

Reviews

Brian C. Donovan and David Edwards (eds), *British Sources for Irish History 1485–1641: A Guide to Manuscripts in Local, Regional and Specialised Repositories in England, Scotland and Wales*, Irish Manuscripts Commission, Dublin, 1997, pp. xxx + 381, hb. £30, ISBN: 187428010X

The problems faced by Irish historians, who lost so much of their source material in the burning of the Public Record Office in Dublin in 1922, are familiar. Once a paralysing handicap, this legacy is also a powerful incentive in the discovery of new archival resources. There are good reasons why relatively little use has as yet been made of British local and specialist repositories – poor understanding of their Irish significance by their own curators, and lack of awareness and opportunity by Irish based historians being barriers enough. The publication of this book marks an enormous advance in demonstrating the breadth and depth of the potential resources. It will transform the research horizons for many students, taking them directly to neglected primary sources and suggesting further avenues for exploration.

It is an ambitious book which the editors admit grew in the course of compilation far beyond their original expectations. Strengths and weaknesses both result from this: it attempts to provide an understanding of the wealth of materials available in British repositories, and a route into them, but admits to omissions and unevenness, caused primarily by the scale of the project, and its extension as their research progressed. Although the editors defend their policy of listing in more detail occasional documents which might not justify a visit to a distant office, with briefer accounts of those obviously demanding sustained research, the results are somewhat idiosyncratic.

Before succumbing to the temptation to follow up references in the body of the text, users should read the Introduction, which describes the background and methodology, with several important caveats. The chronological scope, 1485–1641, was determined by the research interests of the editors, studying the history of two Irish counties (Wexford and Kilkenny) in the early modern period. They explain their survey procedure and their decision to omit the more familiar national archive repositories, and relatively inaccessible private collections. Over 450 archive centres remained. To assist them, and to the enormous assistance of archivists receiving their enquiries, they undertook extensive research into individuals and families with known Irish

connections, identifying the counties in England with which they had probable association. The second stage of the survey involved visits to roughly half of the offices reporting material, and the listing of their records at bundle or item level. These lists make up the bulk of the book. For the remaining offices there are either brief references to series or collections, or descriptions provided by archivists and guides. The uneven coverage is freely admitted. The editors urge the value of personal visits, and express particular regret that relatively little is present from Scotland and Wales.

It has to be said that not all historians will find the work easy to exploit. It can be approached in various ways, either by the office in question, or by the person and place name indexes. It will therefore be most immediately useful to those who are tracking the papers of a family or individual with known Irish associations: finds will range from extensive collections, such as those of the Loftus family of Clones, Co Monaghan lying within the Barrett Lennard Muniments in Essex County Record Office, to single loose documents, such as a 1631 bond by Sir Walter Butler Earl of Ormond, now in the East Yorkshire County Archives and Records Service. The lack of subject access or identification of document type is probably inevitable, given the miscellaneous nature of the resources, but for many it will be frustrating. One cannot, for instance, find all topographical descriptions or maps, although specific examples are listed by place. As many of the individuals referred to are relatively obscure, but their transactions throw light on events and procedures of significance, researchers will generally have to accept the necessity to comb through the entire volume.

This reference work will be an essential tool for any early modern Irish historian, and should also become familiar to the record offices in question, identifying material which has frequently not been catalogued or indexed with any Irish association. Almost certainly, as the editors admit, further entries could have been made, and further editions will follow. New tools are increasingly becoming available in British archives to aid such work. The on-line access to local repository finding aids will assist those using the present work and attempting to extend it. Let us hope that the example will be followed by others, providing equally stimulating resources for medievalists and later modern historians.

University of Nottingham

Dorothy Johnston

W. R. Elton and J. M. Mucciolo, *The Shakespearean International Yearbook*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 1999, pp. xv + 398, hb. £45, ISBN: 1859283535

‘Where are we now in Shakespearean Studies?’ asks the subtitle of this volume. A disgruntled reader might reply, ‘Evidently in a world without editors, copy-editors, or proof-readers’, for this book shows signs of being thrown together without proper care on the part of its editors and publishers. Most glaring is the omission of any editorial statement about the aims of what is evidently intended to be a new annual publication in a field which is already amply served. There is no indication of the functions which the new annual will take on, the kinds of article which it will print, the methodological or ideological agenda which it might follow, or even whether it is willing to receive contributions other than those which it has commissioned. Some articles are surveys of recent work, others are research papers; some are

substantial, others skimpy. Altogether the volume is a badly-planned ragbag, valuable and inadequate by turns.

The opening essay by Graham Bradshaw is symptomatic. He says that he was commissioned to review the current state of work on Shakespeare's tragedies, but the actual essay does nothing of the kind. It rehearses Bradshaw's well-known quarrel with New Historicist and Cultural Materialist readings of Shakespeare; explores the question of actors making eye-contact with the audience or camera when speaking Hamlet's soliloquies; and puffs a recent PhD thesis on selfhood in Shakespeare. Though often astute and interesting, this does not add up to a coherent essay, let alone a thorough and informative survey of work on the tragedies.

