

Nearly a third of chapter five is a careful study of Coryate's journeys as exemplars of travel wagers. Parr characterizes Coryate as a profiteer and showman, but at the same time an innovative writer about foreign lands with a "talent ... for adaptation and discovery" (173). He is the epitome of the early modern English individual.

In chapter six, Parr uses Ben Jonson's "On the Famous Voyage" to raise further questions about the function of mad voyages and travel wagers. He draws on a variety of Jonson's works, as well as Thomas Dekker's pamphlets to explore early modern attitudes towards social reform, the metropolitan space and, for Jonson, on the uses of satire. Along the way, Parr also provides a useful critical history of Jonson's poem, running from the 1980s to the present.

Renaissance Mad Voyages is the first entry in Ashgate's new series, Cultures of Play, 1300–1700, dedicated to "recount[ing] the history of early modern wit, humor and games" and "provid[ing] a forum for reconceptualizing the play elements of early modern ... life." Parr's book makes a very strong contribution to the former goal. The book is a rich trove of well-researched, valuable materials and information for students and scholars of early modern English culture. It is light, however on the second goal, largely steering clear of theoretical interventions and using terms such as tourist, early modern, and Renaissance unproblematically. This however, may be part of the book's conceit, as Parr concludes it with a thoughtful afterword that calls for more interdisciplinary scholarship on mad voyages both literal and literary.

Alan Perreiah. *Renaissance Truths: Humanism, Scholasticism and the Search for the Perfect Language*. Ashgate: Farnham, Surrey and Burlington, VT, 2014. li + 168 pp. \$109.95. Review by KARIN SUSAN FESTER, INDEPENDENT SCHOLAR.

The distinguished scholar of medieval logic, Alan Perreiah, takes the reader on a captivating and enlightening journey. *Renaissance Truths* is certainly a book about logic, but more so, Perreiah wants to fill a significant gap: to acknowledge those late medieval and early Renaissance scholars who also "sought to recover or invent a language that was pure and truthful in the way of Adam's original tongue" (16). The

author investigates the rationale underpinning “meaning” and “truth” in the work of three very significant thinkers from the late medieval and early Renaissance periods, namely, Paul of Venice, Lorenzo Valla and Juan Luis Vives.

How does one go about finding a *pure* and *truthful* language, and what does logic have to do with it? The search begins with trying to conceptualize how thought and language could determine reality, and, even more so, trying to find, as well as prove how the incommensurability of languages is not insurmountable. Perreiah, in his lengthy and meticulous expositions, proves that both humanists and scholastics were synchronously moving in the same direction while searching for the “perfect language.” Umberto Eco’s *The Search for the Perfect Language* is certainly an extraordinary work; however, as Perreiah points out, he overlooked, or perhaps underestimated, the roles played by late medieval scholastics and early Renaissance humanists in trying to find or construct a perfect language (11).

The author questions the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis: “the view that language structures the mind, determines thought and thus constitutes reality” (vii). He also includes a detailed survey of modern scholars and their interpretations: Ann Moss, Richard Waswo, Erika Rummel, Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf. The humanists Vives and Valla both adhered to this linguistic determinism, and so do many modern scholars to this very day. The scholastics, however, conceptualized it differently: “thought determines language, and that both are subordinate to the objective nature of things” (42).

For Perreiah, the dilemma of whether or not the delicate and fluid relationship between thought and language is determinist needed serious sorting out. So, he set out to prove that the incommensurability of languages was not something that could always be readily assumed. Perreiah also tackles four additional dilemmas: (i) trying to understand Lorenzo Valla’s attack on scholasticism; (ii) trying to prove that Vives has been misunderstood—Perreiah is not convinced that Vives actually made an earnest refutation of scholasticism; (iii) trying to understand the purpose of scholastic logic; and, (iv) finally, exploring “how can the seemingly unbridgeable chasm between scholastic ‘formal logic’ and humanist ‘informal logic’ be bridged” (ix). Perreiah focuses on four areas of language theory, namely, meaning (*significatio*),

reference (*suppositio*), inference (*consequentiae*) and proof (*probatio*), as these elements facilitate how we are to understand how humanism and scholasticism actually worked toward a common goal: finding, developing and sustaining the perfect language (ix).

The book is devoted to the analysis of late medieval scholastics and the early Renaissance humanists in their search for the “perfect language”; it does, however, offer scholars who are focused on the seventeenth century, especially logic, philosophy of language, language theory and translation theory, some food for thought. In particular, look to the seventeenth-century philosophers René Descartes, Pierre Gassendi, and G. W. Leibniz whose thinking was not only influenced by humanists but, surprisingly, by scholastics as well. Moreover, Perreiah emphasizes the different ways logic was used to settle disputes. A remarkable exemplar would be the debates that took place between scholastics and humanists during the Renaissance and Reformation: “Another kind of dispute arises between thinkers who hold rival solutions to different problems that seem nonetheless irreconcilable. A person who adopts one of the theories seems logically committed to rejecting the other despite the fact that the theories arise from different problems and are designed to serve different purposes” (vii).

