*concerning Human Understanding*, Locke rejected this Stoic doctrine in favor of the blank slate theory, though, curiously, without reference to Cicero.

Unfortunately, Stuart-Buttle's use of Cicero as a thematic device breaks down somewhat in the second and third chapters of the book. Shaftesbury largely ignored the Roman, whom he regarded as a dilettante, and Mandeville scarcely mentioned him. Thus, the chapters devoted to these philosophers appear to exist only to illustrate the type of neo-Stoic and Epicurean analyses that Middleton and Hume were at pains to demolish with Ciceronian tools. Whether this is sufficient justification for their existence is questionable.

Nevertheless, Stuart-Buttle's book about virtue possesses many virtues of its own. Its clear prose eschews the jargon that too often mars histories of philosophy. It offers enlightening information and provocative ideas. Above all, it demonstrates unequivocally that seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Britain remained a society in which the parameters of moral discourse were largely set by the philosophers of antiquity.

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Cary J. Nederman: *The Bonds of Humanity: Cicero's Legacies in European Social and Political Thought, ca. 1100–ca. 1550*. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2020. Pp. xv, 220.)

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There is no more influential figure in the history of Western political thought whose legacy has been less well-studied by scholars than Cicero. Nor is there a period of Western political thought less well-studied than the Middle Ages—which are often viewed as a dark, intellectually unfruitful time. Cary Nederman's *The Bonds of Humanity: Cicero's Legacies in European Social and Political Thought, ca. 1100–ca. 1550*, sets out to help remedy both of these lacunae in our understanding of the origins of the ideas that shaped our world.

Nederman's book contributes greatly to correcting the long-standing notion that Aristotle's political thought enjoyed a hegemonic dominance over the medieval intellectual world. After all, Aristotle's *Politics* was lost to the (Christian) West for centuries, and William Moerbeke's translation only reintroduced it in 1260. Cicero's works, by contrast, survived largely intact without interruption. Thus, Cicero enjoyed a roughly thousand-year head

start on Aristotle when it came to shaping the development of what would become European civilization. Nederman shows that while Aristotle's political and social ideas lay largely dormant, Cicero's did not. Moreover, even with the revival of Aristotle's political ideas, Nederman shows, the Ciceronian alternative still frequently carried the day.

Nederman ambitiously covers four and a half centuries of intellectual development in the book. He displays an impressive breadth of learning, as is necessary for such a sprawling project: a mastery of the Ciceronian corpus, familiarity with the great debates and discourses of the Middle Ages, a willingness to look at both Latin and vernacular sources. His subjects range from the prominent (John of Salisbury, Marsilius of Padua) to the obscure (Aelred of Rievaulx, Nicole Oresme). The subjects also come from different parts of society: clerics, schoolmen, courtiers, a lay woman, a Spanish explorer.

It should be uncontroversial to say that Nederman succeeds—decisively—in the main aim of his work: "to elucidate quite diverse, and sometimes intellectually competing, receptions and adaptations of Cicero" in the period in question, and to demonstrate that "Cicero's teachings about society and politics exercised far wider and deeper impact in early European thought than did Aristotle's" (5). To take some examples: Nederman shows how John of Salisbury draws directly from Cicero's organic metaphor of the body politic to elaborate his theory of tyranny and the appropriate response to tyrants. Nederman illustrates the way in which Ptolemy of Lucca reoriented *De regimine principum*, an unfinished work of Aquinas, away from Aquinas's intended endorsement of monarchy toward an openly Ciceronian preference for a mixed republic. He even uncovers how Cicero's concept of universal human dignity undergirded Bartolomé de Las Casas's defense of native peoples against Spanish oppression. In these cases, Nederman persuasively argues that Cicero's ideas were crucial components of the intellectual projects in question, and Nederman displays the versatility and range of Cicero's own thought as it finds its way into such diverse discourses.

But from this range comes perhaps the one significant weakness in the book. Methodologically, Nederman seeks to chart a middle course between two extremes. He dismisses the Cambridge School approach (exemplified by Quentin Skinner) for its refusal to imagine that there can be any "direct intellectual effects of a given text and/or writer upon later ones" (6). But he also rejects the idea of tracing the "influence" of particular thinkers or texts. Instead, Nederman proposes "classical reception studies" as his model, the aim of which is to "comprehend the myriad ways in which [classical texts] entered into and were transformed by their subsequent audiences" (6). For Nederman, "ideas 'travel'"—they have a life of their own, traveling paths their originators might never have expected or intended. This last point is undoubtedly true. But one might still wonder whether there really is any middle ground possible between denying the possibility (or significance) of intellectual influence and affirming it. Nederman claims that his approach

does not amount to a kind of relativism that would preclude distinguishing between true "Ciceronianism and mere citation of one of Cicero's writings" (7). But Nederman does not offer the reader any significant examples of the latter sort of (mis)use of Cicero. In fact, he asserts that it is impossible to identify "a specific 'core' property or properties of Ciceronian perspective in order to discern 'genuine' from 'inauthentic' commitments to it" (187). If this is the case, it becomes hard to determine what constitutes a trivial or superficial reference to Cicero, or to imagine what would be an example of using Cicero's name in vain.