Other contributors take their brief more seriously: there is a valuable survey of recent scholarship on the reign of James I by Johann P. Sommerville which gives the reader detailed bibliographical guidance and a clear sense of the contours of recent historical debates. It is exactly the kind of essay for which any teacher or student would be grateful. But, bizarrely, there is no comparable chapter for the reign of Elizabeth. Much of Sommerville's essay rightly addresses religious issues, and these are surveyed again in Donna B. Hamilton's chapter. The gap and the overlap betray a woeful lack of control. Similarly, there is an essay on Shakespeare and the Italians (but not the French), and two essays traversing much the same ground in discussing the reconstructed Globe. Six works are accorded separate chapters, and perhaps the intention is that subsequent volumes will gradually work through the canon. But this will not provide the reader with a systematic overview because the contributors are working to different briefs: John W. Velz, for example, takes us through criticism of *Julius Caesar* since 1937, whereas Heather Dubrow on the *Sonnets* covers only 1994–97. However good these may be in their own terms (and they include useful insights into recent work), they are not accorded enough space to do their different jobs searchingly. One of the editors, W. R. Elton, contributes an appendix on 'Key Reference Works', in which the addenda take up almost as much space as the original items, and in which the designation 'recent' admits work from 1962. This has not been put together by any criteria which I can discern, and seems to be a random selection of works related to renaissance culture, some very well known, some recondite.

Parts of this volume are useful, but readers should be wary of taking it as a guide to the current state of Shakespeare studies, for which the annual review of work in *Shakespeare Survey* is still the standard resource. Libraries should wait for the *Yearbook* to acquire definition and purpose before subscribing.

University of Leeds

Paul Hammond

Paul Hammond, *Dryden and the Traces of Classical Rome*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1999, pp. xii + 305, hb. £45, ISBN: 0198184115

In examining 'the uses which Dryden makes of Latin in his poetry and his critical writing' (p. vii), Paul Hammond, in his excellent recent book, to some extent is following a well-worn path. The role of tradition, and in particular the Roman past, in Dryden's writings has been a central concern in Dryden criticism for over half a century. It features prominently in T. S. Eliot's influential essay on Dryden in 1921,

in Reuben Brower's 'An Allusion to Europe: Dryden and Tradition' (first published in 1952 and reprinted in an expanded version as introduction to his *Alexander Pope: The Poetry of Allusion*, 1959), and in the notes to standard editions, including Hammond's own Longman edition of 1995. But the basic assumptions underlying Hammond's study differ both from the aestheticism of Eliot and Brower, with their lordly contempt for the merely topical (to Eliot, 'Dryden is distinguished principally for his poetic ability' and to Brower he serves as demonstration 'that poetic craft matters') and from the relentless historicism of several recent studies of Dryden, suspicious of claims that poems can transcend their immediate polemical contexts.

Hammond's critical vocabulary is Derridean, with a touch of post-Freudianism: 'Absence inescapably shadows our apprehensions of presence; alterity becomes the ground of our fiction of self-definition' (p. 17). The Dryden who emerges from these pages is in temperament a melancholy figure, haunted by a sense of loss: 'classical Rome existed for Dryden only as a set of traces which pointed back to an originary culture which could never be recovered, but only reimagined, translated' (p. 29). In sensitive discussions of Dryden's literary borrowing and, in the second half of the book, his practice as a translator of Latin verse, Hammond, more than previous critics, emphasizes gaps and dissonances. A fine chapter on Dryden's translation of Virgil's *Aeneid* characteristically is entitled 'The Epic of Exile' and emphasizes the role, in Dryden's version of the poem, of 'unavailing longing', 'the dispiriting flow of history' (pp. 274, 281). 'All translation', Hammond argues, 'entails the management of loss' (p. 147).

Metaphysical speculations are relatively rare in the detailed treatment, in the first two chapters, of 'Latin and the English Writer' and 'Rome and the English Nation'. Hammond is, as far as I know, the only critic to devote close, rewarding analytical attention to the Latin epigraphs to Dryden's poems and the quotations from Latin embedded in his prose (he makes the interesting point that many of them are misquotations, suggesting that, like Empson, Dryden relied on his memory and didn't bother to check). The theme of succession, poetic fathers and sons, features prominently in these chapters, with excellent discussions of 'memories of Latin' (p. 51) in 'To My Dear Friend Mr. Congreve', 'To the Memory of Mr. Oldham', and 'Mac Flecknoe'. As earlier critics have pointed out (including Eliot, who speaks of Dryden's 'capacity for assimilation'), Dryden frequently invades earlier authors, ancient and modern, 'like a monarch', transforming what he finds there: 'The employment of a poet is like that of a curious gunsmith or watchmaker: the iron or silver is not his own; but they are the least part of that which gives the value: the price lies wholly in the workmanship' (*Essays*, ed. Watson, 1962, I, 69, 155). A particularly interesting instance of intertextual dialogue with a predecessor, not noticed previously, is Dryden's reworking in several poems of passages from Marvell's 'Horatian Ode', a poem which he can only have seen in manuscript, and which (unlike echoes of Virgil or Horace) could not possibly have awakened recognition in readers.

One of the most unusual aspects of Dryden's poetic career is that the latter part of it was largely devoted to translations (partly forced on him by economic considerations, when sources of patronage dried up after the deposition of James II, to whom he remained loyal). *Dryden and the Traces of Classical Rome* provides by far the best critical account of Dryden's translations from Lucretius, Horace, Juvenal, Ovid, and Virgil, as published by Jacob Tonson in a number of volumes between 1685 and 1700. Hammond sees these poems as interpretations and reworkings of the original, by means of which the poet is enabled to discover 'a new voice through the disciplines

of translation, disciplines which offer new forms of freedom and opportunity' (p. 145), even, paradoxically, of self-expression. In discussing Dryden's translations, including *Aeneis*, Hammond places particular emphasis on passages which for one reason or another seem to him to show marked 'imaginative engagement' (p. 242) on the part of the translator, bringing out, with exemplary scholarship, subtle differences between the original Latin text and Dryden's version.