Chapter 1 introduces the concept of the “perfect language.” Perreiah begins with a survey of Umberto Eco’s quest for the perfect language. He details the background of an ideal language that apparently existed: the original language of Adam—the first utterances—in the book of Genesis of the Hebrew Bible—and, no doubt a commensurable language. Perreiah elucidates the reader to the contributions made by religious scholastics and secular humanists as well as expressing his dissatisfaction with Umberto Eco’s research: “he ignores the notable contributions of scholastics to language theory and the semiotic fields of syntax and semantics” (11). And when he speaks of the humanists, Perreiah says, “[Eco] omits their restoration of classical Latin to replace medieval Latin as a scholarly language in the search for the ‘perfect language’” (11). The author is referring to medieval scholastics and Renaissance humanists who, he considers having made valuable contributions to language theory—it demonstrated that both scholastics and humanists were moving in the same direction in their search for an ideal language.

Perreiah's exposition presents a history and a conceptual framework of *a priori* philosophical languages, which are also very relevant to understanding the various ways a "perfect language" could be conceptualized. In *a priori* philosophical languages, "The systems of characters are precise notational representations that offer linguistic maps of whatever can be thought or spoken" (26). Interestingly, "Eco marks the beginning of work on *a priori* philosophical languages in Britain in the seventeenth century" (25), despite a number of European thinkers, namely, Descartes, Francois Viète, and G. W. Leibniz, who already years earlier had been very enthusiastic about developing artificial languages. Perreiah presents an excellent discussion of the work carried out by Francis Bacon, Francis Lodwick, George Dalgrano, and Leibniz. John Wilkins's *Essay toward a Real Character and a Philosophical Language* (1668) contains an excellent example of an *a priori* language developed during the seventeenth century. Leibniz developed *lingua philosophica*, an *a priori* language, which is "based on a fixed set of primitive terms" (28). Moreover, "[Leibniz] saw that the content-words of human language are inexhaustible and that any effort to contain them in a finite system would fail" (28). And, finally, Perreiah explores whether the languages that the humanists and scholastics used could ever be universal, communicable and translatable (29).

Chapter 2, on "Valla on Thought and Language," considers Lorenzo Valla's (1407–1457) general theory of language. Three sections constitute the chapter: "Dialectical Disputations," "Critical Assumptions," and "Linguistic Determinism." Valla considered classical Latin to be the perfect language and it was considered "indispensable for competent thought" (60). Moreover, Perreiah focuses on two of Valla's works, the *Elegantiae linguae latinae* and *Dialectical Disputations*, which are treatises on rhetoric, because these "present [Valla's] vision of a commanding rhetoric inspired by Quintilian that would lead the way to a new philosophy for the modern world" (43). The author also includes a discussion of Valla's critical assessment of Aristotle's doctrine of categories—namely, the ten categories—which is a vivid illustration of Valla's logic reductionist program. For Valla, the categories and predictables were important as they were the foundation of scholastic philosophy, yet he radically objected to portions of it (46–48). In the *Dialectical Disputations I*, Valla radically revised Aristotle's ten

categories, reducing them to three. Ultimately, Perreiah doesn't agree with the criticisms Valla made in his *Dialectical Disputations*, that is, "words and grammar of a language *constitute* the concepts that they express"—essentially a linguistic determinist conception of thought, language and reality (60).

In Chapter 3, on "Valla on Truth," the author demonstrates how scholastic inference rules are applied to various examples of forensic arguments in Valla's *Dialectical Disputations* (34). The author takes a close look at apparent tensions and inconsistencies in Valla's texts, and he is convinced that Valla was not an "ordinary language" philosopher, rather he preferred classical Latin. He examines whether Valla was in any way adhering to a vernacular language, or if he was instead committed to classical Latin (63, 86). And he proceeds to demonstrate that Valla's concept of truth—"that language, and not reality, determines human thought"—is not coherent with his ideas on language and reality (86). Thus, the linguistic determinist thesis seems undermined.

Perreiah surveys the variety of ways Valla's comments on "truth" have been interpreted, and why it could lead to confusion, and prompts the question as to whether Valla actually even expounded a theory of truth. The author examines a number of Valla's statements on "truth" and then scrutinizes a lengthy text from Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* in the *Dialectical Disputations*, which essentially is "logical inference in the context of forensic argumentation." Moreover, according to Valla, "inference preserves truth (or falsity) in a reasoning process, it is an essential component of any theory of truth" (63). Perreiah emphasizes "how the arguments in the passage are related to the scholastic rules of *consequentiae*, the prevailing theory of inference in the Renaissance" (63–64).

