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Diamond, Jeff. Ingratiation from the Renaissance to the Present: The Art and Ethics of Gaining Favor

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What Davis does bring us is, nonetheless, a valuable reminder of the significance and complexity of the issues and the actions Davis evokes through his collection. There is much, much more to discuss on this subject, including the ebbing and flowing of iconoclastic acts; the continuance of some practices such as the use of distinctive vestments, but not others; the unevenness of destruction (stained glass was swept away in some places but not others, and its use was being recovered late in the sixteenth century, for example); and, perhaps most important, the ways in which all these issues led to the fracturing of the Reform movement in England as the seventeenth century unfolded. I suspect that Davis's collection will serve as a spur to further research, which is the best and highest aim any scholarly work can have.

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Diamond, Jeff.

Ingratiation from the Renaissance to the Present: The Art and Ethics of Gaining Favor.

Lanham: Lexington Books, 2017. Pp. xviii, 217. ISBN 978-1-4985-4889-2 (hardcover) £70.

As many critics have observed, the sixteenth century was unusually preoccupied with dissimulation and pretense and their relationship to currying favour and social advancement. Jeff Diamond's *Ingratiation from the Renaissance to the Present: The Art and Ethics of Gaining Favor* explores the ethical dilemmas faced by Renaissance intellectuals who struggled to win over patrons and other powerful figures while staying true to their own principles and maintaining some degree of independence. Diamond analyzes the works of four of the greatest thinkers of the Renaissance—Machiavelli, Erasmus, More, and Montaigne—to see how they answered such questions as “Where is the boundary between innocent shading of truth and actually lying?” and “When does laudable affability slip into an unprincipled sycophancy?” (xvi).

Such dilemmas are unquestionably timeless, and Diamond's introduction underscores the point by familiarizing his readers with Anthony Robbins, the so-called father of the life-coach industry. Although the recounting of Robbins's

story and theories is quite compelling, such a modern analogy is jarring in an introduction. Nevertheless, the techniques used by the modern-day self-help guru (i.e., giving compliments, finding common interests, understanding the other's viewpoint, and demonstrating flexibility) do offer Diamond a unique way to introduce the many methods Renaissance thinkers employed to establish relationships with those possessing wealth, power, and prestige.

Diamond divides his text into two parts: "Background to the Renaissance Culture of Ingratiation" and "Individuals." The first chapter, "Rhetoric and Philosophy in the Renaissance: Speaking Well versus Speaking Truly," reviews classical works on rhetoric to reveal the long-standing interrelationship between speech and morality. Diamond traces the history of classical rhetoric to illustrate its practical nature, noting that "a primary objective of the study of rhetoric has always been to develop the ability to influence others" (4). As such, the rhetoric's practicality is indissociable from its morality; in his pursuit of decorum, defined as constancy and consistency of character, the orator walks a fine line between persuasive pandering and dishonest opportunism. In fact, according to the most well-known of the Italian Renaissance conduct books, *The Book of the Courtier*, social harmony is maintained by a constant stream of dissimulations.

While the first chapter considers the ethics of such dissimulations in the abstract or in the context of love or friendship, the following chapter, "Relations of Power in Renaissance Society: Humanists and Patrons," examines the role of dissimulation in the political arena. Here, Diamond details the exceptionally hierarchical nature of personal relationships which dominated the social world of the Renaissance. Not surprisingly, the court saw both political and cultural dominance during this period but also met with a lot of resistance. Courtiers, torn between their ambition and their dignity, were often ridiculed for their extravagant physical appearance but also for their dishonesty. Somewhat ironically, humanist authors helped to codify forms of courtly behaviour yet expressed resentment for the courtly circumstances. The second part of Diamond's book devotes one full chapter each to four such writers who struggled to succeed in the hierarchical world of patronage without losing self-respect.

In "Niccolò Machiavelli: A Conflicted Conception of Manhood," Diamond attributes Machiavelli's success to his natural tendency to view the world from the vantage point of others and to his ability to adapt himself to changing

circumstances. But it is Machiavelli's extension of the idea of adaptability to moral flexibility that earned him notoriety. He believed that strategic deception and fox-like variability were made necessary and legitimate by the depravity of the real world. Nevertheless, Machiavelli at times demonstrated integrity and refused to be the Medici's sycophant. "Desiderius Erasmus: An Accommodating Spirit" describes the humanist as one who favours the adaptable chameleon over Machiavelli's wily fox. Erasmus consistently underlines the moral significance of any literature he considers, and derides courtiers for their uselessness, yet at times he promotes social accommodation and opportunistic adaptability and does not view them as incompatible with sincerity.

