level of generality assumed by such concerns as illusion and reality, duty and disillusion, we are talking novelistically and not about the language and form of poetry.

The second problem is a related one. Blevins’s Catullus is not the edgy, cocky, and linguistically experimental master that readers of poetry have long cherished—not least (one may suppose) Renaissance authors whose Latinity generally exceeds ours. Not everything in the amatory verse of the English Renaissance is neo-Platonic idealization or a presumed Petrarchan supineness before the beloved. But who ever thought it was? So to evoke Catullus as the extra factor involved is nugatory—especially when (as Blevins admits) we don’t know whether Wyatt or Shakespeare read the Latin master.

Blevins correctly notes that seventeenth-century imitations of Catullus prove most effective precisely in their divergences from the original—in the Jonsonian or Hemickian quality of the English poem. But who doubted this? Readers wanting to get at Catullus but without much Latin should turn to George Goold’s version (1983) or Peter Green’s very recent rendering—then, of course, to the quirky but immensely instructive volume of the Zukofskys, a little course of aesthetics in its own right.


Johanna Eleonora Petersen (1644-1728) was one of the most prominent voices in early Pietism and its most important female figure. Her published exegetical and devotional books won her admiration as well as notoriety for her visions, heterodox ideas, and challenges to gender norms. Her autobiography is one of the earliest of its kind by a German woman and became a model for Pietist autobiography in the eighteenth century. Barbara Becker-Cantarino’s fine translation of her Life is a welcome addition to the sources on German autobiography and Pietism available in English.

Daughter of an impoverished noble family, von und zu Merlau, Petersen had little formal education and at twelve was sent to serve at court. She found the opulent lifestyle of the higher nobility increasingly at odds with her
pious disposition. In the early 1670s she came into contact with Philipp Jakob Spener and Johann Jakob Schütz, leaders of the Pietist movement in Frankfurt am Main, and in 1675 she moved to the city where she became an active and outspoken member in the Pietist movement. In 1680 she married Johann Wilhelm Petersen, a Pietist clergyman. Her marriage to a commoner scandalized some and remained a point of controversy throughout her life, but the two established a remarkably productive relationship. Around 1685, divine visions began to play an important role in Petersen's understanding of Biblical texts and Christian doctrine. By no means did marriage and motherhood dampen her religious activity. In 1689 she published her first devotional work, to which she appended a version of her *Life*. After her husband lost his clerical position for voicing heterodox ideas in the pulpit, the couple dedicated themselves to furthering their radical Pietist goals. Altogether Petersen published fifteen of her own works and collaborated with her husband on numerous others.

Petersen's *Life* is an early example of spiritual autobiography in German. It is relatively concise and describes Petersen's religious development from the age of four. It is not a typical conversion narrative, and there is no single turning point around which the story revolves. Rather it depicts a series of decisive events throughout her life that became critical for her spiritual development, establishing her authority to speak on theological issues. In the first part of the *Life* completed in 1689, Petersen draws on biographical details and episodes, if selectively, making it a valuable record of the early Pietist movement. In the second part, added in 1718, such biographical information is almost entirely missing, and Petersen concentrates on her revelations and theological insights to the exclusion of key events in her life including her husband's dismissal, the death of children, and their contact to other radical Pietists.

Becker-Cantarino provides a lengthy introduction to Petersen and her *Life*, a helpful bibliography, and annotations throughout the translation. In addition, she includes two appendices: a letter by Petersen defending her religious activities to the Frankfurt city council and an early devotional tract that had previously been published in English. The strength of this volume is the remarkably smooth translation that Becker-Cantarino achieves in rendering Petersen's baroque style into English. Only partial translations of Petersen's life had been published previously, and by making the entire autobiography with
annotations available in a compelling translation, Becker-Cantarino gives students and teachers of early modern Germany an excellent new resource.

The introduction is very good at placing Petersen's *Life* within the broader literary tradition of autobiographical writing and raises important questions for scholarship on women in Pietism. But in other respects the introduction disappoints. The treatment of theological issues can be superficial, especially on questions of justification and eschatology. At one point Becker-Cantarino dismisses the theological explications of Petersen and Jane Lead, a contemporary English visionary whose writings influenced Petersen, as uninteresting to anyone but “theologians.” Given how central such “explications” and theological writing were to Petersen’s self-identity, Becker-Cantarino’s lack of interest in this aspect of Petersen’s character is puzzling and appears to devalue what Petersen herself thought was most important.

To a certain extent, this reflects the dearth of research on Petersen and other women in Pietism, which only in the last few years has gained momentum. For instance, Becker-Cantarino would have benefited substantially from Ruth Albrecht’s intellectual biography of Petersen, which appeared almost at the same time as this volume. But other recent works on Pietism could have aided Becker-Cantarino, especially Andreas Deppermann’s work on Schütz and the circle of radical Pietists in Frankfurt to which Petersen belonged. The numerous inaccuracies in dates and names are particularly troubling in an introductory text. Especially confounding are Spener’s first names, which throughout the introduction, notes, and index are cited erroneously. Many dates are inexplicably off by a century; others are cited inconsistently. Careful copy-editing could have easily avoided these typographical errors.

Taken as a whole, this is by far the best introduction to Petersen in English. Alongside other volumes by Anna Maria van Schurman, Marie Dentière, and Katharina Schütz Zell (forthcoming), Chicago’s *Other Voice* series has contributed substantially to understanding the religious thought of women in early modern Protestantism. The lively translation of Petersen’s *Life* will be particularly welcome in the classroom and go a long way in conveying the dynamism and character of the Pietist movement to students of history, religion, and literature.