

Forms of Association: Making Publics in Early Modern Europe. Paul Yachnin and Marlene Eberhart, eds.

Massachusetts Studies in Early Modern Culture. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2015. x + 334 pp. \$29.95.

Interdisciplinarity and *collaboration* are key terms in our contemporary scholarly predicament, overdetermined by the intersection of external pressure to perform in certain ways and an internal desire to share, and to share in, the work and excitement of scholarship. *Forms of Association* is one of several volumes to emerge from the Making Publics project (2005–10), sponsored by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and succeeded by a virtual platform (<http://www.makingpublics.org>). That project, conceived in relation to Habermas's notion of the public sphere, almost immediately reoriented itself around the idea of "publics." The result has been undeniably generative and also a touch absurd; on the one hand, a proliferation of case studies and, on the other, a proliferation of publics — a ballad public, a theater public, a juristic public, a public constituted by the (re)publication and circulation of *Britannia*, and so forth.

Most of the essays in *Forms of Association* are very good; some are excellent. They are gathered in a posthumous Festschrift for Richard Helgerson, paying homage especially to his 1992 book *Forms of Nationhood*. Helgerson was part of the planning of the Making Publics project and, according to the editors, a presiding influence in its formation. Threaded together by explicit address to Helgerson's work, usually in the first paragraph, the essays are also thematically grouped into four topical clusters: "Writing Publics (Publics and Nation)," "Forming Social Identities and Publics," "Networks and Publics," and "Theatrical Publicity." Some of the essays are book historical, though without identifying themselves as such. Stephen Deng writes about Coke's Reports and *Institutes*, Torrance Kirby about Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* and Hooker's *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*, Leslie Cormack about Saxton's *Atlas* and Camden's *Britannia*, and Vera Keller about *album amicorum* as a genre. Other essays explore representation and practices at the shifting boundary between public and private. Lena Cowen Orlin writes about windows as frames for the threshold, Angela Vanhaelen about threshold and gendered arrival-departure scenes in Dutch genre painting, Meredith Donaldson Clark about an unpublished manuscript on Verulamium by an amateur antiquarian, and Jeffrey Knapp about the admixture of civility and hostility (barbarism) in *Macbeth* and in the relation of playwright and audience.

Characterized by a strong historicism, the essays pay granular attention to the texts, forms, media, practices, and tempos of social relations in the case studies as well as to things, spaces, and imaginary and affective realms. There are shrewd observations about how being/making/becoming public unfolds, or doesn't, or might. Yet only occasionally does an essay gesture or reach toward the *longue durée* or the formal theoretical problems posed by the Habermasian notion of the public sphere. Jean Howard's essay on the

Robin Hood archive, which traces the reshaping of its motifs across the sixteenth century, notes in passing the Robin Hood stories of the twentieth century. David Lee Miller's essay on *Julius Caesar* and the politics of martyrdom calls attention to the layered anachronisms that produce an imaginary, at once shared and fragmented, that challenges historical narrativizing. David Sacks foregrounds questions of scale by focusing on local debates about the vernacular language in relation to the interventions of university and state officials and pan-European centers of scholarship. Patricia Fumerton's essay on ballads offers a Venn diagram in order to capture a multiplex yet singular focus. Javier Castro-Ibaseta, writing about the late sixteenth-century literary market in Spain, develops an ambitious diagram to imagine the transformative processes whereby identities are unmade and remade by participation in collective public experiences.

The richness of evidence and the local theorizing of its implications marshaled in this volume and others from the Making Publics project are more than welcome. They lay the groundwork for thinking about how interdisciplinarity and collaboration might aspire beyond parallel play and thematic connections to a wary reengagement with larger theoretical models. In his concluding remarks, Paul Yachnin quotes Hannah Arendt: "Only where things can be seen by many in a variety of aspects without changing their identity, so that those who are gathered around them know they see sameness in utter diversity, can worldly reality truly and reliably appear" (300).

Alexandra Halasz, *Dartmouth College*