

existentiel » (302). La dernière contribution, de Dominique Brancher, revient au lien entre la médecine et le scepticisme de Montaigne auquel la première a fait allusion. Se centrant sur l'image de la rhubarbe (11, 12), elle révèle de façon ingénieuse toutes les connotations de cette image dans un contexte pyrrhonien.

C'est à Marie-Luce Demonet de clore ce recueil et elle revient à la métaphore illustrée ludiquement par le frontispice et à la médaille de Montaigne, nous rappelant que « l'examen des opinions dans la balance est un mouvement perpétuel » (323). Il est certain que le recueil offre matière à réflexion. On peut se demander si l'argumentation n'est pas parfois quelque peu forcée, si les rapprochements ne sont pas fortuits, mais l'essentiel est qu'il s'agit d'un recueil qui nous incite à revoir constamment notre opinion sur Montaigne, à constater de nouvelles perspectives et à rester sceptique devant notre prétendue compréhension des *Essais*.

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Charles G. Nauert

Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe

Second edition. New Approaches to European History

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Pp. x, 253.

When the first edition of Charles G. Nauert's *Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe* was published in 1995, it was deservedly admired. For instance, Albert Rabil noted in *Renaissance Quarterly* that it was "the best synthesis of humanism by one writer thus far penned," and James Estes in the *Sixteenth Century Journal* that it was "a masterpiece of concision." But Rabil also identified problems in the book's treatment of certain topics, including art and the activities of women humanists. Estes, for his part, remarked at the beginning of his review that although the book was part of a series called "New Approaches to European History," its approach to its subject was hardly new. Both reviewers looked forward to the eventual appearance of a revised edition. This has now appeared, again in the Cambridge "New Approaches" series, with an updated bibliographical essay, and revised treatments of three topics: fifteenth-century Italian education, civic humanism, and women humanists. These do not by any means add up to a radical overhaul, and the third has the disadvantage of having been completed before Nauert could see Jane Stevenson's *Women Latin Poets* (2005).

So, on the one hand, Nauert's work is still greatly to be admired: at its best, this book offers a fine combination of magisterial learning and lucid expository prose.

But on the other hand, it now feels even more conservative than it did to reviewers ten years ago. Most strikingly, its geographical scope is much too limited: for instance, an account of humanism which does not once mention the name of Matthias Corvinus of Hungary is obviously missing something. This is not simply a matter of concision: Nauert's index has nine entries for Louvain and seven for Erfurt, but none for Cracow or Prague. The balance is very different in a comparable book, Peter Burke's *The European Renaissance: Centres and Peripheries* (1998). A glance at the two books' lists of illustrations tells an eloquent story: Nauert gives us reproductions of ten Italian masterpieces from Giotto to Michelangelo and two paintings by Dürer, while Burke offers, inter alia, architecture from Alcalà and Strathbogie, a woodcut of an obelisk erected by the Danish polymath Henrik Rantzau, a self-portrait by the Netherlandish artist Catherine van Hemessen. Ten years after Norman Davies' *Europe* reminded a very wide readership that the story of the continent does not stop at the line of the Iron Curtain, the narrowness with which Nauert conceives "Renaissance Europe" makes his approach seem far from new.

That is not to complain that Nauert should have written a book more like Burke's; for the purposes of a second edition, he might perhaps have made his book *less* like Burke's. One of the problems which he sets himself is—to adapt the old joke about the student essay on Petrarch—that of standing with one foot in humanism while gesturing with the other at the "the culture of Renaissance Europe." This leads to unsatisfactory material such as the cursory treatment of art, which was not revised for this new edition, though Rabil had very reasonably remarked in his review of the first that "The reader finishes this section without knowing why it was included in a history of humanism." Why is Mantegna part of the story of humanism but not Palladio? Are pictures more centrally humanistic than music (which is not treated here at all)? These awkward questions would have been avoided had this book dealt more fully with Italian and Italianate humanism (including that of eastern Europe and Scandinavia) in a restricted sense, and left the wider topic of Renaissance culture alone. The result might not have been more of a "new approach" than the first edition, but it might have been a more deeply satisfactory treatment of a better-focussed subject.

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