la littérature encyclopédique, la glose ou la Somme, en passant par le commentaire questionné ou le poème sacré ».

L'Utopie de Thomas More est abordée par Gregorio Piaia du point de vue du paratexte. Celui-ci ne saurait se limiter à une fonction rhétorique ou ornementale, ou encore à une simple *captatio benevolentiae*. More est l'initiateur de la pensée moderne utopique, il est l'auteur d'un « libellus vere aureus ». C'est à ce même livre que Cristina Perissinotto consacre sa communication. Elle s'accorde avec G. Paia pour dire que les épîtres dédicatoires appartiennent à l'œuvre elle-même.

Richement illustrée, la contribution de Stefano Benassi prend pour objet d'étude la décoration des villas en partant de l'œuvre de Leon Battista Alberti. Sont ainsi envisagés le syncrétisme mythico-symbolique entre le sacré et le profane, la volonté de domination et l'ascèse mystique.

Tous ceux qui s'intéressent au livre et à son histoire liront avec profit ce volume substantiel.

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David B. Ruderman and Giuseppe Veltri, ed. *Cultural Intermediaries: Jewish Intellectuals in Early Modern Italy*. Jewish Cultures and Contexts. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004. Pp. 293.

The subtitle to this fascinating collection captures many of its strengths, along with some of its problems. "Jewish Intellectual" and "Early Modern Italy" are recognizable terms, but they presuppose categories that are not at all self-evident. Is everything written by a Jew, "Jewish writing"? In a period when conversion—forced and voluntary—was not uncommon, does Jewishness cease to be relevant when a writer becomes a Christian? Are "intellectuals" defined by a particular set of non-doctrinal (halakhic) interests or can a writer whose concerns are primarily theological, doctrinal, and ritual matters still qualify as an intellectual? Is "the early modern period" as meaningful an organizing principle for Jewish intellectual and cultural history as it has become for its western, Christian counterpart? In a period prior to the emergence of the nation-state, what value is there in examining Italian examples under a single rubric, rather than in preserving the specificity of Florence, Mantua, Pisa, Naples, and Ferrara? What is the relative importance of a writer's time spent in one of these centers in relation to his (or his family's) origins in the Iberian peninsula or later years within the Ottoman Empire?

It is one of this collection's great strengths that no single answer emerges to any of these definitional questions. Indeed, in his lucid introduction, David Ruderman identifies the problematics of terminology and periodization inherent in such an undertaking. Ruderman helpfully enumerates a variety of developments that contributed to the new expressions of Jewish intellectual life, including the advent of the printing press (which was as monumental for the dissemination of Hebrew texts,

sacred and secular, as it was for Latin and vernacular texts), the ensuing growth of Christian Hebraism, the presence of a surprising number of Jews in the medical profession (which led to a good deal of cross-cultural and cross-religious exposure), the migration of Jewish and converso population from Spain and Portugal to Italy, and, as both a cause and an effect, a breakdown of cohesion between Jewish authoritative texts and other sources of knowledge.

Fabrizio Lelli's learned contribution begins the volume. Taking the example of Pico della Mirandola's teacher of kabbalah, Yohanan Alemanno, Lelli teases out the biographical and autobiographical elements of his writing to demonstrate that, like his contemporary Christian counterparts, he engaged in a life-writing that sought to provide moral guidance. In his writings on Moses and Solomon, Alemanno's approach resembles that of both pagan and Christian hagiographies, adducing these biblical figures as paradigms of moral perfection. Similarly, Lelli suggests that Alemanno's autobiographical descriptions share significant elements with earlier philosophical literary texts, like Dante's *Vita Nuova*, in which a prophetic calling is perceived within the symbolic landscape of self-representations.

Taking as its subject another of Pico's Jewish teachers, Harvey Hames's intriguing analysis of Elijah Delmedigo's rationalist approach to Judaism places Delmedigo's use of Averroes and Aristotle in light of his contact and disagreements with Christian figures like Pico and Ficino, and shows the care with which Delmedigo had to express his differences with his Christian patrons. What emerges is the provocative view of Delmedigo as an early modern version of Joseph Soloveitchick's "Halakhic Man," caught between the impulse to rationalize the Jewish commandments and the awareness of the inadequacy of human reason to such a task.

As Hames's essay and others in this collection make clear, Jewish intellectuals in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries participated in and responded to a significant challenge to the dominance of Maimonidean (and hence Aristotelian) rationalism. Alessandro Guetta's discussion of Yehiel Nissim da Pisa shows how this challenge drew on the traditionalism of Judah Halevi's *Kuzari* and the kabbalism of Nahmanides, two medieval thinkers who found a newly receptive audience in an Italian Jewish community conditioned by the neo-Platonism and anti-rationalism of Pico, Ficino, and other renaissance humanists. Da Pisa's is an interesting test case, for it shows how a Jewish writer of this period can embrace new, non-Jewish ways of knowing, while at the same time asserting the superiority of the revealed truth of the Torah over the knowledge produced by this new episteme.

A similar tension arising from the use of the "toolkit" of renaissance humanism in the service of Jewish particularism emerges from Adam Shear's discussion of Judah Moscato's commentary on the *Kuzari*. Shear convincingly shows how Moscato was sympathetic to the humanist impulse of identifying textual variants, intensely interested in rhetoric like contemporary humanists, and had a humanist's interest in Hebrew as an idealized language. Along with this more universalist approach to knowledge, however, Moscato sought to offer an encyclopedic account of Halevi's text that served, in turn, as a reaffirmation of the specifically Jewish proven-

ance of the *prisca sapientia*, the primordial wisdom upon which all later knowledge was based.

