and *The Alchemist*, or Chapman's *Bussy D'Ambois* may illuminate the play for the scholar of the period but does nothing to enrich the experience of a modern theatre audience. Although the author praises Bradley for his attention to the play as "a changing dramatic experience" he feels that Bradley might have understood its mode better if he had had more acquaintance with Shakespeare's dramatic context; but the book does not prove this and *King Lear* gains more illumination from the warmth of Bradley's instinct than from the clear light of Professor Reibetanz's scholarship.

The Lear World is anyway quite a short book, but even so it reads like an article filled out and expanded beyond what the scope of its subject and approach can support; it is true, as the author says, that there is at present no study which approaches *King Lear* by way of other Jacobean drama, but his own seems to demonstrate that this is not a very fruitful approach. It is difficult to see how a consideration of the structure of Chapman's *May-Day* or Middleton's *The Phoenix*, both of which "loosely string discrete scenes on a slight situational framework," helps us to respond more fully to the structure of *King Lear*, or how an anatomy of the "stage-managed scenes" in *The Alchemist* will throw light on the procedures of Edmund and Edgar in manipulating the action of *King Lear*. True, all the plays do share the similarities that Professor Reibetanz points out, but in all cases the differences are much more significant. Occasionally it seems to me that his comparisons are really wrong-headed; Jonson's ironic mode of characterisation in *Volpone* surely produces a distancing effect quite alien to what Professor Reibetanz implies about *King Lear* when he stresses its overriding concern with feeling, and it is hard to accept that the audience are invited to respond positively to that gullible pair, Celia and Bonario, as they are to Cordelia and Edgar. In fact the book's best insights are those which do not derive from relating *King Lear* to anything else but from looking closely at the play on stage, as for instance that the common audience reaction of applauding the disguised Edgar's victory in a fight with Oswald in IV. vi may suggest an unconscious awareness that the victims in the play are at last turning the tables on their tormentors. The discussion of the subplot in Chapter 3 is also useful and interesting, particularly the treatment of both Edmund and Edgar as stage-managers, and the idea that the nature of the subplot as an intrigue action makes it in some ways more accessible than the main plot. But in general the book is often unconvincing, and this reader at any rate felt that Professor Reibetanz's frequent citation of the works of other critics neither increased one's confidence in his thesis nor, indeed, implied his own. It will be a useful book for college students because it surveys much of the basic critical background of *Lear* studies, but it is unlikely to fire anyone's dramatic imagination.

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Gareth A. Davies, *A Poet at Court: Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza (1586-1644)*. Oxford: The Dolphin Book Co. Ltd., 1971. Pp. 367. \$4.50.

In this work Dr. Davies offers the first comprehensive study of a writer who, although now virtually ignored, in his day figured prominently among the *littérateurs* of the

court of Philip III. Davies's interest in Mendoza was awakened by the contradiction between Gracián's admiration, expressed in his *Agudeza y arte de ingenio*, and the subsequent demise of the poet's fame.

A Poet at Court is a splendid work. The approach is that of a literary historian and critic, with well-appointed judgements succinctly expounded. Following Mendoza's biography — his relationship with Olivares and his participation in court life make fascinating reading — Dr. Davies discusses Mendoza's reputation among his literary contemporaries. Although Mendoza's position at court may have elicited some exaggerated eulogies, there is little doubt that he was highly regarded not only as an outstanding poet but also as an accomplished *entremesista* and dramatist. Among his acquaintances he could count such luminaries as Quevedo, Lope de Vega, Luis Vélez de Guevara, even collaborating with Quevedo in the composition of dramas.

The discussion of Mendoza's verse and drama is detailed (Chapters V-VI, IX-XII). As poet Mendoza excelled in the use of traditional forms: the *romances*, *coplas*, *redondillas*, *endechas*, and, above all, the *décima* (in the use of which Lope acclaimed him as unequalled). Davies attributes Mendoza's predilection for the *décima* to his love of the conceit, the intellectual exercise so favoured by seventeenth-century Spanish writers, and the basis of Gracián's admiration.

As dramatist Mendoza composed some twelve works, a small number considering the enormous output of some of his contemporaries. His greatest success appears to have been in his social comedies and his spectacle play, *Querer por sólo querer*. Nevertheless, Davies concludes that Mendoza's plays, although interesting, are of secondary order in the Spanish theatre of the seventeenth century.

