maddening; it is a work of great importance, although the importance is frequently shaded by the thicket of apparatus and subapparatus. The now reestablished interest in book culture among literary scholars makes a textual introduction something in which many of those scholars will be interested, especially given the way Donne figures in the tradition of engaging scholarship on the social conditions of verse circulation. Yet those interested in early modern discursive arrangements, in early modern verse, or in these the most exquisitely worldly of Donne’s poems will feel that they are reading over the shoulders of other editors of the Donne Variorum, those to whom the volume seems most precisely addressed: “in B11 and NY3 (but not in WN1), LD stands as the first of a small collection of his early Verse Letters to which LD refers (ll. 7–8; see the Textual Introduction to LD)” (p. lxxvii). The fact reported here is extremely interesting, but one has to strain to decode it.

The editors allege that “the referential nature of the poems and their dependence on a historical reality outside them have meant that the Verse Letters resist ‘conventional literary analysis,’” and it may be that critical tradition is still haunted by an assumed rift between the “occasional,” “referential,” or “social,” and the literary (p. ci). The introduction and the variorum commentary

indicate how much these poems have been required to concern themselves primarily with the inner life of the poet; relatedly, it indicates how much a preferential critical engagement with other kinds of poems—erotic (Saunders Bach), Petrarchan (Wesley Milgate), or devotional (Ramie Targoff and Barbara Lewalski)—treads on the criticism of the epistles. Yet some of the keenest work in the commentary treats the verse epistles as forms of sociability: documents, vectors, and negotiations of various sorts of urbane interaction, tangles of intimacy and clientage, of advice, insinuation, deference, inquisitiveness, flirtation, instruction, and identification. Ironically, the historicizing criticism of Arthur Marotti, Harold Love, and Steven N. Zwicker grows out of a tradition of dogged biographical work, attending not only to Donne, but to the addressees of the poems, although it is rendered expansive by attention not just to the relation of poet and recipient, but also to those circles of readership, variously determinate or imaginable, that compass and attend on the only notionally private dyad of writer and addressee.

Anne M. Thell's edition of Margaret Cavendish's *Grounds of Natural Philosophy* makes available the text of the fourth in a series of closely related publications. Cavendish published *Philosophicall Fancies* in 1653, expanded the work fivefold two years later as *The Philosophical and Physical Opinions*, revised and somewhat augmented it again for a second edition of *PPO* (1663), and then revised, slightly condensed, and substantially reorganized the exposition of her work in *Grounds* (1668). Thell's edition is a reading text, not a full-fledged scholarly edition. Its great advantage over the transcription available through EEBO-TCP is that it is based on the copy now held by the British Library, incorporating handwritten emendations arguably derived from Cavendish herself.¹ Thell gives no indication of how extensive these emendations may be—nor does she provide any evidence that she has collated the British Library copy with any others—but the reader should be pleased at her choice of copy text.

Cavendish is a difficult thinker and it would be asking a great deal of an edition that it should provide an account of seventeenth-century natural philosophy sufficient to enable the reader new to Cavendish securely to assess the intellectual situation and novelty of *Grounds*. Thell's introduction is helpful, especially on the topics of Cavendish's understanding of perception and the limits on knowledge, but it is too brief to accomplish the larger contextualizing goals. The footnotes to the text proper are light, and while they are reasonably helpful where they are offered, most readers are likely to feel that Thell has not given them enough assistance.

Cavendish is not only a difficult thinker, but also a restless one. A future editor of *Grounds* will almost certainly wish to detail its relation to Cavendish's antecedent efforts, *Philosophical Fancies* and the two editions of *PPO*. Thell usefully directs attention to the attenuation of Cavendish's commitment to atomism, but readers might wish for a richer account of such other developments as, for example, the addition of several chapters on the multiplicity of worlds in the appendix to *Grounds*. They might also wish to be alerted to the fact that, in *Grounds*, Cavendish chose to curb her use of the phrase "animate matter" and to move nearly all, even vaguely, theological discussion to an "Appendix," whereas her earlier systematic efforts admit discussion of eternity of matter and immateriality of substance to the body of her text. Readers will also appreciate a reflection on the possible motives and tactics of this sequestration of the theological. Other rearrangements might well deserve notice: in *Grounds* the discussion of human perception, self-knowledge, mental life, bodily functioning, and human illness is moved forward, ahead of the discussion of the motions and qualities of nonhuman creatures, although Cavendish precedes her discussion of human being with a discussion of general creaturely sensation, perception, and reproduction. Whether this somehow reflects adjustments in Cavendish's sense of the order of things or in her sense of what might be more easily assimilable or more interesting to her readers might deserve comment.

Volume 44 of *Supplementa Humanistica Loaniensia* is mainly an edition of Milton's *Epistolarum Familiarum Liber Unus*, the collection published in 1674 along with Milton's Latin prolusions; Estelle Haan provides translations that are usefully fastidious, if not quite as fluent as one would like. The introduction situates them helpfully in the long tradition of classical and Neo-Latin formal epistles, and Haan's meticulous commentary offers invaluable assistance in orienting the reader to the specificities of Milton's stylistic choices.

Haan does not speculate much over why Milton published the collection when he did or why he selected the particular letters that he chose. Heterogeneity of tone, length, and recipients are among the chief characteristics of the form of the familiar epistolary collection, and this is an intriguing assemblage. It includes letters written over a span of forty years, to recipients including Thomas Young, Alexander Gil, Charles Diodati, Henry Oldenburg, Richard Jones, and others; the author appears as student, teacher, poet, traveler, civil servant, and friend. Several document the progress of his blindness.

Happily, Haan's own volume is heterogeneous. She supplements the 1674 collection with seven letters in Latin to Hermann Mylius, three vernacular letters, and a small sheaf of Latin letters to Milton, untranslated. Perhaps the most arresting is the famous letter written in English, probably during the winter of 1632–33, and addressed to an unnamed friend—possibly Young, although it would make this the sole surviving letter that Milton wrote to Young in English. It survives in two drafts, both of which Haan provides. Milton explains, in tones poised between embarrassment and self-mockery, his decision not to take holy orders, a decision framed in terms of his misgivings specific to preaching; the account of this decision issues in the famous pivoting apology, “yet that you may see that I am somtyme suspicious of my selfe, and doe take notice of a certaine belatednesse in me, I am the bolder to send you some of my nighthward thoughts some while since since they come in fitly, made up in a Petrarchan stanza” at which point he copies out the sonnet “How soone hath Time” (p. 450). Haan's edition offers one the opportunity to observe Milton adjusting his self-defense by means of the transformation of “somtyme suspicious of my selfe” to “something suspicious of selfe” and of “some while since since [*sic*] they come in fitly, made up in a Petrarchan Stanza” to “some while since because they com in not altogether unfitly made up in a Petrarchan Stanza. which I told you of” (p. 455). One would like to think this a letter to Milton's tutor Young, especially since the fussy adjustments of tone and rhythm in framing the apology for poetry might reward attention in a modern classroom.

The original printed collection included a letter from Milton, written in his capacity as Latin Secretary, to the German diplomat Mylius. Mylius was seeking Parliamentary approval for draft documents guaranteeing safe passage through English territories for the Count of Oldenburg. The printed letter was extracted from a larger correspondence between Mylius and Milton, and Haan prints seven other letters from Milton's side of the exchange which are now preserved in the Niedersächsisches Staatsarchiv. The correspondence is pleasantly ingratiating, though fundamentally businesslike. Students of Milton's poetry will be amused to discover that Milton's messages are familiar: he is sorry, he has done his best, he himself is only slightly to blame, these things cannot be rushed.

Raymond G. Siemens's edition of *The Lyrics of the Henry VIII Manuscript* for the Renaissance English Text Society represents Henry as composer, poet, and as court ideologue, the cheerful

master of “Pastyme with good companye,” of venerie in all its forms (p. 29), of masquing and chivalric sports (pp. 35 and 43), and the patron of piquant, energizing secrecy (p. 24). The themes of few of the poems are unexpected, yet Henry resists literary and moral convention by the obtrusion of his own exuberant and expansive sovereignty, insisting that *this* young man is *not* ruled by youth, nor *this* lover by love. He composes a song for Queen Katherine to sing in his praise on the occasion of a tournament: “My souerayne lorde of pusant pure: / as the chefteyne of a waryowere / ... He prouith hym selfe that I seye best: / my souerayne lorde” (p. 43, lines 11–2 and 15–6).

The manuscript source for the edition, BL Additional MS 31,922, is a songbook, compiled ca. 1522. Nearly a third of the songs are preserved there as settings only, whereas Siemens provides only the texts recorded in his source. Although the manuscript “can yield up to four readings for each line, as most of the works were intended to be sung by several voices,” he adopts the first voice as his copy text, leaving the other voices to fall away save when they provide possibly authoritative variants to the copy text for the first voice (p. 17). (For a generous guide to the challenging relations of lyric text and written song, readers will wish to consult Scott A. Trudell’s *Unwritten Poetry: Song, Performance, and the Media in Early Modern England*, discussed below.) In effect, Siemens attempts to make the songs legible as monologal poems, despite the fact that the manuscript plainly documents a culture of polyvocal singing. One can no more immerse oneself in the works edited here than in the verse epistles edited for the Donne Variorum: the experience is intellectually healthy and aesthetically disagreeable, like academic castor oil.

BOOK HISTORY

The actualities of written vellum and printed paper claim attention much less uncomfortably in several books on the material culture of early modern discourse. Joshua Calhoun’s book on paper, *The Nature of the Page: Poetry, Papermaking, and the Ecology of Texts in Renaissance England*, is gracefully, feelingly written; it is also impressively learned. He operates, perhaps unwittingly, in the great tradition established by Michael Baxandall’s great *Lime-wood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany*, which begins its genetics of one of early modern Europe’s most refined art practices with a description of the geography in which it flourished, proceeds to an exposition of the chemical and structural properties of the wood

of the linden tree, and only then to its cultivation and harvest and thence to the guild structure of those woodcarvers who give the material substrate its human articulation, its culture.

"We accept, as readers and writers, that words on matter never perfectly replicate ideas in the mind ... We accept and even enjoy these incongruities between mind and matter" (p. 8); there will be Derridean objectors to this, of course. Calhoun clearly enjoys exposition, and extends himself, usually successfully, to sweeten the passage between natural and industrial history on the one hand and intellectual history on the other. He walks us through the standard narrative of the rise of wood-pulp papermaking—unsurmountable rag shortages provoking the innovation of wood-pulp papermaking—and admonishes the reader that this narrative simplifies book history at the expense of environmental history, yet the chapter hardly displaces the orthodox history. Calhoun aspires to recast the human and social as the biological and the ecological. Yet while many pages insist on the material identity of rag-based paper and wood-pulp paper, this attention to the material does not really bring an environmental history into the foreground. Again and again he attempts to reach past the human: he concludes a sustained reading of Henry Vaughan's "The Book" by insisting that "the subject of the poem is *corruptibility*, not *death*," yet the critical displacement of the human/animal seems only dutiful, however graceful (p. 68).

There is much to be learned here: about the crucially different mechanics of correcting text on parchment and text on paper, on sizing as the necessary condition for annotation—and because sizing is also a preservative, "the more annotatable a book's pages are, the more likely it is to survive" (p. 123). Book-historicist literary scholars are accustomed to looking obliquely at text—seeing literature as words on paper, or as patterned dark on revelatory light, or as ink (variously dull or shiny, dark brown or black, superficial or penetrating) on flax (dull or shiny, white or beige, homogeneous or speckled, slick or spongy). To such scholars, the book will contribute many new examples, but no revelations; those not habituated to such defamiliarization or indifferent to it, will not be convinced. This is a pity: many of the authors he cites—Donne in particular, but also Edward Taylor, Vaughan, and Abraham Cowley—urged these oblique attentions, but Calhoun does not stop to wonder why that should be, whether and how the history of paper might contribute to the history of defamiliarizing wit.

