works. This is an especially welcome feature of the annotation, since Erasmus' correspondence is liberally studded with proverbs and *bons mots* derived from his *Adages*, many of which could otherwise go unrecognized. The present volume of the *Collected Works of Erasmus* thus offers elegant translations and impressive scholarship. The collaborators are to be congratulated.

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Barbara Kiefer Lewalski. *Protestant Poetics and the Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1979. Pp. XIV, 536. \$27.50.

This book is so erudite and thoughtfully executed that it is difficult to find fault with its parts. Our only argument can be with its general avowedly "revisionist" judgment on a vast body of seventeenth-century English lyrics that Lewalski calls "Protestant."

Lewalski's central thesis is that there existed in seventeenth-century England and New England a "mode" of Protestant meditation springing from the Reformation habit of examining the experience of the individual Christian life as a regenerative pilgrimage and of measuring the success of this pilgrimage according to its conformity to Biblical type. The meditative "mode" consisted in applying the significance of Biblical history to the "self" to find out how the self's pilgrimage to the Christian eternity was faring. The meditator was usually motivated by a concern with personal individual Calvinist "regeneration" from the general original fall of man. The meditator's method was gleaned from Biblical typology as he examined the nature of nature in the light of the revealed "Word," and as he also contemplated his own spiritual life in the light of the Word's historical manifestations. This meditative "mode" began to develop in England with the Biblically-inspired religious lyrics of Coverdale and Wyatt early in the sixteenth century. It developed simultaneously in prayer and in poetry, though its first real incontestable appearance in verse occurred only with Donne early in the seventeenth century. Strongly influenced by the pictorial techniques, the symbols and the abstracts figures of emblems and by the exegetical and experiential aims of Protestant sermon-writing, the meditative "mode" in verse was repeated among a number of poets whose aesthetics it fundamentally came to define. These poets after Donne, writes Lewalski, were the British George Herbert, Henry Vaughan and Thomas Traherne and, finally, the New England American Edward Taylor, with whom the Protestant poetics died out.

Lewalski's work is a massive piece of scholarship that requires several readings to encompass. Its preliminary first chapter describes the origin of the English Protestant *furor poeticus* in a Reformation "paradigm of Salvation." The first major part of the work then discusses how this poetic inspiration found its support in the "genre theory," "poetic texture" and "symbolic mode" of the Bible. Its second major part puts this tri-partite scriptural context within the more particular literary context of lyric, emblem and sermon. The third and final major part of the work applies Lewalski's findings of both these Biblical and literary contexts to the five poets in whom the Protestant meditative lyric lived and died.

Through its persistent quotations from, and references to texts of English Protestants like Baxter, Ambrose and Andrewes, and the often obscure prose works of her five meditative poets, Lewalski's book clarifies with some finality the religious sensibility and the poetic aims of Herbert, Traherne and Taylor. She succeeds in giving cogent substance to an historical background that has hitherto in literary scholarship been insufficiently filled in. The Protestant literary sensibility of poets like Herbert and Vaughan can no longer be considered as the sentimental fruit of personal religious crises and as poetic by mere coincidence. Herbert's retreat to Bemerton and Vaughan's seclusion in Llansantffread were not isolated phenomena, and the religious character of their verse is shown to have extensive intellectual coherence. These poets took part in a quasi-monastic movement into the parishes of seventeenth-century England. There, in a century of moral upheaval, the Revealed Word of God seemed to find its clarity again in the explorations of nature and the Bible. Out of these explorations, Protestant meditative verse was inspired.

By contrast, Martz's *The Poetry of Meditation* (1954), which *Protestant Poetics* was written to supplant, was also "revisionist" in its time. It linked the phenomena of English devotional poetry to Western Christian, often Counter-Reformation sources. Martz's critics, including Lewalski, have complained that he concentrated excessively on so-called Catholic genres of meditation, principally the Spanish mystic Ignatius Loyola's *Exercises*. However, Martz's findings had the virtue of freeing contemporary literary scholarship from encapsulating divisive terms like "Continental," "Catholic" and "Roman" as opposed to "British," "Protestant" and "English." Lewalski's work unfortunately revives this terminology with the resulting impression that Christian traditions from Christ to the Renaissance developed by nations. Such a practice helps Lewalski technically to isolate the details of English attitudes to the typology of the Bible and of nature and her discussion of these attitudes is brilliant. The poetry of Herbert particularly benefits in clarity of source and meaning. Above all, Herbert gains in stature as a poet. The reader of *Protestant Poetics* has the constant impression that the vague points in his reading of Herbert's poems for years and years are in the process of all being cleared up. He reads Lewalski's explanation of the cry of "child" at the end of "The Collar" as the summons of God to his New Covenant son, with the joy that comes of enlightenment (p. 314). But such English attitudes to natural and Biblical typology as Lewalski uncovers are surely diminished by her argument's implication that profoundly explorative thinkers like Donne superseded Augustine and Dante with scientific finality.

