Betty I. Knott's translation of the *Ciceronianus* is excellent, with a clear text and, necessarily, very extensive annotation. Both in the notes and in the splendid introduction, she has combined vast learning, skilled use of language, and an undiminished sense of fun, as Erasmus himself would have hoped.

In conclusion, this compilation of satiric works by Erasmus is an indispensable book for students of western culture. For teachers of literature especially, it stands as a guide to much of the thought of Sidney, Shakespeare, Milton, Dryden, Pope, and Swift; our reading of all these must be enriched by its use.

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John N. King. *English Reformation Literature: The Tudor Origins of the Protestant Tradition*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1982. Pp.xvi, 539.

Those of us who once formally studied the literature of the Renaissance in university undergraduate English courses, and those of us who now teach it to undergraduates, are part of a tradition of students and teachers who through their acceptance and selection of "appropriate" authors and works of the period perpetuate what the Marxists might call an ideological bias towards Renaissance literature. This ideology is, in large measure, based on what we have been told to accept as good or representative or significant literature of the period. The period's own spokesman for the standard was Sir Philip Sidney. Sidney the theorist defined the acceptable standard of literature in his *Apology for Poetry* and Sidney the poet put the standard into practice in his writing. In our own time we have been told what literature of the Renaissance is good for us by C.S. Lewis in his enormously influential study, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama*. Sidney and Lewis share the same prejudices: both, further, are masters of the sweeping generalizations, Sidney in his reluctance to acknowledge the value of anything home-grown, Lewis in his apparent eagerness to use the adjective "drab" to apply to those literary works that do not meet his restrictive categories.

The question arises: why have so many of us felt the need to become members of Sidney and Lewis' party without perhaps really knowing it? Part of the answer to this question surely has to do with the wealth of material that the Renaissance period presents us with and the need to condense this material drastically into a sort of "Greatest Hits of the Renaissance" for the purposes of an eight-month course. Surely if there were world enough and time, would not more of us pay greater attention to John Bale's *The Image of Both Churches* or Robert Crowley's *Philargyrie of Greate Breтайne*? The answer to this question is probably no. For without proper critical editions of these Reformation masterpieces, we cannot reasonably expect anyone - except perhaps for those like King - to endure the rigours of the microfilm reader in order to sample the other traditions that stand behind - or, perhaps, more properly,

beneath – the mainstream represented by such figures as Spenser, Sidney, Donne, Shakespeare, Milton, and so on. But having said this, I recognize that I have introduced into the discussion a classic example of the chicken and egg situation. My point is that, if standard editions of lesser-known authors of the period were made available, these lesser-known authors would become better known and a greater knowledge of the richness of various Renaissance traditions would be ours; others might argue that standard editions are not available because these lesser-knowns are deservedly lesser known and their work can in no way be spoken of in the same breath as the works of the conventional masters.

In his book, John King asks the following question about the Tudor authors and their works that are the subject of his study: "How could so many authors and works, of such significance and influence, remain unknown to most Renaissance literary scholars." Although he does not provide any more of a complete answer to this question than I have, he does, I feel, show successfully who these authors are and why their works are significant. In the central part of his study, King focuses on the major literary productions of the period of the reign of Edward VI (1547–1553) and demonstrates how this literature "introduced Protestant themes and a plain style that would continue to influence English literature throughout most of the seventeenth century." King pays particular attention to the literature of the reign of the "young Josiah," largely because the relaxation of censorship regulations brought about by the King's enlightened uncle, Edward Seymour, led to a significant increase in the writing and publication of Protestant literature. By literature King means actual imaginative creations rather than simply writing in general. This oasis of literature of religious protest, directed largely against conservative Catholicism and in favour of simple Biblical wisdom, was essentially unknown in Edward's father's time because of Henry's religious conservatism and greater control of the press. What Edward's short reign seemed to allow, therefore, was a freedom of imaginative expression that issued in a number of significant literary productions.

King's book is divided into two main sections. Part one entitled "The Reformation Background," is a survey of the development of Protestant thought, its encapsulation within literature during Edward's reign, the relationship between government, literature, and the printing press, and the importance of the Bible as the main repository of source material for Protestant literary works of the period.

The second part entitled "Literature During the English Reformation" attempts to provide a survey of "gospelling" and satirical literature in its various genres: poetry, drama, and dialogue, to name only three of the more popular forms. In his commentary on the myriad of satirical literature that appeared during this period and that was directed against Roman Catholic doctrine and practices, King adds significantly to the old but still valuable work done by Samuel Tucker in his work *Verse Satire In England Before the Renaissance*. In this second section of the book, King devotes two separate chapters to two of the giants of the Tudor Protestant literary tradition, Robert Crowley and William Baldwin. His chapter on Crowley,

and particularly that section devoted to the "protestantization" of *Piers Plowman* and the Piers tradition, is one of the most fascinating sections in this often fascinating and learned book.

Although not all readers will want to spend much time studying the five appendices at the book's conclusion ("Reformation Manuscript Dedication;" "Reformation Woodcuts;" "The Scottish Propaganda Campaign;" "The First English Metrical Psalter;" "Robert Crowley: A Bibliography;"), many will find a wealth of interesting material in the detailed list of Reformation Literary Texts, c. 1525-1575, that King compiles.

The weakest part of this book is found in the chapter entitled "Continuities." As I have already suggested, King does an excellent job establishing the background and demonstrating the existence of the Protestant literary tradition as it appeared during Edward VI's reign. He is less successful, however, showing in detail the influence of this literature on the so-called mainstream authors of the Renaissance. In part the chapter entitled "Continuities" tries to demonstrate this influence and pick up various threads of influence that King has alluded to here and there in earlier chapters. However, the complex issue of influences would seem to require more than the fifty or so pages that King gives to it. What is called for is another book dedicated solely to this purpose. It would serve as an appropriate companion piece to this admirable study of the origins and development of the sixteenth century Protestant literary tradition.

In 1965, James K. McConica in *English Humanists and Reformation Politics Under Henry VIII and Edward VI* established the historical and political contexts for the humanist movement in England. In his work John King defines the literary context for the latter part of the same period. Taken together, both books are indispensable for a well-rounded view of the culture of an often neglected period of English literary History.

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