For all its interest in the nonhuman, in mercury and flax, the sheep and the silkworm, the book is insistently autobiographical: Calhoun stirring a boiling slurry of Lady's Mantle, holding Matthias Koops's book on "Substances," writing in some particular place near some particular other place. He often seems to be striving to reincarnate Henry David Thoreau. That this is not the only book from this year's monographic output to feature such moments of self-centering deserves comment, below.

In an oddly intriguing effort, Katarzyna Lecky investigates an important subcategory in the popular print market, the small format maps that began to proliferate in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, alleging a messy traffic between this corner of print culture and the literary activity of several of the most celebrated poets of the first century of cheap cartography. In order to make its case, *Pocket Maps and Public Poetry in the English Renaissance* proposes that the unelaborate utility of these maps is often polemical, that their scale and manner are anti-imperial, antiroyal, and aggressively humble; Lecky goes on to ascribe a related polemical positioning not only to Milton, but also to Ben Jonson, William Davenant, and even Spenser. "*The Faerie Queene* situates its critique of imperial cartography in the portable chart of Amoret's heart" (p. 93). She observes Samuel Daniel's gallant embarrassment, expressed in his elegy for Charles Blount, at having squeezed his record of Blount's accomplishments into a small format octavo and makes much of Daniel's adjustment of that embarrassment in the revised version of the elegy, where he describes his confining poem as "this small carde," whereas Blount's life "askes a spacious Mappe of more regarde" (p. 8). This is a scrappy, audacious book.

Jason Scott-Warren's *Shakespeare's First Reader: The Paper Trails of Richard Stonley* would make a fine introduction to early modern life among books, especially to such recent approaches to reading or "book use" as feature its complexity and variety, or that register its continuities with keeping accounts, estimating, and inventorying. Scott-Warren is unusually successful at situating books and book acquisition within the larger structure of material goods and the shopping that brings that messy structure into the bricolage of the household. Like many essays in the affective and social life of reading, Scott-Warren's introduction somewhat incautiously brings in evocative post-Enlightenment reflections on reading without any caveat that the fundamentals of our relations to, and by means of, books may be quite variable historically. Yet things firm up considerably as he focuses on Richard Stonley

himself, whose book use he represents as a form of curation, that is, of management and care. Stonley was born in 1520 and spent much of his adult life as a client of William Petre, who secured for him a position as a teller in the Exchequer of Receipt. He amassed considerable property and built an even more considerable collection of books. He seems to have died in the Fleet, where he had been incarcerated for embezzling nearly £13,000.

The first chapter gives warrant to the title of Scott-Warren's book, since it takes up Stonley's purchase of *Venus and Adonis* in June 1593 and situates that book within the some 500 other books in Stonley's library. He situates it otherwise as well, directing our attention to the journal in which Stonley kept his accounts, and to the other purchases recorded for the same day: what does it mean, he wonders, to construe *Venus and Adonis* in relation to the day's acquisitions, to some buttons, leggings, and yet another book, John Eliot's *Survey of France*?

Scott-Warren makes the Foucauldian question of the meaning of a sometimes heterogeneous or far-fetched congeries the first part of a diptych that addresses Stonley's inclusive journal of accounts as an instrument of self-construction, a form of book-keeping that tangles inventory, budget, and commonplacing. He operates here in concert with Adam Smyth, who has so usefully expanded our feel for the ramifying genres of autobiography. He then shifts to consider an inventory of Stonley's goods compiled in preparation for a sale to raise cash to defray Stonley's considerable debts; he uses that inventory, not as he uses Stonley's journal, but as a guide to the reconstruction of the zones of Stonley's domestic space, and to the ways in which those architectural zones are challenged by the unexpected distribution and clutter of objects across those zones—as if he were the slipshod prosodist of the domestic stanza.

He also begins to assess Stonley's taste, noting its new-fangleness, and this assessment spills into the next chapter, on Stonley's book ownership as a practice: the bindings he favored, his habits of inscription—emphatically personalized witnessing of ownership—followed by three chapters on particular books in his collection, the personal force of which Scott-Warren derives from Stonley's biography at the times of his taking possession of the books. These latter chapters seem more speculative than those that precede them, but they express the great richness of Scott-Warren's achievement, which couples painstaking research, forthright honesty about the nature of the available records, and engagingly framed imaginings. Alluding to the delusions that Wil-

liam Reynolds brought to his reading of *Venus and Adonis*, Scott-Warren observes, “doubtless a thousand crack-brained readings were fomenting in the grimy taverns of plague-stricken London. Perhaps reading is a kind of lunacy, a wildly subjective thing, unless it is trained by a literary education or brought within the confines of an interpretative community that will establish the rules of the game” (p. 23). And then comes a surprise as he turns to Stonley’s reading of *Venus and Adonis*: “But in Stonley’s case we do not even have the benefit of this ungovernable subjectivity—we have no subjectivity at all. Stonley’s reading, if it ever happened, has succumbed to the fate of most reading, vanishing without trace” (p. 23).

MATTER AND NOT-MATTER

Much of the force of *Shakespeare’s First Reader* depends on Scott-Warren’s intellectual tact, and particularly on his trick of writing engagingly without overplaying his hand. His account of book use includes the recognition of the *trifling* aspect of many such uses, and he has the grace to guide us on how to gauge the psychosocial weight of trifles. Joe Moshenska’s book on *Iconoclasm as Child’s Play* works some of the same territory, although the trifling with which he is concerned concerns the stuff of worship, the conversion of what Protestants regarded as “ydolls” into “dolls.” Because they can never quite shed the smudge of opprobrium, these trifles cannot retain their lightness of being. Moshenska resumes themes from Mikhail Bakhtin and Charles Barber, refining a rhetoric of festive abuse by directing our attention to children as agents of cultural decoding, the transformation of the meaningful into the trifling. Or rather he asks us to consider children as imputed agents: unlike Johan Huizinga or Gregory Bateson, Moshenska is not trying to understand the child’s construction of play, but the de-meaning that adults impute to child’s play, and he offers some fine pages on Melanie Klein’s and D. W. Winnicott’s considerations on the pragmatics of the analyst’s imputations and many more pages on the place accorded to play across the history of pedagogical thought. All of this theoretical reflection on child’s play sets up a deft reading of Pieter Bruegel’s *Children’s Games*, one that centers on its depiction of a child whose face is covered by an adult mask and concludes with the observation that “the child at play [tends] to be seen as a kind of living mask, demonically other in the inaccessibility of its operations” (p. 176). Across the book, he works with a rich archive of

ambivalence to play, reminding us not only of the denigration of unorthodox religious practice and disapproved doctrine as mere play, but also alerting us to ideas about God's playfulness (Gregory Naziansen and Maximus the Confessor), and about the playful relation among the persons of the Trinity (Meister Eckhart). The historical ambivalence to play forces caution on the interpreter of playful action—caution and, on Moshenska, irresolution, which is everywhere in his book. He sets out in his fifth chapter under the banner of a fragment from Heraclitus over which scholars continue to puzzle. Moshenska's gloss: "Time itself is akin to play, the fragment suggests, and child's play to time, but both sides of the equation are unstable—wavering between human and cosmic temporality, between ordered and disordered action" (p. 128).

The chapters are more ruminative than argumentative and, although the logic of inclusion is not always clear, all the parts are variously compelling. The chapter on the religious puppet begins by remarking the relation between the jointed/disjointed puppet and the broken body on the crucifix—Bruno Latour's comment, "the historical differences between iconoclasm and iconophilia appear to be very small" (p. 75), sanctions the ambivalence here—but the chapter then shifts its attention to holy folly, where Moshenska elaborates and deepens Screech's great exposition of Erasmus's debt to Origen. The connection between puppet and fool has to do with *discordia concors*—"I want to suggest that a combination of loftiness and silliness, of magnificence and ineptitude, is embodied in the figure of the holy puppet" (p. 80), to which Moshenska assimilates Erasmus's figure of the Silenus Alcibiades. The construction of the chapter, and of the book, is attractively, if sometimes frustratingly similar to that of the jointed/disjointed puppet.

After a few prefatory pages, James A. Knapp turns the introduction of *Immateriality and Early Modern English Literature: Shakespeare, Donne, Herbert* to a discussion of recent phenomenological approaches to early modern culture, to which his book makes an engaging contribution, albeit a demanding one. He is well aware that his undertaking, the use of phenomenology to assist in an historical account of the immaterial, is counterintuitive. Seeking a disciplined approach to experience, phenomenology began with a powerful orientation to appearance, and Knapp knows that many readers will find it an unlikely critical vantage from which to address the immaterial or the spiritual—he frequently treats the spiritual, not as a subset of the immaterial, but as a synonym for it. The book tacks strenuously between intellectual

histories of form and substance, episodes from the history of phenomenology, and phenomenological explorations of passages from Shakespeare, Donne, and George Herbert.

Immateriality is sorted into three parts, the first concerned with the problem of judging the actuality and moral nature of persons in several Shakespearean plays, the second addressed to the problem of assessing and representing doctrinal truths in Donne's "First Anniversary" and "Anatomy of the World" and in Herbert's *The Temple*, the third taken up with early modern theories of cognition and their impingements on *Much Ado about Nothing*. He concludes with a discussion of entanglements of mind and body in *The Tempest*. Knapp's readings are subtle, circuitous, and frequently moving; they focus on individual words, phrases, and passages, often leaving the larger works from which they are taken in shadow, but the shimmer and flare of his local investigations are justification enough.

Before his introductory account of phenomenological engagements with early modern culture Knapp announces the polemical intent of his book, which he frames as an attempt to redress what he regards as an overemphasis on the material among contemporary scholars of early modern literature. His undertaking resonates sympathetically with that of Trudell, who begins his book on singing and poetry by expressing reservations about what he regards as the overemphasis on themes of materiality and embodiment in contemporary sound studies. Of course Knapp is adversative—"let us consider the *immaterial* instead"—whereas Trudell means to be corrective—"let us consider the material more scrupulously"—and to one who has surveyed many "Recent Studies," the call for scrupulousness seems more urgent. If the term "network" is frequently applied to add a specious gloss where "group" would do or "community" would be clearer, if "world-making" is recruited to glamorize a sentence in which "fictive" would have less sparkle, if "body" or "bodies" lends a pathos that "person" or "persons" cannot summon, the use of "material" often seems meant to lend a grounding authenticity otherwise felt to be unavailable to mere cultural history. That grouchy last sentence may be dismissed as prissiness, but the problem of "matter"/"materiality"/"materialist"/"materialism" is larger. Across a number of books published this year, "matter" and its cognates are so uncertain of reference that they do little more than loosely affiliate a sentence or a book. But very loosely: sometimes to Marxism, sometimes to Lucretius, sometimes to an anthropology of practices, sometimes to Thing Theory, sometimes

to Actor-Network Theory, but almost always to an uncertain or disoriented mix of these influences. In "Materialism and Reification in Renaissance Studies," a fine review essay written sixteen years ago, David Hawkes observed how dissolute the term "materialism" had already become.² I suspect he would be as grateful as I am for Knapp's and Trudell's specifications. Knapp makes it quite clear to what he refers when he speaks of matter, and Trudell is helpfully fastidious when he speaks of materiality.

Trudell's *Unwritten Poetry* is one of several books in this year's crop that especially impresses by its calm methodological prudence, and not just in matters of materiality and embodiment. The brief introduction makes other helpful stipulations—that the logic of book history should not dictate terms for the study of the history of other media, and that the cultural historian of song should recognize the range of media through which it circulates. "In my usage 'medium' can refer to everything from printed book to singer's larynx to actor's body—any node in the system through which meaning unfolds" (p. 13). He goes on to insist that we "recognize the similarities between early modern song and contemporary media that feel ubiquitous, mobile, ephemeral, and permanent all at once ... It is a familiar enough concept to postmodern culture that textual meaning is embedded in a constantly changing media nexus. What we have sometimes failed to recognize is that we are not unique," that the culture of lyric has always been postmodern (p. 18).

