distinguishes (in a manner reminiscent of Roland Mushat Frye) between drama with a dogmatic or polemical purpose and drama that exists in the "historical matrix" – if you will – of a Christian age and makes use of available resonances, but in order to recreate human experience rather than to teach.

We must leave aside many pertinent questions including what we mean by a "Christian" play, audience or playwright, or indeed, what we, or our Renaissance predecessors, would take as evidence. Even so, it is impossible to accept the grounding premises of Roche's interpretation as simply "historical" in our critical age when we have seen works such as William Elton's *King Lear and the Gods* – the acme of "historicism" for some – which are in significant ways not compatible with those premises.

Even if their perspectives inevitably cannot illuminate all aspects of *King Lear*, these are for the most part stimulating essays, welcome in their general distrust of formulae, and certainly contributing to the play's continual renewal in our times. However, it is somewhat disappointing that they do not contribute more to helping us adjust the delicate balance between our respect for history, for the particularity and possible differences of other times and places, and our human response to Shakespeare. Many of us are indeed interested in reconstructing an "historical matrix" for understanding Shakespeare. We need to find ways of being "historical" (other than by making *a priori* assumptions of radical difference), to refine our conception of what we mean by that and to add to our knowledge, without sacrificing the nature of drama as felt.

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These two volumes stand together as a monument to what can be accomplished through coordinated team research and financial support that knows no national boundaries. Plans for a critical edition of Bucer's works (in three parts: *Deutsche Schriften*, *Opera Latina*, and *Correspondance*) were laid by François Wender (+ 1972) of Strasbourg with the support of Robert Stupperich (Münster) and have led to the publication of several volumes of the German writings and the *De Regno Christi*. Now the project is being carried forward by the International Committee for the Publication of Bucer's Works, consisting at present, in addition to Stupperich, of scholars from Strasbourg, to be sure, but also from Cambridge, Geneva, Giessen, Vancouver, Erlangen, Apeldoorn, and Paris. The letters received a subvention from France's Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and the Latin works one from the Nederlands Organisatie voor Zuiver- Weten-schappelijk Onderzoek. With Bucer's correspondence scheduled to grow to between 28 and 30 volumes, the Latin
works to an as yet unanticipated number and the German writings not yet complete, this cooperation must continue.

Both volumes have been prepared for publication with great care and erudition and have been well printed and bound by the publisher. The Correspondance consists of 86 letters from 1511 to 26 December 1524, plus a listing of another 71 that were surely written but have been lost. In addition, the volume contains a valuable chronology of Bucer’s life to 1523 and a fascinating archivally-based account of how he secured a post at St. Aurelia’s. Throughout, the reader is in the secure hands of M. Jean Rott, who has left no page unturned in Strasbourg or anywhere else to guarantee that this would be, as it is, the definitive edition. In the Opera Latina three scholars have each taken responsibility for one document: De Caena Dominica (1524), Bucer’s first writing solely on the eucharist, the Epistola Apologetica (1530), against Erasmus, and the unpublished Refutatio Locorum Eckii (1538?), which were probably notes for a series of theological lectures. The intervening and subsequent Latin writings have been reserved for separate volumes by type – Biblical commentaries, ministry in the church, and the like. Again the job of editing is careful and the apparatus is full.

But what do these volumes reveal about Bucer, at present the most enigmatic of the main-line reformers? They may suggest that he will remain enigmatic, for in these documents is to be found evidence of all the intellectual currents that coursed through Europe in the early sixteenth century. There is the early Dominican Bucer who still uses Thomistic categories in confronting Eck’s Loci in 1538. There is Bucer the humanist observing Luther at Heidelberg in 1518 and confusing him with Erasmus; and Bucer the reformer, rejecting Erasmus on doctrinal grounds in 1530. Finally, there is the incredibly eclectic Bucer as revealed in his library holdings from a letter to his Prior of 1518.

This team of editors has thus opened up not just important portions of Bucer but also of the learned culture in general during the early sixteenth century. It is to be hoped that the success of these volumes will help generate the human and material resources to bring the entire project to completion. Vive l’équipe internationale Bucerienne!

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At the end of Spenser’s Faerie Queene VI the slanderous Blatant Beast escapes, “Barking and biting all that him doe bate … Ne spareth he the gentle Poets rime.” Like many others, Spenser found this beast particularly fearsome. After all, to be bad-mouthed and misread by the authorities might involve exile, prison, or the scaffold, and for a poet to be misread by the public would impede his ability to instruct and reform. In this short intelligent (and expensive!) book, A. Leigh Deneef explores Spenser’s concern with bad speaking and bad reading, showing the defensive tactics he adopts. Furthermore, arguing that Spenser recognized the moral ambiguity of literary feigning and knew that if his evil enchanter Archimago works with illusion so do poets, Deneef also shows how he tries to protect the reader against his own poem’s power to mislead.