one that places the Curia at the center of large-scale economic and administrative changes in European history. With luck, other scholars will follow her lead and make the history of the Curia Romana a standard element in early modern historiography and one appealing to English speaking scholars.

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Barbara L. Estrin. *The Raven and the Lark: Lost Children in the Literature of the English Renaissance*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press / London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1985. Pp. 288. \$29.50.

When a social historian, such as this reviewer, picks up a work of literary criticism and scholarship contemporary to his historical interests, he generally hopes to find insights that move beyond the strictly literary. Reverberations of the ideologies of literate elites, general cultural assumptions, characters and plot events that closely mimic what is known of actual people and events from other sources – these are all elements a historian would seek from the literary scholar. Nor would these elements be desired solely by the historian. While it is certainly true that a text is susceptible to a variety of approaches, a historical contextual reading is a very valid way to proceed to unlock meanings in the works of authors like Shakespeare.

At first glance Barbara L. Estrin's *The Raven and the Lark* would seem to be the sort of book a historian would find interesting. She attempts to set her literary analysis in a historical context developed in the second and third chapters. But, above all, she chooses a promising approach – the foundling motif. According to the foundling formula as she describes it, an exposed child of noble lineage is raised in primitive surroundings, ignorant of his true parentage, his identity is later revealed by a talisman or mark, and he is returned (usually at the point of marriage) to his biological parents to carry on the lineage. "Analogous foundling" is the term she applies to literary characters whose experiences approximate those of formulaic foundlings: "they know their parents but are separated from them . . . they endure the same separation, the same loss" (p. 13). However, Estrin does not confine the analogy very closely to this model. To treat a character like Cleopatra as an analogous foundling seems absurd.

The lost-child plot, Estrin insists, boils down to the dichotomy between art and nature. Art is carried by the fostering relationship in the adoptive sections; nature triumphs in the ultimate reunion. Authors were able to exploit this "minigenre" (p. 17) in a variety of ways. She confines her remarks to literary texts. Theological, philosophical, legal, and artistic treatments of the art/nature problem do not figure in her account. Nor does she go into the related issue of Renaissance notions of fiction (no citation, for example, of William Nelson's *Fact or Fiction: The Dilemma of the Renaissance Storyteller* [Cambridge, Mass., 1973]), although her insights into Sidney and Spenser should contribute to scholarship in this area.

What she does with the foundling motif casts doubt on the adequacy of the book's subtitle. "Literature of the English Renaissance" turns out to be essentially

only four authors: Malory, Sidney, Spenser, and Shakespeare. Malory and Sidney are treated in consecutive fourteen-page chapters. Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* receives three chapters. About half the book is devoted to Shakespeare, or, more precisely, to ten plays. In view of Estrin's early assertion that "foundlings appear in the work of virtually every major author of the English Renaissance" (p. 16), one has to wonder why she limited her inquiry to these four only. Her theme would seem to work for Marlowe too. Even More's Ralph Hythloday would seem to be a good candidate for examination as an "analogous foundling," given the elastic way in which she uses the notion.

Even within her treatment of the authors she has chosen, one is left wondering about omissions. The very title of the book, for example, comes from *Titus Andronicus*, but Estrin does not consider this play at all, other than in explicating the title-giving words of Lavinia. The intricate discussion of Lear as a "foundling" is not paralleled by discussion of Edmund and Edgar. But Edmund's bastardy and the whole problem of familial identity worked out between the half-brothers in the play should have made them prime candidates for analysis in terms of the foundling motif. But the most startling omission is that, again despite the subtitle, the book is not about children at all. At the end, in fact, Estrin concedes that "children do not appear in Elizabethan literature" (p. 203). Yet even there she insists on formulating her conclusions in terms of childhood, although these terms were largely absent in her discussion of such "children" as Cleopatra, Richard III, King Arthur, and Marinell.

