référence à Diogène, dans le Prologue, avec le lucianisme prépondérant à l'époque. Le pantagruelisme aurait, en fait, une coloration proprement diogénique. Une curieuse coïncidence s'attache d'ailleurs à la date de parution du *Tiers Livre*, 1546, qui est aussi celle de la publication de la traduction française des *Epistres de Diogenes*. Est-ce pur hasard ? Michèle Clément ne le pense pas. Quant au *Discours de la Servitude volontaire* de La Boétie, ses positions cyniques seraient indubitables, avec le genre de la diatribe, dirigée contre le peuple mais pour le service du peuple – et cela même s'il n'y a aucune référence explicite au cynisme dans ce traité contre la tyrannie. Enfin, à la présence de Diogène dans les *Essais* de Montaigne (une vingtaine d'occurrences dont les deux tiers sur l'Exemplaire de Bordeaux) s'ajoute une rhétorique de la provocation qui, selon M. Clément, s'assimile à une sorte de « situationnisme cynique » (176), même si le mot cynique n'est jamais prononcé.

Encore plus que les idées, ce sont les modes de discours qui autorisent M. Clément à détecter une influence cynique dans les textes de la Renaissance. Les jeux de mots, le franc parler, le mélange sérieux comique, l'éloquence parodique, les détournements illogiques, les démonstrations par l'absurde, tous ces modes de discours s'apparentent à une esthétique contestataire qui relèverait d'une éthique dite « cynique ». Peut-être cette revendication pourra-t-elle paraître par trop exubérante et tout le monde ne s'accordera pas à reconnaître une attitude « diogénique » dans la satire du clergé corrompu chez Érasme, dans l'écart entre savoir et charité chez Rabelais, dans le fait de laisser faire la nature chez Montaigne. Diogène interprétait l'injonction de l'oracle de Delphes comme le droit de falsifier la monnaie. Faut-il y voir une contribution essentielle du cynisme à la théorie critique du signe à la Renaissance (72 et suivantes) ? La vogue du cratylisme ne suffirait-elle pas à rendre compte de l'intérêt de l'époque pour les problèmes de l'ambiguïté du langage ? Et lorsque le géant Gargantua réapparaît vers la fin du *Tiers Livre*, faut-il voir dans le petit chien qui le précède une référence à la « doctrine cynique » de cet ouvrage ? Quoi qu'il en soit, les nombreuses conjectures qui se pressent dans l'étude de M. Clément ont un effet tonifiant et jouissent de ce même pouvoir contestataire que l'auteur reconnaît avec raison aux allusions cyniques qu'on a trop souvent tendance à oublier en lisant les textes canoniques de la littérature humaniste.

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Zachary Lesser. *Renaissance Drama and the Politics of Publication: Readings in the English Book Trade*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. Pp. xii, 244.

Prompted both by Foucault's critique of the concept of authorship and by the desire for an appropriately historicized version of that critique, theatre historians have worked hard over the last decade or more—not least in the field of repertory studies—to offer alternatives to authorship as the principle of thrift in the construction

of meaning, emphasizing as a basic premise the collaborative nature of theatrical production. At the same time, other scholars have turned their attention back to the playwright by emphasizing the self-consciously “literary” nature of certain canons, notably that of Shakespeare, and demonstrating the extent to which plays were written with readers rather than audiences in mind. Now Zachary Lesser, by investigating the ways in which meaning accrued to plays when issued by publishers with particular specialities, offers a way to focus on the printed text and its readers without reinstating the author as the primary source of meaning.

The central claim of *Renaissance Drama and the Politics of Publication* is that early modern plays take on new meanings when we pay attention to the identities and motivations of their publishers. As he puts it, the plays a given publisher published “form a corpus as much as any author’s work does” (77), and the nature of that corpus determined to a greater or lesser extent how readers read a given publication by that publisher. This ought, at first sight, to be obvious. After all, the way Humphrey Moseley appropriated the Beaumont and Fletcher canon by publishing the plays with overtly Royalist commendatory materials made sure that those plays were misread—in relation, that is, to their politics at first performance—for centuries. But Lesser is right to note the lack of critical attention that has been paid to this question and he is right to pursue it with the tenacity he demonstrates in his book. If the Moseley Beaumont-and-Fletcher was a one-off with overt political intent, Lesser shows that certain publishers, over a period of years, established canons that can only be recognized when the range of their publications is assessed. “We cannot,” he argues, “analyze the ways in which books were marketed and sold, as though their meanings were predetermined and stable, without simultaneously discussing the shaping role of the book trade in creating these meanings. The publisher does not merely bring a commodity to market but also imagines, and helps to construct, the purchasers of that commodity and their interpretations of it” (17). For Lesser, the meaning of a given play is created by the publisher as he constructs a readership, and thus a market, for that play.