"Thomas More: Ingratiation and Its Limits" describes how More, like Machiavelli and Erasmus, displays complex moral ambivalence towards social accommodation, noting a "conflict between an 'academic philosophy' which insists on inflexible honesty and a more practical 'philosophy' which accepts and even embraces adaptability in social situations" (136). In cases where he knew that expressing his opinion would be professionally detrimental, More chose to refrain from comment, but when forced to comment on the king's marriage to Catherine of Aragon, he chose integrity over personal advancement.

The sixth and final chapter, "Michel de Montaigne: 'Self'-Preservation," describes Montaigne's position as inconsistent, like that of the previous three writers. Montaigne believes that a person's private actions are revelatory of his character, but also states that "what is of real importance is only that within the mind; it is the integrity of thought which is essential, not that of compartment and actions" (168). In fact, like many humanists, Montaigne believed that some kinds of dissimulation were the means to realizing one's true self. As was suggested of More, perhaps the ambivalence on the part of all four writers could be attributed to their humanist training in *utramque partem*, in making the best possible argument for both sides of any issue.

Diamond's conclusion follows the tradition of writing on civility and social advancement through the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth, when it begins to go out of fashion. Although there are some interesting parallels, the cursory overview is somewhat disappointing after the exceedingly detailed analyses of the preceding chapters. Notably absent here and in the introduction is the question of morality which otherwise seems to be at the heart of ingratiating. The fine distinctions between personal integrity and ingratiating, between commendable adaptability and amoral fawning, which

Diamond carefully ferrets out from the writings of numerous Renaissance intellectuals would be sufficient to satisfy the curious reader, but as Diamond seems insistent on providing modern-day equivalents, comparisons with the political or even the business world would have been more compelling.

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Du Bellay, Jean.

***Correspondance du cardinal Jean Du Bellay, Tome VI : 1550–1555, Tome VII : 1555–1559.* Édition Rémy Scheurer, Loris Petris, David Amhert et Nathalie Guillod-Falconet, avec la collaboration de Ruth Stawarz-Luginbuhl.**

Paris : Société de l'Histoire de France, Éditions de Boccard, 2015, 2017. 523, 569 p. ISBN 978-2-35407-140-0, 978-2-35407-145-5 (reliés) 45 €, 60 €.

Initiée en 1905 par Victor-Louis Bourrilly et Pierre de Vaissière, la publication intégrale de la correspondance du cardinal Jean du Bellay (1527–1560) vient de connaître son terme avec l'édition du septième et dernier volume en mai 2017. Dirigée par Loris Petris et Rémy Scheurer, cette magnifique entreprise a permis de mettre à jour plus de 2 000 lettres, pour la plupart inconnues, en français, anglais, allemand, italien, espagnol et latin, dispersées entre Moscou et New-York, Naples et le Pays de Galles. Grâce au travail acharné et systématique de ces auteurs, les sept recueils de correspondance sont parus de manière très régulière s'égrénant au fil des années (tome III : 2008, tome IV : 2011, tome V : 2012, tome VI : 2015, tome VII : 2017). Ainsi, les chercheurs disposent aujourd'hui d'un fond épistolaire exceptionnel, avec une annotation fondée essentiellement sur des sources manuscrites inédites, et ont également la possibilité de consulter en ligne l'index général de cette correspondance (1905–2017) qui les invitent généreusement à de nouvelles découvertes.

L'achèvement de ce projet tend néanmoins presque à occulter la qualité intrinsèque des deux derniers ouvrages, alors qu'il est important d'en signaler toute la richesse et l'exception. Le tome VI, qui couvre la période de juillet 1550 à avril 1555, regroupe 340 lettres et mémoires, dont presque les trois quarts sont adressés à une quarantaine de correspondants, principalement le roi Henri II et le connétable Anne de Montmorency. Il faut insister sur la qualité de l'annotation