other areas. Chronology is also vague. Though reference is twice made to a span "from Luther to Milton," and anecdotes are drawn from the whole of the sixteenth century and occasionally (as with Ralph Josselin) the seventeenth, the weight of material is mostly early or mid-sixteenth. And, though Reformation is a suggestively broad term, the discussion omits Calvinism almost entirely. In the end, Ozment implies a homogeneity of ideas over a span of time, place and persuasion that – however probable its broader application – is not convincingly supported beyond the experience of sixteenth century Lutherans, Anabaptists and Zwinglians in Central Europe. About the remainder, we have still a great deal to learn.

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Millicent V. Hay. *The Life of Robert Sidney, Earl of Leicester*. Washington: The Folger Shakespeare Library. London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1985. Pp.260. \$46.50 CAN

Our sense of the significance of Robert Sidney's place in Renaissance England has sharpened dramatically in the past decade. Peter Croft's discovery of his poems in 1972 – perhaps the most significant manuscript discovery in Renaissance literature in 40 years – led to a revaluation of Sidney's life, work and connections and of his place in the turbulent world of the late Elizabethan and Jacobean Court. Croft's edition of the poems, which appeared in 1984, should lead to further revaluations, but already there have been significant articles and dissertations on Sidney's work by Katherine Duncan Jones, Deborah Wright, Josephine Roberts, Jon Quitslund, and the present reviewer, among others.

Millicent Hay's study is the first full biography of the man who lived, before and after 1586, under the shadow of his elder brother Philip – and even, to a lesser extent, that of his younger sister, Mary, Countess of Pembroke. Her book was originally written as an Arizona State University dissertation in 1979, and unfortunately it bears all the marks of a careful, methodical but rather unanalytical piece of dissertation research. It is a narrative chronology, relying heavily on the State Papers, detailed where the sources are full, silent where there is less public evidence – so that Sidney's life in the Jacobean court, between 1603 and 1625, is given only one chapter (or a little more), whereas his (admittedly eventful) years in the 1590s – when he was struggling to return to the court and more paranoid than most about his reputation and when his correspondence with Rowland Whyte, in particular, is very full – is given four or five. As a piece of historical research, Hay's book is thorough and painstaking; as a piece of historical writing it is naive, superficial and soggy. It seems unsure of its audience: professional historians of the Renaissance, for instance, might well be impatient with its methodological naiveté, literary critics with its plodding paraphrases. It ignores forty years of research not only into the cultural contexts of the period, but into the kinds of questions we ask about such a time – economic, sociocultural and class issues are ignored; psychohistorical, statistical, demographic matters virtually absent. Even taking it at face value, as an old-fashioned "life and works" approach, the contextual

scholarship is skimpy. The most significant connections Sidney has were undoubtedly with his family – and the intertextual relationships of Philip. Mary, Robert Sidney's writings remain a phenomenon yet to be adequately explored. But Hay's treatment of the connections is perfunctory, to say the least: a major reference for the other Sidneys seems to be *DNB*, and there is virtually no use or mention of the work of, say Josephine Roberts on Mary Wroth, Gary Waller, Mary Ellen Lamb, or J.C.A. Rathmell on Mary Sidney, let alone any of the remarkable work on Philip Sidney in the past decade – by A.C. Hamilton, Germaine Warkentin, the *SLIT* essays of 1982, or the Waller/Moore volume, *Sir Philip Sidney and the Interpretation of Renaissance Culture* (Croom Helm, 1984). In part, this neglect is due to there having been very little revision since completion of the original dissertation, but my point is that Sidney studies (and Renaissance studies generally) is such a rapidly changing field that it is not good enough to slip a reference to Croft's edition into the text and onto the dustjacket (though, oddly, not into the bibliography): we need not only the most thorough scholarship, but also the most up-to-date.

When we turn to the treatment of Robert Sidney's poetry (the occasion, after all, of our revival of interest in him), there is even more disappointment. The readings of the poems are almost exclusively biographical, often in a naively reflectivist manner, and they are further vitiated by unengaging comments like "Deborah Wright's study of the cycle produced a somewhat novel approach that has something to recommend it" (196) or Rathmell "has hewn the veracity and intimacy" [of Jonson's "To Penshurst"] and "little remains to be added to what he has said" (208). Much of the "analysis" of the poems is undergraduate paraphrase at best – all the more the pity since some exciting work has already been done on Robert Sidney's poetry to show that its variety, skill and cultural interest goes far beyond the reductive.

Stylistically, this is a rather plodding book: rather archaic clichés abound (to use one of them): Sidney's England "was populated by titans"; the Sidneys were "destined to excel"; Philip "achieved lasting fame" – all of these swelling phrases take their places on the first leaf of the study. Small irritations recur: the Sidney's home is Penhurst Place, the Pembrokes lived at Wilton House; J.C.A. Rathmell is not "Professor" Rathmell. And so on.

A lot of painstaking work went into this study. It is attractively presented, usually accurately proofed, and unquestionably a useful compilation of the material from standard sources like the State Papers and the Sidney correspondence. But it would be a pity if it should stand as an adequate study of Sidney's significance. Too much has gone on recently in Renaissance scholarship that can help us place Sidney in his time – the work of Greenblatt, Montrose, Whigham, Goldberg, Sinfield, Patterson et al. – for the superficial narrativized chronology of this study to be allowed to articulate authoritatively our view today of the "sad pilgrim."

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