As a "revisionist" answer to Martz's *Poetry of Meditation*, *Protestant Poetics* has long been sorely needed to redress the balance in our knowledge of devotional traditions in verse. The answer was late in coming and the reader is grateful that it has come from a scholar of Lewalski's erudition and deep personal conviction. Contemporary literary scholarship has waited for this work with justified impatience and it is not disappointed. However, Lewalski's discovery of numerous basic Catholic positions on typology in Donne's sermons (pp. 136, 138) and her avowal that his divine poems fit with less ease than those of her other poets into her concept of Protestant typological meditation (pp. 140, 254, 282) are an indication that the historical convergence of ideas is more intricate than is suggested

by her method of pursuing it. To encapsulate the movement of ideas into the "English" or the "Continental" and the "Reformation" or the "Counter-Reformation," and to refuse to give an equal footing to more than one movement in one poet's work, has an unsettling effect on Lewalski's reader. This effect is of the same order as finding Ignatian exercital structures too much in English Protestant verse. If Protestant poets "saw themselves as correlative types or as anti-types of David the Psalmist" (pp. 136, 231), so did Jesuits like Southwell (e.g. "Davids Peccavi") well before Donne, and "the introspective, soul-searching, analytical religious lyrics" of Lewalski's poets, which had no classical precedents (p. 31), appeared as early as in the Jesuit Jasper Heywood's work (e.g. "The complaint of a sorrowful Soule" and "Alluding his state to the prodigall child") in *The Paradise of Dainty Devises* (1585). Also, though very occasionally, the Catholic background needs refining. Lewalski's work should have corrected (pp. 193-194) the error in Freeman's otherwise authoritative *English Emblem Books* (1948) that Benedict van Haefstan and his *Schola Cordis* (1629) were Jesuit - van Haefstan was Benedictine.

The truth, it would seem to me, undoubtedly lies in the point of view that absorbs both *The Poetry of Meditation* and *Protestant Poetics and The Seventeenth-Century Religious Lyric*. If Martz's work suffered from the absence of a critical mechanism that could set believable limits on the presence of exercital structures in verse, its original seminal impetus was nevertheless correct. The Ignatian exercital structure appears in the poems of too many English poets from Heywood to Eldred Revett over the period of almost a century for us to describe it as an "ancillary genre" to Protestant meditation, as does Lewalski (p. 147). I venture to say that *Protestant Poetics* suffers from the defect of many lasting seminal works of literary scholarship: it fails to concede ample place to certain fundamental realities in the history of thought while bringing to light so many others correctly for the first time. Lewalski's great work (the last word that can be applied to it is "thin") ignores many Renaissance poetic traditions and suggests inadequately the commonalty of Catholic, Anglican and Calvinist interest in, for example, the relation of Biblical typology to nature (e.g. the overwhelming preponderance of Jesuit writings on exegesis above all other subjects in the order's first bibliography by Ribadeneira in 1602). Lewalski's reader does not quite see the real limits, and hence the real historical force of Renaissance Protestant poetics in seventeenth-century England; the reason is that the work does not suggest enough to the reader the complexity of numerous Christian idealistic forces working on the already-existing traditions of Renaissance verse.

I do not wish to revive the political quarrels of the Reformation and the Counter-Revolution. I wish in fact the opposite. Literary ecumenism carries with it the threat of irrelevant critical sentimentality. However, judiciously used, it has the virtue of bringing the relevant literary realities to the fore. Nor do I wish, as an admirer of two very significant literary scholars of the current half century, to correct either Martz or Lewalski. I with them, rather, to get along.

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