

This is not at all to detract from Dealy's enormous accomplishment, since it is *The Stoic Origins of Erasmus' Philosophy of Christ* that allows us to clearly formulate such philosophical questions with respect to Erasmus in the first place.

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*The Poetry of Kissing in Early Modern Europe: From the Catullan Revival to Secundus, Shakespeare and the English Cavaliers.* Alex Wong.

Studies in Renaissance Literature 34. Woodbridge: D. S. Brewer, 2017. xx + 346 pp. \$120.

With his *Basia* (first published in 1541) Janus Secundus made the “essential analogy of kiss and poem” (5) and so, Alex Wong claims, “made the lyric of kissing into a genre” (313). Secundus's collection of kiss poems signifies the culmination of centuries of development of the motif of kissing in verse, and so offers a helpful turning point for consideration of the early modern development of the *basium* tradition. Wong is concerned to state that this present study is not “a consideration of ‘kisses in literature,’” but instead charts “the rise and fall of a genre” (1), and so ensures a balance is struck between exploration of early classical models and later vernacular works. As such, Wong's important and comprehensive exploration of the classical origins of this trope comprises chapters 2–4 of this study, with chapters 5–7 charting the development of the motif through Neoplatonic “soul kisses” in European lyric, and finally in British Renaissance and Cavalier responses.

As a key precursor to Secundus's work, early European development of a neo-Catullan movement is explored through discussion of works by sixteenth-century Italian writers, including Pontano, Marullus, Sannazaro, Beroaldo, and Crinito, and later French imitators, including Marot, Ronsard, Belleau, de Baïf, and Bonnefons. This broader context for the development of *basium* through *baisier* and into English allows Wong to account for the inherent tension arising from recognition of the “vast influence of Catullus 5 and 7 on English poetry” (47), even though a “Catullan' style never flourished in English” (40).

Chapters 2–4, therefore, have a particular focus on the origins of the Catullan *basia mille*. The wider exploration of how Catullan kisses are transmitted and multiplied, through poetic imitation and adaptation, is a helpful reminder that the later neo-Catullan kiss is also, therefore, “Ovidian, Tibullan and Propertian, as well as Martialian” (54). Time is taken to explore in detail the significance of key sociocultural concepts, to ensure the reader is equipped to interpret “hard” and “soft” kisses in later early modern verse, for instance. So we see discussion of the social implications of *mollitia*, and attention is paid to how these versifiers self-consciously play upon competing representations of *vir durus* and elegiac “softness.” Wong's insistence on maintaining a focus on poetics allows for recognition of the implications of the ambiguity of *molliculus* within the wider *basium* tradition, noting

the latter's significance as a "literary game" in which space is given for the "formation and reformulation of certain postures . . . in respect of masculinity and male sexuality" (102–03). Although Wong asserts the tradition is inextricably linked to masculine personas, space is given here to consideration of works by Louise Labé, Aphra Behn, and Margaret Cavendish, and so may act as a prompt for further scholarship concerning the influence of the *basium* tradition on women's writing from this period.

Moving on to discussion of early modern European texts, Wong demonstrates how a view of "the continental scenery" (201) forms a crucial backdrop to an interpretation of English vernacular works. Briefly proving the *basium* tradition's influence on Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella*, Wong's weight of focus in chapter 7 confirms its more significant impact on Drummond's vernacular imitations of European antecedents, and in the works of the Neo-Latin Scottish poets Buchanan, Ayton, and Leech. As discussion moves on to the "Sophistication of the English Kiss" (chapter 7), we are reminded that although "early modern drama is full of kisses . . . few stage kisses betray close kinship with the lyrical *basium*" (255). As such, Wong touches only briefly on Shakespearean drama before moving on to a fuller discussion of *Venus and Adonis*, which is "patently though subtly" informed by the Secundan *basium* tradition (261). Through the exploration of Catullan-Secundan influences on the works of Shakespeare, Campion, Jonson, Donne, Cowley, and Stanley, in this chapter, Wong is able to develop new insights into the reading of specific works through the lens of the *basium* motif, while also demonstrating the weight of repetition and reiteration that forms the basis of a literary practice based on principles of *imitatio*.

Indeed, with this study, Wong aims to demonstrate the "value of attending closely to those aspects of literature which are most generic, imitative and repetitive" (xvii). *The Poetry of Kissing* succeeds in focusing on the minutiae of motif, while maintaining a broad appeal. Here the novice may learn the value of attending to the detail for a better understanding of the whole; and the seasoned scholar is encouraged to return to well-known texts, to explore the new perspectives that may be afforded when proper account is taken of Neo-Latin contexts.

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*Traduire Lucrece: Pour une histoire de la réception française du "De rerum natura" (XVI<sup>e</sup>–XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle)*. Philippe Chométy and Michèle Rosellini, eds. Libre pensée et littérature clandestine 68. Paris: Honoré Champion, 2017. 394 pp. €65.

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The editors Philippe Chométy and Michèle Rosellini explain that their aim was "to elucidate the process of reception of *De rerum natura* beginning from this tradition's most tangible element, the French translation of the Latin text" (7). As such, *Traduire*