Certain questions present themselves. Were publishers as actively intentional as Lesser seems to imply? What scope is there in his account for the arbitrariness, contingency, favour-exchange, and so forth of the early modern publishing world? He recognizes that there is a danger of attributing too much agency to a given publisher, that not all publishers will actually have *read* the books they published, though he quite reasonably points out that whether or not publishers read books, the way they chose to market those books entails a reading of them. He acknowledges too that “early modern publishers could never hope to control completely who read their books nor how they read them,” so that “publication could produce, and surely must often have produced, unintended results” (18). Recognizing these issues, he chooses to focus on four publishers—Walter Burre, Nicholas Vavasour, Thomas Archer, and Thomas Walkley—who stayed in business a very long time (twenty-four, twenty-six, twenty-eight and forty years respectively, as it happens) and who must therefore have had both a clear grasp of and a determining influence on the requirements of

the market. "Studying a play through a publisher's specialty," he argues, "allows us to specify the particular texts and debates that the play was thought, at least by one historical actor, to engage; to whom it was thought (and made) to speak; and in what political field" (22-3). The publisher with a demonstrable knack of isolating, profiting from, and sustaining a market for a particular line of books is thus Lesser's privileged reader.

The book consists of an engaging introduction, a useful brief account of the early modern book trade, and four chapters on the individual publishers. Lesser begins by reading Burre's apparently illogical decision to publish a play, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, that had flopped on stage as an attempt—which history shows to have been a success—to create a market by distinguishing between "popular" and "witty" plays: the failure of the play in the theatre, represented as the ignorance of the lower-class audience in not understanding its subtleties, thus paradoxically presented Burre with a readership for the printed text, carefully created through its dedicatory apparatus. He then finds the logic for Vavasour's belated publication of *The Jew of Malta* in 1633 in the ways in which that play could be read anachronistically as a dramatization of the debate over Laudianism. He returns to the 1610s to show the difference it makes to our understanding of the impact of plays such as *The White Devil* and *The Roaring Girl* when they are read in the context of Archer's "dialogic" publication of texts from both sides of the Jacobean *querelle des femmes* as negotiating a "safe" way for readers of the middling sort to engage with the threat of the independent woman. And he concludes with a substantial chapter on Walkley's quartos of the 1620s, notably *A King and No King* and *Othello*, arguing that they form part of a larger engagement in Walkley publications with the question of "mixed government."

At times, "if," "likely," and "it cannot be a coincidence that" are perhaps a little too prominent. There is of course much virtue in "if," and there is nothing wrong with well-supported critical speculation (this is, after all, a book about speculation in the medium of print), but the necessary guesswork involved at times is a reminder of the shortage of practical evidence for readers' responses to published texts—a shortage that, to be fair, Lesser acknowledges early on by pointing out, *inter alia*, the frustrating though understandable preference libraries have traditionally shown in choosing "clean" copies of early modern books rather than those with productively full margins. Again, some of the individual parallels he suggests are less convincing than others—not least when he offers a tendentious correlation between Ernest, Count of Mansfeld, and *Othello* as "extravagant and wheeling strangers"—and have the effect of associating him less with the post-New Historicist critics he cites approvingly in his introduction and more with literary allegorists of an earlier generation.

Carping aside, Lesser has written an excellent book that is both an exemplary instance of the (re)turn to the "literary" in the analysis of early modern drama and a genuinely new contribution to the field in its demonstration of one of the ways in which meaning in play-texts is created by agents other than the author. It will be hard for anyone who has read his book to go on to read an early modern play without

paying attention, in a way they are unlikely to have done before, to the identity of its publisher—especially if it was published more than a certain number of years after it was first performed, by a publisher with a long-term track record—and thus to the readership both addressed and created by that publisher.

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Susannah Brietz Monta. *Martyrdom and Literature in Early Modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Pp. viii, 245.

Megan L. Hickerson. *Making Women Martyrs in Tudor England*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005. Pp. ix, 239.

Martyrologists as diverse as John Foxe and Robert Persons built extensive religious and political narratives around the testimonies of their chosen martyrs. These martyrologists sought to bear witness to the historical continuity of their own faith traditions, while discrediting the religion of their opponents. Susannah Brietz Monta's *Martyrdom and Literature in Early Modern England* traces the impact that competing Catholic and Protestant martyrologies had upon English literature of the period 1540-1650. Reading works such as Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Copley's *A Fig for Fortune*, Munday's *Book of Sir Thomas More*, and Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, she argues that competing martyrologies pressured early modern authors to represent the search for religious truth as an essentially agonistic endeavor. In a world where a true martyr looked disturbingly similar to a heretic, Monta maintains, the historiographical projects of the martyrologists, and their truth claims, were undermined by a plurality of competing voices.

Monta divides her work into two main sections. Part One is broken into three chapters, which deal with how Catholic and Protestant martyrologists attempted to establish an interpretative framework to promote their own martyrs' testimonies while countering polemics by competing martyrologists, and shows how both made the common argument that the cause and not merely the fact of death determined the validity of martyrdom. Part Two pairs texts influenced by Protestant and Catholic martyrological material with the aim of demonstrating the effects that the competing traditions had on a variety of early modern authors. This section of the book contains a lengthy discussion of suffering and its connection to religious confidence, focusing on the religious poetry and prose of Robert Southwell and John Donne. While the Jesuit Southwell sought to find grace in pain and emphasized the redeeming rewards that martyrdom brings, Donne saw literal martyrdom as unnecessary and instead explored the possibility that martyrdom may be a spiritual experience, and a part of everyday life. Monta's well-documented account of the place of conflicting martyrological testimonies in the deep trouble over conscience of the Reformation era might have benefited from further contextualization, for instance by engagement with writers on conscience and casuistry such as William Perkins and William Ames. But this