Trudell's prudence is powerful and distinguished, and similar intellectual virtues quicken the ensuing chapters. Yet *Unwritten Poetry* is imperfectly unified, a characteristic that it shares with so many of the monographs under review here that this fact may merit some general notice; in the case of *Unwritten Poetry* the imperfect unity is so minor a blemish that it provides the quiet occasion to comment on a flaw that rises to egregiousness in at least a handful of other works produced this year, a great many of which feel more like coherent anthologies than monographs. Often a chosen topic is so compelling that it creates an appetite in the reader for a comprehensive study rather than a provocative collection of deeply researched articles. The causes are obvious enough: the pressure on scholars in early career—and not just on those in early career—to move research into hard covers and the complementary pressure on presses to restrain the length of books both conduce to promote the single-author anthology. It has also conduced—though not in Trudell—to the adoption of a shared manner that oscillates between extravagantly bold claims

and cagey, and sometimes impenetrably subtle, provisionality. The pressures are perhaps endemic, but the senior professoriate should probably resolve to affirm the aptitudes and certify the achievement of those particular scholars whose work could become more coherent and more consequential if held back from hasty publication in book form. We should encourage monographs that aspire to more than suggestion.

Trudell's two central chapters, on singing boys on stage, especially in Jonson's plays (chapter 2) and Shakespeare's (chapter 3), are extraordinarily incisive, both in detail—Trudell makes an intriguing case for the original casting of child actors as Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustardseed, and doubling as the Athenian mechanicals, Bottom excepted—and in their general assessment of the contribution of music to the erotics of boys' performances and to the related capacity of song to operate freely at the borders of dramatic representation, especially in *Twelfth Night* and *Hamlet*. Yet these two chapters on children and music on the stage, important contributions to the criticism of early modern theatricality, pull away somewhat from the interrogation of lyric poetics, performance, and media relations that powerfully unite the introduction with the book's first chapter, on Sidneyan musicality, and with the last one, on the vulnerable music of Henry Lawes's and Milton's *Ludlow Maske*, and on music and noise in *Areopagitica*, *Samson Agnostics*, and *Paradise Lost*.

Trudell offers usefully specified accounts of the sung versions of Philip Sidney's verse, and helpful indication of how books of airs "enable local, occasional acts of making," with both book and performance contributing to the realization and "reimagining [of] Sidneian musical humanism" (p. 74). This is less a book about music and poetry than it is about the variety of media in which poesy is articulated. So what Trudell says of *Astrophel and Stella*, that its "interest in music develops alongside its broader interests in media interplay" (p. 60), is equally true of Trudell's book. Sidney emerges as Trudell's chief guide. He traces the mediations that inhere in Sidney's *Defense of Poesy* (theatre, writing, music) and draws our attention to the rich, sometimes cacophonous soundscape of the *Old Arcadia*: "The *Arcadia's* invitation to pick up a pen was also taken as an opportunity to sing, compose, and collaborate across media" (p. 54).

In *The Matter of Virtue: Women's Ethical Action from Chaucer to Shakespeare*, Holly A. Crocker offers a gendered history of virtue. Her complex account rests on the claim that the understanding of ethical virtue was sharply transformed in the High Middle

Ages. In the Aristotelean tradition, virtue is the product of habit and legible in actions; but during the High Middle Ages, virtue became largely illegible, becoming lodged in the will; hidden there it became paradoxically susceptible to superficial counterfeit. Crocker observes that this new configuration of the ethical especially accorded with more ancient ideas about the speciousness of women's moral lives: as subethical beings ancient women could be guided by the rigors of custom, but their actions could not be relied upon as signs of their true nature. In the High Middle Ages, Crocker tells us, the unreliability of the behavioral sign diffuses to men. In effect, then, her book alleges a feminization of virtue: "by the second half of the fourteenth century, it was clear that virtue's duplicity was connected to women's corruption" (p. 14).

Crocker discovers, in the literary and philosophical record, a counterethics of observable virtuous practice (p. 267), as opposed to hidden virtuousness of the will; and she finds it in exercises of what she calls "material virtue," a large category, blurred at the edges, that she associates with that sense of "virtue" as it is used in the discourse of natural history, virtues that, she urges, "arise from embodiment" (p. 30). These virtues, which transcend or evade the slipperier virtue hidden in the will, are often gendered female; elaborating insights worked out by Mary Beth Rose, Crocker argues that the virtues frequently express themselves in endurance or vulnerability. Endurance is important: it is visible, but, unlike virtuous action—which can be performed by the counterfeiting will—not ostentatious. Of course, endurance is also largely disabling: the virtuous endurance of John Lydgate's Helen is the irrelevant—Crocker's deft term—heroism of the captive; commenting on "the futility of Polyxena's embodied excellence" (p. 71), she observes that a reader "might wonder ... how the disparity between her idealized life and her gratuitous death can possibly be reconciled" (p. 72).

Crocker reads Lydgate's *Troy Book* with rigorous appreciation—Crocker's Lydgate plays in Chaucer's league—and her discussions of "women's ethical action in [Troy's] warrior's world" are penetrating and plangent (p. 59). Even more impressive is her treatment of Chaucer's uneasy Custance and of the many suffering heroines carried forward from the fourteenth-century efflorescence of the pathetic; this chapter starts somewhat slowly, but it launches remarkably as she begins to allow Benthamite reflections on the moral status of nonhuman animals to shape a reconsideration of the virtue of suffering and a fascinating discussion of the way divine grace works to dissolve ethical subjectivity.

Fascinating as is her chapter on endurance, Crocker is plainly keen to recur to more active, more vibrant lives of virtue, and her next chapter swivels intriguingly to examine insurgent sufferers. She treats the residue of merely suffering heroism in Thomas Lodge's *A Margarite of America* (1596) with delightful impatience: "Margarita is so naive, so sincere, and so doomed, it is something of a relief when the brutal Arsadachus runs her through with a rapier in response to her final profession of devotion" (p. 155). The bulk of the chapter is devoted to female virtue in *The Faerie Queene*, and there Crocker finds a tenacious subjectivity even in Florimell, this against a stolid tradition that regards this character as sheer object. More important is her insight concerning Florimell's double: "False Florimell exposes the problems attendant on elevating an ideal that is anything other than enlivened, embodied, and thinking excellence" (p. 182).

The concluding third of the book is especially canny, resting on her discovery of a crucial dyad in the literary system, the complementary pairing of Griseldas and shrews. There is a minor inefficiency in the book at this juncture, since the discussion of tales of Griselda recapitulates much of the analytic work in the earlier section on Custance and endurance. She offers a high-hearted, even gleeful reading of "the comprehensive 'unmaking' of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew* in [John] Fletcher's" *The Woman's Prize* (p. 245). The book is bracing: Crocker generalizes with convincing confidence, quoting and illustrating to drive her argument forward, and not merely to confirm and settle it.

Not really an early modern monograph, Julie Orlemanski's *Symptomatic Subjects: Bodies, Medicine, and Causation in the Literature of Late Medieval England* is, however, a monograph; patient, sustained, synthetic historical exposition plays into patient, sustained, coherent, often intricate readings. The casually browsing reader might suppose this to be a literary history of *physik*, but *Symptomatic Subjects* is more intellectually gripping than that: Orlemanski offers a cultural history of causality, in which *physik* is shown to participate with considerable literary consequence. One sometimes feels slightly crowded by her readings, for she specifies the force of dense arrays of narrative and rhetorical decisions, even those not clearly pertinent to her larger analysis of symptom and cause, but one cannot but be impressed by her synthetic gifts. Even more impressive is her talent for summary: each chapter engagingly propounds its thesis in the first few pages before setting off on its dense work of persuasion.

The book opens with an account of the rise of symptomology and causation, turning then to case studies on the plotting of symptoms and causes in Chaucer and Robert Henryson, then to “the traffic between authorial body and narrating voice” in Thomas Hoccleve and Margery Kempe (p. 249). The Chaucer chapter is stunning. Though she ends the book with a chapter on Kempe in which she describes how the somatic supports the devotional and competes with it, there is something brilliantly climactic about the attentive, genial reading of Hoccleve’s *Series*, which steers the reader through a wonderful turn in the argument of the book. Having richly described a culture of causal medicine, Orlemanski exposes Hoccleve’s droll exasperation with that culture, which he finds irrelevant to what roils his own experience of madness. Those around him want to know the origins of his psychopathology, yet he resentfully complains that “Ther cometh but smal fruyt of swich deemyng” (p. 241). Both the Hoccleve and Kempe chapters testify to the entrenchment of symptomology and to aspects of literary autobiography that protest the inadequacy of etiology to concerns both elicited and expressed by literary self-representation.

BIOGRAPHY

The Yale English Monarchs Series is now old enough to be doubling down. Michael Hicks’s *Richard III: The Self-Made King* is the second biography of Richard III in the series. Hicks often quotes the first, by Charles Ross, a “comprehensive and rounded analysis of the reign ... still fundamental and not superseded here” (p. 43). Hicks devotes his attention to “the formation and activities of Richard the man,” and specifically as magnate and landholder, with “exceptional space” devoted “to Richard’s life as duke” in order “to draw out the continuities in his behavior before and after 1483” (pp. viii–ix).

If Hicks admiringly acknowledges numerous debts to Ross, he kicks against other forebears, volubly regretting the historiographic legacy of Tudor ideologues, for whom the end of Richard’s reign brings a past to malignant conclusion and inaugurates a brilliant present; he suggests that whenever we assert the continuity of our own postmodernity with a Tudor early modernity, we are being duped by Tudor historians. Hicks takes time to celebrate anything that alienates Tudor modernity, and he seems oddly cheerful when observing that “1500 no longer appears modern” (p. 1). The purpose of that observation is not to antiquate Rich-

ard so much as it is to reduce Richard's boundary status: across the biography Richard's historical liminality is made to suffer. Hicks's other complaints against the Tudor depiction of Richard are more familiar, although he is less interested in More's and Shakespeare's demonization of Richard than in the focus of their biographies. He wants us to attend to Richard's life and not to his deeds: he wants us to see in Richard a continuous historical being that his political ascent, reign, and defeat merely punctuate.

Hicks places Richard in his family, exposing both his sense of entitlement as a member of the royal family and his brother George's comparatively greater arrogance. Hicks makes clear how disadvantaged Richard was, "a new duke who [had] inherited nothing" (p. 56), in the face of the grandeur expected of him. Yet he takes equal pains to detail Richard's life in the household Richard Neville, earl of Warwick, tracking Warwick's well-earned loss of Edward's confidence. Slowly and almost surreptitiously, Hicks establishes a buried theme that seems to abide through at least the first half of this biography, the idea of Gloucester as second Warwick. Once Hicks reaches the mid-1470s, events are steadily referred to anticipations in Warwick's political life or the experiences that Richard had had in Warwick's household.

There is something tantalizing about Hicks's narrative manner. Directing our attention to the increasing size of Edward's family and to the fact that Richard, therefore, "ceased to count as a dynastic heir" (p. 86), he invites us to imagine Richard's resentment; he frequently repeats that invitation by pointing out the duties and privileges that Edward withheld from Richard—diplomatic commissions, an advantageous marriage arranged on his behalf by the king. Having emphasized Richard's adolescence in Warwick's household, Hicks suggests that Richard emerged from that household into an early adulthood of peril and responsibility, indebted to a brother whose support was crucial and capricious, but who came to rely on him to resist Warwick and Clarence. He sometimes just skirts the psychological, resisting the occasion explicitly to reflect on what it might have meant to the sixteen-year-old Richard when Edward relieved Warwick and Hastings of their offices in Wales and conferred them, and the responsibility for containing the latest rebellion there, on Richard.

