

In part 5, historical and memorial texts make up the selections, with essays by Harald Bollbuck, Sascha Salatowsky, and Ernst Koch. These contributions will hold the attention of those whose primary focus is the history of the Reformation (in contrast to the theology of the Reformation). Part 6, “Bibliography and Letters,” is the final section of the volume, with the essays of Franziska König and Ernst Koch. These two contributions are useful to those wishing to compare the writings and letters of Myconius. These materials are extremely important sources for firsthand knowledge of Myconius’s thought, both publicly exhibited through his tracts and other works and privately on display through his letters. The sorts of materials shown here clarify many questions concerning Myconius’s depth of thought and intellect.

The benefit of a volume of this sort is that it places in readers’ hands a historical examination of a man who has long deserved such an examination, again, because his theological efforts were terribly important. Take, for example, the closing segment by Koch, which provides an important list of the correspondence of Myconius. There, readers have the opportunity to get an overview of the expansiveness of his contacts and the people who both sought his advice and whom he advised. Koch lists 816 letters to and from Myconius, the first dated to 1524 and the last to, tentatively, 1544. Correspondents include Luther, Zwingli, Melancthon, and a whole host of persons unknown, as well as towns and cities and their leaders who needed his assistance. He was not as prolific a correspondent as Heinrich Bullinger, who had well over ten thousand letters in his in- and out-box, but his corpus is significant.

The only failing of this well-formulated volume is that it is too brief. There need to be sections on Myconius’s theology beyond merely skimming his views. A sustained, critical, thorough investigation of Myconius’s own theology is a serious desideratum. Perhaps in the future the contributors to this volume will put their hands to that, and that would be a welcome work indeed.

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*Early Modern Aristotle: On the Making and Unmaking of Authority.*

Eva Del Soldato.

Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020. 300 pp. \$55.

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Although stating that Aristotle was a great philosopher is a truism, he and his philosophy remain fascinating to scholars; Del Soldato’s book is an excellent example of this fascination. In order to present the *fortuna* of his authority in early modern Europe, the author has selected an impressive body of about two hundred source texts (prints, manuscripts, letters), of various provenance, in which the figure of Aristotle appears. The book offers an engaging story of the uneasy road of liberation from the influence of authority, and the

path of humanity's self-development in search of truth and rationality, with the flexible but tyrannical figure of the philosopher as the main object of struggle.

The aim of Del Soldato's work is to demonstrate the manipulations of Aristotle's figure, as she puts it—"its use and abuse, from both transnational and interdisciplinary perspectives" (3)—which in consequence reveal the flexibility of Aristotle as an authority. She provides a fresh perspective by organizing her book according to literary genres, in which she finds a useful clue for interpreting cultural movement. The analyses are well contextualized in ongoing intellectual debates and the political landscape. The book consists of five chapters supplemented by four short texts in the form of appendixes. These include so-far unpublished transcriptions and translations of the preface by Alfonso Pandolfi to his *Comparatio* of Aristotle and Plato, and Federico Pendasio's *Comparatio*, whose manuscripts Del Soldato found in the Vatican Library and Biblioteca Ambrosiana in Milan, respectively.

The first three chapters are devoted to the genre of *comparationes* between Aristotle and Plato, which Del Soldato begins with the appearance of the *De Differentiis* of Gemistus Pletho (1439) and closes with Giuseppe Valletta's vernacular treatise *On Philosophy* (1697). Thanks to Del Soldato's compilation of an enormous number of sources and her careful analysis, we can follow the development of a genre initiated by Greek authors (Pletho, George of Trebizond, and Bessarion) and furthered by Latin and vernacular authors. This is undoubtedly the most valuable part of the work, as no one has yet attempted to study the *comparationes* as a whole, based on such a large number of sources.

In the author's interpretation, the two philosophers and their comparisons become a mirror of the political, theological, and philosophical anxieties of the era. I found particularly interesting the theological context of these comparisons, which aimed at proving which philosopher was more pious and had more affinities with Christian religion, and were also fierce debates on the possibility of reforming existing dogmas. Therefore, Jesuits tried hard to minimize any affinity between Christianity and Platonism, as this could lead to heresy. Del Soldato's great merit is that she shows and proves that the situation was not so clear-cut. Through many examples of *comparationes* she demonstrates the complexity of manipulation, where even reconciling Plato and Aristotle could serve different purposes. The only hesitation a reader may feel at this abundance of examples is that it obscures the author's own thoughts and comments.

In the remaining chapters Del Soldato looks at the manipulative strategies in the use of Aristotle's authority from the viewpoint of subsequent literary forms: legends, a proverbial anecdote, and a fictional story involving Aristotle (chapter 4), and the motif "if Aristotle were alive" (chapter 5). Such legends as Aristotle the Jew or Spaniard are described as examples of the national appropriation of his authority, acting as a kind of ennobling cultural agent. While Aristotle Spanicus was attractive mainly in a national context, Aristotle Judaicus was fought against by Catholics or Protestants who rejected any continuity between Judaism, Hellenism, and Christianity. Del Soldato's book ends with a chapter devoted to the phrase once formulated, by Galileo, among others: "if

Aristotle were alive,” which represented the twilight of the philosopher’s tyranny. Referring to a revived Aristotle paradoxically served mainly to legitimize new trends and scientific freedom.

To sum up, the book gives a detailed and well-written overview of the fortune of Aristotle’s authority, its use and abuse in early modern Europe, which will undoubtedly be of interest to any scholar of Aristotelianism and anyone interested in the circulation of thought and intellectual trends.

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*Hobbes’s “On the Citizen”: A Critical Guide.* Robin Douglass and Johan Olsthoorn, eds.

Cambridge Critical Guides. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020. xii + 252 pp. \$99.99.

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Robin Douglass and Johan Olsthoorn have provided us with the first book-length study of Thomas Hobbes’s *On the Citizen*, perhaps better known by its Latin title, *De Cive*. It is part of the Cambridge Critical Guides, a series offering authoritative multi-author volumes centered on major philosophical texts. In a co-authored chapter, Deborah Baumgold and Ryan Harding show how *On the Citizen* revises and reorganizes *The Elements of Law*. If the two works comprise a single project, with *On the Citizen* being the more finished draft, it could be because certain, and especially later, portions of *The Elements of Law* were hastily assembled so that the work might address the sitting of the Short Parliament. This line of interpretation draws on and summarizes findings in Baumgold’s *Three-Text Edition of Thomas Hobbes’s Political Theory* (2017).

Several essays shed light on Hobbes’s engagements of Aristotle. In their chapter, Nicholas Gooding and Kinch Hoekstra present *On the Citizen* 1.2 as a thoroughgoing attack on principles foundational to Aristotle’s political philosophy, with those attacks then comprising Hobbes’s core arguments: humans may naturally desire political association, but that desire, if it exists, does not explain how such an association is formed; friendship is motivated only by desire for glory or advantage, and so is an unstable foundation for human society; and law on its own cannot maintain concord, which is made stable only by fear of the sovereign’s power. Extending some of the work in his excellent book, *Popular Sovereignty in Early Modern Constitutional Thought*, Daniel Lee also presents a subtle engagement of Aristotle. Hobbes argues that the subject is essentially a *servus* (slave) obliged to obey the sovereign as *dominium* (lordship). This is an Aristotelian move in that it rests on an analysis of states as they exist, even if Hobbes disagrees with Aristotle on whether a state governed as a *dominium* is a well-formed one. Relatedly, Laurens van Apeldoorn rightly claims that *On the Citizen*, like Gaius’s