

The Hartlib Papers: A Complete Text and Image Database of the Papers of Samuel Hartlib (c.1600-1662). Second edition on CD-ROM. HROnline for the Humanities Research Institute: University of Sheffield, 2002. £1,570. Review by DONALD R. DICKSON, TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY.

One of the great untold stories of intellectual influence in the seventeenth century is that of Samuel Hartlib. The MLA International Bibliography currently lists only a handful of articles and books about him (sixteen in all), despite the many enterprises in which he engaged. Most know that Milton dedicated *Of Education* (1644) to him, but his role in many of the intellectual debates of his day in such practical fields as optics, mathematics, agriculture, and politics is not so well known. In 1995 the Hartlib Papers Project brought out the first edition of the papers of this influential man (on an MS-DOS platform), though the cost of the CD-ROM made it scarce. Only a handful of research libraries subscribed. Now that a second edition is available in a Windows format and at a greatly reduced price, the remarkable story of this Renaissance polymath may begin to emerge.

Samuel Hartlib was born in Polish Prussia at Elbing about 1600. His father, a Polish merchant of German extraction, married the daughter of an Englishman with the Eastland Merchants. The details of his early life are not fully clear. Based on clues from his letters, G. H. Turnbull argues that he studied until 1621 at the Gymnasium at Brieg, a well-known center of Protestantism in Silesia, then at Cambridge from 1621 to 1626, where he may have read law. Though all his early education at Brieg would have been in German and Latin, he was probably raised bi-lingually amidst the small English community on the Baltic. When he began recording noteworthy events in 1634 in his *Ephemerides*, he wrote mostly in English (with occasional passages in Latin).

After his probable stay at Cambridge, Hartlib returned briefly to the Baltic, before resettling in London in the spring of 1628. The impetus to return came not only from conditions in Prussia

but from the desire to help bring about the kingdom of God in England where millenarian expectations ran high. Hartlib encouraged others to read Bacon's *De Augmentis Scientiarum* and sought throughout his life to develop England's agricultural and horticultural resources; helped establish schools (in 1629 and 1630); offered succor—often at his own expense—to exiled scholars and ministers from the continent, especially Calvinists from the Palatinate; became the London agent for John Dury who hoped to promote ecclesiastical pacification among protestant divines by establishing “correspondency” to enable communication on spiritual matters; and promoted utopianism by bringing Jan Amos Comenius to England and having J. V. Andreae's utopian writings translated and broadly disseminated. He was filled with zeal for *pansophy* whose goal was the recovery of the knowledge that postlapsarian mankind had lost. Disseminating information within the European *republic of letters* became something like a religious obligation for Hartlib and his circle, and it explains why his epistolary networks were so extensive.

Furthermore, Hartlib believed that such a reformation of society would be aided by the establishment of a model college of learning, such as Bacon had imagined in his “Solomon's House” or Andreae in his *Christianopolis*. Hartlib hoped Chelsea College might become such an institution in London; and Comenius would later come to regard the Royal Society as the fruition of these long-held schemes. Because of his pansophical and utopian interests, Hartlib became known as an “intelligencer” or agent for the dissemination of news, books and manuscripts. With his scribes and amanuenses, he maintained regular and extensive correspondence with continental and English authorities. He was sent books, manuscripts, and letters filled with knowledge of all kinds for his review and assessment. The responses were themselves duplicated, opinions collated, and digests sent to members of his immediate circle or others who might benefit from the knowledge he had gained. He even collected the responses of his friends and returned them to the original author; so that ideas crossed frequently between England and various places in northern Europe. In this, he acted like

the Internet of the seventeenth century. While his printed works, such as *A Description of the Famous Kingdome of Macaria* (1641), list him as the author, Hartlib actually wrote little (Gabriel Plattes is now known to have authored this utopian treatise). He was more an impresario for the ideas of anyone who could improve society in some way.

Hartlib's correspondents included many of the most distinguished individuals of his generation: Milton, Marvell, Robert Boyle, John Pym, Oliver Cromwell, Americans such as John Winthrop and George Starkey, as well as leading luminaries in Europe such as Descartes, Pascal, and Comenius. The papers also contain in-depth information about a host of lesser and even previously unknown figures, whose role has gone largely unrecorded. As a result the Hartlib Papers contain enough material to rewrite the history of many subjects. Our understanding of agricultural and horticultural reform may certainly be transformed by the rich materials within this collection. The history of optics in Britain and Europe in its formative years when the microscope and telescope were first developed, may also be modified by the extensive body of information on early instrument makers contained within his papers.

