although the reader is presented with no way of determining how extensive or systematic this borrowing from the new Folger text may have been. Basically, McGrade and Vickers have contented themselves with Keble. If the Folger edition had been more complete, it could have served throughout as the basis for the abridged text.

The modern reader confronts a varied landscape in the editing of Hooker. The Folger project under Hill's tutelage is bringing forth an excellent library edition in six volumes including commentary, rather expensively priced for most scholars, and in old spelling. Houk's scholarly but outdated edition of Book VIII is available in most libraries. The Everyman edition gives us Books I–V in a modern spelling text based on Keble and without much editorial assistance, but is no longer in print. Now McGrade and Vickers have produced a modern-spelling selection, based essentially on Keble but reflecting some Folger advances, in a readable volume published at £12.50. You pay your money and you take your choice.

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Robert M. Kingdon. *The Political Thought of Peter Martyr Vermigli, Selected Texts and Commentary*. Geneva: Droz, 1980. Pp xxvi, 198.

The intention of this book is to make available the largely neglected political writings of Peter Martyr Vermigli in an annotated edition, elucidated by a comprehensive and thoughtful introduction and through some additional selections from his Latin works. The passages chosen were determined by their content, their representative quality and the attention paid to them by contemporaries. The introduction provides a brief but satisfying statement of Vermigli's place in the tradition of the intervention into political questions by Reformed thinkers who were in education and profession really theologians. Vermigli's sources are discussed as are his methodology and intentions. The Italian's biography is only introduced when it helps explain the context of his work.

From this relatively short sample of Vermigli's writings, it becomes clear why he has not previously attracted the attention of scholars of political theory. Little of what Vermigli wrote regarding the nature of the state, its proper functions and the legitimacy of any resistance to it is original. His ideas are derivative and not as forcefully argued as those, for example, of John Calvin. Still, Kingdon makes a strong case for further investigations into Vermigli's role as a transitional thinker between the Lutheran position on the state and the Calvinist and as a source for subsequent generations of clergymen whose attitudes to political questions were very probably influenced by those of Vermigli.

This assertion is all the more interesting because Vermigli wrote no single work on politics; there is no systematic investigation of such matters at all in a corpus limited almost exclusively to theological subjects. Still, Vermigli often was confronted by the necessity to address political problems, given the role he played in England, Zurich and Strasbourg and given the intellectual environment of the Reformation. Vermigli's political thought is most apparent in the collection of *Loci communes* prepared in part

by Vermigli himself, but more so by his students after his death and not printed until 1576. The material of these commonplaces comes from his lectures and Scriptural commentaries and are thus intended as Biblical rather than political exegesis. Still, long passages discussing political issues arise especially from Vermigli's Old Testament commentaries. The *Loci communes*, analysed in a fashion illustrative of his scholastic training at Padua and built on Biblical, Patristic, Classical and Legal sources, enjoyed enormous popularity across Europe, seeing 14 editions before 1656. Obviously, Vermigli was indeed an important reference for generations of Reformed ministers who mined his text for material and *exempla*. For example, Kingdon notes John Milton's debt to Vermigli in *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, indicating quite conclusively the authority of the Italian reformer.

Without any doubt, then, the editor's contention that Peter Martyr Vermigli's political thought deserves more attention is correct; and Kingdon's book provides an excellent introduction to this subject. The English texts are edited, although retaining the original spelling and punctuation. A brief glossary and notes are also provided. The Latin passages, however, consist only of photographically reproduced pages from the original sixteenth century editions with no scholarly apparatus attached. Very useful tools for further research are added at the end of the volume: a short title bibliography of the works of Vermigli, including the locations of extant editions; a list of partial works and extracts; a general bibliography; an index; and an index of Biblical references.

Therefore, Kingdon has not only made a persuasive case for further study of Vermigli's political thoughts but also has provided the necessary background information to begin the task.

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Michael Murrin, *The Allegorical Epic: Essays in Its Rise and Decline*. The University of Chicago Press, 1980. Pp. 275. \$23.00.

Critical approaches to literature are in no small degree influenced by the critic's intellectual milieu. However scientific we try to be, however objectively we attempt to treat literary history, our methods are always determined by what are ultimately subjective frames of reference. Like it or not, the scholar, whether writing on Homer or Joyce, translates his material into his own idiom, makes it more contemporary, even if his goal is to preserve its historical context and character.

Recent studies in allegory are a case in point. A work such as Maureen Quilligan's *The Language of Allegory* is unmistakably a product of our times. Using methods and terminology of the structuralists to explore the relation between text, subtext and reader, she analyses allegory and some of the major examples of the form in terms of contemporary intellectual points of view. In their time, our proto-critics, the scholiasts and exegetes of later antiquity and the Middle Ages were doing the same thing with their principal texts – Homer, Virgil, and the Bible – and so, allegory was invented as a way of accommodating text to reader. Historically, allegory is first of all part of the critical rather than poetic process.