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**Eanes, Gomes. A Portuguese Abbot in Renaissance Florence:  
The Letter Collection of Gomes Eanes (1415–1463). Ed. Rita  
Costa-Gomes**

James Nelson Novoa

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[See table of contents](#)

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naissance de ce dernier et propose, au lieu de la date trop souvent considérée comme acquise de 1492, celle de 1498 ou 1499 (324, note 1). Ce volume se distingue surtout par un appareil critique très riche, puisqu'aux tables du volume s'ajoutent des annexes générales pour les règnes d'Henri II et de François II : la liste des ouvrages dédiés au cardinal, l'index des personnes et des lieux pour l'ensemble des tomes IV à VII, ainsi que l'état des sources manuscrites et imprimées de l'ensemble de la correspondance. C'est ainsi une véritable « Renaissance secrète », selon la formule de Loris Petris, qui se déploie sous nos yeux.

Véritable joyau d'érudition, ces tomes de correspondance du cardinal Jean du Bellay sont une formidable réussite à la fois par ce qu'ils apportent aux chercheurs pour la compréhension de l'histoire de l'Europe du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle et par ce qu'ils promettent de futures découvertes.

MARIE BARRAL-BARON

Université de Franche-Comté

### **Eanes, Gomes.**

*A Portuguese Abbot in Renaissance Florence: The Letter Collection of Gomes Eanes (1415–1463).* Ed. Rita Costa-Gomes.

Biblioteca dell' "Archivum Romanicum," Series 1, vol. 472. Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2017. Pp. xlviii, 579 + 1 ill. ISBN 978-88-222-6516-6 (paperback) €65.

The name Gomes Eanes is not likely to be familiar to most Renaissance scholars. The Portuguese abbot and reformer has received little critical attention outside of scholarship that deals with medieval Portugal. Yet as a prominent religious leader, becoming none other than the abbot of the Badia Fiorentina, he straddles the Portuguese and Italian worlds. This fascinating collection of letters, spanning the many years he was involved with the religious house, show him to be a veritable intermediary between different religious, political, and cultural contexts. This new book, impressive for its erudition and rigour, is surely to be of interest to a great variety of readers.

Rita Costa-Gomes, one of the most noted Portuguese medievalists working in North America, has grounded herself in scholarship regarding this man, who died in 1459. Following the paths of other scholars, such as António

Domingues Sousa Costa, Eduardo Borges Nunes, Martin Malcolm Elbl, and Ivana Elbl, her erudite introduction spells out the salient features of Eanes's biography: his early years of study in Padua, his many years of involvement with the Benedictine Badia in Florence and the reform movement, and his final years in Portugal as the head of another prominent monastic community, the Augustinians of Santa Cruz in Coimbra. Her introduction goes a long way to grounding current research on Eanes and making him known to English language readers who, if they had encountered him at all, would be aware of little beyond his stint at the Badia and involvement in the reform movement.

The great contribution for scholars, here, is quite obviously her critical edition of some 550 letters. Costa-Gomes goes out of her way to insist that what is being published is a letter collection and not a correspondence: the letters are addressed to him from a variety of senders. Having been conserved by Eanes, they subsequently were dispersed and divided, being finally preserved in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale and the Laurenziana library in Florence. Costa-Gomes's description of the initial logic behind their assembly, their early cataloguing, and their various journeys is a story unto itself which makes a fascinating read. Half are in Portuguese while the rest are in Latin or different forms of Italian vernaculars. For philologists in particular, the texts are of genuine interest in their own right as examples of prose in those languages and linguistic varieties. Her painstaking transcriptions, which faithfully provide readers with the texts, shed a crucial light on the epistolary genre of the fifteenth century—in the diverse linguistic and cultural contexts from which the letters proceed. The letters were penned by fellow religious, friends, family, admirers, prelates, aristocrats, and even Portuguese monarchs, all aware that they were dealing with a man whose erudition, life path, and position made him an ideal go-between, mediating between the Italian and Portuguese worlds.

The letters are organized chronologically and numbered by the editor, who provides the shelf mark and an English summary or synopsis of the text. In her brief descriptions, she makes a point of identifying the letter writers and their relation to Eanes. The book is most certainly going to be of interest to scholars of medieval Portugal, Florence, and religious reform, but also to those who study the epistolary genre itself due to the book's wonderful examples of how the genre was malleable and varied, marked and conditioned as much by the person to whom the letter is addressed as by the subject at hand.

This has been a long-awaited book for many interested in Gomes Eanes. It will surely go a long way towards establishing the Portuguese religious reformer and spiritual leader as a figure to be known and studied by a much wider readership.

JAMES NELSON NOVOA

University of Ottawa

**Escobedo, Andrew.**

***Volition's Face: Personification and the Will in Renaissance Literature.***

Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2017. Pp. xii, 326. ISBN 978-0-268-10167-1 (paperback) \$40.

Personification has been used in recent studies of the relationship between subjecthood and objecthood as a figurative instance of ways in which human agents can be de-personed. By limiting the full scope of human action to a single characteristic, some contemporary critics suggest that as a figure, personification offers an outmoded understanding of being that implicitly insists that a circumscribed behavioural capacity cannot amount to full personhood. As Andrew Escobedo asserts in *Volition's Face*, however, this need not be the case. If we consider premodern understandings of personification, we will encounter models of the figure that indicate precisely the opposite inclination. For writers of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance (a term that Escobedo uses deliberately instead of “early modern period”), personification signalled a distinct channelling or effusion of energy, that in turn conveyed a kind of animism. Specifically, Escobedo argues, the movement of this energy should be understood as an expression of different aspects of the human will, an important element of the premodern self but not coterminous with it. The premodern self is made intelligible as the will interacts with different psychological capacities—such as reason—as well as with sources external to the individual agent. In medieval and Renaissance writing, personification is particularly valuable as a means toward representing the interactive—or, to use Escobedo’s term, “transactional”—property of the will, as it figures ideas or modes of being as they become modes of action.