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### Ryle, Stephen, ed. Erasmus and the Renaissance Republic of Letters

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**Ryle, Stephen, ed.**

*Erasmus and the Renaissance Republic of Letters.* Foreword by Lisa Jardine.

Turnhout: Brepols, 2014. Pp. xv, 474. ISBN 978-2-503-53030-7 (hardcover) €110.

This volume presents twenty-one articles that originated as papers read at a conference held at Corpus Christi College, Oxford in 2006 to mark the centenary of the publication of the first volume of Percy Stafford Allen's monumental *Opus epistolarum Dersiderii Erasmi*. If that name is not immediately familiar, one can say, without exaggeration, that Allen's work laid the foundation for modern Erasmus studies. The influence of his work is evident not only in all of the contributions in this volume, but also in much Erasmus scholarship produced over the last half-century. This certainly makes him a figure worthy of celebration, and the essays collected here provide a fitting tribute to his contribution to scholarship.

Allen's great achievement was to produce a critical edition of all of Erasmus's extant correspondence and to date the letters and arrange them in chronological order. Furthermore, he used introductions to the letters and notes to identify correspondents and persons mentioned in them, providing a hitherto unavailable collection of biographical data. The first of eleven volumes was published in 1906; Allen produced up to volume 7 until his death in 1933. The four final volumes were completed by his wife, Helen Mary Allen, and his Oxford friend H. W. Jarrod, who worked from his notes. The series was completed in 1947, and an index for the series appeared in 1958.

There are several indications of the enduring quality and thoroughness of Allen's edition of the correspondence of Erasmus. For example, when the ambitious Amsterdam critical edition (ASD) project was initiated in the early 1960s, the scholars involved deemed it unnecessary to undertake a fresh edition of the correspondence because it would only duplicate Allen's edition. Across the ocean in Toronto, it was Allen's edition of the correspondence that inspired the founders of the translation project Collected Works of Erasmus (CWE) to launch that series. Furthermore, of the twenty-one articles in this volume, only three deal with updates or corrections to his work. Only a handful of new letters has been discovered, and only a few letters have required re-dating.

The contributors to this volume represent some of the major scholars working on Erasmus from Great Britain, North America, France, Italy, Belgium, and the Netherlands. The editor has grouped the papers into five

thematic sections, each with a different focus. The essays in the first section deal directly with Allen's edition. Michel Magnien presents a newly-discovered alternative opening to a letter written by Germain de Brie to Erasmus in 1528. Christine Bénévet gives an overview of discoveries that have been made since Allen's edition was published. James McConica discusses the editorial practices developed for translating and annotating Erasmus's correspondence in the CWE, which uses as Allen's edition as its source.

The second section deals with Erasmus's relations with his contemporaries as revealed through his correspondence. There are articles about Erasmus's relations with the German knight Ulrich von Hutten (Silvana Seidel Menschi), the English humanist Thomas More (Clare M. Murphy), the Flemish printer Dirk Martens (Alexander Vanautgaerden), the Spanish humanist Juan Luis Vives (Charles Fantazzi), the Alsatian reformer Wolfgang Capito (Erika Rummel), and Duke George of Saxony (Marie-Barral-Baron).

The papers in the third section, entitled "Literature and Philosophy in the Renaissance Republic of Letters," each deal with a specific aspect of Erasmus's place in the early modern literary world. These include one on Erasmus's views on the "republic of letters" (Romano Ruggieri), plagiarism (Ari Wesseling), his influence on Etienne Dolet (Catherine Langlois-Pézeret), peace and conflict in his *Colloquies* (Béatrice Périgot), the epistemological problems of Erasmian humanism (Hanan Yoran), the translation of Greek texts into Latin (Isabelle Diu), and a comparison of Erasmus's epistolary style with that of the later sixteenth-century Dutch humanist Justus Lipsius (Jeanine De Landtsheer).

The papers in the fourth section take aim at Erasmus's spiritual legacy. Jane E. Philips discusses Erasmus's role as a paraphraser of the gospels through an examination of an extended paraphrase of Matt 24:27. Letizia Panizza discusses Erasmus's views on marriage through an analysis of the controversy over his *In Praise of Marriage*. Dominic Baker-Smith exposes the influence of Erasmus's ideas about concord in the Church on the Scottish humanist Florens Wilson. In the final essay in this section, Gregory Dodds discusses Erasmus's influence on Joseph Hall and Thomas Fuller during the era of the English Civil War.

The fifth and final section contains just one essay by Mark Vessey, in which the author makes a cogent case for how Erasmus was written out of the literary history of England in the late nineteenth century.

Taken together, these essays present an excellent sampling of contemporary scholarship on Erasmus, and highlight the variety of approaches and

interpretations of contemporary scholars. The thread that binds them all together, however, is their reliance upon Allen's edition of the correspondence to do so. As Lisa Jardine puts it in the foreword: "Within the carefully crafted correspondence are to be found the dense skein of Ariadne's threads, which teased out and assiduously followed will lead the scholar to fresh insights in the great Low Countries humanist" (xiv).

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**Shantz, Douglas.**

*An Introduction to German Pietism: Protestant Renewal at the Dawn of Modern Europe.*

Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013. Pp. xviii, 490 + 11 figs., 3 maps, 3 tables. ISBN 978-1-4214-0831-6 (paperback) \$35.

To review a book like Douglas Shantz's *An Introduction to German Pietism* it is necessary to assess both the scholarly innovation of the author's research and the way in which the book introduces the reader to the topic. Shantz delivers results in both categories. *An Introduction to German Pietism* is the first general history of Pietism in the English language since Stoeffler's *The Rise of Evangelical Pietism* (1965). Shantz's book incorporates recent German and English language scholarship on Pietism and effectively synthesizes two very different scholarly interpretations: a traditional approach involving the study of Pietist leaders and their theological and intellectual innovations, and more recent approaches that have placed Pietism and its participants within the social, cultural, and political world of early modern Germany. Shantz argues that Pietism is important because of its role in ushering out the "medieval worldview" in matters of faith. Furthermore Pietism, according to the author, is deeply embedded in the religious traditions of North America, especially in nineteenth-century Evangelical and Revivalist Christianity. While it assumes at least a cursory knowledge of early modern history, *An Introduction to German Pietism* is an excellent introduction—especially suited to upper year undergraduate and graduate students.