The Hartlib Papers Project diligently collected all of the extant papers, but of course not everything survived. Shortly before his death Hartlib complained to a friend that his papers were being lost through carelessness, pilferage, and fire. After his death in 1662 his archive was purchased by William Viscount Brereton and put in order by Hartlib's friend John Worthington. What survived until the twentieth century was seventy-one bundles of documents (comprising some 5,234 individual documents). A few items had been acquired by Hans Sloane and so ended up in the British Library. One bundle was purchased for the Osborn Collection of the Beinecke Library at Yale in 1957. The bulk of the Hartlib archive was discovered among the family papers of a defunct line by a London solicitor and given in 1933 to a professor of education at the University of Sheffield, George Turnbull, who had written a recent biography of Hartlib. Turnbull made great

use of these newly discovered archives for his monumental study of the interrelations of Hartlib, Dury and Comenius (1947), but the 25,000 pages of manuscript will add considerably to the intellectual history of the seventeenth century in due course. The Second Edition of the Hartlib papers happily reunites the missing bundles (some 445 documents) and includes other Hartlib-related materials, such as correspondence between Hartlib and Robert Boyle, John Worthington, Joseph Mede, John Pell, and Johann Hevelius. In addition, translations of some of the most important Latin texts in the collection are included.

As an electronic edition, *The Hartlib Papers* offers up its riches with extraordinary ease. Its search engine is simple to use as well as sophisticated. One can perform a simple Boolean search, or a search using multiple Boolean operators. The index was constructed using a built-in stemmer, which makes word searches more efficient by identifying standard morphological variants of a word. Thus a search for "alch-" will find all of the documents in which forms of alchahest, alchemia, alchemiam, alchemista, alchemistarum, alcherm, alchimi, alchimia, alchemist, alchimista, alchimestam, alchimestarum, alchimistica, alchymi, alchymia, alchymic, alchymica, alchymical, alchymici, alchymicum, alchymisch, alchymist, alchymista, alchymisten, alchymisterei, alchymisti, alchymistical appear (55 in all). One can also search with a wildcard suffix (an asterisk on the end of a string of characters). The software also has a split-screen facility that allows comparison of two documents. Full on-screen help is provided at the touch of a button. Text can of course be easily saved and pasted into another text with a word processor.

The Hartlib archives are still organized by the topical bundles into which Worthington first organized them and can be browsed (as can the various collections from other libraries included). A tab discloses the inventory by title and date. Where images exist of the original manuscript, an icon within the document takes one to the image or prompts one to load the second CD to recover it. Since *The Hartlib Papers* is a diplomatic edition, all the details of the original manuscript are preserved, with editorial comment con-

fined to italic text in brackets. Each document has a header with three fields: the title, which describes the document type, the hand (where relevant), writer, recipient (where relevant), and the language (where other than English); the date (given in New Style usually); and the complete reference to the manuscript.

The electronic edition of *The Hartlib Papers* is an extraordinary resource that all research libraries ought to acquire. Scholars of seventeenth-century studies are much in the debt of those who worked so hard to bring this project to fruition: the directors, Michael Leslie and Mark Greengrass, and to their principals, Michael Hannon, Patrick Collinson and W. J. Hitchens, Judith Crawford and Timothy Raylor.

Hannibal Hamlin. *Psalm Culture and Early Modern English Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. xl + 289 pp. \$75.00. Review by ALAN RUDRUM, SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY.

Professor Hamlin's starting point is the fact that the culture of early modern England involved the translation of two ancient literatures, and the perception that less critical attention has been paid to biblical than to classical influences. The ubiquity of psalm translations and paraphrases suggests their study as a natural starting point in correcting this perceived imbalance. Hamlin begins with two apparently simple questions which prove on examination not to have simple answers: what is a psalm and what is a translation? Complexity arises from the facts that most translators did not read Hebrew and that there was universal ignorance regarding the formal workings of Hebrew poetry (3). It is pleasant to be returned, after some discussion of these complexities, to the observation that early modern man was convinced that the psalms were indeed poems and to the assurance that we shall be concerned with what contemporaries thought, rather than with current debates (6). Hamlin sees *use* as pointing to the important distinction between translations of classical texts and translations of psalms: their use in the liturgy, in family devotions, in sermons. This distinction itself becomes complicated by his apparent agree-