Reid Barbour. *English Epicures and Stoics: Ancient Legacies in Early Stuart Culture*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1998. Pp. x, 312.

"It is the thesis of this book that early Stuart culture is diacritically obsessed with the Stoics and Epicureans, apart from and in relation to one another; that the Stoics and Epicureans afford early Stuart readers and writers with the most impressive yet vexatious answers to many of their most urgent political and religious questions; and that given the complexity with which the philosophies have been transmitted, the cultural brokers of early Stuart England are forced to wrestle with the paradox by which the friendly philosophy becomes the enemy, and the enemy the friend" (pp. 2-3). Reid Barbour pursues this thesis throughout this book, exploring outcroppings of Epicurean and Stoic themes in mostly literary works. He emphasizes the ethical and political aspects of these two Hellenistic philosophies in the realms of high politics and religion.

Epicureanism and Stoicism have been entwined throughout their history, in part because of their juxtaposition in Cicero's *De Fato* and *De Divinatione*. In the Renaissance and early modern period, they continued to be discussed in relation to each other. Both philosophies were materialistic, and both needed extensive modification to be acceptable to a Christian audience. Epicureanism denied the role of the gods in human affairs and emphasized unpredictable chance as a primary causal agent in the world. Stoicism could be understood as providential, but the Stoic emphasis on Fate and extreme determinism was problematic for theologies that were based on notions of free will, both human and divine. Both philosophies were fundamentally concerned with the question of how to lead the good life. Epicureanism advocated a hedonism based on the calculus of pleasure and pain. Stoicism recommended submitting to inexorable Fate. For both philosophies, tranquility was the product of the good life. Moral and political philosophy was a key concern to seventeenth-century English writers, who lived in a society rent by religious and political strife. They frequently struggled with these issues in discourse with the ancient schools of philosophy, as Barbour amply shows with reference to the writings of such figures as Francis Bacon, Robert Burton, John Milton, and Lucy Hutchinson.

There are several problems with *English Epicures and Stoics*. Nowhere does the book contain a clear presentation of the major tenets of Epicureanism or Stoicism. Some important aspects of these philosophies are overlooked, such as Epicurean political philosophy, which Lisa Sarasohn has recently shown to be a major influence on the political philosophies of Hobbes and Locke. Thus, Barbour tries to draw an analogy between atomism and political theories of sovereignty, but never mentions the fact that both Lucretius and Gassendi wrote explicitly and extensively on political theory.

Natural philosophy was an important locus for early modern discussions about Epicureanism and Stoicism. Many writers sought to replace Scholastic Aristotelianism with a new, complete philosophy. In an age deeply affected by Renaissance humanism, they sought ancient models for their new philosophy.

Stoicism and Epicureanism were obvious candidates, but they had to be modified to make them acceptable to Christian writers of the day. Two Continental philosophers, Justus Lipsius in Flanders (1547-1606) and Pierre Gassendi (1592-1655) in France, undertook this task. An international community of scholars was concerned with these issues, a fact which the book's narrow focus on England ignores. There is nothing wrong with a book's dealing with the English treatment of these issues, but the broader context of the English discussions should be acknowledged.

The book is practically devoid of discussions of natural philosophy, despite the fact that consideration of these philosophies often took place within the context of the search for a new philosophy of nature. Lack of context, more generally, is a problem with the book. Barbour is so immersed in the material that he sees no need to explain it to a wider audience. The book is chock-full of literary references but does not sufficiently contextualize either the writers or the individual works.

The reception and influence of Epicureanism and Stoicism are important themes in early modern intellectual history. This reader did not find Barbour's account of them very satisfying.

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Jeffrey Johnson, *The Theology of John Donne*. Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1999. Pp. xiii, 162.

Johnson's book has timely goals: to "describe the distinguishing features of Donne's theology, as revealed in . . . the *Sermons*, and to read the historical/political circumstances in which he preached in relation to these theological foundations." In his view, the *Sermons* provide no "systematic theology, yet they do present a clear theological vision" (p. x). Accordingly, he examines a range of the sermons, referring also to the *Devotions* and some *Divine Poems*. Some sermons are treated in detail, with suitable attention to the historical setting.

Johnson identifies the Trinity for Donne as the "fundamental . . . belief for regulating Christian faith and practice," and then argues that its "divine community . . . serves for Donne as a model for individuals to conform themselves to the triune God specifically through a liturgical participation in the Church" (p. x). Reminding us that Donne often inveighs against "singularity" (p. 32), Johnson highlights passages referring to the liturgy and to the communal element in the church, and gives special attention to sermons on baptism and on the churching of women.

Aware of recent writings linking Donne with Calvinism, Johnson does two good things: (1) he shows significant differences between Calvin and Donne (such as Donne's threefold division of the soul, including memory, following Augustine, and his strenuous denial of supralapsarianism); and (2) throughout his book he cites very many parallels and similarities. In fact, at a number of points Jeffrey helpfully compares Donne's ideas with those of Calvin and Hooker, showing how