Recent critical commentary on Dryden's *Aeneis* – Steven Zwicker's *Politics and Language in Dryden's Poetry* (1984), David Bywater's *Dryden in Revolutionary England* (1991), Howard Erskine-Hill's *Poetry and the Realm of Politics: Shakespeare to Dryden* (1996) – has seen the poem as a covert Jacobite document. To some extent Hammond follows their example in suggesting a political context for the poem, but his account is more wide-ranging, and sees the poem's 'incomplete, inexact resemblances' to the England of 1697 as problematical: 'Dryden's *Aeneis* is a politically engaged text, but not one which is merely partisan. Dryden and Tonson planned the publication of *The Works of Virgil* to appeal to a broad constituency in the nation' (pp. 220, 228).

Hammond's concern, in this sensitive and illuminating study, is with the 'condition of exile' more generally (p. 229), rather than with Jacobite politics, showing in convincing detail how 'the vein of tragedy which runs through Virgil's epic' (p. 219) is brought out powerfully in Dryden's translation.

University of Southampton

Warren Chernaik

J. B. Kramnick, *Making the English Canon: Print-capitalism and the Cultural Past, 1700–1770*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999, pp. viii + 287, hb. £35 (\$54.95), ISBN: 0521641276

This study enters into the arena of 'canon theory' with the aim of reassessing the cultural and economic forces concurrent with the drawing of the English canon during the mid-eighteenth century. The theoretical basis for Kramnick's discussion is taken from a range of familiar sources. Habermäs's public/private, Eagleton's modes of specialization and Anderson's print-capitalism are read alongside the cultural sociology of Pierre Bourdieu to create an overview of the complexities of valorisation in a burgeoning consumer culture. Kramnick begins by tracing the changes in critical attitudes to literature from early to mid-century. He argues convincingly, with reference to an impressive array of contemporary criticism and commentary, for a shift in cultural valuation from a progressive to a regressive gauge of literary achievement. Despite this somewhat 'traditional' socio-historical reading of eighteenth-century culture, Kramnick does not limit his discussion of mid-century criticism to the perceived rift between high and mass cultural products. The canon, Kramnick suggests, grew out of the tension between aesthetic and historicist criticism, the former prioritising taste and sublimity, the latter philological expertise and linguistic difficulty. Alongside this modification of the cultural value system, Kramnick traces eighteenth-century attitudes towards the growing number of women readers and their role in assigning cultural value to types of literature. He observes that at the beginning of the period, 'feminine taste' was seen as an educating influence drawing the public to enjoy 'polite

subjects' and devaluing the 'rough matters of older writing'. By mid-century female literacy was instigative in bringing about the 'beginning of the end of national masculine fortitude'. Women readers became inextricably connected with consumer culture. Kramnick's attempt to present an historical theory for the ostracisation of women writers from the literary canon rests on this evaluation of attitudes towards women readers. By linking the negative aesthetic value attributed to women writers, Kramnick suggests that women writers are confined to the 'novel'. This inference is unsettling and fails to offer the promised cohesive historical account.

During the course of the first half of the eighteenth century an aesthetic of accessibility turns to an aesthetic of difficulty. Modernity is rejected in favour of a specifically English antiquity, and the masculine is prioritised above the feminine. Having established this basis for the creation of the canon, Kramnick turns to the specific examples of Shakespeare and Spenser. The greater part of his discussion is given to the former whose 'unique position in the canon is largely explained by his simultaneous popularity and antiquity'. This extolling of Shakespeare's uniqueness seems contrary to his previous discussion of cultural/critical debate. Kramnick however goes some way to resolving this conflict by examining three very different critical analyses of Shakespeare from the early 1750s which demonstrate a diversity of critical opinion and the unresolved status of the canon, particularly Shakespeare's position within it. It is curious that Kramnick does not discuss the importance of adaptation to mass-cultural perceptions of Shakespeare during the eighteenth century. Kramnick's emphasis on 'scholarly' editions of the plays resists the significance of these popular, modern versions and their role in what has been termed 'the making of the national poet'. A discussion of these texts would add to Kramnick's concept of Shakespeare's canonical uniqueness. The inclusion of Spenser in the canon is also confused by the model of canonicity outlined by Kramnick. Taking *The Faerie Queen* as his specific example, Kramnick demonstrates how Spenser's 'feminine' genre should decrease the text's aesthetic value; however, the 'difficulty' of reading counteracts this devaluation. Through 'learned reading' elucidated by the newly recognised professional critics, appreciation of the literary genre (romance) and historical period (feudalism) can be achieved.

This study is firmly grounded in the critical debate of the first half of the eighteenth century. Kramnick considers an impressive array of diverse writers from the period creating a clear context for his argument. Alongside this he also acknowledges the current critical anxiety for, and rejection of, the canon. To apply Kramnick's own metaphor, this study arising at 'the dusk of the canon' is undoubtedly a significant contribution to our developing understanding of the dawning of the English literary canon.

University of Wales, Aberystwyth

S. Louise Marshall

David Loades (ed.), *John Foxe and the English Reformation*, St Andrews Studies in Reformation History, Aldershot, Scholar Press, 1999, pp. xii + 340, hb. £55.00, ISBN: 1859283519

This volume emerged from a colloquium intended to bolster the project that will produce critical editions of *Acts and Monuments*. It can be said, in a sense, to be a manifesto for this, demonstrating the need for such a project and the need for further

Foxeian study. In this it wholly succeeds. It has, as is all too often the case, the drawbacks of such collections but there are several thought provoking, satisfying and convincing contributions.

Perhaps the most exemplary essay is the iconographical study by Margaret Aston and Elizabeth Ingram. Providing sensitive readings of the illustrations and tracing connections in terms of sources and established forms, they deepen the simplistic treatments that tend to dominate the field. They also make clear the necessity of placing the martyrology firmly in its pan-European context. This recurrent theme is addressed, in different ways and with differing success, by David Watson and Andrew Pettegree. Watson provides a short and workmanlike look at Jean Crespin which is interesting but a little peripheral. Pettegree gives a more useful study of the Antwerp minister Adriaan van Haemstede. He looks at the virtually incestuous relationships between martyrologists and goes on to examine the common types and themes that structure the various accounts.