If the buried theme of the first half of the book is "Gloucester as second Warwick," the not-so-buried theme is "landed Gloucester." Hicks narrates Richard's slow and uncertain accumulation of property and alliances, the elaboration of his duties and obligations, his complex career as a property holder, the stir

of great householding and the massive business of life at law, boldnesses and blunders. Leisure, pleasure, interests, and attachments are nowhere to be seen: "Richard took pride in Anne's noble lineage ... She fitted into the intermarried social network" (p. 165). Hicks clearly limns Richard's restlessness, his disposition to improve and reform and not just to milk his situation. Yet despite the book's subtitle, Hicks's biography is not a narrative of self-making. A man of political habits begins to emerge—Richard the undeterred, the retrencher, unable to surrender a goal and able only to reroute—but he emerges as situated, constrained, not self-constructed.

Another important biography was also published this year, one of several single-author studies of Spenser. Jean R. Brink's *The Early Spenser, 1554–80: "Minde on honour fixed"* is very much a literary biography: the twin goals of her activity are to mine Spenser's three earliest print publications for evidence of Spenser's life, and to mine the documentary record for biographical details pertinent to those three publications, *The Theatre for Voluptuous Worldlings*, *The Shepheardes Calender*, and *The Spenser-Harvey Correspondence*. Brink has a passion for elucidating knotty archival details, and that work sometimes slows a monograph that is elsewhere sparked by considerable expository verve. She has a special talent for the capsule biography, and she exploits it to considerable advantage: in a swift contrastive glance at Michael Drayton, who took pains to disguise his low-status origins, or in efficient portraits of Alexander Nowell and Edmund Grindal that sketch the ladder of Spenser's patrons. Sometimes these brief lives are only evocative: the wonderfully engaging description of Henry Sidney, the father of Philip, may suggest how easily the later Spenser might have found the process of transforming historical figures into allegorical characters, yet because Brink claims no conspicuous interactions between Spenser and Henry Sidney, his presence in the biography seems slightly mysterious.

Brink devotes much of her book to correcting and recalibrating received ideas about Spenser's life, rather than substantially reconceiving it, yet the corrections are most welcome. And the final chapter of the book constitutes quite a powerful attempt to make sense of what Ireland meant to Spenser and of what the ecclesiological milieu at Cambridge might have meant to Spenser's vision for Irish policy.

SPENSER STUDIES, MAINLY

“Recent Studies” are inevitably heterogeneous, yet Spenser exerts a powerful centripetal force on a great number of those Studies. Whether or not there is something intrinsic to the Spenser corpus that elicits powerful criticism, Spenser scholarship, like work on Shakespeare and the most canonical of early modern English dramatists, benefits from a critical mass of practitioners. That strong individual voices emerge from that mass is to be expected, but the strength of those voices is not *sui generis*.

Gordon Teskey’s is among the strongest of this year’s Spenserian voices, though he is by no means unrivalled. *Spenserian Moments* is a long book, more expository than argumentative: ample, digressive, and sometimes looping in its exposition. Teskey describes what he means by a “moment” many times, and often as if for the first time, so that description begins to seem as much a making new as a clarification. The sustained depth of his engagement is comparable to that of the late Harry Berger, from whom we also had a Spenser book in 2020, although Berger takes pains to explain and convince whereas Teskey persuades by elegance and power of statement. Such rhetoric tempts a reader to reenact the critic’s discoveries, but I found myself frequently unable to do so. I could not recognize Spenser in all of Teskey’s characterizations: I would like to feel that Spenser’s language is more “classically rich and harmonious” than Ariosto’s, since neither richness—classical or otherwise—nor harmony seem to me to be Spenser’s particular virtues, but perhaps I am unaware of the limits to the harmony of Ariosto’s Italian (p. 4). As for “classically harmonious,” Teskey may be thinking of what Percy Bysshe Shelley described as Spenser’s “harmonious arrangement of ... pauses,” which seems accurate to me, though I’m not sure that it’s classical in character or a preeminent feature of Spenser’s poetry.³ Likewise, however useful Teskey’s attention to Spenser as a poet of moments, the assertion that “Spenser thinks not in structures, but in *moments*” will perplex most professional readers of *The Faerie Queene*—not just those schooled by James Norhnborg’s magisterial *The Analogy of “The Faerie Queene”* (p. 17): Spenserians habitually represent Spenser as one of the greatest of architectonic craftsmen. Teskey’s claim that Spenser thinks not in structures forces the experienced reader into uncertainty over what is meant by a poet’s thinking.

This is precisely the uncertainty that *Spenserian Moments* solicits. The book is organized into four parts, the first “On Spenser,”

the second "On Allegory," the third "On Thinking," and the short fourth part "On Change," and although the book offers a busy evocation of Spenserian allegory, the section on thinking is the book's core, its destination: "the poem he is making is not a representation of his thinking"—is not reducible to ideas, propositions, or beliefs—"but simply is his thinking" (p. 300). Teskey explains that all the episodes in the poem that rehearse the deceptiveness of appearances have the higher purpose of enforcing "a distrust of his own as well as others' power to make manifest" (p. 304); in effect, Teskey attributes to Spenser an anxious anticipation of what John Keats means by negative capability; for Spenser, it is implied, being in uncertainties is not simply a prerequisite of a certain poetical character, but a matter of professional poetic ethics. Teskey makes this point frequently, as if he were anxiously trying to lay the ghost of a propositional Spenser. Hence the afterword appended to the book, "The Colossi of Memnon" a fantasia in which the twin colossi, statues of Memnon and Achilles, who guard the mortuary complex of Amenhotep III, are likened to the twin columns of Jacques Derrida's *Glas*, which Teskey understands as Hegelian guardians to the tomb of Antigone. Teskey goes on to imagine the narrative of *The Faerie Queene* itself, with its many pairs of rivals, as preserving but not entombing, that is, as sustaining a poetic thinking that resists the entombment which is the completed thought.

There are wonderful things here, many of them consisting of especially vibrant statements of well-established data. That Spenser's explanatory "Letter to Raleigh" has an unfixed position in the early texts of *The Faerie Queene* has excited repeated and seldom brief comment, but Teskey's fourteen pages on the topic have an unusual force, the summary statement—"The positionality of the Letter to Raleigh forces us to relinquish the notion ... that *The Faerie Queene* is an object ... that despite its incompleteness is enclosed in itself"—is extremely well earned (p. 227). Teskey's treatment of Spenser's capacious debts to Torquato Tasso—to Tasso's *Aminta* and *Gerusalemme liberata* and to Tasso's ways of reconciling Ariosto's practice and the venerable rules of Aristotelian poetics—is helpfully adroit. Teskey skillfully evokes the swirl of Spenser's commitments: to the magnetic pleasures of romance making, to the prestigious rigors of chic neo-Aristotelian poetics, and to the very different, because ardent, rigors of responsible moralizing. It may be observed that Teskey's descriptions of neither Tasso's nor of Spenser's commitments include confessional ones: Teskey's Spenser is a Renaissance and proto-Romantic

poet, not the Protestant one who has received so much critical attention during the past two decades.

There should perhaps be less gatekeeping in Teskey's rhetoric: "Every competent reader of *The Faerie Queene* knows these moments and remembers them better than the episodes, better than the stories, better than the plan or 'fore-conceit,' and better than the whole" (p. 269). Evaluations of the form—"the moments are better than the episodes and the individual episodes are better than the larger structure in which they take their place," to take a hypothetical example—may themselves be a worrisome power play; but the form in which Teskey has framed his related assessment, such that failure to assent evidences incompetence, is more worrisome. "Thinking in generic terms about poetry gives literary critics pleasure and work. But at some level of awareness even those who are most committed to the enterprise of genre criticism feel they are moving among shadows ... while the poem waits for them out in the light" (p. 274). Teskey's book is meant to confer the rewards of competence and light.

The Manchester Spenser has produced a number of compelling monographs on Spenser and his circle, and has done so in very short order. Tamsin Badcoe, one of the general editors for the series, has taken up the topic of the rhetorical character of Spenser's geography and hydrography, focusing especially on topographies that won't come into focus—"those that do not yet present a continuous or 'objective' reality to the person perceiving them, such as islands and other littoral spaces ... fragments of worlds ... the cosmos, the coastline, 'elsewhere', 'nowhere', and finally ... England and Ireland." It returns repeatedly to "horizons, edges, and impasses" (p. 14).

Edmund Spenser and the Romance of Space is a long ruminative book in which the evocative frequently wins out over the specified. Badcoe often quotes a critic at his or her most mysterious, "'space appears to have lost its poetry' in the seventeenth century" (p. 14), without equipping us with its original clarifying context or with a clarification of her own devising. One wonders how space's alleged loss can square with the counterevidence of country-house poetry, or *Poly-Olbion*, or *Paradise Lost*, or *Cooper's Hill*, or—if the loss of poetry is to be understood as permanent—with the counterevidence of the mass of eighteenth-century loco-descriptive poetry and prose. Yet, there are truly admirable moments when a reader can feel fully oriented. Badcoe ingeniously revisits the ties of Guyon to the seafaring Ulysses and aptly expounds the unvariegated blankness of the woods of book 6 of the *The Faerie Queene*.

Given her preference for landscapes of marsh and murk, one can see why Badcoe bypasses the measured geographical specificities of book 5, landscapes and seascapes navigable and tractable, in which passage is calculably frustrated by time, tide, and other impediments. Although her final chapters drench themselves in the boggishness of the Low Countries and of Ireland, her most compelling and memorable pages concern the seascape between Ireland and England. Badcoe's discussion of *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe* is remarkable.

Since Spenser first explained the design of his epic to Raleigh, commentary on *The Faerie Queene* has been oriented to and through the reader and Catherine Nicholson offers an exquisitely intelligent account of the peculiar history of reading Spenser's epic. *Reading and Not Reading "The Faerie Queene": Spenser and the Making of Literary Criticism* is a disciplinary history, a study of Spenser as required reading—in nurseries, home libraries, and schoolrooms—and of the affective complexity that comes of literary discipline. She seems to bear no animus toward assigned or dutiful reading, present or past. Genially allying herself with "the curious," she quotes John Hughes's observation that Spenser's poems "have been able thus far to survive ... and seem rather likely, among the Curious at least, to preserve the Knowledge of our Antient Language, than to be in danger of being destroy'd with it" (p. 40). Hughes made this assessment, that Spenser and his readers were inescapably residual, in 1715: for more than three centuries, reading *The Faerie Queene* has been curiously curatorial.

This is a tour de force, a captivating account of reception history that never taints that history with condescension. At each turn in that history of reading, Nicholson finds something newly apt, a prompt or provocation for our own reading. A chapter on selective reading—not reading the poem, but only bits of it—considers what it is that makes the poem such a disintegral resource; what, she asks, makes us experience the poem as a gallery of rich moments. She goes on to observe how those moments are savored by individuals and, perhaps more interestingly, by coteries whose shared enthusiasm sustains the subgroup.

The book comes most fully into focus in the fourth chapter, which begins by discussing how Spenser imagined Elizabeth to have read *The Faerie Queene*, and proceeds thence to reflect on how we read the poem. And by "we," Nicholson insists, she means scholars, professors, and students. She is in a cheerful tradition represented by Isabel MacCaffrey, Paul Alpers, and Jeff

Dolven (once her teacher), a tradition of taking very seriously the likely experience of the reader. Yet her reader (and Dolven's) is less dutiful than those imagined by her critical forebears and she is very thoughtful about what happens at this or that juncture when a reader code switches, relinquishes one frame of analysis for another. At the same time, her analysis may be situated in a newish tradition of criticism, represented by Jonathan Goldberg, Joseph Campana, and Melissa E. Sanchez, that rigorously doubts the truism that Spenser is a celebrant, above all, of marriage and of the spirituality of its carnalities. Eventually the chapter wheels and discovers that the epic sustains a frequent, sometimes quite searching critique of privacy, and particularly of that privacy specific to marriage. The book is very good at such interpretive work, but its excitement centers on its apologia for that careless reading—discontinuous, inattentive, hasty, irresponsible—that, Nicholson argues, Spenser came to seem to have solicited. She reminds us that a thriving literary culture is careless with all its books and that the professoriate might do well to respect and provoke such carelessness, even if we cannot discipline it. It is sometimes difficult to persuade one's colleagues to read books outside their fields, and annoyingly difficult to get them to read books on Spenser. I intend to keep recommending Nicholson's book to those I most respect and value.