Nederman presents several cases in which one might reasonably wonder whether a particular author is meaningfully engaged with Cicero's ideas, or instead is merely using Cicero as authoritative window-dressing for an agenda wholly foreign to anything Cicero might have intended. For instance, Nederman argues that Otto of Freising "weav[es] elements of Cicero's thought" into his *Chronica*. The decisive proof and primary example of this comes when Otto cites Cicero's *De inventione*. Yet by Nederman's own account, Otto's argument "turns Cicero entirely on his head. The peaceful realization of common humanity by means of eloquent oratory that appeals to reason is substituted for the mechanism of coercion" (47). Nederman does not say that Otto acknowledges his disagreement with Cicero and argues against him. Rather, Otto seems to think (or expect the reader to think) that Cicero offers authoritative support for his claim. In either case, this would seem like an instance in which Cicero's *ideas* really have not "traveled," but rather only his words.

Likewise, Nederman illustrates how both defenders and opponents of universal empire drew upon Cicero for support in their arguments. Nederman rightly notes that tensions in an author's thought might reasonably lead people to draw diametrically opposite conclusions from them. He is also right that Cicero's thought certainly opens the door to the idea of some universal *republican* political unit (Cicero refers admiringly to Rome as the one-time "protectorate of the world"). But it is hard to see how someone such as Engelbert of Admont could fairly be appropriating Cicero when he advocates for a universal absolute monarchy under the Holy Roman Emperor. After all, if Cicero is well-known for one thing, it is that he died precisely for his implacable opposition to the kind of government led by a "*dominus mundi*," a fact Nederman acknowledges (150). Thus could we not again say that this is inauthentic Ciceronianism, no matter what passing resemblance might be conjured by Engelbert's selective citations of Cicero?

Still, setting aside this interpretive challenge, the fact that writers such as Engelbert and Otto would actually deploy Cicero in support of arguments so antithetical to Cicero's known views supports Nederman's fundamental assertion of the ubiquity of Cicero in the late Middle Ages. Nederman does an invaluable service in showing us how important Cicero was to the development of the European intellectual world. Hopefully his work will prompt

still further exploration of the manifold philosophic afterlife of Rome's greatest philosopher.

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Timothy Haglund: *Rabelais's Contempt for Fortune: Pantagruelism, Politics, and Philosophy.* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2019. Pp. 165.)

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There is always a refreshing quality to reading a study on a major author that is written by a scholar from an entirely different background. Such an "outside" approach often enhances our understanding in quite significant ways, all the more so if the author under study, in this case François Rabelais, was a true polymath, monk, medical doctor, and humanist in the early modern fashion and thus far exceeded purely "literary" perspectives in his writing. The main interests of Timothy Haglund's study of Rabelais are political philosophy (and the link to pantagruelism), the rapport between Rabelais and Machiavelli, and the intricate links between private life, politics, and religion. Haglund develops a number of pertinent points, and through the lens of political philosophy, he opens up new critical angles on Rabelais. But his promising study is hampered by the critic's struggle with Rabelais's text and by a lack of engagement with the plethora of recent and important scholarly works on Rabelais.

Although the wealth of scholarly studies on Rabelais is hard to master, Haglund's study would have benefited especially from more engagement with recent sources in the main venues of research, such as the *Études rabelaisiennes*. There are important critical sources for a large number of topics, hard to neglect in any serious study. Haglund frequently touches on these topics seemingly without being aware of the essential scholarship on them. Examples are themes such as "scandal," "reception theory," the prologue to *Gargantua*, "paradox," "comedy/satire," "perplexity," and "cynicism," which have all benefited from essential recent scholarship that would have helped him strengthen, and sometimes nuance or modify, his findings. The following is a case in point: Machiavelli is the focal point of Haglund's study, but a quick look at any bibliography of Rabelais criticism would have unearthed five major studies on the topic—a scarcity that underlines the necessity of the present study. But Haglund ignores four of them, coincidentally the four published in French by major critics such as R. Cooper, I. R.