

whole, this collection does indeed help clarify the impact of Calvinism on the literature of the period. This book is of real importance to historians and literary scholars alike.

Richmond Barbour. *Before Orientalism: London's Theatre of the East, 1576-1626*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003. xii + 238 pp. \$60. Review by NABIL MATAR, FLORIDA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY.

The title of this book identifies its three foci: a theoretical engagement with Edward Said's theory of orientalism; theatre and pageant in the London of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods; and the "East," by which is meant the regions east of the Ottoman Empire, regions which, as the author accurately notes, have not been sufficiently studied. The book is a welcome addition to the growing body of literature on England's commercial and diplomatic expansion into the early modern world.

Barbour divides his book into two equal units: the first examines dramatic representations of the East, both on stage and in pageants; the second historical and autobiographical documents. He moves from the Ottoman Levant to India, and from London drama and mayoral pageants to tourist, diplomatic and East India Company accounts. The first part, "Staging 'the East' in England," opens with a discussion of Richard Knolles' influential *The Generall Historie of the Turkes*, a book that yet awaits a modern edition and a detailed study. Barbour uses the text to show that "Before orientalism expressed western imperial power in Asia, early 'orientalist' tropes, provoking alternate alarm and complacency at home, helped writers decentered by travel to worlds east of England to reorient themselves" (15). This argument accurately conveys the position that developed in Britain toward the powerful Ottoman Empire: of recognizing similarities (both English and Ottoman potentates executed rivals and relatives to ensure succession) and differences, as in the "eastern shows of opulence and power . . . [that were seen to be] deceptive, effeminate, and debasing" (29). Barbour then discusses *Tamburlaine* and *Antony and*

Cleopatra, important plays that have received extensive coverage in recent criticism, and situates them in the context of England's commercial ventures, arguing against the oft-repeated claims that the plays belong to a colonizing imagination. As he succinctly states, "England's eastern initiative," and the representation of the East on the Swan and the Globe, "was driven by capital investment, not dynastic political design" (40). The third chapter examines public pageants, especially the royal entry of King James into London in 1603, court masques, and mock battles on the Thames, and their role in staging, in proto-orientalist terms, the "Muslim-Christian strife." These presentations showed the far reach of English geographical imagination and the acquisitive impulses of merchants, sailors, stock-holders, theater-goers and royalty. Although some writers criticized trade with the East, there was admiration for the commercial links that brought to London exotic products which made it appear the emporium of the world: "English ethnocentrism," observes Barbour, "dominate[d] an emergent orientalism" (74).

After a brief "Interlude" on the advantages and disadvantages of travel in the writings of English humanists, Barbour crosses to the second part, "Inaugural scenes in eastern theatre," which examines two accounts about the East by a tourist and a merchant/diplomat: Thomas Coryat and Sir Thomas Roe respectively. Barbour describes Coryat as the first English tourist in the East—a man who traveled not for any trading or religious goal, but simply to observe and then write down his observations for his countrymen—thereby transforming the East from a threat to a thrill (144). Coryat is a curious figure, and worthy of study, but it is not clear why Barbour chose to focus on him and ignore the extensive accounts about the "Persian" East that appeared from the Shirley brothers and their circle at the same time. Unlike eccentric Coryat, the Shirleys represented the kind of diplomatic and commercial ventures in Safavid Persia that numerous other Englishmen would attempt elsewhere in Asia: Persia was as much of the "East" as the Ottoman Levant and India. Sidestepping Persia, Barbour discusses the career of Sir Thomas Roe, the first Englishman to go to India

in an official capacity, and to attempt to “charm” (155) the Mughal court. Although supported by the East India Company, Barbour notes that Roe lacked the linguistic skills to negotiate directly with the Indian potentates, and the financial affluence to impress them. Still, Roe theatricized his arrival in Surat, believing himself capable of fulfilling his Company’s and king’s wishes, but when he presented his gifts to King Jahangir, the latter found them amusing and soon had his artisans imitate and improve on them. English skill and self-presentation were thus eclipsed by Indian industry and wealth. Roe found himself “fantastically upstaged” and marginalized by his hosts.

Before Orientalism is informative and clearly written. It is rich in detail and elegantly presented, with very helpful illustrations. Its juxtaposition of literary descriptions with personal accounts sharply shows the difference between English hopes and Eastern reality. In this respect, it was unfortunate that Barbour omitted Persia, and that he did not try to situate the English experience within the larger European encounter with the East. Knowlles’ account of the delay which European ambassadors experienced before being granted an audience by the Grand Signior is seen by Barbour as a “ceremony of humiliation” and “subjection” (32), but descriptions in Ottoman and other “Eastern” sources show that the same delays were often experienced by Muslim ambassadors and that Muslim ambassadors also experienced them in Christian courts. Similarly, Roe’s experience in Mughal India would have been enriched if it were seen in light of the very similar experience of Vasco da Gama, over a hundred years earlier. Works by Michael Fisher and Sanjay Subrahmanyam, along with sources from the “East,” would have helped decenter this highly Anglo-centric study. Furthermore, the relationship between the pre-orientalism of the title and all the proto-orientalism allusions in the book remains unresolved. What exactly does it mean to state that English writers were pre-orientalists, or proto-orientalists, or orientalists (used interchangeably)? Prefixes are ambiguous. If orientalism is a movement, as Said defined it, that was a product of the modern European state with its institutions of administration, scholar-

ship, and power, how could a 1580s play by Marlowe express “proto-orientalist conceits” (46), or “Enobarus’ rhapsody” in 2.2.201-8 be “a set-piece of proto-orientalist vision” (65) when it was taken verbatim, as Barbour carefully notes, from Sir Thomas North’s translation of Plutarch?

Before Orientalism is an important book. In an ideal world, its impressive scholarship would have been accompanied by a rigorous theoretical formulation.

Ronald W. Cooley. *“Full of all knowledg”: George Herbert’s Country Parson and Early Modern Social Discourse*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004. 238 pp. + 1 illus. \$50.00 Review by MARGARET J. OAKES, FURMAN UNIVERSITY.

It has become a commonplace to warn students encountering *The Temple* for the first time not to dismiss these poems as Sunday School-ish sing-alongs—the poetry is deceptively simple. The nursery rhyme-like appearance of some poems in the collection and their seemingly straightforward ideas belie intricate schemes of rhyme and rhythm, explorations of profound theological puzzles that parallel historical disputes over both theological tenets and those matters supposedly belonging to the “adiaphora,” and mature, multi-layered modes of approaching the divine. Ronald W. Cooley argues that the same principle of critical attention to an illusory simplicity should apply when encountering *The Country Parson*. Just as we cannot assume that the *via media* of the seventeenth-century English church (if such a thing actually existed) presented a smooth and internally consistent set of values and practices, we cannot assume that Herbert is following previously “constructed” positions and policies on ecclesiastical or doctrinal matters. In fact, Cooley argues that Herbert is actually part of a series of church figures who were in the process of negotiating among conflicting positions in the Church on numerous matters after it was freed from the oppressive stasis of the Elizabethan Compromise in his “effort to steer a course between a retreating conformist Calvinism and an advancing Arminian authority” (41).