



without even a pause for a conjunction” (142). The conclusion is likewise written with soul-pleasing wit. After a long, interesting note and a full bibliography plus index, we are through. This book will long live in this grateful reviewer’s memory.

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*Rhetorical Renaissance: The Mistress Art and Her Masterworks.* Kathy Eden.  
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*Rhetorical Renaissance*, like Kathy Eden’s previous work on ancient and Renaissance rhetoric, balances erudite concision with deep comprehensiveness. The result is a wide-ranging and thoroughly readable analysis of the rediscovery and advancement of ancient rhetorical theory in the Renaissance. Eden demonstrates a continuity of rhetorical practices that, when combined with novel observations and an adept handling of primary texts, makes for a compelling new account of the Renaissance as a rhetorical age through and through—one in which *Rhetorica Regina* (Queen Rhetoric, shown in allegorical form on the book’s cover) regained her ascendancy.

Eden deepens and complicates this oft-told story by acting as a detective of sorts, finding evidence of seemingly arcane inventions and stylistic precepts—procured from the rhetorical handbooks, or *technai*, of antiquity—at work in texts that range from Plato’s *Gorgias* to Montaigne’s *Essays*. Many Renaissance authors felt such a focus on basic rhetorical precepts to be superficial pedantry; Philip Sidney, as Eden notes, decried them as “a most tedious prattling” (114–15). Instead, Eden shows that these principles constituted an essential structural component of Renaissance literary art, and moreover that the technical apparatus of rhetorical theory was even more deeply embedded in the Renaissance system of literary production than has previously been shown.

While Eden grounds her argument in her prior work on rhetoric and hermeneutics, a particularly novel contribution of *Rhetorical Renaissance* is her assertion that the increased historical awareness of the Renaissance arose in part from its newly gained sense of the historicity of rhetorical style, instigated by the discovery of Cicero’s *Brutus*. Unlike the rhetorical handbooks, which often make claims for the universal applicability of a single style (for example, a standout author to be imitated), *Brutus* considers instead the temporal constraints placed on orators, and argues for the importance of historical context in judging different oratorical styles. While the Renaissance gained its stylistic precepts from the handbook tradition, according to Eden, it gained its historicism in part from this broader Ciceronian approach to stylistic theory. This is best seen in Eden’s masterful reading of Erasmus’s *Ciceronianus* in chapter 4. With Erasmus’s questioning of the adaptability of Cicero’s style to contemporary circumstance, Eden contends, the rhetorical principle of *decorum*—speaking differently

according to the variable constraints of time and place—for the first time in the Renaissance becomes explicitly linked to historicism as an interpretive principle.

Apart from matters of style, Eden outlines how inventive strategies for proving arguments, gathered from the ancient *stasis* system, lead to novel ways of conceptualizing the authorial self. Of particular interest here is the second chapter's discussion of Augustine and Petrarch's use of self-refutation—argued for, though not put into practice, in Plato's *Gorgias*—and how this strategy of proof lays the groundwork for the skeptical advancements of the essay made by Montaigne.

Eden's discussion of Montaigne's stylistics is notable as well. Here she makes a convincing case for Montaigne's reliance on the stylistic tactic of comparison, or *similitudo*. At the same time, though, Montaigne uses self-refutation to advocate for a distrust of comparison's ability to capture the diversity of reality and worries openly about his use of it. Self-refutation (proof), as it concerns comparison (style), for Montaigne becomes a means to articulate a self-critical analysis of style and to question the probative capabilities of rhetoric in general. Eden traces meticulously here a thread that reveals not only what ancient rhetorical techniques Renaissance writers picked up but also how these techniques were used to advance beyond the strictures of the ancient doctrines they originated from—in the case of Montaigne, to scrutinize, theorize, and innovate an entire genre.

Eden, in short, has developed a kind of rhetorical handbook of her own, aimed at a deeper understanding of the rhetorical architecture of Renaissance texts—one that scholars of Renaissance rhetoric and literature will find eminently useful. *Rhetorical Renaissance* does much to broaden our picture of the vast literary provinces over which rhetoric once so magisterially reigned. *Rhetorica Regina* indeed.

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*“An Ancient Psalm, a Modern Song”: Italian Translations of Hebrew Literature in the Early Modern Period.* Alessandro Guetta.

Studies in Jewish History and Culture 72. Leiden: Brill, 2022. x + 318 pp. \$162.

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In his essays in *Cultural Translation in Modern Europe* (2007), Peter Burke famously pointed out that “the study of translation is or should be central to the practice of cultural history” (38). Burke's statement well applies to the scope of Guetta's volume, which offers a counter to the preponderance of studies concerned with translation into Hebrew or, particularly in the Renaissance period, from Hebrew into Latin. We thus discover that in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Italy, Jewish translations from Hebrew having as target language the vernacular were not only a diverse phenomenon