giorgio Trissino, Giovanni Pietro Capriano, and Agnolo Segni, with a nod towards Benedetto Varchi as well. This discussion lacks a context and is perhaps overly dependent on Bernard Weinberg as a secondary source. For instance, the author did not use the facsimile edition of Trissino's *La poetica* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1969)—not that this is crucial inasmuch as Trissino was not widely read in the sixteenth century. The final section on the affections consists of an examination of the theories of Lorenzo Giacomini. Surely this subject deserves more attention, even if it is agreed that the trivial side of the humanist revival of ancient attitudes and thoughts did not rival the quadrivial side.

Given the complexity of Palisca's book, the overall accuracy of the text is remarkable. And yet the antics of word-processing gremlins can be spotted here and there. They erased the translation of the excerpt from Cornazano's *La Sforziade* (p. 373), divided the references to Cardinal Niccolo Ridolfi into two persons in the index, and interfered with a few entries in the bibliography: for example, Barbaro's Italian edition of Vitruvius first appeared in 1566 and not 1567, the date of his Latin edition; the correct title of Bk. II of Cassiodorus's work is *Istitutiones saecularium litterarum*; and the entries of Giambattista Giralaldi Cintio's *Discourses* and Isidore of Seville's *Etymologies* have disappeared.

However, it makes little sense to rehearse minor cavils when one assesses a work of this magnitude. Palisca's book is a major achievement and a challenging standard for scholars working not only on Renaissance discourse on music, but also on writings from various cultures, for it demonstrates what sorts of things may be drawn from primary sources, how one draws them out, and the contexts in which one evaluates them as primary texts. Any research done in the future on individual writers, cultural contexts, or reception history must take into account this stellar contribution by Claude Palisca.

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Hilary Gatti. *The Renaissance Drama of Knowledge. Giordano Bruno in England*. London and New York: Routledge, 1989. Pp. xvi, 228.

The problem of the relationship between the thought of Giordano Bruno and the plays of William Shakespeare has been a vexed one ever since German scholars raised it in the mid-nineteenth century. The concluding chapter of Hilary Gatti's new book proposes an answer, at least for *Hamlet*, a play which she believes is suffused both with the Nolan's vision of an infinite universe and his tragic awareness of the cost of questioning the accepted doctrine of a finite one. In leading up to this point Gatti considers not only Shakespeare's response to Bruno, but Bruno's impress on the small group of Englishmen—courtly, literary, and scientific—who seem to have read him closely. This group, she contends, included Marlowe, and as

a result she is able to bring together in a single argument the two greatest dramatists of their age—one a hard-working bourgeois, the other a radical intellectual—and to juxtapose with considerable insight the two plays in which Bruno's spirit has been most closely felt: *Hamlet* and *Doctor Faustus*. Her book thus reaches into several disciplines: history, cultural analysis, literary interpretation, and drama. Despite points where the demonstration wavers, the result is convincing, not least because she rigorously includes an appendix chronicling the controversy itself, making it possible for us to test her argument in its setting.

"Setting is a non-committal word she uses frequently, aware of the subtle way often contradictory forces pull at each other when new ideas are coming to birth. We begin with a chapter on "the Brunian setting," by which she means the continental context within which Bruno's extraordinary intellectual egotism operated. Gatti is clearly in deep sympathy with her subject; she accepts his egotism calmly, not as a disadvantage which has to be overlooked but as the expectable bulwark of a proud mind philosophically embattled. Bruno bluntly insisted on the obvious rightness of his views, and fiercely attacked whoever did not concur, and there is no denying it or defending him. Gatti is skeptical enough where she needs to be, but her sympathy enables her to trace without excuse the inherent tragedy (in the full dramatic sense of that term) of Bruno's career. "What gives his work its particular power and impetus both within his own times and more generally within the modern world is the nature of his response," she writes. "For Bruno, placed in front of a newly entrenched and often obscure rigidity on the part of the traditional cultural institutions, both academic and religious, takes upon his own individual intellect the task of repudiating an old and worn-out world order and of opening up new vistas of knowledge and understanding." It is this situation which she sees dramatized in the dilemmas of *Faustus* and *Hamlet*, and which links the two plays together.

Gatti traces Bruno's conflict with three important institutions: the Church, the universities, and the Courts of Princes. In every case he was fated, not only because of his own contentious personality, but because his insistence on the necessity of autonomous inquiry in philosophy affronted the interests of those he addressed. The problem around which Bruno's thought constantly revolved was not itself a new one: the relation between "the divine unity, inscrutable to man and ... the richness and abundance of universal variety which it is given to man to approach and comprehend through dedicated search and inquiry." Both Louis Le Roy (at a low level) and Francis Bacon (at one much higher) were to address it, and escape the stake. For Bruno, however, autonomy of inquiry became the fundamental condition for such speculation, and it was this conviction that he brought to London in 1583, a London ruled in his imagination by two images, that of the Queen and of Sir Philip Sidney.

Gatti has less to say of the Sidney-Bruno link than one would wish, perhaps because a cool-headed survey of the evidence would make another chapter—or a

different book. It is his connections with the Northumberland circle she investigates, in two closely argued chapters in which his influence is tracked from one passage to another of Northumberland's own writings and papers, those of Thomas Harriot, and William Warner. Her exposition is too closely tied to this evidence to recapitulate fairly here. It is both extremely suggestive and not in every case totally convincing; there are a few places where it might have been fairer to give up trying to extract connections from the limited body of evidence and instead rely confidently on the resources of interpretation. Nevertheless it emerges that a close textual knowledge of Bruno's writings indeed united the Northumberland circle, and that Marlowe shared in this knowledge.

The case she builds not only illuminates the philosophical position and moral conflicts of Faustus, but the dramatic structure of the play Marlowe wrote about him. Gatti renounces the traditional moral interpretation of Faustus' final monologue, with its stress on his failure to repent. Rather, she argues, contact with the ideas of Bruno made it possible for Marlowe to depict his character making "an irrevocable intellectual choice: to embrace an alternative metaphysic which implied alternative concepts of knowledge but also of the soul and death." It is in the tensions between these conflicting images, these two concepts of knowledge and of death, that Marlowe writes Faustus' last speech. But "the attempt to escape from the metaphysic which dominates his culture has failed," and Faustus, recognizing this, "has no choice but to die in terms of the inevitable scenario."

Gatti's treatment of *Hamlet* has equal interpretative insight, but here the attempt—plausible within the circle of the Wizard Earl—to create a documented connection between playwright and philosopher founders for the lack of documents. Gatti relies primarily on an elaborate explication of the image of the antique Silenus-box, with its ugly exterior concealing images of divinity, to connect the play's fascination with inner and outer (being and seeming, plays within plays) and the Brunian mentality. The closest connection she can make between Shakespeare and Bruno is the long-ago noted one between Polonius and the pedant Polinno of Bruno's *De la causa, principio et uno*. Here the argument of what is otherwise a very stimulating book becomes thin-spun. It is not that *Hamlet* cannot be placed in her Brunian setting; it is that the job cannot be done by these means. It might have been better to accept that Shakespeare's magpie knowledge differed in kind from Marlowe's, and to consider how much *Doctor Faustus* itself may have done to transmit Brunian concerns to someone who was ever a quick study.

This is nevertheless a thought-provoking book; though Gatti honourably points out how many of the things she says have earlier been said by others, the order she sets them in is fresh, and she adds much of her own. It is too bad that the price (\$79.95 Cdn.) of this modest-sized volume is a scandal.

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