This may be the best moment, briefly, to shift attention from Spenser in order to mention Angelica Duran's study of the reception of *Milton among Spaniards*, an account that begins with a chapter on what Milton says of the Spanish Inquisition in *Areopagitica* and a brief glance at the entries that mention Milton in three issues of the Spanish Index of prohibited books: *Defense of the English People*, proscribed in 1707; a general prohibition on works by Milton in 1790; and a narrower proscription of the Latin State Papers and of *Paradise Lost*, in 1844. In the next chapter, Duran comments on ten of the nineteen Spanish translations of *Paradise Lost* published since 1812, three in depth—one in prose and two in verse—remarking on the prosodic challenges to verse translation, on how the translators suppress Milton's satiric treatment of the Roman church, and on how they adjust doctrinal features of the epic most at odds with Catholic orthodoxy. There are many sharp observations, but no sustained account of any given translation emerges.

The book is sometimes distractible: the chapter on illustrated Spanish editions of *Paradise Lost* begins with discussions of the frontispiece to the 1645 *Poems*, of Milton's derisive treatment of

Eikon Basilike, and of the possibility that the father of the illustrator of the 1688 Tonson edition of *Paradise Lost* may have been Spanish, all this before turning to the first two illustrated Spanish editions (1873 and 1883), both of which copy their images from Gustave Doré's illustrations first published in English editions of 1866. This is too bad, since this vagrant itinerary defers our arrival at a lovely vignette on Gregorio Prieto's sixteen slightly precious illustrations for a 1972 artist's book, with extracts from Juan Escóiquiz's nineteenth-century translations from Milton. Having discovered that five of the illustrations had already appeared in *Lorca en color*, a collaboration between Prieto and García Lorca, Duran guides us toward ways in which two of the images associate heteronomous Lorcan imaginings with the self-satisfactions and disappointments of Milton's newly created Adam and with Adam's unsettled response to the elaborations of Eve's body. Now back to Spenser.

David Lee Miller did the community of Spenserians a kindness in pulling together *Resisting Allegory: Interpretive Delirium in Spenser's "Faerie Queene,"* a collection of essays by Berger on the 1590 edition of *The Faerie Queene*. *Resisting Allegory* is something of a sequel to *Revisionary Play*, itself a collection of essays on Spenser written between 1961 and 1983. *Revisionary Play* witnessed Berger's swooping assimilation of provocations from post-Freudian psychoanalysis, feminism, and poststructuralism as he sought, in his words, "to de-aestheticize New-Critical practice" (p. 453). It also witnessed his general unresponsiveness to New Historicism, which itself witnesses Berger's abiding ties to New Criticism: he has always written as if the text itself were sufficiently eventful as to render contextual conditions and events supererogatory. In the retrospect of "Displacing Autophobia," the opening essay of *Resisting Allegory*, Berger directs our attention to the internal textual event and discloses his disappointment in the "strong tendency" of many of his peers "to elide the mischievous interplay of text with countertext" (p. 19). He treats his peers genially—indeed, it is one of the privileges of working in early modern studies that Berger might read and quote one's work, since he invariably makes those he cites seem enormously incisive and imaginative; he is harder on himself. *Resisting Allegory* discloses an intellectual restlessness at which *Revisionary Play* only hints.

Berger has been a difficult critic from the get-go and *Revisionary Play* displayed his gift for finding problems that others had not noticed, producing often dazzling solutions to those problems, solutions that, for all their complexity, seemed more than true

enough at the time of their original publication. In *Resisting Allegory*, he has gone on to unearth new problems, often precisely where one thought he had unsettled and settled things before. In his introduction "On Texts and Countertexts," he observes, "The root of all evil in Book 2 is the witch, Acrasia. Some sixty years ago I castigated 'her' as a demonic allegorist. Today I find myself castigating that castigation by replacing 'demonic' with 'demonized'" (p. 12). The precise shift he observes here emphasizes that meaning and evaluation as processes discursively produced have become the central objects of Berger's criticism. "Acrasia, I now believe, is textually represented as the objectification of male hysteria, and her femaleness is like that of a male in drag. The *discourse of temperance* demonizes Acrasia" (p. 12, emphasis added).

Berger's critical inventiveness has had the effect of making Spenser's own dialectical and rhetorical gifts seem always greater than other critics have conceded. There is a breathtakingly apologetic force to Berger's work: in Berger's essays, Spenser, or his poetry, is discovered to have anticipated our resistance or exasperation, or even, in cruxes where we have missed something that Berger sees, to have solicited our very lapses of attention. Where others observe the poet in facile condemnation or dazed celebration, Berger discerns a performance of facility or the mechanization of dazing.

I have already remarked on how many "Recent Studies" were organized around Spenser. However compelling his corpus may be—and however inviting a voluminous corpus can be to historicizing critics—the fact that work on Spenser so dominates Tudor nondramatic literary scholarship owes a good deal to the International Spenser Society and its tireless efforts to maintain a hold on programming, in America, at the conferences of the MLA, SCSC, RSA, and the International Congress on Medieval Studies. That Spenserians herd together is both valuable and deleterious: they push each other usefully, but they often head in similar directions, and their coherence is steadily reflected in volume 34 of *Spenser Studies*. This annual issue is a fine collection, despite a couple of essays that seem only to restate accepted interpretations, but there is considerable novelty in Rebeca Helfer's essay on the traffic between Spenser's *Ruines of Time* and *Prothalamion*. Half of the volume functions as a festschrift for William Oram, a testimony not only to the force of his scholarship but also to the warmth of the community of Spenserians, a warmth which Oram has done much to sustain. There are many attractive offerings in this part of the volume: Lauren Silberman does something of

a star turn in her contribution honoring Oram, swiftly tracking the ways in which the epic topos of the night raid, or *Doloneia*, enables Tasso, Ariosto, and Spenser to reflect on heroic puberty.

PEDAGOGY

The contemporary and early modern classroom exerts attractive force over much of the work under review here this year: a few of the tributes to Oram linger over his pedagogical service to Spenser studies, Nicholson's *Reading and Not Reading* devotes considerable attention to *The Faerie Queene* as required reading, and Scott Newstok's *How to Think Like Shakespeare: Lessons from a Renaissance Education* propounds a set of maxims for liberal arts education based on his own broodings on passages from Shakespeare's plays and on what we know of Elizabethan schooling and of early modern apprenticeship. Newstok has also done the generous and faithful work of editing Michael Cavanagh's "*Paradise Lost*": *A Primer*, a posthumous record of the way Cavanagh taught Milton in the course of three decades at Grinnell. Cavanagh's *Primer* is a lovely book, imagined as an introduction to a reader preparing to venture into *Paradise Lost* with no assistance beyond Cavanagh's book. I doubt that there are many readers who would undertake such a reading, or whether Cavanagh's *Primer* is appropriately pitched to them. He defines elementary terms ("oxymoron") and refers to poems from across Milton's career, addressing the reader as if she were likely not to have heard of them, yet he also refers to particular aspects of those poems without line numbers as if the texts were familiar. The audience, then, is not so much a novice, but someone thinking about a novice: the audience is us, in our capacity as teachers. Certainly one could turn to this book for the refreshment and inspiration that a genial colleague, committed to the instruction of nonspecialists, might offer. Cavanagh has a great gift for unpretentious summary statement: "He draws a circle of fellow Judaeo-Christians around him, who—though a few may be offended—are probably secretly thrilled to hear the rudiments of biblical experience related in the hallowed language of Greek and Latin epic poetry" (pp. 22–3). He is often both quotable and accessible—on tone, on diction, on caesural effects.

The tributes to Oram and the books by Cavanagh, Newstok, and Nicholson all register the attractive pull of the classroom on early modern literary scholarship. Yet that same tug sometimes seems to deform aspects of our scholarship: even some of the best of the books under review bulge with overlong elementary

introductions to aspects of early modern literary culture or of literary culture in general, explanations that might enrich a survey course or digressions that might enliven one, but that deform or obscure the argument at hand. Other forms of charm crowd in as well: personal anecdotes, vignettes from research travel, scenes from archival adventures, many of them dubiously successful at authenticating, specifying, or dramatizing the case at hand.

It would be easy to blame or forgive authors for these excrescences, but editors should not be too quickly forgiven. The editing of the collection of "Recent Studies" considered here was unsettlingly lax. Authors were not saved from rambling or from repeating themselves; grammatical lapses and simple typos were not caught. One book by a single author provided a new bibliography for each chapter, with items repeated from chapter to chapter. Especially in the case of collections of essays, editorial responsibility often fell through the cracks: scholarly editors seemed to have counted on the contributors to scrutinize the submitted copy, or perhaps expected the staff of the press carefully to read proof; contributing authors relied on the editor of the volume or the staff of the press to check their quotations. Whatever the cause, a few of the edited collections seemed unprofessional. The economics of academic publishing have long been perilous, but the tweedy pride that once burnished the products of many academic presses seems now to subsist at only one or two. The University of Pennsylvania Press deserves praise for editorial prudence, attention to detail, and polished design.⁴

Not all editorial failures may be blamed on press editors, for many errors could have been caught by the field specialists who agree to vet manuscripts for a press. Misplaced generosity or haste allows books to appear in flawed form and so do damage to a field. I have referred above to entrenched unclarities of diction: if "matter" and "material" have come to mean too much, "performative" now means nearly anything—constitutive, fluid, theatrical, improvisational, or—and there is irony here—uncertain of reference. We are still suffering, somewhat, from the effects of superficial integration of challenging theoretical material into graduate education, and those who review manuscripts for presses have the uncomfortable duty of stepping up to help. When an author refers to the Lacanian Real, Imaginary, and Symbolic orders as "subject positions," a reader's confidence should be shaken; when a few more such formulations appear within a page or two, reading will proceed under the cloud of low expectations. Future "Recent Studies" would proceed even more constructively if we expected reviewers and press editors to demand more of us.

EDITED COLLECTIONS

A few of the essay collections under review contain only one or two contributions specifically concerned with early modern subjects. Sometimes those contributions usefully unsettle the larger contexts of the collection or are unsettled by it. Unfortunately, Rémi Vuillemin's essay on the typography of the printed sonnet, "Borders and Liminal Spaces in Sixteenth-Century Collected Poetry," is isolated within Ciaran Ross's *Reading(s)/Across/Borders: Studies in Anglophone Borders Criticism*, a volume including revised versions of papers delivered at a conference held at the University of Strasbourg in 2016. Jamie McKinstry's contribution to *The Male Body in Medicine and Literature* is similarly isolated. He offers an account of the influence of dissection on Donne's poetry, an account inevitably indebted to David A. Hedrich Hirsch's important essay on atomism in Donne and Jonathan Sawday's book on anatomy and literature. McKinstry builds gracefully on those earlier studies, emphasizing how Donne uses dissection to confirm integrities beyond the reach of exposure.

Luisa Simonutti has edited the informative collection *Locke and Biblical Hermeneutics: Conscience and Scripture*, which includes essays on the religious writings of John Locke's last decade, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, the two *Vindications of the Reasonableness*, and the *Paraphrase and Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul*. A few of the essays go over very much the same ground, which deprives the volume of efficient verve, but several of the essays are memorable. Jean-Michel Vienne's contribution on Locke's hermeneutics demonstrates the coherence of Locke's treatment of the gospels in *Reasonableness* and of the epistles in the *Paraphrase*. Whereas the promotion of charity is the organizing principle of interpretation for Augustine, "Locke always chooses the solution that preserves man's liberty, consciousness and self" (p. 111). This obliges him to some very evasive handling of the passages in *Romans* on election, crucial to the Reformation.