Nonetheless Estrin sets up her analysis as if it did indeed consider children. The second chapter deals with "The Renaissance Context." In it she employs a few historical works (notably Pinchbeck and Ivy, *Children in English Society* [London, 1969] and Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800* [New York, 1977]) to set in place elements of the treatment of children. Their importance in the continuity of blood and lineage, she claims, meant they were treated like property with no identity apart from that of their parents. But the necessities thrown up by a rigorous and harsh demography produced wardship, apprenticeship, and forms of adoption. Thus she sees abandonment and finding as common and constant. "In a society attuned to the cruelty of child abandonment . . . aware of the exigency of dynastic perpetuation . . . and awakening to the need for social reform . . . the foundling plot provided a perfect wish fulfillment" (p. 26) of humanitarian and dynastic impulses. This is indeed an interesting historical insight, but she does not do much with it. How close the plots are to the contemporary realities that supposedly generated this wish fulfillment on the part of the audience she does not say. It escapes her that the attitudes toward children, a historical field first plowed by Philippe Aries, were not as uniformly harsh as she supposes (a reading of Linda Pollock, *Forgotten Child: Parent-Child Relations from 1500 to 1900* [Cambridge, 1983] might have been advisable). It may be that Spenser did not consummate the foundling plots in *The Faerie Queene* because he made more of the treatment of children than Estrin anticipates; however, she relates this not to the historical context but to the demands of the foundling formula and the art/nature dualism that informs it.

The evocation of the foundling formula in Chapter 3 likewise displays historical

blindness. Only biblical and classical precedents are mentioned, and thus the Renaissance context and development is simply tacitly assumed. Medieval precedents or developments are never sought (except for contrast in discussing Malory). But surely

chansons, romances, nouvelles, and hagiographical sources could be mined to great profit here. Estrin's explication of Richard III by reference to Cain proves useful, but it is not (so far as I can tell from a rapid rereading provoked by her interpretation) explicitly licensed in the text of the play. A more traditional recourse to Machiavelli could equally well, or better, serve to expound the art/nature issue.

On her own terms Estrin does some interesting things. The fact that Spenser's foundlings are almost never granted the pleasing resolution of reunion and marriage does indeed illuminate his peculiar stance on the relationship between art and nature. Some of Estrin's insights into Shakespeare also seem profitable – such as her contrastive pairing of Cleopatra and Rosalind. The art/nature theme works on the late comedies and *Romeo and Juliet*. *The Raven and the Lark* thus contains points of interest to anyone intent on understanding any of the texts to which Estrin turns her attention. Those in literature will want to correlate her readings with those of other scholars. They may also consider using the foundling formula on other texts, while being more rigorous about extending it by analogy. But they should find at least parts of her book refreshing. Historians, on the other hand, will find little here.

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Charles L. Stinger. *The Renaissance in Rome*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985. Pp. xv, 444. \$37.50.

This is a book of synthesis and re-interpretation, and an important contribution to the growing body of work on Rome in the century preceding the Sack of 1527. Like most scholars, Stinger sees Rome as overshadowed by the papal court and approaches the Renaissance through the history of ideas. The book accordingly concentrates on views and attitudes held by a group of writers, scholars and artists who were also courtiers. The political, social and economic history of Rome, and even institutional developments at the Curia, appear as part of a backdrop that is secondary in importance.

Regarding "urban realities" Stinger gives an evocative account that concentrates on the disjointedness of Renaissance Rome. His interest is less in the conditions under which residents of the city lived than in "perceptions of Rome" on the part of articulate observers, including pilgrims whose experience was informed by their special receptiveness for the sacred and supernatural. Describing ceremony and liturgy as "the most significant human actions" in Rome (p. 46), Stinger focuses particularly on public manifestations such as the papal *possesso* and triumphal entries, which he connects with the Curia's enduring preoccupation with the correctness and splendour of liturgical ceremony.

Stinger links the Roman fascination with the subterranean (caves, catacombs