John Considine. *Dictionaries in Early Modern Europe: Lexicography and the Making of Heritage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. xiv + 393 pp. $99.00. Review by EUGENE D. HILL, MOUNT HOLYOKE COLLEGE.

John Considine's fine book tells an upbeat story of some learned but melancholy men: the lexicographers of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe. These erudite pioneers saw themselves as performing labors akin to those of Hercules, whom they repeatedly invoke in their prefaces and correspondence. But their typical frame of mind was well evoked in a Latin verse by Joseph Scaliger (aptly and elegantly rendered, as are numerous passages of Renaissance Latin, by Considine):

> If a harsh sentence from the judges awaits someone, once
> He has been condemned to afflictions and penalties,
> Let workhouses not fatigue him with raw material to be wrought
> Nor let mines of metal pain his stiffened hands:
> Let him make DICTIONARIES. Need I say more? This
> One labour has aspects of every punishment. (72)

Himself a former editor specializing in etymology for the OED, Considine writes with informed sympathy of his protagonists (the Estiennes father and son, the Casaubons, and many other figures through Du Cange), his particular heroes being the elder Estienne and Du Cange. Of the former he reports: "It was Robert Estienne who first made a dictionary in which vast cultural heritage was analysed into the stories told by individual words, made readily retrievable by being sorted into an alphabetical macrostructure, and both introduced and coloured throughout by the story of the lexicographer's personal heritage" (315).

This book abounds in material one *ought* to have known. Herewith one example where many more could readily be provided. In a discussion of the obscure folk called the Batavi—lauded by Tacitus for their outstanding courage—Considine explains:

> A history was manufactured for them, supported by a forged inscription, . . . on a stone supposedly unearthed near Leiden—an appropriate location, since in 1575 Leiden was given the Latin name *Lugdunum Batavorum* (many neo-Latin place-names were, like this one, creations of the Renaissance rather than revivals of ancient nomenclature). This name appeared as the imprint of a great number

of scholarly books, and told every consumer of Dutch scholarship about a Dutch heritage of independence. (151)

Readers who find this passage, as this reviewer does, both instructive and entertaining will be abundantly rewarded by this study. Younger scholars seeking theorized intellectual history will have to look elsewhere—names absent from the Index include Agamben, Derrida, Foucault, Nietzsche, Hegel and . . . Vico.

What Considine has on offer is a rich report on neglected masters of lexicography, based on close acquaintance with abundant primary sources (mainly Latin but also vernacular). The story he tells is (as this review began by noting) a consistently upbeat one, and Considine may be found at times to inflect his sources in twentieth-century scholarship in ways that match his temperament rather than their intentions. This author's key notion of heritage—familial, ethnic, national—he takes from David Lowenthal's *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History* (1998), as is acknowledged in the Introduction (8). But that instructively entertaining volume paints a panoramic canvas of the historical enterprises discussed as bunkum (variously deception or self-deception, but bunkum throughout). Lowenthal's is the opposite of a Whig history—it exhibits stasis not progress—and could not be more different in purport than Considine's series of lexicographic triumphs.

A further instance of such inflection may be found on the concluding page of the last full chapter, where Considine cites Hans Aarsleff's classic essay "The Early History of the *Oxford English Dictionary*" (313). Considine rightly notes Aarsleff's demonstration that the Oxford project derives its lexicographic method from a book on Greek dictionary-making by the German classicist Franz Passow (1812). Considine takes Passow's method to be a revival of seventeenth-century lexicographical practice and theory to be found in such scholars as Stiernhielm and Andreas Jäger. But the thrust of Aarsleff's essay cuts a different way; to quote: "the concepts of 'etymology' and 'philology' are seriously misunderstood because it is not realized that the meanings of both words changed fundamentally in the course of the nineteenth century so that the meanings now normally assigned to them—i.e. their late nineteenth-century meanings . . .—will not at all do before around 1820 at the earliest" (*BNYPL,*

66, 1962, 435).

There are moments when Considine may be deemed to overstress the continuities between seventeenth-century comments about language and present-day historical linguistics. Thus he writes: "The 'Scythian' from which extant languages were supposed [by a number of seventeenth-century scholars, as Considine carefully documents] to descend was not so much the name of a known language variety as a shorthand for 'a lost language formerly spoken in south-western Asia and distinct from Hebrew.' So, the Scythian hypothesis adumbrated the modern understanding that a number of European and Asian languages are indeed descended from a lost language which very probably was spoken in south-western Asia and was unrelated to Hebrew—the language now called Proto-Indo-European" (306-07). The jump here is a long one; in making it Considine will seem in the eyes of not a few readers to be taking shadowy types a bit more favorably and scientifically than necessary, even readers disposed to grant Considine the teacher's privilege of using analogical shorthand. To be sure, these considerations add up to a caveat or two, no more. This book richly rewards the scholar's attention.

Jeanne Shami, ed. *Renaissance Tropologies: The Cultural Imagination of Early Modern England.* Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2008. x + 382 pp. $60.00. Review by P. G. STANWOOD, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

The twelve essays by the same number of authors form the chapters of this book, which is a kind of *Festschrift* for the late Gale Carrithers, though little biographical account is given of him. His important and influential work *Donne at Sermons*: *A Christian Existential World* (1972), however, is a presence that hovers over the whole volume. But his last work, a collaboration with James D. Hardy, Jr., *Age of Iron: English Renaissance Tropologies of Love and Power* (1998), provides the organizing principle not only of that book, but also of this present collection.

Carrithers and Hardy identified four tropes: *journey, theater, moment, and ambassadorship*; they believed these terms usefully (if not necessarily fully) provided categories in which might be gathered the congeries