by Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Bireno's abandonment of Olimpia, Ruggiero's abandonment of Alcina and Orlando's liberation of Olimpia are renditions of Ovidian myths but Ariosto plays myth against myth to produce a number of variations on the basic theme of abandonment. In exploring these ideas, Professor Hanning provides a novel approach to the problem of Ariosto's indebtedness to his classical sources.

The final paper on the *Furioso* is B. Reynolds' "Ariosto in English: Prose or Verse?" Professor Reynolds compares the relative merits of three noted prose translations of the epic poem and of three prominent verse translations. She offers her own verse translations of several stanzas to exemplify her view that the limitations of the individual versifier, rather than those of the English language, are responsible for producing inferior translations. Her point is well contended and her verses are truly representative of the aesthetic experience of the original, although, as she herself concedes, "much is inevitably lost."

This review does not permit an examination of the remaining essays of the collection which are, needless to say, up to the standard of those just referred to. C. Klopp's "The Centaur and the Magpie: Ariosto and Machiavelli's *Prince*" deals with Ariosto's *Cinque Maggio*, while C. Segre's "Struttura dialogica delle *Satire*" and P. Wiggins' "A Defense of the *Satires*" are self-explanatory.

The anthology is rounded out by two fine bibliographic reports. J. Gibaldi's "The Fortunes of Ariosto in England and America" provides an interesting and most useful account of Ariosto criticism in the two countries indicated. A valuable list of publications by and on Ariosto in translation accompanies this essay. The concluding essay is E. Esposito's "Situazione editoriale delle opere ariostesche," which succinctly brings into focus the various editions of Ariosto's works.

All in all, *Ariosto in America* constitutes an entertaining and academically sound text which would enhance any collection of Ariosto criticism.

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D.E. Hoak. *The King's Council in the Reign of Edward VI*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976. Pp. x, 374. £12.50.

In spite of the immense number of books and articles published on the Tudor period during the last two or three decades there are still immense and significant gaps in our knowledge of the period. For the reign of Edward VI, in particular, studies of the lower and upper Exchequer and the Privy Council have long been desiderata. Prof. Hoak has now very competently filled one of those gaps with his book on the Privy Council.

Prof. Hoak's book naturally divides into two sections. Chs. 1-5 deal with sources, membership and the conduct and authorisation of business, while Chs. 6 and 7 analyse the part which the council played in the day-to-day government of the realm and in the high politics of the period. An admirable nine-page conclusion summarises the author's findings.

Prof. Hoak points out that earlier views of the Edwardian Council were based upon a superficial examination of meagre, and often badly edited, printed sources. He now describes a wide range of source material, both printed and manuscript, in

considerable detail and analyses the comparative value of its various sections. Unfortunately the council registers are records of acts and events, *not* minutes of debates or discussions of the board. Therefore they tell us nothing of the arguments and compromises which preceded significant political decisions. Even the dates given in these registers during the period of Protector Somerset's rule do not record actual meetings of the board but only the record of business (warrants, etc.) authorised by one or more councillors in the course of their duties. Not until after Somerset's fall do the dates record the formal meetings of the council. Again, although registers of letters were destroyed in the great Whitehall fire of 1619, owing to improved clerical organisation and a greater provision in taking copies a better collection of conciliar letters survives than for any earlier period. This is especially true of the years of Northumberland's rule when William Cecil's care (he was a most efficient secretary) added agendas to the documents preserved.

Prof. Hoak successfully disposes of the old legend that membership of the council rose to the unwieldy number of forty. Forty-five men are known to have served during the whole reign, but membership at any one time fluctuated between thirteen or fourteen and thirty-two. Therefore numbers were not much out of line with those of Henry VIII's later years. The origins and experience of members are closely analysed. There were very few clerics but in the early days as many as eleven members were conservative Henrician catholics. Seven had held military commands. Many others had seen active military service. More than half had some diplomatic experience. Just over half were courtiers and all of them were widely experienced administrators. All in all the membership exhibited both considerable competence and talent if not brilliance. These chapters, together with the following sections upon the conduct and authorisation of business, are necessarily highly technical and closely analytical. They make far from easy reading but they do inspire the confidence of the reader in Prof. Hoak's grasp of these sources and his ability to handle them competently.