If Delmedigo's veiled assertions of Jewish superiority are characteristic of an understandable anxiety in the face of Christian authorities, and if da Pisa's and Moscato's concerns were exclusively with Jewish audiences, Leone Ebreo, the subject of Giuseppe Veltri's contribution, seems to have succeeded in finding a means to express such religious pride without alienating his non-Jewish readers. Ebreo drew upon his familiarity with Christian and pagan models to compose his best-selling *Dialoghi di amore*, a text that situates itself within the popular genre of courtly literature, thereby making it appealing to those who might not have shared its distinctively Jewish point of view, even when he was attacking Christianity subtly for its corruption of Jewish truths.

Martin Jacobs seeks to show how Joseph ha-Kohen exploits Renaissance models for more explicitly polemical purposes. Drawing on humanist accounts like that of Paolo Giovio, ha-Kohen has a totally different audience in mind than his Christian sources and thus celebrates Turkish victories over Italian fleets. Though Jacobs's discussion helpfully shows the degree to which ha-Kohen subjects his historical materials to the Jewish view of history (prophecy and fulfillment, sin and punishment, martyrdom and deliverance), it is less convincing in showing what is especially "humanist" about his narratives.

In an essay on Azariah de' Rossi, among the strongest of the collection, Joanna Weinberg shows how de' Rossi was intensely aware of the two audiences, Christian and Jewish, to which he addressed himself in his magnum opus, *Ma'or Eynayim*, and the very precarious position in which this placed him. His text displays an extraordinary immersion in the new forms of knowledge with which we associate Renaissance humanism as well as a profound commitment to the advancement of such knowledge in pursuit of perfection, what he calls the "Beautiful Soul." Unlike many of his contemporaries, de' Rossi seems to have been able to avoid bias while retaining a fierce pride in his Jewish identity.

The special challenge of conversion—in the form of pressure from Christian authorities or in the figure of the converso returning to his Jewish origins—is a subtext of nearly all the essays in this volume. It becomes explicit, however, in those by Gianfranco Miletto, Eleazar Gutwirth, and Don Harrán. Miletto's investigation into one of the earliest programs of Jewish pedagogy in the work of David ben Abraham and Abraham Provenzali is a fascinating account of the Jewish response to the Counter-Reformation, one that became necessary with the increasing presence of conversos in the Italian Jewish community. In an effort to prepare Jewish youth for the intellectual and religious challenges of a world in which it was no longer possible—nor preferable—to isolate oneself, Provenzali proposed the establishment of a curriculum and educational institution modeled on the newly flourishing Jesuit colleges. Gutwirth's important reassessment of Amatus Lusitanus, perhaps the most famous converso of the period to return to the Jewish fold, makes the convincing case that for the study of this Portuguese immigrant to Salonika, notorious for his

diverse interests, “[t]he interrelation of the different fields are part of the central epistemological problem rather than mere ornaments.” Better, perhaps, than any other figure discussed in this volume, Lusitanus stands as the paradigmatic “cultural intermediary,” straddling the worlds of Christian and Jew; Portugal, Italy and the Ottoman Empire; history, literature, philosophy, medicine, and the natural sciences. As court musician in an emphatically Christian world, Salamone Rossi Ebreo, the subject of Harrán’s multi-faceted essay, repeatedly found himself in the precarious position of having to compose music that was neither too Christian—for how dare a Jew have the temerity to write in a sacred register?—nor too Jewish—for what place could Jewish music have in the Mantuan court? As a musician also seeking to contribute to his Jewish community, Rossi was repeatedly cautioned not to desecrate the synagogue by incorporating Christian and secular elements. Rossi’s resistance to conversion in the face of what is likely to have been enormous pressure and temptation is noteworthy. Yet he was not wholly embraced by the Jewish community, either, having to find his most distinctive voice in the instrumental music he composed for neither court nor synagogue. Our preliminary questions reemerge here: to what extent it is helpful to call Rossi’s instrumental, *moderno* music particularly Jewish?

The volume’s concluding essay, by the preeminent scholar of Jewish mysticism, Moshe Idel, proposes yet another binarism to be interrogated, the distinction between Safedian and Italian Kabbalah. In characteristic fashion, Idel disputes the view, standard since Gershom Scholem, that the Kabbalah of the sixteenth-century Safed mystics was *the* dominant form, influencing others without itself being influenced. He acknowledges that Italian Kabbalists were certainly reading and responding to Safedian Kabbalists, and makes the convincing case that Safed kabbalists, in turn, reacted quite negatively to Christian Kabbalah’s influence on Jewish Kabbalah in Italy. As a locus of vital thought, the Italian Jewish community could not be ignored.

This excellent volume is one of several published in the last few years to participate in the reshaping of early modern intellectual history by revealing the extensive and complex interactions between Jews and Christians.

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Marcia B. Hall, ed. *Rome. Artistic Centers of the Italian Renaissance*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Pp. xxiv, 358.

This is the first in a series of five projected volumes – the others to include Venice and her colonies, the northern courts of Italy, Naples and southern Italy, and Florence – which aims to provide a new history of Italian Renaissance art focused on artistic centers and their cultural contexts, rather than on artists or media. After a preface to the series as a whole, this volume continues with a cultural introduction, by Ingrid Rowland, and an introduction by Marcia Hall to the art history of Renaissance Rome,