The content of the form is taken further by a splendid piece by John King, using a series of narratives and studying the hermeneutic determinism of the range of genres adopted. His contribution reads as an appropriate castigation of the Victorian editions but also exposes a neglected area that will aid our future assessments, not least in that he modifies traditional questions about Foxe's veracity. Similar issues are addressed by Tom Betteridge but, in his case, between editions. He characterises the 1563 edition as 'prophetic', 1570 as 'apocalyptic' and 1583 as 'monumental'. The analysis across editions is a vital part of the Foxe project and Betteridge gives a stimulating schematic framework that will need taking further in detail.

This matter also occurs in three other essays. Damian Nussbaum looks at the edition of 1632 and reads it against the changing religio-political context with transformed internal and external threats to English Protestantism. He, too, sets out the field for useful correctives to the Haller and Lamont theses. Eirwen Nicholson's essay on 'Eighteenth-century Foxe' is a little disappointing. She asks an under-addressed question of the assumption of Foxe's influence on later anti-popery but provides a pessimistic answer by focusing too narrowly on 'pure' Foxeian editions of the period without stepping back to address influence in a broader sense. Similarly, Andrew Penny's look at the development of prophetic interpretation almost loses the plot in becoming an essay on S. R. Maitland's reaction against Foxe. In this context it is not particularly profitable.

The remaining four essays fit into the collection in different ways. Brett Usher provides a beautiful piece of detective work on Foxe's changing presentation of the Marian church in London. He weaves Foxe with new archival work, considering Foxe's account in its political context. Susan Felch opens the possibilities of reader-response theory but is too constrained by space to fulfil the potentials. It has more interesting questions than answers. Glyn Parry looks at Foxe's attitude to Catholicism. Unfortunately Parry mistakes Foxe's Augustinian 'hate the sin but love the sinner' attitude for something like toleration. Julian Roberts provides a useful bibliographic essay, focused on the logistics and materiality of the various editions of Foxe. As Roberts remarks with undue modesty, there is only space for 'some fairly preliminary clues' (p. 37) and, in a sense, this might stand as a motto for this collection. One is given an appetite for Foxe and left with a feeling of impatience for the arrival of the critical edition and, if that was the aim of this book, it succeeds.

Roger Lockyer, *James VI and I*, London, Longman, 1998, pp vi + 234, pb. £11.99, ISBN: 0582279615;

Roger Lockyer, *The Early Stuarts: A Political History of England 1603–1642*, London, Longman, 1999 (2nd edn), pp. xii + 402, pb. £15.99, ISBN: 058227768X

It is one of the curious injustices of British history that the posthumous reputation of King James VI and I has been mercilessly villified, while that of his incompetent and politically divisive son, Charles, has often been accorded an undue measure of respect and veneration. While Charles I appears to us as the model of kingly dignity, a melancholic and conscientious ruler, brooding upon his own martyrdom, the hapless James has traditionally been seen as little more than a figure of fun; an ungainly and impecunious pedant, presiding over a corrupt and thoroughly debauched court. In this version of events, image supplants reality and any thorough-going assessment of their relative effectiveness as heads of state is lost beneath the weight of prejudice and anachronistic, sexual and moral, character judgements. That King James accomplished his succession to the English throne without bloodshed, kept his lands at peace for more than twenty years, and preserved the traditional framework of monarchical government virtually intact, against a background of European war and confessional conflict, counts for little when set against his love of favourites and his decidedly 'unheroic' persona. By way of contrast, that Charles I squandered his inheritance and provoked all three of his kingdoms into a cycle of bloody, and fratricidal, wars has all too frequently been absolved, simply on the grounds that he was an exemplary husband, and a man of principle and good taste.

In this light, Roger Lockyer's two volumes, which survey almost half a century of governance by the early Stuarts, provide a most welcome and refreshing corrective. Dispensing with the outmoded concept of a 'highroad to civil war' running throughout the period, he studies the reigns of James and Charles in their own terms, without recourse to either hindsight or special pleading. The nature of the doctrinal conflicts, which so disfigured early modern society, are clearly delineated while his treatment of the areas of agreement, as well as conflict, between the executive and members of Parliament is nothing if not uniformly strong and thorough. In line with current historiographical practice, he also provides comprehensive surveys of the tensions inherent in Scottish and Irish society, highlighting King James's success at 'government by the pen' and his son's abject failure to maintain the difficult relationship between church and state north of the border. The text is further enhanced by skilful descriptions, and well-grounded assessments, of Buckingham, Strafford and Pym, the foremost statesmen of the age.

Given the ambitious scope of these works, it is inevitable that there are going to be compressions and differences of interpretation of source material. Although Lockyer conclusively demolishes Sir Anthony Weldon's scurrilous and spiteful contemporary account of James's character, he incorporates into his biography of the monarch modern research emphasising the king's supposed disabilities which ironically owes much to the sensationalism of that displaced, and bitter, courtier. Similarly, his contention that King James gradually retreated from his belief in the potency of witchcraft during his reign in England needs to be qualified. James did, indeed, expose trumped up charges of witchcraft at Leicester, in 1616, and at Cambridge, in 1605–6 and again in

1616. However, these were cases of possession. When he was confronted, in 1620, by a plot aimed at his own person he reverted to the expedient of torture just as he had done in Scotland, almost thirty years before. Moreover, he refused to disown his own study of *Daemonologie* and had the tract proudly incorporated into the English edition of his collected works. It would seem, therefore, that the king's rather ambiguous attitude towards witchcraft can be best explained in terms of his own conception of kingship. He clearly thought of himself as a Godly magistrate, and when under threat it was comforting, as well as being politically useful, to identify himself with divine right, and his opponents with diabolical wrong.