Raffaele Russo provides a strong intellectual biography of Locke in his last years, which Justin Champion's essay nicely supplements. Russo complements the historicism that Locke brings to Paul with a historicism of his own, one which captures the urgency that gave force to Locke's work on the Pauline epistles, the needs he felt first to "save works" and to locate the function of faith, as that which transforms the right which reason discovers into a responsibility to righteous action.

In a provocative contribution, Kim Ian Parker reviews the circumstantial evidence for Locke's connections with Baruch Spinoza

and with a circle of Dutch and emigré intellectuals sympathetic to Spinoza. While Locke's annotations to the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* in the 1670s are unassailable evidence of influence, Parker makes a case for Locke's having begun to grapple with Spinoza in the 1660s. Finally, it is worth alerting the curious to Maria-Cristina Pitassi's account of the reception of Locke's late theological works, which contains an intriguing footnote demonstrating Locke's authority among Quakers: Locke was taken up to bolster both sides of an argument over female preaching (pp. 245–6, n11).

Andrew McRae and Philip Schwyzer observe that "*Poly-Olbion* has only rarely concentrated critical minds" (p. 8), but their collection of essays on the poem makes a fine case for remedial concentration, demonstrating, as it unfolds, that such concentration need not be dutiful. They admire the collaboration of Drayton, John Selden, and the engraver William Hole, though they do not revere it, and they and their contributors assess the book with deliberate clarity. Angus Vine's essay on Drayton's *copia* is especially precise: for him, Drayton's aim is "comprehensiveness rather than compendiousness and his work sets out to generate narrative abundance as much as to contain it"; he goes on to make shrewd observations concerning Drayton's sometimes emphatic incompletions (p. 20).

The central themes of "*Poly-Olbion*": *New Perspectives* are not new, although they are managed with great penetration. The energizing, if sometimes slightly comic tension between Drayton's songs and Selden's commentary caught the eyes of critics as early as Alexander Pope, and Schwyzer, Sjoerd Levelt, and Shannon Garner continue to brood on that tension—Schwyzer especially emphatically, as he works over their very different attitudes to Galfridian traditions, preceding thence to an extremely subtle account of Drayton's "perspectival" conception of time. Other essays elaborate Richard Helgerson's insight that the regionalism of *Poly-Olbion*, like that of many though not all works of chorography, conspicuously resists the national—especially in its early Stuart formations—"so that the land displaces the monarch as the cynosure of English identity and patriotic loyalty" (p. 90). Helgerson's insight is rehearsed, with ecological emphases, in several essays—in McRae's essay on soil in *Poly-Olbion*, Andrew Hadfield's essay "Drayton's Fish," and Todd Andrew Borlik's treatment of Drayton's bioregionalism, the latter pointing up some especially interesting contrasts between the politics of the Thames in *The Faerie Queene* and in *Poly-Olbion*. Sara Trevisan's striking essay

on Drayton's relation to Welsh bardic practice, however, resists Helgerson's analysis by making the case that Drayton's purpose was "at least partially to reconcile the history of the land and the history of its kings" (p. 210); Trevisan's resistance to Helgerson turns out to partner a very rich reading of the collaboration between Selden and Drayton.

Hadfield's is not the only essay on Drayton's chorography to fasten on the wateriness of his landscape. Garner's sinuously sophisticated treatment of romance elements in the poem culminates with a celebratory account of "Severn's dissolving and immortalization into the river ... Waves take on human features, locks of human hair are caught in river locks, and human arms expand their reach to include the non-human" (p. 143). This essay is an especially eloquent representative of a substantial body of work that yearns toward a humbling entanglement of the human by the natural. Yet her essay is checked or at least qualified by Bernhard Klein's essay which insists that Drayton is unusual among his contemporaries in his discomfort with maritime characterizations of Britain: "endowed with a distinctly negative energy, [Neptune] is seen as a threat to the land and to the firecelly local histories it engenders" (p. 165).

Kristen Poole and Owen Williams's wonderful collection, *Early Modern Histories of Time: The Periodization of Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century England*, is one of the few compilations in which the contributions sustain almost uniform force and authority. Tim Harris's essay on historians' various constructions of the early modern and Euan Cameron's essay on Christian historical periodization are both magisterial and lucid. Poole revisits typology, necessarily crucial to Cameron's account, insisting that historiography should not relinquish its generative conceptual power. Ethan H. Shagan offers a brilliant thought experiment on secular periodization, one that resists both an unreflective understanding of the secular and the equation of secularization and modernization that it subtends. Heather Dubrow and Nigel Smith both contribute nice reflections on the way location disrupts the chronology of history.

Things turn literary in most of the other essays. James Simpson's narrative of the erosion of the wall between medieval and early modern English literary studies as literary studies began to bring Church reform closer to the center of their concerns is arch and penetrating, concluding as it does with the encounter of medievalists with the "shocking, not to say appalling" brittleness of sixteenth-century culture: "We suddenly understood that

liberal modernity tossed its embarrassing abject back into the later Middle Ages" (p. 98). Then come five essays that explore the nonlinearities of early modern time: Kate Giles on the compound of period and simultaneity produced by repurposings in the built environment; Natasha Korda on the periodicity of laundry time; and Teskey on the renderings of periodicity in seventeenth-century verse and the events that punctuate them. The last two studies in nonlinearity focus on Shakespeare: his use of the theater for necromantic séance, enabling him to speak with the dead (Douglas Bruster) and on our own continued use of Shakespeare to insist on the presence of the past, its availability to miraculous renewal (Julia Reinhard Lupton).

Julianne Werlin's brilliant essay features both demographic history, with perturbations and shifts that might serve as period markers, and, within one of the periods, a personal history of feeling. Werlin lingers over the late sixteenth-century increase of matrimonial age, to which she ascribes a transformation of affective personal life that, on the evidence of love poetry, at once heightened erotic frustration and normalized it, so that it compounded the other frustrations that attended on young adulthood. The implicative force of the essay is checked by the limits of its archive: Werlin draws exclusively on poetry by men for her demography of desire and the essay spares only a few sentences for women's affective life.

With her shrewd coordinated attention to the periodizations of social history and the personal periodizations of the frustrated individual, Werlin's essay complements two fine studies of mid-seventeenth-century temporality. Mihoko Suzuki begins with a Gramscian critique of the Restoration as a dividing line between distinct literary cultures, focusing on the continuities of Anne Halkett's political sensibility and literary habits across that divide. Suzuki is very much in concert with Zwicker, who has sustained, over the last couple of decades, a steady critique of the idea of the Restoration as a literary period marker, a critique meant to specify both what "Restoration" effected and what it did not. In this essay, Zwicker not only concerns himself, first and last, with the dull, if perplexing idea of an "Age of Dryden" (p. 215), but also with the perplexing present, the past claimed and the future projected in *Heroique Stanzas*, *Absalom and Achitophel*, and the Prefaces to *Religio Laici* and *Fables*; attending to the word "time" in each of these texts, he charts the evolving personal aspect of a literary culture "that had tired of the apocalypse," and so proposes Dryden as an idiosyncratic and subtle witness to what we call—crudely, as Shagan explains it—secularization (p. 219).

In *Renaissance Personhood: Materiality, Taxonomy, Process*, the collection edited by Kevin Curran, virtually every essay examines the gap between legal personhood and the human; with few exceptions, *Renaissance Personhood* is a very strong volume, even if some of the essays are marred by careless editing. Wendy Beth Hyman has an adroit essay on "The Inner Lives of Renaissance Machines," heavily indebted to Jane Bennett, Latour, and Jessica Wolfe: its originality lies in a delicate specification of the semantics of "machine," as verb as well as noun, rather than in the rehearsal of the mechanistic model of mind or person. Colby Gordon's account of householding in Semayne's Case and *The Comedy of Errors* is skillful and engrossing and Campana offers a shrewd, attentive itinerary across instantiations of the epic topos of the bleeding tree.

Amanda Bailey's essay, "Race, Personhood, and the Human in *The Tempest*," is possibly the most ambitious essay in the volume, dense and difficult, but quite rewarding. John Archer's brooding interpreting between Levinas and the Shakespeare of *Macbeth* and Sonnet 129 is nearly as challenging, its excursus on William Blackstone's comments on the "chore in action" tantalizingly oblique. The concluding essay, Gregory Kneidel's sustained gloss on twenty-two supremely elliptical, witty lines from "The State Progress of Ill," a verse satire by Edward Herbert, is the volume's great gift, since it brings the lines to bay as an extraordinary self-aggrandizing account of the author's cosmopolitan humility.

Perhaps the most commanding collection of literary essays published this year is Yulia Ryzhik's *Spenser and Donne: Thinking Poets*—the title of which may have been inspired by the essays on Spenserian thinking that Teskey has reworked as chapters in *Spenserian Moments*. Although one wonders whether the volume will substantially disturb readers' sense that deep differences of poetic temperament divide the two figures, Ryzhik has set her contributors the goal of moving "beyond the convenient but unfruitful contrast between Spenser and Donne that has dominated critical discourse" (p. 5). The essays that come closest to realizing this goal do so somewhat narrowly: essays by both Richard Danson Brown and Linda Gregerson take up Donne's engagements with Spenser's *Mother Hubbard's Tale* and so recognize a kinship that finds its origins in Spenser's abiding satiric efforts.

Many in the distinguished raft of contributors take up topics quite central to their own recent careers: thus Patrick Cheney offers what might be considered a coda to his recent book on the sublime in early modern poetics; Anne Lake Prescott sustains her

career-long commitment to articulating the Continental literary engagements of Tudor and Stuart writers; Brown continues his campaign of modeling the intellectual power derivable from a form of close stylistic analysis to which he refers as “overhear[ing]” (p. 14); Ramie Targoff’s essay on stainless eroticism in Donne’s and Spenser’s epithalamia recurs to the searching reflections on contamination in her earlier book on Donne; and Ayesha Ramachandran’s essay on Spenser and Donne’s cosmic philosophical poems elaborates themes of her book on *Global Imaginings in Early Modern Europe*.

Prescott frequently recurs to the elementary interpretive question of whether we are meant to recognize Spenser’s intellectual debts as we read him, whether his sources are also intertexts. No doubt, the juxtaposition of Spenser and Donne gives the question local piquancy, for Donne wears his erudition on his sleeve, whereas Spenser—differently, if not incomparably learned—does not. The fact raises questions for many essays in the volume. The contributors regard Spenser’s nonmention of Ovid, Virgil, or Longinus as irrelevant to their thinking about the place of these authors in Spenser’s intellectual biography and to the ambitions and meanings his poems communicated to his early readers. But is the nonmention irrelevant? The question seems somewhat more pressing when asked of Donne, who frequently insists on the thoughts with which and thinkers with whom he is engaged. Cheney expects Donne’s readers to recognize Donne’s aspiration to play in the league over which Longinus was the commissioner—and why not?—yet should Donne’s habits of explicitness compromise our confidence in what we allege as implicit? Prescott expresses some caution in the matter. After having alleged an unstated, but precise intent in Spenser’s allusion to Ovid’s *Amores* I.i in the Proem to book 4 of *The Faerie Queene*, she turns to Donne for contrast: “For young John Donne, flashes of Ovid can seem ... fanciful, show-off, self-positioning the author as a smart young man with wit and education. In his younger years, imitating Ovid was less a departure from epic ... than an imitation of a smart Roman-about-town” (p. 114). A *mere* imitation, she implies.

David Marno’s contribution to the volume has a cunning ingenuity. Observing Petrarch’s ramifying use of “sparse”—scattered, dispersed—and its cognates in the *Rerum Vulgarium Fragmenta*, Marno proposes that representations of spiritual error and distraction in Spenser’s and Donne’s devotional poetry may be understood as an extension of something fundamentally Petrarchan, the amendment of which is to be effected by retractions of earlier utterance and the concentration of devotional attention.

