

indeed become compliment where the display of playful, gallant verbal virtuosity evolves into an end in itself.

The added paragraph breaks and chapter headings make Knapé's diplomatic edition more readable and accessible, and the ample footnotes enhance our appreciation of the source text. Both Knapé's edition and informative critical examination are welcome contributions for scholars and advanced students of early modern rhetoric and, more generally, of cultural history. Knapé's book also helps us understand Greflinger's unique role, matched only by his contemporary Georg Philip Harsdörffer, in the transition from a strictly language-based humanist rhetorical handbook to a rhetoric-based comprehensive code of conduct, which was oriented on the French ideal of *galante conduite* and fully disseminated in Germany by Christian Weise and Christian Thomasius later in the seventeenth century.

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*Beyond Greece and Rome: Reading the Ancient Near East in Early Modern Europe.*  
Jane Grogan, ed.

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This volume is a collection of essays in Oxford University Press's influential Classical Presences series, and by its very nature challenges the notion that only the classical past bears study in relation to early modernity's self-fashioning. The authors are an international array of scholars, mostly in the fields of classical studies and early modernity, and none is a Near Eastern specialist per se. In this regard, the book is not closing the considerable gap between the disciplines of ancient Near Eastern studies and early modern reception, but it is hardly fair to criticize the good efforts of serious scholars for not fixing the shortcomings of academic specialization. Jane Grogan's twenty-five-page introduction makes clear what is being addressed here: scholars have generally been slow to move beyond the well-worn furrows of Greece and Rome in relation to early modernity's vision of the past, to the detriment of the field. The focus here is on "the significance, richness, and intensity of early modern engagements with the ancient near east: its world, authors, and material remains" (1), and this is reflected in its tripartite division into 1) "Routes of Reception" (four essays); 2) "Materials and Traces" (three essays); and 3) "Refiguring Sources" (five essays).

At a meta critical level, this volume is really about the modern reception of early modernity and its flattening of Renaissance culture thematically into a narrow concern for a Greco-Roman past. As Grogan puts it, "The European Renaissance, then, is not so very European at all, even in its classicism" (2). It should be noted that the ancient Near East here is not exclusively a matter of Assyrian and Babylonian studies, but includes the

Hellenistic and Roman Near East as well as the Christian one—and, as Grogan admits, reflects a rather expansive “Herodotean geography” (6). This expanded definition accords with the assumptions and realities of the early modern receptions under review in the essays. More poignantly, Grogan frames this collection as challenging the author-centered models of cultural reception that narrowly define Renaissance culture in terms of a few canonical authors (10), to the neglect of ideas, registers, and figures drawn from wider sources and experiences.

Of the three main sections, “Materials and Traces” has the most united approach, in that each chapter involves specific sites that are enlisted in an early modern discourse of memory, authenticity, and/or authority, thus touching upon the themes of mnemohistory and *lieux de mémoire* (explicitly so in Ladan Niayesh’s essay on English travelers to the site of Persepolis). The four chapters of “Routes of Reception” look to how ancient source texts on the Near East produce knowledge that, via reception, becomes filtered through a Latinized Hellenism (i.e., Cicero’s mediation of Xenophon’s mediation of Persia in Noreen Humble’s chapter), compared to contemporary Ottoman and European realities (Dennis Looney’s contribution), or weaponized for colonial exploitation (Galena Hashhozheva’s eye-opening essay on Edmund Spenser’s theory of the Scythian origins of the Irish). The last section, “Refiguring Sources,” comprises essays that have clear similarities in approach to the previous sections, but swing more widely towards the discursive transformations of their subjects.

Deirdre Serjeantson, for example, looks at Babylon as a site, a Biblical topos, and a polemical idea. Derval Conroy looks at the popularity of the female exempla of Semiramis, Panthea, Tomyris, Zenobia, and Artemisia II in drama and popular gallery books. English drama figures prominently in Grogan’s chapter on Alexander the Great and in Edith Hall’s essay on Cambyses. The outlier in the section is Jennifer Sarha’s chapter on the historiography of Assyria, which is a useful statement on the ordering of limited knowledge within a highly repetitive tradition before the epistemic leap taken with later archaeology and the decipherment of cuneiform.

The scholarly commitment and quality of these essays are high, with the contributors choosing their battles carefully. The fascination raised by the many topics, however, produces a problem: a hunger for a concluding discussion that returns to how such investigations are necessary to reconfigure our thin descriptions and incomplete understanding of early modernity’s relationship to the ancient world. That remains a work in progress.

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