Leaving these minor points to one side, Lockyer has produced not only an exhaustive and informative general survey of political developments in the first half of the seventeenth century but has also fashioned an authoritative biography of 'one of the most learned and intellectually curious men' ever to sit upon a throne. In providing a fine summary of recent scholarship on James's reign and in a thoughtful exposition of the controversies, and very real achievements, which marked its course, his study looks certain to replace all previous modern biographies as a first point of reference. As such it should be warmly welcomed, not only by the broadest but also by the most critically exacting of audiences.

University of Lancaster

John Callow

Andrew Murphy, *But the Irish Sea Betwixt Us: Ireland, Colonialism, and Renaissance Literature*, Lexington, The University of Kentucky Press, 1999, pp. 240, hb. \$34, ISBN: 0813120861

In recent years, ample scholarly attention has been devoted to the intersection of English literature and Irish politics in the early modern period. 'So', Murphy asks, 'why is this present book – yet another contribution to a debate that has been ongoing now for more than a decade – necessary?' 'What', he adds, 'does *But the Irish Sea Betwixt Us* have to offer that has not already been said by other critics?' (p. 3) To answer these questions, that is, to get a sense of exactly what this book has to offer, it is important to begin with a brief look at the other critics – critics whom Murphy copiously cites. 1997 witnessed the publication of four books that stand out as major contributions to the debate to which Murphy refers: David J. Baker's *Between Nations: Shakespeare, Spenser, Marvell, and the Question of Britain*; Andrew Hadfield's *Spenser's Irish Experience: Wilde Fruit and Salvage Soyl*; Christopher Highley's *Shakespeare, Spenser, and the Crisis in Ireland*; and Willy Maley's *Salvaging Spenser: Colonialism, Culture and Identity*. These books – Baker's, Highley's, and Maley's, in particular – significantly remapped the cultural and political landscape of early modern British literature. Although these books primarily concerned themselves with literary and extra-literary representations of Ireland, they also directed attention away from an overexposed (because binarized) Ireland to the intricate, plural histories of the four nations inhabiting the British Isles. As a result, a new literary history of the early modern period is slowly taking shape, a literary history attentive to readers and writers throughout Britain and Ireland.

Although Murphy's book does not notably break new ground – that is, it does not shed significant light on relatively unknown or neglected texts, nor does it offer

totally innovative readings of the standard texts – it is a valuable contribution. It offers a number of intelligent local readings, and, more importantly, it brings to the debate a heightened theoretical awareness of Anglo-Irish cultural encounters. The Introduction and, more so, the first chapter outline the methodology. Unlike D. B. Quinn and Nicholas Canny, who treat Anglo-Irish relations in the Renaissance as part of a broader colonial paradigm, Murphy insists that Ireland was no analogous ‘virgin land’, but rather a neighbouring island that ‘shared a certain ethnic and religious heritage with [England]’ (p. 4). Crucial, here, is the notion of proximity, which Murphy borrows from postcolonial theory (Homi Bhabha) in order to distance himself from a model of colonial critique that would collapse the difference between Ireland and the New World, between Irish natives and New World natives. (How many native Americans were Catholic?) For Murphy, Ireland is not to be confused with the New World: crucial religious, cultural, and political differences divide Ireland and the New World, differences which Murphy uses to foreground England’s and Ireland’s physical and cultural proximity. Not that Ireland was not a colony; rather, it was a kingdom and a colony, and it is this unique and complex situation that Murphy explores. Such an approach has both benefits and risks. The main benefit is its interrogation of claims to ethnic purity. Of course, any obscuring of difference is always dangerous, especially if it results in homogenization. Murphy’s insistence on ‘approximateness’, to be sure, registers the uniqueness of Irish ‘culture, language, legal systems, and traditions’ (pp. 6–7). Moreover, Murphy is less interested in denying ethnic and religious identities than contesting elitist, exclusive, and essentialist ones. Thus, he is critical of both (early modern and modern) English nationalism and Irish nationalist counterstatements. Now given that Murphy is working primarily with English texts – written by Englishmen in English – the overwhelming question is: for whom are the English and Irish proximate? When, in a letter to the Earl of Essex, Bacon describes the war in Ireland as ‘no ambitious war against foreigners, but a recovery of subjects, and that after lenity of conditions often tried; and a recovery of them not only to obedience, but to humanity and policy, from more than Indian barbarism’, it is not hard to see that proximity can be evoked by the colonizer to sustain a master-slave relation. Murphy is aware of this, and his project should not be confused with Bacon’s ‘recovery’ work, for Murphy’s denial of absolute Anglo-Irish difference seeks to dismantle the rhetoric of civility underpinning Bacon’s pronouncement.

Questions of Anglo-Irish proximity are carefully studied in chapters two, three, and four, which offer readings of Gerald of Wales’s (or Gerald de Barri’s or Giraldus Cambrensis’s) *Topographia Hibernica* (c. 1187) and *Expugnatio Hibernica* (c. 1189), Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* and *A View of the Present State of Ireland*, and Shakespeare’s *Henry the Fifth*, respectively. The chapter on Gerald is welcome, for although Gerald’s works – which Murphy rightly describes as ‘foundational documents of the tradition of British imaginings of Ireland’ (9) – are often referred to, they are rarely examined in detail. This chapter sets the stage for what follows in that it traces Gerald’s ambivalent representations of the Irish as, on the one hand, fellow Christians and, on the other, barbarous others. Unfortunately, little is said about the resurfacing of Gerald in Holinshed’s *Irish Chronicles* (John Hooker included an English translation of Gerald’s *Conquest of Ireland* in the second edition of the *Chronicles*), which is odd given that this book investigates Renaissance texts and that the *Irish Chronicles*, unlike so much of the English manuscript material on Ireland, were published. Richard Stanyhurst, an Old Englishman who made crucial contributions to