Of all the fine essays in the collection, the one with the most power to startle and so reignite the poems with which it grapples is Targoff's account of the dark rumble of violence in Spenser's and Donne's epithalamia, which she presents as poems on the sacrifice of virginity. On the other hand, the essay with the most power to refresh one's sense of the complementarity of Donne and Spenser may be Ramachandran's piece on "Spenser, Donne, and the Philosophic Poem," which seizes on Spenser's *Fowre Hymnes* and Donne's *Anniversaries* as case studies by means of which to make good on Ernst Cassirer's claim that, in the Renaissance, "Man finds his true Ego by drawing the infinite universe into himself, and conversely, by extending himself to it," deriving modern human subjectivity from "a thoroughly enmeshed, dialectical symbiosis" of microcosm and macrocosm (p. 135).

I have neglected to mention Elizabeth D. Harvey's essay on graphic magic, as manifest both in poetic scenes in which written and especially incised characters exert control over the beloved (and spiritual scenes in which God incises his image in our hearts) and in the general poetic practice of "style" as inscription of an author's "poetical character." I reserved it because it bears important kinship with *Impossible Desire*, Hyman's intriguing book on the carpe diem poem, which treats even counterintuitive metaphoric attributions as propositions about the world: when Donne tells us that the incision of his name on a windowpane in "A Valediction: Of my Name in the Window" "doth contribute my firmnesse to this glasse," Hyman alleges that the device "reflects a different hierarchy among materials, one that we ought not attribute to metaphysical conceit alone" on the grounds that such metaphors are "agencial, efficacious modes of thought" (pp. 29–30). The rakes of Hyman's carpe diem poems are more than Busyanian sorcerers imposing their cruel imaginings on the social world; they are proto-Enlightenment magi subversively reconceiving the world as merely despiritualized and natural. Her claim is that "for early moderns ... figural reality was constructed of components whose physicality had material efficacy"; most of the book's challenge is condensed here in the paradoxical phrase, "figural reality" (p. 35).

There are four essays on early modern texts and illustrations in Bradford K. Mudge's collection, *The Cambridge Companion to Erotic Literature*. Elizabeth Robertson concerns herself with the ideological work performed by Shakespeare's familiar pair of poems on coerced sex, *The Rape of Lucrece* and *Venus and Adonis*; Ian Moulton surveys and samples the titillating and obscene poems that appear in early modern manuscript miscellanies, and

Sarah Toulalan discusses the ways in which medical treatises attempt to ward off prurient constructions of their information. Like many of the contributors to Mudge's collection, Toulalan and Robertson oblige themselves to explain what they understand by "erotic" and "pornographic" and to work out its different applications to the texts they discuss and those of the nineteenth century and after. On the other hand, James Grantham Turner does not bother with definitions and simply launches into a buoyant and encompassing survey of the sort of writing and imagery that resembles Aretino's, anticipating or imitating the *Modi* and the *Ragionamenti*. Although Turner concentrates on Continental literature in Latin, Italian, and French, he makes no excuses for considering bawdy writing for nonerudite audiences. He covers a great deal of ground, taking up the eroticization of high-minded philosophy in the Ficinian tradition, the afterlife of the classical bisexual debate on whether boys or women give greater pleasure to the dominant elite male, and the place of the prostitute in erotic literature. The essay is neither rigorously taxonomic, theoretical, nor difficult, but it is richly detailed and will prove useful to many.

EROTIC LITERATURE

I have already mentioned *Impossible Desire and the Limits of Knowledge in Renaissance Poetry*. Hyman seeks to situate the carpe diem poem in early modern intellectual history: "A primary contention of this study is that the will to conquer virginal bodies demonstrates philosophical as well as sexual intent" (p. 8)—the thought that lies between maid's legs. The entire scholarly audience may not accept her operating assumption, that the carpe diem poem always tricks its reader—and not just the virginal seducee—into seriously considering that immoral behavior might have no eternal consequence, an assumption on which she founds her case for the importance of the genre. Although it's worth noticing that Horace almost takes us there with his *quam minimum credulo postero* ("put little trust in the future," *Odes* I.xi.8). Yet most of her audience will be taken with some of the subordinate lines of investigation that she brings to the genre. She has wonderful things to say, for example, of the kinship of the two imperative genres, carpe diem and memento mori, and she has more wonderful things to say about the unflagging interest in the refusal of the hymen to signify an interest that culminates, in Hyman's fourth chapter, in the proposal that joking about the hymen adds to the repertory of Pyrrhonian routines for the main-

tenance of skeptical doubt. Her reading of *Measure for Measure* as a revealingly twisted reconstitution of the *carpe diem* poem strikes a dozen sparks.

In *Latin Erotic Elegy and the Shaping of Sixteenth-Century English Love Poetry: Lascivious Poets*, Linda Grant makes a straightforward case quite forcefully, “that to trace the ‘Petrarchan’ solely back to Petrarch, or Petrarch’s poetry only back to Ovid, is misleadingly narrow” (p. 6). She is convincing when she demonstrates what can be gained after one recognizes that strains of sixteenth-century elegiac practice usually characterized as anti-Petrarchan should be characterized rather as Propertian or Catullan or when the identification of the beloved with literary ambition itself is recognized not as a Petrarchan innovation, but as an imitation of Propertius and Sulpicia, and legible as such by sixteenth-century elegists.

She seeks a split-level model: “mediations, such as Petrarch’s rewriting of elegy ... insert themselves between the classical ‘originals’ and Renaissance ‘imitations’” with concern for how “Renaissance verse may be engaging with near-contemporary texts at the same time as it is imitating classical poetics” (p. 9). This model asserts itself only fitfully until Grant’s concluding chapter, on Sulpicia, the female erotic poet whose poems come down to us embedded in the Tibullan corpus. Grant considers Sulpicia’s possible influence on Mary Sidney, and on the way Sidney’s oeuvre mediates and delivers the Latin tradition of erotic elegy to Mary Wroth.

Most of the chapters make similarly tidy cases. Her discussion of verbal infidelity in Catullus’s poems of Lesbia locates the deep Catullan roots of Thomas Wyatt’s urgent complaints against the beloved’s violations of troth. She pairs Donne’s “To His Mistress Going to Bed” and Thomas Nashe’s “Choice of Valentines” and treats them each as attempts to merge *Amores* I.5, Ovid’s account of Corinna’s naked approach to his bed, and *Amores* III.5, a poem on the theme of impotence; a welcome untidiness of argument creeps in when Grant also alleges Donne’s deeper engagement, in “To His Mistress,” with the transitivity of gender in Ovid’s tale of Hermaphroditus from book 4 of the *Metamorphoses*.

An exception to the tightly focused arguments of the other chapters, Grant’s treatment of Sidney’s debt to Propertius has a ranging quality. She shows how variously Cynthia figures in Propertius’s elegies, as a reader of his poems and as his muse, or even as a poet in her own right; as an exotic temptress, as hard-hearted, or as yielding. She finds Propertius especially engaged

and hectically so in associating Cynthia with figures from epic, with Aeneas, with Dido, with Hector, and with Creusa. Construing this variety of reference as a challenge to the poet's authority, Grant goes on to find a similar threatening instability of association in Sidney's *Stella*.

A final book on erotic verse deserves notice, despite the fact that Erik Gray's *The Art of Love Poetry* only occasionally glances at early modern verse. It has some handsome pages on Christopher Marlowe's *Passionate Shepherd* in which Gray proposes the poem as a complex appropriation of the yearning invitations of the Song of Songs. A few pages on Joannes Secundus's Neo-Latin *Basia* are warmly appreciative and, in a sense monitory. Scholars such as the great J. W. Binns have insisted how skewed the literary historiography of early modern English literature will be as long as we neglect its relation with contemporary Latin literature; although Gray does not scold, he suggests how impoverished our reading might be by such neglect, for the passages he quotes from the *Basia* are wonderful.

I am saving the most dazzling of the works on erotic verse for the last page of this essay.

VARIA

Operating in the midst of an explosion of work on the historiography of exploration and plantation and a milder ferment of work on the history of foreigners' encounters with Britain, John Cramsie aims to show "how the age of discovery became in Britain an age of *self*-discovery" (p. 8). *British Travellers and the Encounter With Britain, 1450–1700* is a massive treatment of surveys of Britain in three "books," the first tracing British ethnography from John Leland to William Harrison, the second jumping forward to the unfinished *Itinerary* of Fynes Moryson, and the third returning to William Camden's *Britannia* and then launching forward to the late seventeenth-century revisions to *Britannia* by Bishop Edmund Gibson and Edward Lhuyd. This last "book" shows how Camden's accounts of topography, archaeology, and origins were supplemented, perhaps predictably, by a new economic focus, on natural history, agriculture, and manufacturing.

Scholarly work on the literary contribution to English nationalism and protoimperialism has gone forward with comparatively little attention to social heterogeneities other than gender or confession. John Kerrigan's *Archipelagic English* remains an unusual departure. Attention to locale and region has proven sturdier

among political historians, sturdier still among agricultural and economic historians. While literary scholars interested in the early history of multiculturalism may not wish to delve deeply into the local and regional historiography, they might find serious inspiration in Cramsie's study, which takes up early Tudor self-knowledge as exuberantly plural. Offering a cultural history that complements R. R. Davies's *The British Isles, 1100–1500*, Colin Kidd's *British Identities before Nationalism*, McRae's *Literature and Domestic Travel*, and Stanley Mendyk's *Speculum Britanniae*, Cramsie evokes a nation of travelers fascinated by the differences of places and peoples, sharply aware that the insular landscape and population had been churned, but not homogenized, by a continuing history of migration. There are homogenizing tendencies: Cramsie's fourth chapter tracks how the refashioning of the complex quasi-ethnographic surveys of Roger Barlow, Andrew Borde, and Leland into Harrison and John Stow's simplifying accounts were shaped by the unifying theme of the Protestant evangelizing of Britain. But the general thrust of his account is the persistence of the plural across two centuries of chorography, the repeated evocation of Britain, not as a nation or even as fragile union of nations, but as a land discontinuous from place to place and period to period.

In a book on the publicity of privacy, Todd Butler speaks insistently of bringing a cognitive perspective to Stuart politics, yet while he claims a focus on "the minds of individuals attempting the necessarily complex task of making sense of the conditions, implications, and significance of their choices" his concern is not so much with the inner workings of minds—whether the mind of subject or sovereign—as with the public "process of meaning making" (p. 6). *Literature and Political Intellection in Early Stuart England* is a study of the rhetorical negotiation of consent. Because he alleges the "continuing immanence of cognitive processes in the discourse practices and literature of the Stuart era," his book has a complex relationship to the political-theoretical problem of conscientious hypocrisy as framed by Pierre Bayle, Spinoza, and Thomas Hobbes (p. 7). The alleged immanence of thought in discourse is balked and disrupted by the theoretically troubling, but politically enabling practice of mental reservation, a practice that made much early modern publicity vividly dubitable and that electrified its literature.

Chapter 1 explains the place of dissimulation in Francis Bacon's thought, and his uneasiness over the invasion of cautiously constructed privacy, an uneasiness that, Butler amply

demonstrates, Donne experienced as horror. He concludes the chapter by observing that Bacon endorsed asymmetries of political privacy, that the sovereign should know his counselors' thoughts, but that his counsellors should not aspire to know too much of their sovereign's mind. Butler resumes his discussion of the asymmetry of inscrutability in chapter 3, where he takes up the clash of Edward Coke and Bacon over the interrogation and trial of Edmund Peacham.

Chapter 2 offers a superb account of the oath of allegiance and its attempt to stipulate a particular semantics, after which follows a meticulous exposition of Donne's response to the Oath in *Pseudo-Martyr* and, later, in his sermon on Esther, responses at once fastidious and ambitiously corrosive of the passions of Catholic reservation. But the chapter that literary scholars are likely to find most compelling is the one devoted to deliberation, which places the haste of tyranny in plays like *The Roman Actor* and teases out the ways in which the theater took its place as a partner to parliament by its contributions to a burgeoning veneration of sluggish discursive incrementalism.

