Le glossaire placé à la fin du volume est très utile, même s'il subsiste plusieurs points d'interrogation. L'auteur n'a pas indiqué quels dictionnaires il avait utilisés. La traduction en français moderne des mots difficiles ou obscurs aurait été encore plus utile au lecteur s'il l'avait trouvée en bas de page, accompagnée de quelques notes explicatives.

Venons-en au texte lui-même de l'*Exposicion des Songes*, dont le commentaire – surtout en ce qui concerne les sources – est fait longuement et par ordre chronologique, dans l'introduction générale: l'oniromancie égyptienne, les clés des songes mésopotamiennes, la tradition judaïque, etc. L'oeuvre elle-même est-elle d'un grand intérêt pour une étude de l'imaginaire? L'ensemble donne l'impression d'une vaste compilation ordonnée, mais d'une interprétation abstraite et arbitraire qui concerne surtout les rapports sociaux, économiques et hiérarchiques. L'index donne une idée des objets prétendument vus en songe, mais non de leur signification, presque toujours liée aux notions évoquées plus haut. C'est pourquoi il est permis de préférer à cette somme encyclopédique les brèves clés des songes citées en appendice, comme plus représentatives d'un genre éminemment populaire dont on aimerait suivre la trace dans la production imprimée jusque dans la littérature de colportage, assurément. Mais c'est là un autre travail.

En attendant, il faut féliciter François Berriot pour l'ampleur de la tâche qu'il a menée à bien et le remercier d'avoir mis à la portée du public savant des textes, manuscrits pour la plupart, qui intéressent la littérature comparée, l'histoire des mentalités et des civilisations, la littérature médiévale et l'histoire de la littérature du seizième siècle. Nul doute que d'autres chercheurs, à leur tour, se serviront des textes établis avec autant de soin comme matière première de leurs propres travaux.

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Stan A.E. Mendyk. *'Speculum Britanniae'. Regional Study, Antiquarianism, and Science in Britain to 1700*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989.

In *'Speculum Britanniae'. Regional Study, Antiquarianism, and Science in Britain to 1700*, a book which grew out of his Ph.D. dissertation, Stan Mendyk has created – as he states – a work of synthesis. Relying for the most part on materials in print and not on unpublished archives he has looked at several generations of chorographers and has tried to show the continuity in the evolution from antiquary to virtuoso. Towards the end of the book he cites Herbert Butterfield's observation concerning the need to move beyond the examination of the work of "the few men of supreme genius" in order to understand the history of science and this becomes his own methodology. Beginning with John Leland, he traces the antiquarian thought of major and minor figures right up to the beginning of the eighteenth century when John Morton's *The Natural History of Northamptonshire* was published. Francis Bacon figures prominently in this development: after his seminal

work regional study came to require "a critical use of authorities" and ultimately the virtuoso would use "historical and natural materials and scientific methods to make accurate statements of fact about both past and present". In some sense, too, Mendyk sees the later work as a culmination of Leland's original vision and gives Joseph Levine the final word on the topic: "Looking back across the two centuries that separated [George] Hickes [the Saxonist] and his friends from John Leland and his successors, one can see a single great antiquarian dream being slowly realized."