Holinshed's Irish *Chronicles*, is noticeably absent from this book. Although the chapter on Spenser includes many references to other critical voices – the usual suspects: Baker, Hadfield, Highley, Maley – it does provide fascinating readings of *A View* and Book V of *The Faerie Queene*. His analysis of *A View* considers the Gaelicization of the Old English in Ireland, a process Murphy terms 'a psychophysiology of incorporation' (p. 73). Even though the account of this psychophysiology of incorporation fails to draw upon early modern medical discourse, it is sophisticated. Gender politics are discussed at length in this chapter and brought to bear on his reading of Book V of *The Faerie Queene*. In an interesting move, Murphy reads Artegall as a 'composite figure' (p. 85): Old English-like in his submission to Radigund and New English-like in his victory over Grantorto. Since Artegall has traditionally been viewed as thoroughly New English (an allegorical representation of Lord Grey), the Old Englishing of Artegall offers a new perspective on the poem's politics. Murphy's approach to *Henry the Fifth* begins with Shakespeare's more straightforwardly nationalist early histories and works up to the latter play, tracing 'a construction of national identity [that] deepens and becomes increasingly more complex' (p. 114). Ultimately, *Henry the Fifth* 'fails to effect its ambitious project of maintaining a Gauntean sense of a coherent England, while somehow simultaneously (through the attempted incorporation/subordination/unification of the diverse national elements within the realm) accommodating to that sense of England the very boundaries and differences Gaunt ignored' (p. 121). What is missing from this fine chapter, however, is an elaboration of how the anxiety about identity affects the play's complex and contradictory ideological inscriptions. What is the relation between the play's construction of national identities and the composite monarch who dominates the play-text? Murphy notes that in the First Folio, the Queen of France greets Henry as 'Brother Ireland'. This points to 'the deep interconnectedness of the two national groups and to the intense difficulty of the task of distinguishing discrete, coherent (and hierarchically organized) separate national identities from among them' (p. 121). That the King of England is interconnected with the Irish surely has political implications, especially given the dissenting English voices haunting the play-text. Perhaps something could have been said about the generic hybridity of the history play, an English genre as novel and elastic as the nascent English nation-state.

Murphy himself points out a 'distinct shortcoming' of his study: 'its failure adequately to engage with the greater *British* (in the broadest sense) dimension of the issues under discussion' (p. 10). The history, including much of the literary history, of Jacobean Britain and Ireland cannot be fully understood unless approached from a British perspective. Consider the following passage, written by an English planter in Armagh, in 1622, who sees the Scottish as necessary to the settling of Monaghan: 'for the wast Land on the North side before mentioneis to the wch English wilt hardly be Drawen: it wear good to sett it to Scotis men then is the difficultie of the plantation ended for the English then wilt gladly sitt down upon the other when the Scotss shalbe as a walt betwixt them & the Ireish'. This quotation reveals just how impoverished an Anglo-Irish binarism is when it comes to talking about Jacobean Ireland, Ulster in particular. In my opinion, Murphy is too quick to highlight his book's 'distinct shortcoming'. The fourth chapter, which focuses on Jonson's *Irish Masque* as well as his obscure 'Ode. allhgorikh', does a splendid job of analysing these works within the context of James's desire for Anglo-Scottish national and cultural union and Ireland's place, or lack of, in that British context. While it is true that this book is not thoroughly

'three kingdoms' in its approach to English/British identity (de)formation, it does break away from a strict, not to mention reductive, colonizer/colonized binarism. Of course, Ireland's status as a kingdom/colony – which is much different from Scotland's and even Wales's position under James – does not allow Murphy totally to break away from this model. One will find little in this book about fruitful cultural overlap in the early modern period: the conclusion surveys the massacre literature of 1641.

In short, this book should be received as much more than 'yet another contribution' to the debate, precisely because it cogently combines colonial critique and postcolonial criticism and, in doing so, invites us to view early modern Ireland as the site of complex cultural interaction.

SUNY, Potsdam

Christopher Ivic

C. E. Patterson, *Urban Patronage in Early Modern England: Corporate Boroughs, the Landed Elite, and the Crown, 1580–1640*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, pp. viii + 337, hb. £50 (\$60), ISBN: 0804735875

Corporations were institutions which might come to constitute a political interest. Institutional integrity, and the interest that this might represent, were promoted and defended against rivals. This book examines how these institutional and political interests were mediated and conducted, concentrating on an important medium for the conduct of these politics – patronage. It offers convincing criticism of two dichotomies common in the writing of early modern history – the distinction between centre and locality and between citizen and outsider. Both (apparently common sense) distinctions conceal important aspects of the functioning of early modern English politics. Patrons (outsiders who were invited in) were able to help to resolve conflicts both within towns and between towns and rival corporations. In doing so they both appealed to the Crown on behalf of the corporation but also might be recruited to defend particular corporate interests against measures taken by the Crown. The book is based on the records of a varied mix of boroughs around the country – Barnstaple, Chester, Coventry, Dover, Exeter, Great Yarmouth, Ipswich, Leicester, Winchester and Worcester. It deals, therefore, mainly with smaller towns, and discussion of giants like London, Norwich and Bristol is limited. The chronological limits are set by the establishment of the routines of administration which are usually referred to as the 'Elizabethan constitution' by 1580 and the breakdown of government in 1640. The emphasis, however, is on how politics worked in this period, rather than on problems – it is definitely not a pre-history of the civil war. It is not a comprehensive urban history, therefore, but a thematic discussion of the mediation of political and administrative conflicts in early modern England. Corporate politics in this period have not been integrated into general accounts of government and this book serves an important purpose in doing so. The prose is clear and lively, if occasionally more informal than some readers may like.