The book ranges fruitfully across genres, from sermon to poem to play. Interestingly, and in ways that recall Love's great inquiries into scribal culture, Butler proposes new genres conjured from the very accidents of transmission: his fifth and sixth chapters take up "captured correspondence" as if it might itself be a recognizable form with its own logic, a logic conferred by reception rather than by composition.

Emily L. King's fascinating *Civil Vengeance* aims to place the revenge play—a genre the designation of which she would have us hold at arm's length—in a broader context of retributive practices and even of retribution renounced, transmuted, or sublimated. She is also a gifted and gracious surveyor of complex traditions of criticism, but readers may struggle with her striking, sometimes cryptic style; the struggle will reward them. She initiates her first chapter with a superb summary of the sovereign management of retribution, which drifts into consideration of general problems of the management of social mobility by civil conduct: King treats mockery and other constraints on mobility as if they were comparable with, even the same as, constraints on vengeance or violence. Throughout the book, King tracks analogs to the frustration of retribution that revenge plays display. In her treatment of Donne's *Death's Duel*, for example, the chief violence is mortality and the chief impulse to avenge that violence is impiety, the pious frustration of which reroutes and expresses itself in relentless, grisly evocations of postmortem decay, a mortality beyond mortality.

"[T]his study broadens existing definitions of revenge and, to that end, distinguishes the phenomenon of civil vengeance from spectacular or 'traditional' revenge" (p. 132). King treats civil vengeance as a capacious category that can include licit state penal practices, royalist narratives of the English Civil War of Charles II, diffuse civilizing processes like education and courtesy, and the resentful self-discipline of those who must contemplate their own deaths. She understands it as reactive or retributive, although sometimes fantastically so, since she takes certain exercises of state or cultural power like the proscription on vagrancy as retribution for offenses that have not yet occurred, that paradoxically derive some of their offensiveness from not yet having been enacted. The ingenuity of such arguments is the source of much of the book's force, though it can also present itself as a weakness, since it licenses her to frame virtually all cruelties that smack of sovereignty as fundamentally retributive.

Dan Mills's *Lacan, Foucault, and the Malleable Subject in Early Modern English Utopian Literature* has split aims: "this book explores the nature of subjectivity in early modern utopian literature by locating intersections between the thought of Jacques Lacan and Michel Foucault" (p. 3). He sorts ten utopian works to the Lacanian Real, Imaginary, and Symbolic and aligns those orders with three phases in Foucault's career. Mills's device is to treat Lacan's Imaginary and Symbolic—at bottom associated with staged constituents of psychic development that are also aligned with the structural constituents of the sign—as models for forms of sociopolitical organization, external arrangements derived from psychic originals. Dubitably, he sometimes treats the Imaginary and the Symbolic as if they were personality types, and not as constituents of personhood. This turn makes it possible for him to treat particular utopias as supporting specifiable subjectivities, much as Stephen Greenblatt understood More's *Utopia* as a kind of asylum for its author's awkward spirituality.

The book proceeds with a lively, improvisational gusto. Because the Lacanian Symbolic is the order of language, Mills enrolls the utopias of Eliot and Francis Lodwick, writers with special engagements in linguistics and translation, as conspicuous representatives of the Symbolic. Because Lacan characterizes the constitution of the ego within the Imaginary as orthopedic, and because Foucault deploys the same term to describe a range of disciplinary cultural formations, Mills characterizes several utopias that engage in correction or challenge as depictions of Imaginary subjectivity: Gerrard Winstanley's *The Law of Freedom*

because it is antiroyalist, Cavendish's *Blazing World* because her Empress challenges the status quo in the Blazing World and then by a self-correcting renunciation of her own authority. The book concludes with three chapters on utopias of the Real, the order inaccessible to language, to which he assigns Joseph Hall's *Mundus Alter et Idem*, James Harrington's *Oceana*, and Henry Neville's *Isle of Pines*: Hall's utopia because of his satiric effort to represent London itself as an impossible place, *Oceana* because of frequent font changes understood to stage a nullifying assault on language, and the *Isle of Pines* because, as a place of miscegenation and lawlessness, it represents, in Mills's account, a full-fledged assault on the Symbolic order, a kind of revenge of the Real (this despite the fact that the regime of lawlessness is terminated by the reactive imposition of six laws).

GENDER AND SEX

Per Sivefors brings a balanced, flexible—say, Stoic—critical disposition to the understanding of verse satire, and its sociocultural situation and functions; those functions are then translated as expressions of a balanced, flexible understanding of masculinity. The net effect of this translation is not entirely surprising: the awkward, imperfect wisdom of satire and the satirist, its temperature always an object of attention and its authority never quite secure, is shown to express the heterogeneous, but not incoherent social being of aspiring young adult males. *Representing Masculinity in Early Modern English Satire, 1590–1603*: “A Kingdom for a Man” proceeds thoroughly and dutifully, working, in its first chapter, through each of Donne’s satires, from first to fifth, and, in its fourth chapter, through each of Everard Guilpin’s, from first to sixth.

Symmetry prevails. In the chapters on Donne and John Marston, satire discloses of the inadequacy of some core masculine virtue: “self-control and moderation” in Donne’s satires are “flawed and problematic” (p. 58); “Marston’s satires expose the deficiencies of manly self-control *and* the ability of violence to serve as an instrument of power ... The satirist’s various incarnations ... amount to so many embodiments of a hollow and non-empowered masculinity” (pp. 70 and 72). In the chapters on Hall and Guilpin, adequacy recovers. The treatment of Hall gathers up a congeries of masculine virtues under the rubric of husbandry, which, for Sivefors, includes economic householding, thrift, licit paternity, and provisioning for children other than the eldest son, and Hall

is celebrated as a serene satiric promoter of such husbandry. The sequence of satires in Guilpin's *Skialetheia* is a narrative of achieved husbandry, its first three an exposure of the hectic aggression of young male adulthood and the final three an unfolding of increasing if incomplete poise: "if Guilpin's conclusion is tentative and fraught with uncertainties, it is still marked by a gradual movement toward a moderate and balanced sense of manhood" (p. 134).

Richly conceived, James Daybell's *Women Letter-Writers in Tudor England* would serve well as a wise introductory provocation to reflections on early modern literacy. His fourth chapter, directly focusing on literacy, is a model of methodological care, marshaling a powerful case for women's increasing epistolary proficiency and independence over the course of the century. The book dwells thoughtfully on marital correspondence and what it can tell us about the history of affects. The survival of both sides of marital correspondence is not infrequent: roughly a quarter of surviving wives' letters can be matched to husbands'. Daybell notes that husbands' diction is generally more affectionate and emotional, but then goes on to remark that letters from wives to husbands slowly develop "greater personalization." Musing over whether this stylistic shift reflects changes "in the emotional quality of marriage or the rise in the social status of women," Daybell cautiously alleges "an increased desire of married couples to be more intimate, endearing, and affectionate in expression" (p. 112). One might quibble here, since transformations in the affective structure of marriage may not cause increases in personalization; one might rather suppose that general economic pressure on women to increase epistolary proficiency was the driver and that epistolary proficiency simply made marital affection newly legible.

Though not as methodologically elegant as Daybell's study, Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski's *Not of Woman Born: Representations of Caesarean Birth in Medieval and Renaissance Culture* is often usefully compendious. For the sake of convenience, Blumenfeld-Kosinski often distinguishes properly medical texts from other ones, sometimes without signaling the ways in which the category of the medical or the surgical was constituted at any given moment. When she tells us that while "Caesarean births are mentioned in various early medieval texts, the operation as a medical procedure is not known to appear in medical writings prior to Bernard of Gordon," the distinguishing features of "a medical procedure" are left mysterious (p. 24). She argues that transformations in surgical practice have effects on illustration,

slowly displacing highly conventional images with those struggling toward a specifying verisimilitude (p. 53). She recounts Francois Rousset's late sixteenth century efforts at performing caesarean section on living mothers and the debate over the advisability of the procedure, and alerts us to the contemporaneous vernacularization of obstetrical discourse.

The book contains a chapter on the marginalization of women in early modern obstetrics. While the topic has been treated by many other researchers, Blumenfeld-Kosinski offers a helpful survey of that research, although her treatment is not likely to be discovered by many interested readers, since it is in no way signaled by the title of the book. The same may be said of the final chapter, an interesting treatment of "Saintly and Satanic Obstetrics."

Although Victoria Brownlee declares that "my aim is not to offer an encyclopedic record of biblical use," there is a strong through line of argument in *Biblical Readings and Literary Writings in Early Modern England, 1558–1625* (p. 9). Brownlee challenges both the primacy and the simplicity of literal construction while concentrating her attention on Reformation deployments of typology and emphasizing the flexibility of those deployments. Rather than surveying the relation between biblical interpretation and literary practice from 1558 to 1625, she takes pertinent soundings, offering an extremely subtle reading of George Peele's *David and Bethsabe*, and arguing the debt not only of Shakespeare's *Lear*, but also of his predecessor's *Leir*, to the book of Job. Perhaps her finest chapter gives an account of the spiritual substance of Marian flesh in Amelia Lanyer's *Salve Deus*, this from her strongest chapter on Marian maternity in Lanyer, Dorothy Leigh, and Thomas Bentley. She usefully reminds us that when our literary history sidelines biblical verse it marginalizes women's literary activity.

I have saved Sanchez's wonderful *Queer Faith: Reading Promiscuity and Race in the Secular Love Tradition* for last; its achievements are difficult, challenging, and utterly exhilarating. Sanchez builds rich analytic frames and then compellingly reads texts toward them. Occasionally, she seems to get ahead of what she has proven: her not unprecedented account of Petrarch's incoherence and inescapably iterated and incomplete conversions is apt, and she is no doubt right that it resists a monogamy that other critics find celebrated in the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, but the claim that incoherence and incompletion dramatize "the need for a more hesitant ethics of promiscuity" seems not the inevitable

corrective to the error of finding a celebration of monogamy (p. 58). I am happy for her to get thus ahead of the proven, for she is speaking of our need for an ethics of promiscuity, a need produced at a great distance by the heritage of Petrarchism.

Her treatment of figures of slavery in Shakespeare's sonnets instances explication at its best: even as she sustains an eerily encompassing exposition and dismantling of the whiteness of love, she manages line readings that defamiliarize and untame the sonnets, so that their swagger beckons from beyond settled understandings. Her account of Shakespeare's identification with the black mistress is breathtaking.

Her brief coda promiscuously addresses a topic also addressed by Nicholson, the attachments of academic professionals to their subjects. Where Nicholson probes why and how we faithfully love our author, Sanchez carefully celebrates infidelity to one's period and directs our attention to how a commitment to early modern studies or to any pre-twentieth studies might be judged as infidelity to queer theory and vice versa, albeit asymmetrically so. The final celebration of attachment to period makes the coda seem strangely apologetic, even regrettably so, insofar as apologia betrays the book's splendid celebration of infidelity. I am pleased to end with references to Nicholson's and Sanchez's books, since they instance the kind of work in early modern literary studies that one might proudly and eagerly recommend to nonspecialists.

NOTES

¹ Margaret Cavendish, *Ground of Natural Philosophy Divided into Thirteen Parts: With an Appendix Containing Five Parts* (London: Printed by A. Maxwell, 1668; Ann Arbor: Text Creation Partnership, 2011), <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A53045.0001.001>. The transcription is also available by license through ProQuest.

² David Hawkes, "Materialism and Reification in Renaissance Studies," *JEMCS* 4, 2 (Fall/Winter 2004): 114–29.

³ Percy Bysshe Shelley "Laon and Cythna," in *The Complete Poetry of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, ed. Donald H. Reiman, Neil Fraistat, and Nora Crook, 3 vols. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2004), 3:109–320, 118, lines 180–1.

⁴ I have left this sentence unchanged from the form it took when I submitted this review, in December 2020, yet in the light of the subsequent editorial disruption at the University of Pennsylvania Press it might have been bitterly revised and elaborated.

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