

produced when Yorke was arrested and charged with complicity in the Gunpowder Plot and with harboring Jesuits.

In chapter 7, White concludes by reconstructing an Oxfordshire performance of *Mucedorus*, staged by the parish players of Stanton-Harcourt during Christmas of 1652, in which the floor of the inn being used as a stage collapsed, killing six people, mostly children. Drawing almost entirely on the anti-theatrical account of the tragedy by John Rowe, White argues not only that this performance combined all the threads that wove through provincial drama in general—feast-day entertainments, regional touring, civic politics, and religiously motivated hostility to theater—but also that it was mounted, as were the Catholic parish dramas with which his study opens, to raise funds for parochial income. The evidence for this latter claim, however, is speculative at best.

Lack of evidence is what prevents White's book from accomplishing its grand ambition to revise our understanding of the relationship between religion and drama in early modern England. The data White cites is too anecdotal to support his contention that stage-playing and festive games were an integral part of Reformation church culture in provincial England. White does, however, offer an extremely interesting and salutary set of counterexamples to the current orthodoxy that the Reformation secularized drama, severing its ties to religious institutions, and that provincial theater disappeared after the 1570s. As White demonstrates, in some key cases early modern Englishmen and women expressed their religious devotion by dressing up and playing parts for at least one hundred fifty years after Henry VIII declared England a Protestant nation.

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***Herculean Labours: Erasmus and the Editing of St. Jerome's Letters in the Renaissance.*** By **Hilmar M. Pabel**. Library of the Written Word 5. The Handpress World 3. Leiden: Brill, 2008. xvii+389 pp. \$148.00 cloth.

Any study of Erasmus's extensive editorial career would be an overly daunting undertaking, and in this eloquent and engaging monograph Hilmar Pabel has set for himself an ambitious task, which he accomplishes with considerable skill. Pabel's ambition lays in his examination of Erasmus's editing of Jerome's letters which were published in 1516. While referring to Erasmus's efforts as Herculean, Pabel's book is no less so. By exploring how Erasmus and other editors arranged and commented on Jerome's letters Pabel seeks to "re-envision" (6) Erasmus's editing of Jerome within the theological and

intellectual currents of the first half of the sixteenth century. Pabel argues correctly that the paratexts were anything but neutral scholarly apparatus, but rather provided the “theological and religious ambience for the intended reception of Jerome” (13). Furthermore, by establishing the theological and religious ambience for the reception of Jerome, Erasmus was able to establish himself as a secondary author with Jerome.

The first chapter, “Jerome in Print,” begins with a lengthy overview of the history of the manuscript collections of Jerome’s letters. Many of Jerome’s letters were to be found in monastic *scriptoria* during the Middle Ages; however, in the Renaissance these letters were read by both the ecclesiastical and humanist communities. Ecclesiastics admired Jerome’s theology and controversies with early Christian heretics. Humanists on the other hand focused on the image of the solitary Jerome in his study as the model par excellence of contemplative study. This discussion set the stage for the central argument of this chapter that Erasmus’s editing of Jerome’s letters was a part of the larger confessional debates of the first half of the sixteenth century. While Erasmus’s initial purpose in editing Jerome was to “serve the humanist theological purpose of letting the Church Fathers compete with, or even replace, the medieval scholastic doctors” (85), by 1516 Erasmus’s editorial efforts became dominated by confessional concerns. Despite the edition’s assertion of his theological credentials for restoring Jerome, Erasmus’s paratextual work came under criticism in the 1520s, especially from Diego Zúñiga who accused Erasmus’s Jerome as an example of Protestant heresy. Yet, as Pabel explains early, Protestants distanced themselves from Jerome due to his defence of life and the preeminence of virginity over marriage.

The second chapter, “Classifying Jerome,” provides a painstakingly detailed discussion of the laborious task of organizing and sifting through the innumerable manuscript editions of Jerome that had proliferated during the late Middle Ages. This proliferation resulted in many pseudo works being incorporated into the corpus of Jerome’s letters, which led in turn to the necessity of medieval editors critically examining the texts to determine authenticity. Citing several examples of medieval editions, including an eighth-century manuscript completed during the episcopate of Arebo of Freising, Pabel traces the process by which these pre-*Erasmian* editors sought to confirm the authenticity of Jerome’s letters. However, as Pabel points out Erasmus’s innovation in his classification of Jerome’s letters was that he separated the spurious from the authentic by placing what he considered inauthentic in a separate volume. This editorial decision in effect made Jerome himself “a principle of classification” (150). Yet this decision did not go unchallenged, and Erasmus recognized how controversial his approach was. Regardless of the criticisms levelled against Erasmus, liberating the authentic Jerome from the forgeries which crept into the church father’s corpus of letters was an essential

component of Erasmus and other northern humanists' efforts in restoring theology based on a correct reading of the Bible and the patristic authors.

The third chapter, "Portraying Jerome," sets the context of Erasmus's effort to separate the inauthentic Jerome from the authentic. Pabel turns his attention to the Dutch humanist's vita of Jerome. Throughout this lengthy chapter, he describes Erasmus's efforts to extricate "the biography of Jerome from the legends or errors that had accumulated in the old lives" (175). This was a part of the larger purpose of presenting the authentic Jerome to Erasmus's readership. But as Pabel is also quick to remind his readers, Erasmus's portrait of Jerome was to serve a specific intellectual and confessional purpose. Thus, by extricating the real Jerome from his fictional persona, the church father could be what he wrote (246). For Erasmus, the real Jerome functioned as an exemplary model of the "perfect humanist and the portrait of the true theologian" (247). The vita further served as a marketing tool in order to get the letters read and read properly.

Chapter 4, "Elucidating Jerome," concentrates on the placement and functions of the paratexts of Erasmus's edition of Jerome's letters. As the title suggests, the purpose of these paratexts was to open the door to the reader into Jerome's letters. This chapter delves with considerable detail into the various types of paratexts employed in Erasmus's textual exegesis. The chapter is divided into subsections dedicated to Erasmus's *marginalia*, *argumenta*, *scholia*, and *antidoti*. In each of these sections, Pabel successfully keeps his main argument in sight. He persuasively demonstrates how each of these paratexts was employed to present an accurate image of Jerome while at the same time presenting a theologically orthodox and humanistically inclined Jerome to his readership.

Pabel's book itself represents a Herculean labor. He has successfully provided a glimpse into Erasmus's editorial process and the role this process had in the reception of Jerome by an early modern audience. Furthermore, it has drawn attention to an important aspect of Erasmus's textual scholarship. Given the importance of Erasmus's editorial effort, it is surprising that more work has not been done on those efforts. This book goes a long way in filling that gap.

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***The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm, 1566–1672: Material Religion in the Dutch Golden Age.* By Mia M. Mochizuki.**

Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2008. xxiv+399 pp. \$124.95 cloth.

Most of us know Dutch churches only through Pieter Saenredam's seventeenth-century paintings of what seem to be empty whitewashed interiors, cleansed by