Chapter 4 is dedicated to examining Juan Luis Vives's (1492–1540) *Adversus pseudodialecticos*, which expounds a theory of language, and Perreiah offers a new perspective to understanding this particular work. Interestingly, and not surprisingly, *Adversus pseudodialecticos* has also been considered by scholars from the sixteenth through to the twenty-first century "as a final refutation of scholastic dialectic" (89). Perreiah claims they've not understood *it* for what it *is*, and, therefore, he sets out to clarify some things, namely, its "sophistical nature and

purpose" (89). He questions its *authenticity* as a genuine example of documented scholastic teachings.

In Chapter 5, "Vives on Truth," Perreiah challenges the taken-for-granted view (apparently amongst many scholars) that Vives totally rejected scholastic dialectic: "Vives, while critical of its language and its practice of sophistic, retains many of scholasticism's fundamental principles" (88). Perreiah demonstrates how Vives did *not* totally abandon scholastic dialectic, but actually it's quite the contrary: "The strongest evidence against the idea that Vives rejected scholasticism in its entirety is the number and nature of theoretical claims he makes in his monumental new organon *De disciplinis*" (104). Perreiah "propose[s] to show that [Vives's] conception of truth retains important elements from scholastic logic" (105). The author also makes a huge effort explaining Vives's devotion to building a proper educational curriculum including language and logic in his *De tradendis disciplinis*, the principles of education and language pedagogy (106). This is followed by Perreiah's detailing Vives's method of analyzing sentences, and *De censura in enunciatione* is an excellent illustration of Vives's method for analyzing sentences and arguments (108). And, finally, Perreiah outlines the differences between humanists Valla and Vives, and he also stressed that the strong element of disagreement between scholastics and humanists seemed to be the inference theory (*consequentiae*) (121).

In Chapter 6, "Paul of Venice on Truth," Perreiah begins by calling attention to three observations concerning scholastic logic tracts. First, the difficulty of defining the purposes of particular scholastic tracts: "Tracts whose purpose is problematic are: supposition (*suppositio*), proof (*probatio*), particularly the proof-procedures of exposition (*expositio*) and resolution (*resolutio*), and, for some, obligations (*obligationes*)" (124). Second, some scholastic logicians did explain what they were doing. Perreiah questions the intentions of the scholastics: Why did they write their logic tracts the way they did? And, if the logic tracts did have a purpose, then apparently "some measure of linguistic perfection" was achieved (124)? The author elucidates how university students during the late medieval and early Renaissance struggled with illiteracy (126). The logic tracts had two important functions: (1) "To bridge the gap between [students's] languages and university Latin,

students needed an intermediate language that they could translate into their own vernaculars,” i.e., languages and dialects of Italian, German, English, French and others; and (2) to serve as “instruction in logic as well as training in the syntax and semantics of university Latin” (125–26). In the second section, Perreiah discusses Rita Copeland and Donald Davidson’s theories of language interpretation. The final part of the chapter is devoted to Paul of Venice’s (1369–1429) *Logica Parva*. This work “is first and foremost a manual that taught thousands of students logic in Italian universities of the Renaissance” (141). The author explains in detail how *Logica Parva* was actually used to teach Latin grammar and logic—this is a fascinating section and is one of my favorite parts in the book.

Various notable seventeenth-century thinkers were influenced by the thinking of late medieval scholastics and Renaissance humanists. Alan Perreiah broke new ground with this work, and, for that reason alone, this book will offer scholars a fascinating read, especially those interested in logic, philosophy of language, language theory and the history of ideas.

Peter N. Miller. *Peiresc’s Mediterranean World*. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2015. 633 pp. + 32 illus. \$39.95. Review by R. BURR LITCHFIELD, BROWN UNIVERSITY.

This is an intelligent, detailed, and well written digest of the “archive” of Nicolas Fabri de Peiresc, which is an important source for early seventeenth-century Mediterranean history. Peiresc (1580–1637) was a lawyer living in Aix-en-Provence and a member of the Parlement of Provence, which met at Aix, an office he inherited from an uncle. He was an unmarried nobleman with independent means. But more importantly he was an avidly curious antiquarian, collector, and observer of the Mediterranean world, which he viewed through the port of Marseilles. His estate and his collections of books, coins, medals, and curious objects (even a small crocodile skin) were dispersed after his death, but he had copied down on sheets of paper his letters, reading notes, memoranda, jottings of conversations, orders and receipts for goods (119 volumes of manuscripts, some 77,000 pieces of paper),