

Recent Studies in the English Renaissance

GRAHAM HAMMILL

It is unclear whether or not the division between dramatic and nondramatic literature will remain viable in early modern studies since the central questions shaping the field easily cut across that divide. Nevertheless, I have tried to maintain a focus on critical studies of nondramatic literature as much as possible in this review, largely bypassing the Shakespeare colossus that dominates so much of early modern literary studies. It is encouraging to see the range of work being done on writing practices from prison writing (Ruth Ahnert) to women's writing (Patricia Pender and Rosalind Smith), as well as some remarkably rich work in history of the book. This list should include *Katherine Parr: Complete Works and Correspondence*, edited by Janel Mueller, which makes available in paperback the works of a significant early modern woman writer. In last year's review, Barbara Fuchs remarks on being struck by the relative scarcity of explicitly transnational work. This year saw the publication of several very fine books in this field, most notably Michael Murrin's stellar study of Renaissance romance and A. E. B. Coldiron's superb analysis of transnational printing, translation, and the construction of national and transnational identities through the formatting of the book. The most exciting works in the field of literature and law reframed the study of law through its exceptions, exemplified by *Taking Exception to the Law: Materializing Injustice in Early Modern English Literature*, edited by Donald Beecher, Travis DeCook, Andrew Wallace, and Grant Williams. Something

Graham Hammill is Professor of English at the University at Buffalo, SUNY, where he is also Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School. He is the author most recently of *The Mosaic Constitution: Political Theology and Imagination from Machiavelli to Milton* (2012) and coeditor of *Political Theology and Early Modernity* (2012).

studies, a turn that asks how England engages with the Mediterranean as a conceptual space. Essays by Jane Hwang Degenhardt, Eric Griffin, and Weissbourd explore relations between Spain and England on the English stage. In an intriguing essay that focuses on similarities between Catholic and Protestant writers on the origins of the English nation, Brian C. Lockey argues the provocative thesis that papal supremacy offered a model of cosmopolitanism that transcended confessional boundaries. In Lockey's account, it was writers such as John Foxe who developed a xenophobic countervision of national integrity. Although the Mediterranean link in this essay is tenuous, this is a standout contribution to the volume. Nevertheless, I do believe that Lockey's claims about papal supremacy could be nuanced with more attention to nascent concepts of federation introduced by English understandings of the Holy Roman Empire as well as by writers such as Althusius. The volume concludes with an essay by William S. Goldman that focuses on Charles Cornwallis's diplomatic correspondences during his four-year tenure as England's first ambassador to Spain (1605–09).

MEDIA: BOOK, MANUSCRIPTS, AND FILM

Coldiron's *Printers without Borders: Translation and Textuality in the Renaissance* is one of this year's best books. The book is impressive in its broad attempts to map the emergence of English national culture, including the canonical literature of the English Renaissance, from an explicitly European perspective as well as its detailed account of printing and translation and how the two were intertwined. An instant classic, *Printers without Borders* is a major contribution to the study of book history as well as the study of national and international humanism. In *Printers without Borders*, Coldiron identifies three patterns of transmission and translation, each correlated to the capacity of readers to imagine themselves existing in national and international cultures. Put somewhat schematically and without Coldiron's subtlety or nuance: in the first pattern, readers imagine a foreign work that has become English; in the second, paratext provokes readers into the sense of being part of a world community; and in the third, translation presents readers with their own alterity. Coldiron discusses these patterns across ten case studies of translations printed between 1473 and 1588. The works she selects may not be currently well known but were popular at the time of printing. *Printers without Borders* begins with a substantial chapter

on William Caxton and Jean de Tournes, and then goes on to consider John Wolfe's trilingual translation of the *Book of the Courtier*. The book concludes with two chapters, each of which is a tour de force: a broadside celebrating the defeat of the Spanish armada in eight languages (Latin, Hebrew, English, Greek, Dutch, Italian, French, and Spanish), and an analysis of macaronic verse—that is, verse that uses words or parts of words in more than one language—covering material from Caxton to Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witchcraft*. Although at times she ignores more material issues concerning commerce or ideology (which she acknowledges up front), Coldiron has produced a remarkable book that draws significant connections between print culture, literary history, translation, and transnational studies. Throughout, the bibliographic, philological, and literary work is truly impressive.

Translation and the Book Trade in Early Modern Europe, edited by José María Pérez Fernández and Edward Wilson-Lee, examines vernacular translations from Greek and Latin across Europe during the first century and a half of printing. The collection is comprised of case studies that explore intersections between the material interests of printers with topics such as immigration, exile, and national culture. The volume is comparativist in nature, in that it looks at multiple literary traditions in comparison with one another. It is also transnational, in that it examines relations among various material sites and generic conventions. Fernández and Wilson-Lee have written a substantial introduction that emphasizes the economic motives of the book trade and the symbolic capital associated with humanist translation projects. (In this regard, *Translation and the Book Trade in Early Modern Europe* provides a good supplement to Coldiron's *Printers without Borders*.) The essays that follow map the networks of printers, authors, texts, readers, and translators that underlie the making of early modern Europe. Several essays will be of particular interest to readers of *Studies in English Literature*. Rocío G. Sumillera, in "Language Manuals and the Book Trade in England," examines the ways in which printed handbooks dramatically changed language instruction in early modern England. Wilson-Lee, in "Glosses and Oracles: Guiding Readers in Early Modern Europe," examines the transmission of Continental printing innovations into England through Wolfe. And Stewart Mottram, in "Spenser's Dutch Uncles," focuses on "A Theatre for Worldlings." Mottram reads the English translation alongside Dutch, German, and French volumes, examining the handling of Familialist themes and showing their influence on Spenser's thinking of ruins throughout his career.