There are five thematic chapters, followed by a case study. The first chapter explores the ways in which the relationship between patron and borough was established. It was sealed with gifts and entailed obligations and commitments on both sides. Patterson illuminates this relationship, which has been written about in other

early modern contexts, with reference to the extensive anthropological literature on the subject. The second chapter looks at the specific roles played by patrons in the boroughs and the following three chapters explore their role in particular kinds of conflict – resolving disputes within towns, between rival jurisdictions in the localities and mediating the relationship between corporations and the Crown. This thematic structure makes sense, but there is inevitably some overlap and some repetition. For example, the many disputes between cities and cathedral chapters (that is between rival jurisdictions) might also involve conflict within towns and involve mediation with the Crown. Similarly particular issues, like the militia or ship money, might provoke conflicts of all three kinds. There is a suspicion, too, that these things might work differently in different locations – quite different towns are treated together in a way that might conceal significant differences. It is helpful, therefore, to have a final chapter which looks at all these issues through a case study of the relationship between Leicester and the Earls of Huntingdon over the whole period covered here.

The conclusion argues for the importance of patronage in early modern local politics and for the use of this kind of analysis in general accounts of the workings of early modern politics. Clearly this is a subject, and an approach, which has implications beyond urban history. The conclusion also raises a much broader and more difficult question, which is not really tackled here. Patterson echoes the argument made by Kishlansky in *Parliamentary Selection* that the mid-seventeenth century marks a sharp break in the means by which conflicts were resolved. Prior to the civil war MPs were selected for their social qualities as leaders of society; it was only after the civil war that elections driven by ideological differences became characteristic of the political process. This argument has been affirmed by the studies of the Stuart lieutenantcy by Slater and of late Stuart borough politics by Halliday. Paterson argues that in boroughs patronage and social leadership allowed for the mediation of conflicts until 1640, but thereafter political difference was increasingly articulated in ideological terms. However, the breakdown of patronage in 1640 is difficult to understand on the basis of the thematic account given here – it is not clear at what points and for what reasons political conflicts were becoming too profound to be handled by these means. This is even more the case since Patterson is more interested in how politics did work, rather than why they did not. Nonetheless, by connecting the findings of her study with these much larger questions Patterson ensures that students of this period will need to take account of this important book.

University of Sheffield

Michael Braddick

Julie Sanders, *Ben Jonson's Theatrical Republics*, London, MacMillan, 1999, pp. xii + 262, hb. £45, ISBN: 0333676629

The important work of this book is the demystification of Ben Jonson as patriarch, 'conservative', and theatrical absolutist. Sanders distances herself from accounts of Jonson's career which claim his investment in serving the crown as the King's Poet, and removes Jonson's crafted publication of his folio *Works* (1616) from the centre of attention. Widening the critical lens to include neglected play (*The Staple of News*, *A Tale of a Tub*, *The New Inn*) Sanders questions *Works* as Jonson's definitive creative

achievement – and, perhaps more importantly, as unequivocal evidence of his desire for literary control. *Jonson's Theatrical Republics* is a timely challenge of received wisdom, which also succeeds in redressing the comparative neglect of Jonson by historians and theoreticians of popular culture.

The introduction disarmingly acknowledges that ‘no fixed or even stable definition of what Jonson understood by the term “republicanism” will be offered.’ Sanders shrewdly resists proposing Jonson’s active political republican sympathies, suggesting instead that his ‘theoretical and hypothetical’ republicanism made creative use of the vocabulary of republican debate in early seventeenth-century England. Nor is Jonson understood to have anticipated the upheaval of the mid-century. Instead, Sanders uncovers Jonson’s familiarity with English and European republican ideologies in order to demonstrate his investment, through the politics of local government and community, in the possibility of limited rule. Sanders’ thesis is that Jonson ‘toyed seriously (and the oxymoron is intentional) with ideas of limited monarchy’. His republicanism thus reveals itself most forcibly in the experience of theatre which functions as its own ‘republic’ thanks to the collaboration of writer, director, actors and audience.

Part 1 concentrates on the Roman tragedies *Sejanus, His Fall* and *Catiline, His Conspiracy*, and explores the treatment in *Volpone* of the republican state of Venice, mythologised in the early modern imagination as directly descended from the ancient Roman Empire. Venice was understood to lean towards both republicanism and absolutism; Sanders reads these plays as explorations of this political contradiction which query the very viability of republican terminology. In the later chapters, republicanism elides into commonwealth, understood broadly to mean family, community, and the common good. Sanders explores female political configurations in the urban societies of *Epicoene, The Devil is an Ass*, and the masques commissioned by Queen Anne of Denmark, taking issue with the charges of aggressive masculinity and misogyny often levelled against Jonson. The chapters on *The Alchemist* and *Bartholomew Fair* discuss the urban space of London as itself theatre; Sanders wittily reconceptualises Jonson’s notorious anti-theatricalism as an ironic stance with the capacity to acknowledge the audience’s interaction in the experience of public theatre. The fluency of these arguments is only occasionally impeded by a chorus of critical voices quoted both in support of and against Sanders’ own theses.

Sanders is most at home with the post-1616 plays. The chapter on *The Devil is an Ass* produces vivid, topical readings from the unpromising subject of fen drainage, while *The Staple of News* is shown to explore the democratising emergence of widely disseminated print culture. Sanders reaches the unexpected, cogently defended conclusion that Jonson was engaged in a sustained critique of those who resisted such expansion. The final two chapters on *The New Inn* and *A Tale of a Tub* press home the theory that Jonson’s political agenda in the later plays was not always serviceable to the Caroline Court, pitting Jonson’s investment in commonality against his notional advocacy of personal rule.