As he makes clear from the very beginning Mendyk wishes to "bring to light" (a metaphor borrowed – consciously? – from Leland and Bale) individual writers and their achievements. His framework is straightforwardly chronological and we move through the centuries from individual to individual. There are, however, problems with this method of presentation. Most obviously, no single person is studied in any depth. Mendyk does not add to our knowledge of Leland, say, and he does not bring the most recent scholarship to bear in his discussion. Instead we have a series of somewhat repetitive potted histories – updated versions of *Dictionary of National Biography* entries – which become more and more difficult to absorb as one goes along. Even more worrisome are the considerable misunderstandings of the information which is already well known, as when (p. 45) Mendyk confuses Leland's *Itinerary* and his 'New Year's Gift' of 1546/47. Or when he does not seem to be aware that the most important *Commentarii de Scriptoribus Britannicis* was in fact more or less completed in Leland's lifetime and subsequently published in the eighteenth century. Very often we seem to slip from vague hypothesis – Tristram Risdon according to the *Dictionary of National Biography* was "apparently a Puritan" – to accepted fact: Risdon, we are now told (without any supporting evidence) "illustrates the interest of Puritan gentry in chorography." As so often happens when one is summarizing and giving synopses Mendyk drifts into unexamined platitudes: although some of John Norden's devotional books "achieved considerable popular appeal", Mendyk affirms, "his career as a religious author proved to be singularly unsuccessful." Unsuccessful from whose perspective? And in what way? Is not popularity an acknowledged mark of success?

Interestingly, the very narrative context, its division into neatly defined *vitae*, tends to undermine the continuity Mendyk is trying to establish. William Burton's possession of Leland's papers is a major factor behind the composition of his *Description of Leicester Shire* (Leland's ancestral county like Burton's): the story of these papers illustrates graphically, moreover, the almost apostolic succession at the heart of the antiquarian movement and the very small circle of individuals involved from generation to generation. And yet in Mendyk's narrative this vital link is barely even mentioned and certainly not seen in the paradigmatic light it deserves.

Mendyk's biographical choices seem somewhat arbitrary since he gives himself such a wide range of possibilities: he restricts himself neither to the famous nor to the obscure, nor to a single geographical area nor to a single century. If Leland is to be studied in depth, for example, then why not Cotton or Drayton. In the end one

comes to feel the choices are hit or miss and that any pattern which emerges is a matter more of chance than of fact. Different individuals, one suspects, might have led to different conclusions.

It is not easy to work out the principles behind footnotes and bibliography. Quite rightly Mendyk cites Joseph M. Levine and yet the book he seems most to admire – Levine's *Humanism and History. Origins of Modern English Historiography* – never makes it to the bibliography (and appears to remain only partially cited: I could never find the date and place of publication nor a full title for that matter) whereas his earlier *Dr Woodward's Shield* and his unpublished Ph.D. dissertation do appear. And why is Oruch's work, so strongly emphasized in the text, excluded? Some primary sources appear in the bibliography and others do not. Amongst those which do there is considerable confusion about choices of editions: why, for example, do we have the 1534 edition of Polydore Vergil rather than the revised edition of 1546 or the third of 1555? In a book about and for the antiquary – "a man strangely thrifty of Time past" – one might expect particular care about accuracy and yet the notes and bibliography are far from punctilious: Leland is linked with Henry VII in Clarke's article, to give one fine bit of anachronism, and Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote a "*Historia regnum Britanniae*". In the text itself I enjoyed, *inter alia*, the reference to "other ancient Egyptian priests or barbs".

All in all this is a somewhat superficial book, one not carefully researched. One has the sense that by the time it actually came to press the author had lost some of his initial enthusiasm and that the final product is more a labour than the kind of labour of love Mendyk has been describing in the work of the chorographers themselves.

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Jasper Ridley. *Elizabeth I, the Shrewdness of Virtue*. New York: Fromm International, 1989. Pp. xi, 391. Christopher Haigh. *Elizabeth I*. London and New York: Longman Ltd., 1988. Pp. vii, 198.

Studies of many historical figures are called forth by anniversaries of birth and death, but for Elizabeth I as for Napoleon the season remains perpetual. Ironically, one is hard pressed to identify a standard work in this burgeoning genre since J.E. Neale's now outdated classic of the 1930s. Commercially successful efforts by such non-academics as Elizabeth Jenkins, Edith Sitwell and Carolly Erickson have not altogether met the standards of serious scholarship, while Paul Johnson's effort of 1974 has been rendered questionable on a number of issues by more recent scholarship. The field thus seems wide open for a new and definitive study, one which would incorporate important recent research and present a new perspective of its own.