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disrupting the surface as the 'semiotic' presses itself into the poem" (221)—no direct quotation is provided, exactly where it is needed. Texts tend to be described and their effects reported, rather than being treated to the direct quotation and close reading that would characterize a Kristevan analysis. There are also signs of certain familiar thought formations. An old chestnut like the Stuart masques "containing subversive . . . forces" (168) makes an appearance, for example; and, for all the care taken to avoid essentialism, dubious references to things like "the mysterious if suspicious depths" and "dark interiority of being female" (85, 193) slip through. That woke theoretical positions should continue to struggle with long-entrenched habits of thought, however, shows the Baroque is still with us, and thus neatly illustrates the fundamental argument of this wonderful book.

Catherine Bates, *University of Warwick*
doi:10.1017/rqx.2022.96

Sidney's "Arcadia" and the Conflicts of Virtue. Richard James Wood. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020. xiv + 210 pp. £80.

Richard James Wood argues that Sidney's revised *Arcadia* is informed by Philipp Melancthon's philosophical ethos, which incorporates "religious piety, classical ethics, and also the behavior of individuals as part of a wider civil society" (6). Wood asserts that Philippist philosophy permits individuals to "cooperate with God in securing salvation" and stands in contrast to harsher Calvinist theories of predestination (8). Rather than reading the text within "the limits of the conventionally passive Christian Stoicism," Wood contends that Sidney's characters "engage with the vicissitudes of the world" (4), evincing "a commitment to public affairs" (5). As a consequence, Sidney's characters, especially Amphialus, engage with the world and show their flaws, faults, and sins but with the hope that they may be redeemed or rescued from error; for Wood, Amphialus "most poignantly displays [Sidney's] religious ethos" (4). Although Sidney writes in the *Defense of Poesy* that "right poets" should create a golden world, showing through narrative the nature of virtue, in the revised *Arcadia*, Sidney, following Philippist values, creates a "non-idealizing" romance that supports his "belief in the pre-eminence of poetry as a form of discourse in the public domain" (7).

The chapters that follow cover a broad range of topics including Sidney's "consiliary" (24) relationship with his queen, evidenced in the lessons taught both in his *Letter to the Queen* and within his romance, which Wood asserts has a "peculiar suitability . . . for articulating a Philipist ethos . . . [and] show[s] how the *Arcadia* . . . can express a profound moral earnestness, indeed, can communicate a sincere and devout Christian message" (52). Later in the book, Wood asserts that the character of Amphialus be read as an example of Sidney's Reformed Christian piety, a character capable of achieving

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2022.97 Published online by Cambridge University Press

salvation despite his despicable behavior. Through the ministrations of Helen of Corinth, Wood believes a completed revision would have shown Amphialus recovered both physically and morally; in Amphialus, Sidney "creates a corrigible character with the power to inspire cooperation [in his own salvation and] in his readers" (86).

A particularly interesting point Wood makes is the suggestion that the character of Amphialus may be seen as Sidney's avatar. Does Sidney continue to participate in his own poem after the disappearance of Philisides? Wood suggests that Sidney "acknowledges, rather than suppresses, the fallen aspect of his character, hoping," in Philippist terms, that he will "be judged with moderation" (106). Despite his fall, "Amphialus retains those characteristics which connect him to Sidney's [other] putative heroes" (111). Because Sidney is writing romance and not tragedy, Amphialus's rehabilitation is necessary, and while in the incomplete revision Amphialus falls, he will "rise again and re-enact man's salvation" (116). Put another way, Sidney's text teaches that "moral reformation is an ongoing process" (116).

Later chapters argue that Pyrocles and Musidorus's martial exploits stand in juxtaposition to the reality of Sidney's own life and career and represent Sidney's "scepticism toward . . . courtly values" (127); that, rather than acting as representatives of passive Christian stoicism, the Arcadian princesses instead exhibit a "more actively engaged outlook than . . . conventionally passive virtue" (179), seen especially in Philoclea's influence over Amphialus; and that we may read the revised *Arcadia* in the context of the more factional 1590s and beyond, especially in terms of the career of Sidney's heir, Robert Devereux, second Earl of Essex, whom Wood would, like Amphialus, rehabilitate. Wood also suggests that Mary Sidney Herbert's embrace of Phillipe du Plessis-Mornay's more pragmatic, Stoic, less Philippist position is "key to understanding the anti-factionalist agenda of the *New Arcadia*" (145).

Readers of Sidney's work will find the book deeply researched and clearly presented. It makes a strong contribution to scholarly understanding of the contemporary philosophical, ethical, and political pressures upon the revision of the *Arcadia* as well as contextualizing it within its subsequent publication history and the history of the romance's later revisionists.

Cynthia Bowers, *Kennesaw State University*
doi:10.1017/rqx.2022.97

Humoral Wombs on the Shakespearean Stage. Amy Kenny.
Palgrave Studies in Literature, Science and Medicine. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019. xii + 202 pp. €59.49.

In a field where representations of pregnant and potentially pregnant bodies in early modern drama are pervasive but understudied, Amy Kenny's debut book,

https://doi.org/10.1017/rqx.2022.97 Published online by Cambridge University Press