Dr. Davies's major contribution for those with a marginal interest in Mendoza is to be found in Chapters III, IV, and VIII. The first, "Mendoza and *Conceptismo*," contains a discussion of what is understood by the conceit and, more important, traces some of the possible parallels that might have contributed to the *conceptista* vogue. For instance, Davies examines the relationship between the emblem and the epigram, the cult of the device, the admiration for the epigrammatists Martial and John Owen, the importance of the Belgian humanist Justus Lipsius, the possible influence of Jesuit sermons, and the *cancionero* tradition. These, as Davies correctly argues, are not individually the sources of the conceit, but they reflect a habit of mind conducive to the ready acceptance of the *concepto*: they exercised the mind and demanded the participation of the *ingenio*. This excellent chapter is followed by "Poetry, a Courtly Art," a splendid analysis of the emergence of a literature responding to the demands of the court, where wit, elegance and decorum were esteemed traits. Such courtly preoccupations burst forth in Philip III's reign (Philip II, austere and strong-willed, had directed his attention almost entirely to matters of state). Davies sees this period as the culmination of a number of factors existent in the sixteenth century: the knightly ideal, the courtier perfection elucidated by Castiglione, the expression of Platonic love, the debates of love, and the vogue of the pastoral novel (frequently *romans à clef*), which proved so popular that the king and queen acquired the pastoral pseudonyms of Fileno and Belisa.

Chapter VIII ("A Poet and his Audience") describes the kind of audiences that a poet/dramatist had at his disposal in the seventeenth century, and also examines the much under-estimated question of music in the formation of lyrics — whether a work was intended as a poem or as a musical composition.

A Poet at Court is not only an excellent analysis of Mendoza's life, his work, and the demise of his fame (attributed largely to a change in poetic sensibility away from courtly wit); it also provides substantial and illuminating material on the poetic and dramatic practices of the day. We are reminded that *conceptismo* is not a sudden literary phenomenon; it is the culmination of earlier manifestations in the same way that *culteranismo* marks the extreme of preceding tendencies. For anyone interested in the development of *conceptismo* and in the literary atmosphere of Philip III's court Dr. Davies's book will be an invaluable source. It is a scholarly work, but Dr. Davies displays his erudition modestly. Translations of Spanish quotations at the foot of corresponding pages substantiate Dr. Davies's desire to reach a wider audience; success in this aim is further enhanced by pertinent and judicious references to contemporary events or writers in English and French literatures.

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Mark Phillips. *Francesco Guicciardini: The Historian's Craft*. Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1977. Pp. xii, 195. \$17.50.

Although long recognised as one of the "great historians," Francesco Guicciardini remains under-studied compared to his contemporary, Machiavelli. Most of Guicciardini's work was published only between 1857 and 1869, when it aroused the shocked fascination of critics like de Sanctis and Symonds. His *Storia d'Italia*, which was probably written with publication most clearly in mind, first appeared in 1561, twenty-one years after his death; but Guicciardini's evident anti-Medici bias and his challenge to Florentine *campanalismo* made him unfashionable and early Italian and European editions appeared in expurgated form. Even today, despite translations of his major works, Guicciardini remains under-appreciated, and it is to end this relative neglect that Phillips addresses himself.

Phillips does not intend to present "a comprehensive study of Guicciardini's historiography," and throughout there is a refreshing concentration on the texts, with a minimum of distracting critical apparatus. Nor is this a biography, although biographical information is given to set out the relationship of Guicciardini's works, and to place the historian in his political and social background. Phillips, in his anxiety to break new ground by introducing the student to Guicciardini's 'craft' as a historian, makes clear his dependence on such fundamental studies as that of Ridolfi. Phillips considers that "the art of reading history has been neglected," and that the works of Renaissance historians have been approached by modern historians too exclusively as source material, with insufficient awareness of their value as works of literature or of how they were appreciated in their own day. While recognising Guicciardini's extensive use of primary sources in, for example, the *Cose Fiorentine* and the *Storia d'Italia*, Phillips is less interested in his reliability as a historian and more in his skill and pre-occupations as a minute narrator of events. Hence, in his *Storie Fiorentine* attention is placed on the effectiveness of Guicciardini's account of the Pazzi conspiracy rather than on what it adds to an understanding of the event.

This approach is welcome. Other historians have commented on Guicciardini's