

different dialogues. These voices belong, as could be expected, to Socrates (chapter 3), Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans (chapter 4), and Plato himself (chapter 5).

Plato's Persona offers a global vision of Ficino's hermeneutical work, which has the advantage of presenting a rigorous historical-philological method. In particular, I find three highlights that advance Ficino scholarship and open up new research directions. The first one is Robichaud's study of the rhetorical features that Ficino implements in his philosophical work. Although the topic of the relations between rhetoric and philosophy in the Renaissance has been explored from various points of view (suffice to mention Pico's famous letter *De Genere Dicendi Philosophorum*), Robichaud's perspective is unique because it shows how Ficino's rhetorical tools, mainly prosopopoeia and enargeia (i.e., "the fabrication and presentation of vivid personae" [17]), serve specific philosophical or performative purposes. The second great contribution is the research of the "Iamblichean undercurrents" (212) in Ficino's opera. The presence of these undercurrents has been ignored by the literature probably because Ficino's translations of Iamblichus were never published. While the book is not limited to exploration of this influence, the discoveries presented by Robichaud on the relations between Iamblichean elements and the Renaissance-Pythagorean conception of the dialogues certainly constitute its most innovative part. Without a doubt, this book will invite the publication of more studies on this topic.

Finally, the textual work done by Robichaud on the different historical elements contained in manuscripts owned or annotated by Ficino is outstanding. His expertise allows him to clarify several new elements in Ficino's exegetical practices—for example, the importance of scholia in his interpretations and their incorporation in his published commentaries. In sum, Robichaud has written a work that explores with great detail and originality Ficino's relations with various traditions of Platonism. It definitely constitutes a very important contribution to Renaissance studies.

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The Intellectual World of the Italian Renaissance: Language, Philosophy, and the Search for Meaning. Christopher S. Celenza.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. xvi + 438 pp. \$120.

This is a rich and engaging study. Not a history of Renaissance philosophy as such, it is, rather, an examination of the intellectual worlds of the fifteenth century and in particular of the dominant role of Latin. Its purview certainly includes bona fide philosophers such as Lorenzo Valla and Marsilio Ficino, but it is equally concerned with poets such as Petrarch and Poliziano, with the classicists Nicolo Nicoli and Poggio Bracciolini, with the historian and statesman Leonardo Bruni, with Cardinal Bembo and literary

criticism, and so on, all of whom receive careful analysis. Celenza emphasizes that these philosophizing figures often pursued nonphilosophical disciplinary and transdisciplinary paths in search of authentic wisdom. That is, their love of philosophy carried many of them beyond the formal Aristotle-based curricular philosophy of the schools, and beyond the Scholastic Latin that continued still to serve as its medium. And Celenza draws our attention to “the two great medieval genres” that constituted the teaching “bedrock”—namely, the commentary and the question, “intimately linked as they were to classroom practice” (11, 15). He is engaged, in other words, with late medieval and early modern education in theory and practice, and with the “ways of thinking” education imparted and preserved. The concern here is with seeing the age’s philosophy as the product of where and under what circumstances and by whom it was taught, and with the central texts selected in any curricular plan. The author urges us to bear in mind, however, that there was less variety in the later university curricula than one might initially suppose, given that they were increasingly standardized by the professoriate, which controlled the teaching of philosophy in the universities, including the many new universities, until well into the last half of the seventeenth century.

The study closes with a memorable citation from Galileo’s response in his 1625 *Saggiatore* to a Jesuit named Grassi, who had drawn upon some of Galileo’s work without attribution and had questioned his theories about comets. In the *Saggiatore* Galileo rearticulates the ancient trope that the universe is a book. But unlike the book of the Bible, the book of Nature is difficult, if not impossible, to read precisely because its philosophical (i.e., its natural) components can only be approached by way of geometry and arithmetic. And here we witness the emergence of the mathematical language of early modern natural philosophy running *pari passu* with the emergence of the new vernaculars. As one of the first Latin-literate figures to elect to write scientifically in both Latin and Tuscan, Galileo was to publish his epoch-making *Sidereus nuncius* in 1610 in Latin, with the *Saggiatore* coming out just fifteen years later in Tuscan. The author argues arrestingly that it is only after the long and contentious debate regarding correct Latin usage both in antiquity and in contemporary Renaissance scholarship “had played itself out” and “the history behind it had been excavated by Italian scholars” that thinkers could turn to “canonizing” the Florentine vernacular (401–02). In this context we must recognize the pivotal role of the Accademia della Crusca; Celenza further suggests that Galileo had good political reasons to elect to write the *Saggiatore* in the vernacular—namely, that it must have targeted an important lay audience. In sum, Celenza’s Latin-centered narrative runs throughout this multifaceted volume, though subordinated at times to other concerns (401–02).

Among these is a fascination with the conflicting authorities wielded by such institutions as the church, the universities, the courts, and even particular philosophical schools against the inner imperatives of individuals, the authority that is of the self and its dissident voice. This obviously suggests a recognition of the “polarity” (402)—Celenza’s term—between the demands of conformity and the inner imperative of an

outsider, however mediated, however clandestine. Again, Galileo is a signal example in that he was able to enjoy the anti-institutional patronage of the Medici and, later, the patronage afforded him by his induction into the Roman Accademia dei Lincei and by the Lincei's embrace of the *Saggiatore*. It is interesting to think of the learned societies being in this way at the cutting edge and to witness their shaping role in Italy's intellectual life at the close of what, from the perspective of Celenza's thesis, is the long fifteenth century. I leave it to others to weigh the merits of the chapters on the individual philosophers, all of which deserve close examination in their own right, and all of which speak variously to the linkage between language and philosophy, the core concern of this stimulating book.

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The Emancipation of Biblical Philology in the Dutch Republic, 1590–1670.

Dirk Van Miert.

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This wonderful study was written in the context of the research project Biblical Criticism in the Seventeenth Century, led by Henk Nellen and Piet Steenbakkers. The publications of this fruitful and inspiring project also include *Scriptural Authority and Biblical Criticism in the Dutch Golden Age: God's Word Questioned* (2017) and Jetze Touber's *Spinoza and Biblical Philology in the Dutch Republic, 1660–1710* (2018).

The Emancipation of Biblical Philology departs from the question of how the philological methods of the Leiden-based French scholar Josephus Justus Scaliger cast their shadows on all biblical scholarship of the early modern Netherlands and England until Spinoza's *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* appeared, in 1670. Or, rather, "How . . . did the strong philological tradition of Leiden [University, JB] play out in the hands of different scholars who fostered conflicting agendas?" (21). Van Miert starts with an introduction on biblical philology in the sixteenth century, and then treats Joseph Scaliger's biblical scholarship (chapter 1). That biblical philology had its societal impact is shown in chapter 2, "Biblical Philology: Nothing Radical (1609–1619)," which discusses the Twelve Years Truce controversies concerning the interpretation of divine providence, which involved far-ranging political consequences, and chapter 3, "Mobilizing Biblical Philology: The States' Translation (1619–1637)," which discusses the political implications of this influential Dutch translation of the Bible. At the core of the book are chapter 4, "The Biblical Philology of Daniel Heinsius (1619–1641)," and chapter 5, "Grotius's *Annotiones* on the Bible (1619–1645)." The two following chapters treat their intellectual opponents "Claude Saumaise and the 'Hairy War' (1640–1650)" and