

The Reception of Erasmus in the Early Modern Period. Karl A. E. Enenkel, ed. Intersections: Interdisciplinary Studies in Early Modern Culture 30. Leiden: Brill, 2013. xv + 276 pp. \$141.

The historical (as well as theological) problem of the reception of Erasmus's works arose no later than 1559 when they were put on the Index, and was already the subject of several large monographs in the twentieth century. It has been refocused over the past decade or so, partly as a consequence of the general upsurge of work in reception studies and the history of the book. The editor's introduction to these proceedings from a conference held in Amsterdam in 2011 provides an excellent *tour d'horizon* of the scholarship, before eschewing the rigors of *Rezeptionsästhetik* and affirming that "early modern readers felt legitimized to *use* texts in ways they *liked*" (15), that "poly-interpretability" is as likely to be a feature of nonfictional as of fictional texts, and that the latter distinction is in any case scarcely applicable to an oeuvre such as Erasmus's. Enenkel's own essay considers the options for readers of Erasmus held out to posterity by his friend Beatus Rhenanus in the *Vita Erasmi* of 1540, showing how he downplayed his

author's literary virtuosity and emphasized instead his scholarly precision. Counterbalancing Beatus, several of the other contributors document the uptake of Erasmus's poetic and declamatory writings by major literary figures of his own age and the next. These include the Neo-Latin poet Eobanus Hessus in his versifying of the *Encomium Artis Medicae* (Dirk Sacré), Antonio Brucioli in a dialogizing of *The Praise of Folly* (Reinier Leushuis), and Pierre de Ronsard (the late Philip Ford, tracing ideas and idioms of irenism from one author to the next).

In an ingenious and persuasive piece of detective work, Paul J. Smith uncovers new evidence for Rabelais's early knowledge of *The Praise of Folly*, by reading between the lines of Jean Thenaud's *Triumphes des vertus* (ca. 1517), a work that only circulated in manuscript and was largely unknown to scholars until a critical edition began to appear in 1997. A careful comparison of the *Institutio Principis Christiani* with Justus Lipsius's *Politica* by Jeanine De Landtsheer confirms affinities without demonstrating close dependence. A cluster of three essays is devoted to "Religious Ideas." Lucia Felici shows how Zurich theologian Theodor Bibliander used Erasmus's modestly progressive conception of a nondogmatic, tolerant *philosophia Christi* as the platform on which to raise a much more radical theory of religious universalism. In a complementary piece, Gregory D. Dodds tracks the uses made of Erasmus's authority in seventeenth-century England by Anglican apologists Roger L'Estrange and Edward Stillingfleet, who argued for forms of toleration that would exclude sectarian dissenters from the main body of the church — an un-Erasmian settlement sanctioned by the Act of Toleration of 1689. In Hilmar M. Pabel's essay "Peter Canisius's Ambivalent Assessment of Erasmus" the object of toleration turns out to be Erasmus himself, an author whom Canisius found he "could not discard . . . completely, even though he shared many of the visceral reservations of his fellow Jesuits" (157).

Such judicious assessments are a major strength of this collection, which moves confidently beyond the old fascination with Erasmianisms, without losing sight of the broader movements behind particular uses of Erasmus. That quality is sustained to the end of the last piece, a vignette by Johannes Trapman of the "Baron" Jan van der Wyck of Stoevelaer, who in his 1798 Dutch adaptation of *The Praise of Folly* presented an Enlightenment travesty of the original while sincerely professing to be of one mind with Erasmus.

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