The remainder of the book dealing with administration and politics will be of greater interest to the general reader and to the undergraduate. Important conclusions emerge from these studies. The council, and individual councillors, were extremely hard working, dealing with every conceivable topic of government as well as informal, quasi-judicial arbitration. Protector Somerset was most unwilling to consider the views of his fellow councillors. He by-passed the council whenever possible, and took major decisions in both domestic and foreign policy alone. His extreme bad temper ("great choleric factions" as sir William Paget lamented) when offered unwelcome advice became notorious. His lone, dictatorial tendencies certainly contributed to his downfall. Northumberland, on the other hand, always acted with the council, but by 1552 he had purged it of all opponents. Northumberland, in spite of his political adventurism, his adoption of a more extreme protestantism from purely selfish ambitious motives, did successfully initiate financial reform and began to pay off the immense foreign debt, thus partly clearing up the chaos left by Somerset's expensive war policies and administrative incompetence.

Prof. Hoak clearly demonstrates that W.K. Jordan's view of Edward VI's administrative precocity is most improbable. Northumberland and his friends provided the King with selected council agendas and "the pious imp" enjoyed copying them out.

There is nothing to suggest that he in any way controlled them. Northumberland, again, organised special sessions of the council for the King to attend but the evidence suggests that these were no more than formal, arranged occasions, special shows. No real decisions were ever taken there.

All in all this is a book which provides major reinterpretations of the reign of Edward VI. Students interested in the period will ignore it at their peril.

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Jean Jehasse. *La Renaissance de la Critique. L'essor de l'Humanisme érudit de 1560 à 1614*. Saint-Etienne: Publications de l'Université de Saint-Etienne, 1976. Pp. 712.

Dresser en sept cents pages le bilan d'un univers culturel et intellectuel aussi riche que celui de la fin de la Renaissance n'est pas une entreprise aisée. Telle est pourtant l'intention déclarée de Jean Jehasse. Dès le début de son ouvrage, il indique son désir de "retrouver la vision du monde des Grands Humanistes érudits et d'en dégager les traits spécifiques" (p. 8). A la fin de son étude, il considère avoir réussi à reconstruire, malgré l'imprécision de certains points, "toute une vision du monde" à travers de grandes lignes de force. Le défi est de taille, on le voit, et l'étude monumentale, mais on peut se demander si l'ensemble ne pêche pas à la fois par sa longueur et par sa brièveté: deux cents pages claires et concises auraient sans doute suffi pour dégager les grands traits de l'humanisme érudit. Des milliers ne pourraient pas épuiser les détails des sources, des polémiques et des idéologies d'une vision du monde qui touchait tant d'aspects et de domaines, qui s'alimentait de tant de connaissances diverses dans tous les champs du savoir: la philosophie, la religion, la science, la politique, l'économie, les arts, les lettres. . . Tant de vies consacrées toutes entières à tant de travaux! Peut-être ne fallait-il pas précisément reculer devant l'ampleur de la tâche.

J. Jehasse ouvre et ferme son analyse sur des considérations méthodologiques et historiques. Son intention est de chercher à situer ce qu'il appelle la renaissance de la "Critique." Le mot est d'ailleurs immédiatement défini à partir du *Thesaurus* d'Henri II Estienne, paru en 1572, où il est employé dans le sens grec de choix sévère et judicieux. C'est à partir d'Estienne et de la date de 1575 que Jehasse situe ce renouveau, au coeur même des crises que traverse la Renaissance et qui atteignent leur apogée avec la mort et les funérailles de Charles IX. Il s'agissait, somme toute, de consolider les acquis de l'imprimerie contre les dangers que faisaient courir à la Tradition lettrée une prolifération d'imprimeurs et de typographes incultes, qui rabaissaient l'imprimerie au rang d'une technique. Ce sont les règles d'un Art que prétendra défendre, autour d'Henri II Estienne, une brochette d'humanistes érudits, attentifs à saisir dans leur totalité et leur authenticité, les corpus romains et même hébreux.

Peu connu et mal diffusé, le mot conserve néanmoins son acception et continuera de désigner une double fonction: expliquer les obscurités d'un texte ancien et corriger les passages corrompus par les copistes ou les mauvais imprimeurs. Dans son *De Arte Critica* de 1597, intitulé au complet: "De la Critique envisagée principalement sous son double aspect correctif et indiquant la raison à employer dans la