

is worth examining in light of Richards' background. The principles of vocal delivery and the attention to what printed books can tell us about that can greatly enhance both the reading pleasure of early modern books and our understanding of literate culture of the time.

Greg Walker. *John Heywood: Comedy and Survival in Tudor England*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. x + 477 pp. \$85.00. Review by SARAH K. SCOTT, MOUNT ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY.

Greg Walker's *John Heywood: Comedy and Survival in Tudor England* presents the first comprehensive scholarly biography of the sixteenth-century musical composer, poet, playwright, epigram and proverb collector, admired in his time and too often neglected in present-day early modern studies. As Walker explains throughout his remarkable and substantial examination of Heywood's corpus, the playwright-poet is most deserving of study not only because of the astonishing variety of his writings but because of the ways they give expression to Heywood's moment, the tumultuous years of the English Reformation that spans the reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, and Mary I. The author's works, urban, urbane, satirical, bawdy, philosophical, and humanist, are profound engagements in the vexed moral, social, religious, and political climate. By showing readers how this is so, Walker brings a long-deceased poet and his work to life. Across eighteen chronologically arranged chapters, Walker's narrative approach reveals what is known about the writer and his milieu as it relates to England's tensions and the leading figures involved in them. At the same time, he offers fulsome summaries and analyses of Heywood's creations, including discussions of how the works directly or indirectly address the complex issues of the age. Printer, lawyer, and father-in-law John Rastell and his brother-in-law Thomas More are made central figures early on in Walker's story for the profound influence they had on the entirety of Heywood's artistic career, most notably through their shared affinity for the humanist enterprise and a passion for the powers and pleasures of all forms of moral satire and colloquial turns-of-phrase. Printer William Rastell, son of John, joins the scene shortly thereafter. Walker's interlacing of texts

and contexts invites readers to understand how Heywood's work engages, for instance, the humanist writings of More and Erasmus, matters of Henrician religious instruction, and the works of the poet's literary peers and forebears, notably Skelton and Chaucer, as well as anonymous dramatists and lyricists. Walker employs Heywood's "A Description of a Most Notable Lady" in Richard Tottel's *Songs and Sonnets*, for example, to foreground what would become Heywood's long sympathy for Lady Mary Tudor, a subject that reemerges in a later chapter's discussion of the ballad "The Eagle's Bird Hath Spread His Wings," written in honor of Mary's marriage to Prince Philip of Spain. The former lyric foreshadows More's fate, and the marriage poem, along with Rastell's and Tottel's publication of More's *English Works*, give expression to a period of renewed prominence for Heywood and his family, which, sadly, is irretrievably lost when Heywood later lives out the remainder of his life in exile. Walker's chapters on interludes and plays prove essential for those seeking to study the evolution of Heywood's dramatic artistry through imitation, adaptation, and invention. We are first introduced to the important role of theatre to Heywood and his circle when readers are made aware of the writer's likely ties to Coventry, then one of England's largest, most prosperous cities and sponsor of the celebrated annual Corpus Christi pageant. These cycle plays clearly informed Heywood's early dramatic works, including *Johan Johan* and *Witty and Witless*, which may have been performed at Rastell's London house in Finsbury Fields on a purpose-built stage designed for professional (or semi-professional) performances. Walker's stand-alone chapters on Heywood's plays in historical context are highly valuable for their depth, and when read in concert with one another, they reveal fruitful discussions that illuminate how earlier works inform those that follow. For example, readers learn how Heywood revisits the comic, parodic, and colloquial debate style characteristic of *Witty and Witless*, *The Four PP*, and *Gentleness and Nobility* in *A Play of Love*, though for a different purpose. *The Pardoner and the Friar*'s affinities with its forebears *Play of the Weather* and *The Four PP* advance Heywood's religious position on Reformation strife to reveal a deep concern with partisanism and favoring of mainstream Catholicism. Discussions of Heywood's lyrics also serve to enhance one's understanding of the plays. The repeated

caution to “bear no malice” in “Man, if thou mind heaven to obtain” to create a kind of estrangement evokes uses of repetition in *Weather* (“head”) and *Love* (“conscience”) to signal how the idea now holds a potential to inflict harm, given its politicized, destructive use in the Henrician regime of the 1530s. Earlier dramatic works also inform the poet’s enigmatic insect-parable *The Spider and the Fly*, which employs allegory in a fashion evoking *Gentleness* and *Weather*. Walker’s summations of various dramatic speeches, such as that of John in *Witty and Witless*, “the witless are saved by their own incapacity,” do much to elucidate for new readers the gist of sixteenth-century debate language in dramatic form, as well as to demonstrate the value of the epigram so appreciated by Heywood and others of his time. One can imagine that new and experienced present-day audiences might also welcome the idea that “old” plays addressing such unfortunate truths conclude with a moral message, in this case of the importance of using one’s wisdom to practice good deeds for the purpose of helping others in this life as well as for personal salvation in that which follows. With a style lucid, engaging, and approachable, Walker weaves a remarkable, sophisticated narrative of Heywood’s life, time, and creative work alongside contemporaneous and scholarly accounts of matters of Church and State. The result is a sensitive and deep engagement of the playwright that brings to life a figure exceptional for his discursive breadth, length of career, and humane, “merry” spirit. The volume is a highly valuable contribution to Heywood studies that will surely inspire literary scholarship for years to come.

Jonathan Scott. *How the Old World Ended*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2019. xvi + 392 pp. \$35.00. Review by CHARLES BEEM, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA, PEMBROKE.

This reviewer cannot remember reading a history book this enjoyable and edifying. In *How the Old World Ended*, Scott takes the knowledge and experience of a long and distinguished career to craft what is unmistakably his masterwork. This is a work of global history, leaving behind the limitations of “national” histories to create a history in which people, ideas, and commodities flowed freely in and around