Although Sanders is right to insist that Jonson was not always, and perhaps never fully, of the court, the recourse of recent critics to Jonson as unequivocal monarchist is over-stated. One commonplace, the ‘traditionalist’ Jonson, tends to be replaced with another: the ‘neurotic’ Jonson. It is not always easy to accept that Jonson’s cultural neurosis was ‘a quite self-conscious strategy’, at home in ‘early-seventeenth-century fluidity of thought and politics’. What this approach gains in flexibility, it occasionally loses in precision. However, the achievement of this study is to revise prematurely

reifying, evolutionary readings of Jonson's literary career, while still acknowledging his contribution to the development of the early modern idea of authorship. Some of the trickiest hurdles on the way to the 'democratisation' of Jonson are his insistent interventions in his texts: the copious marginalia, prominently placed Arguments, frequent revision, and Latin frontispieces all seem clearly designed to direct the judgement and taste of his readers. Sanders deals with this difficulty head on, showing how Jonson's desire to safeguard his literary property was accompanied by an awareness of the ephemerality of both the written and the spoken word, and an appreciation of the creative opportunities which emerged as a result.

University of Leeds

Katharine Craik

Susan Wabuda and Caroline Litzenberger (eds), *Belief and Practice in Reformation England: A Tribute to Patrick Collinson from his Students*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 1998, pp. xiv + 293, hb. £49.95, ISBN: 1859284302

Patrick Collinson's infectious fascination with the personalities and processes of early modern religion is not confined to his own research, and *Belief and Practice in Reformation England* testifies to the impressive quality of work he fostered in his Cambridge research students. Singling out individual contributions from the eleven essays on offer is invidious, even if it is made necessary by limitations of space.

In what is probably the book's most important essay, David Crankshaw authoritatively challenges William Haugaard's reading of the Canterbury Provincial Convocation of 1562–63. For some time, historians have suspected it was not 'puritan' dissidents pushing for further reform of the English Church's ceremonial and discipline, but rather the bishops. Through detailed analysis of the crucial sources, Crankshaw points to Archbishop Matthew Parker himself as principal mover of the *reformanda*, and, by implication, to Elizabeth herself as obstacle to their implementation. From the unpromising soil of petty detail and administrative process, Crankshaw harvests important insights into the 'half-reformed' nature of the established church and location of real authority in it.

At much the same time as the bishops were planning further reform through Convocation, John Foxe was attempting reform from another angle, publishing a revised church calendar in the 1563 edition of *Acts and Monuments* which replaced many traditional saints with Protestant martyrs. As Damian Nussbaum demonstrates, where Archbishop Parker failed to win over the Queen, Foxe failed to win over anyone. Catholics were outraged at his 'impudence and impiety'; Protestants smelt a whiff of popery and turned up their noses. Foxe's original intent, however, was not merely to find heroes acceptable to reformers. His publication of an alternative calendar was also a thinly veiled attack on the one included in the 1559 Prayer Book, and is yet more evidence of the desire of early Elizabethan reformers to proceed further and faster than the Crown would permit.

It was largely as a consequence of the limits set on the English Reformation that the spectrum of Protestant religious identity became so diffuse. John Craig, Arnold Hunt, and Alexandra Walsham all bring some clarity to this complexity by turning their spotlights on individuals. Craig's subjects are Thomas Rogers and the 'Cambridge

boies' who organised the Bury St Edmunds combination-lectures of the 1590s. Initially endeavouring to walk a tightrope between his conformist loyalties and sympathy for more radical colleagues, Rogers later came to rail against 'our home faction'. Craig indicates how a prolonged dispute with the 'Cambridge boies' provoked Rogers into adopting a more clear-cut religious identity, considering not only the microhistorical context, but also the background of Whitgift's attacks on the classical movement and the Marprelate tracts.

Arnold Hunt also tries to see where the dividing-line between 'conformity' and 'not-conformity' lay, in his re-examination of Laurence Chaderton. Many scholars, perhaps influenced by allegations that Chaderton betrayed the puritan cause at the Hampton Court Conference in 1604, have tended to emphasise his moderate, conforming side. Hunt, in contrast, finds a man of decidedly radical opinions for whom conforming was frequently an uncomfortable experience. Taking issue with (among others) the dedicatee of this *Festschrift*, Hunt denies that 1604 was the 'end of the story' for Elizabethan-style puritanism. If he is right, there are interesting questions to be asked about the 'Calvinist consensus' so often cited as the well-spring of hostility to Laudian innovations.

Finally, Alexandra Walsham's entertaining subject is Philip Stubbes, best known for his robustly moralistic book *An Anatomie of Abuses* (1583). Walsham argues that the man whose writings suggests vehement puritanism was in fact 'a cultural chameleon': a hack who met a market demand for conservative morality packaged in entertaining formats. Teasing out the implications of this discovery, Walsham challenges the widely-held belief that 'puritan' and 'popular' cultures were mutually antagonistic, suggesting that the term 'puritan' was more and more loosely applied in the late sixteenth century, until 'puritans and stage puritans came to be confused'.

This book ranges widely, from pre-Reformation parish communities to Commonwealth Quakerism, and from church taxation to predestinarian theology. It manages nonetheless to avoid the incoherence which can sometimes mar *Festschriften*. If just one conclusion emerges from the essays, it should perhaps be one which Patrick Collinson has himself so often underlined: that religious labels only mean anything when applied to real people, and that the people of early modern England were more complex animals than scholars sometimes admit.

Cranmer Hall, Durham

James Saunders