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### Ancín, Miguel González, and Otis Towns. Miguel Servet en España (1506–1527). Edición ampliada

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Feng appear to have assumed that readers will be familiar with the literature and history of *quindicesimo* Italy; at the same time, the critical introduction and footnotes may be unnecessary for scholars of Italian Renaissance literature. I would say Alfie and Feng's greatest success is their skill for translating nonsensical poetry into English without losing the poet's intended "meaning"; I say this is a success because translating meaning is particularly challenging when there has yet to be consensus on what Burchiello's words signify.

The genius of Burchiello's poetry is that it attracted—and continues to attract—highly educated writers and scholars who establish meaning from what often appears to be a collection of quasi-connected words; thus, scholarly interpretations appear to speak more to the beliefs, interests, and fascinations of the interpreter than to Burchiello's nonsensical verse. Based on Alfie and Feng's description of the author's life, I think it would be fair to say that Burchiello would be pleased by a multitude of discordant analyses.

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**Ancín, Miguel González, and Otis Towns.**

***Miguel Servet en España (1506–1527). Edición ampliada.***

La Vergne, TN: IngramSpark, 2018. Pp. 473. ISBN 978-0-6921-3883-0 (hardcover) US\$45.

In 1953 Roland Bainton published a fundamental book on Miguel Servetus: *Hunted Heretic: The Life and Death of Michael Servetus, 1511–1553*. Here, Bainton discusses the fate of the Spanish physician—burnt in Geneva because of the Antitrinitarian ideas expressed in his *Christianismi restitutio* (1553)—but also outlines Servetus's scientific outcomes, such as the discovery of the lesser circulation of the blood. According to Bainton, Servetus's religious and scientific thoughts worked together. Some months after Servetus's death, Sebastien Castellion published his *De haereticis an sint persequendi* (1554), arguing that heresy could never justify the death penalty. Servetus and his trial sparked a long debate on toleration that involved humanists and philosophers all across Europe.

Servetus is one of the main characters of early European history, and thanks to this new study it is now possible to deepen our knowledge of him. The tireless work of the editors and the translators of Servetus's works challenged older categories—such as Servetus's uniqueness, or his one-sided challenge to dogmatic theology—and left them behind.

Ancín and Towns relied on thirteen previously unpublished documents to shed new light on the first phase of Servetus's life, from his birth to his education, about which very little was known. Was he a Converso? Where did his family live? His Spanish roots make such questions essential in a study of his work. The authors manage to correct several mistakes and misunderstandings about Servetus's life, and to highlight the importance of both his teachers and the religious and cultural milieu in which Servetus studied.

Ancín and Towns follow the chronology from Servetus's birth in Villanueva de Sigüenza (with an eye to his family) to his education. In this framework, a large part is devoted to Erasmism: the authors contest Bataillon's interpretation merging Erasmism and Alumbradism. Ancín and Towns discovered two Erasmian circles in Zaragoza. From this perspective, they examine Servetus's relationship with Juan Quintana, confessor of Charles V. While attending the Valladolid conference in 1527, Servetus began to be involved in the Antitrinitarian debate. He began to discuss his theory, with interesting claims, and for this reason the famous mathematician Gaspar Lax, who taught in Zaragoza Studium Generale of Arts, contested him. Among the possible causes of Lax's dispute with Servetus, according to Ancín and Towns, it was probably Servetus's complaint regarding Lax's plagiarism that made his position at the school untenable, provoking Servetus to leave Spain and to travel. From that point, his life is well known.

This volume has achieved its aim of becoming a reference work—thanks to research conducted in several archives in Zaragoza, Pamplona, Madrid, and Salamanca. Some statements seem to be exaggerated: for example, “Se posiciona por la defensa de los herejes, de los campesinos, de los moriscos, y en definitiva de todos en los que se encuentran perseguidos y en situaciones de debilidad” (23; [Servetus] takes a stance in defence of heretics, peasants, moriscos, and ultimately of all who are persecuted and in a weak position). But overall the editors demonstrate a strong commitment to Servetus's life, dealing with primary sources and with the most recent historiographical developments—reconstructing the cultural and religious *milieu* in which Servetus's ideas

originated. There is significant scholarly interest in moving beyond celebratory mythologies and apologetical works defending Servetus and condemning Calvin, and vice versa. Ancín and Towns, thank to their research, move us further in this direction. A very useful and rich appendix (almost two hundred pages) concludes the volume.

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**Artese, Charlotte, ed.**

***Shakespeare and the Folktale: An Anthology of Stories.***

Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019. Pp. x, 377. ISBN 978-0-691-19086-0 (paperback) US\$19.95.

Mining a rich vein of global folktales that share archetypal elements with eight of Shakespeare's plays, Charlotte Artese's recent anthology builds upon her 2015 book *Shakespeare's Folktale Sources* in order to offer teachers and students new ways to consider firsthand the nature, significances, and full range of Shakespeare's narrative influences. Acknowledging from the outset that generations of scholars (e.g., Geoffrey Bullough's *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*) have already examined and extensively documented Shakespeare's literary sources, Artese intends not to revisit or revise those materials but rather to supplement and augment them by supplying various modern descendants of his folktale influences that—albeit conjecturally—might help modern readers to imagine what expectations original audiences brought with them to early performances of the plays; might illuminate the playwright's creative processes and choices; and (as Catherine Belsey suggests in *Why Shakespeare?*) might explain why the plays have been so successful across time and space. In this light, both Shakespeare's drama and the folktale traditions upon which it builds survive in scores of languages and cultural traditions, serving ever-shifting cultural purposes, but also gesturing back toward their common ancestral roots. As such, the common types and motifs among the stories edited, introduced, and presented here expose not only their shared features and relations to the plays but also the tradition's range of narrative possibilities and the folktale's remarkable ability to transcend cultural, temporal, and linguistic boundaries.