

demonstrate that these two essay collections are more relevant for us to read than ever.

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INGO BERENSMEYER, GERT BUELENS, AND MARYSA DEMOOR (eds), *The Cambridge Handbook of Literary Authorship*. Pp. xii + 491. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2019. £115.00 (ISBN 978 1 107 16865 7).

At nearly 500 pages and comprising 26 new essays plus an editors' introduction, this volume clearly aims to set the terms for current research in the subfield of 'literary authorship'. Much of the work contained here is strong enough to make this a good thing overall, but one could have wished for some further work on the editors' part to streamline the book's foci and research questions; as it is, the collection is somewhat disjointed, despite being divided into three sections, 'historical', 'systematic', and 'practical' perspectives.

The 'historical perspectives' take up half of the book, and span literary history from Gilgamesh to E.L. James. Of the essays about antiquity, the most interesting to my mind is Ruth Scodel's 'Authorship in Classical Greece', which paints a fascinating picture of ancient Greeks' attitudes towards authorship that should prompt a reconsideration of the complex periodization of the ideas routinely (at several points in this book, too) gathered under the too-quick shorthand 'Romantic'. The disparateness in methodologies noted above is already in evidence in this part of the book, which contains for example Benjamin R. Foster's strict historical analysis of practices of authorship in Cuneiform literature, Antonio Loprieno's interesting but loosely organized observations on ancient

Egypt's unfamiliar notions of fiction, and Christian Badura and Melanie Möller's strained presentist ('recentist'?) recuperation of a range of Roman writers who end up sounding rather implausibly close to Barthes and Foucault. As we enter the Middle Ages, Matthew Krael makes a convincing argument to the effect that copyists' work could be the starting point for more creative activities, while Mordechai Z. Cohen examines mediaeval Jewish hermeneutics without saying much about the ostensible topic of this book. Of the essays dealing with the modern period, my pick is Margaret J.M. Ezell's 'Manuscript and Print Cultures 1500–1700', a shrewd study of the conditions for the ample survival of manuscript transmission after the invention of the printing press through an analysis of the widespread but not ubiquitous 'stigma of print' whereby some major writers in the English and Spanish courts considered it beneath them to publish widely. The following essays, dealing respectively with the eighteenth (Betty A. Schellenberg) and nineteenth century (Alexis Easley), are also solid and well-documented, as well as working well together as a narrative about the economic realities beyond the rhetoric about geniuses and hacks—among these, the increasing professionalisation of authorship and the differences between the book trade and periodicals. Modernism is tackled by Sean Latham, who chronicles the material conditions of magazine publication in the early twentieth century, along with the division between prestigious 'little magazines' and high-selling 'pulp', while postmodernism is accorded a cogent account by Hans Bertens, who highlights the discrepancies between the narrative of the 'death of the author' and the practices of contracts, book signings and literary prizes. There follow Kang-i Sun Chang's interesting but under-focused observations on Chinese authorship, and Adriaan Van der Weel's very good MacLuhan-inspired account of the digital market, which convincingly applies the idea that each new technology has unintended as well as intended outcomes to the current situation in which everyone can in principle make their writings public. On a side note, in this section I would have liked to see something about the

implications of artificial intelligence writing programmes for the book's remit.

The second and shortest section on 'systematic perspectives' is the most heterogenous both method- and quality-wise. I appreciated the first two essays, respectively by Kevin Dunn, who brilliantly deploys the concept of 'enunciative responsibility' to set up a productive opposition between the traditions of poetics and rhetoric as presupposing opposite ideas of creativity—self-expression versus rule-following—and by James Phelan, who puts forward an ingenious, if fine-tunable, proposal for a 'heuristic taxonomy' of genres, based on the idea that authors and audiences rely on genres as loose organizing principles. There follow Jakob Stougaard-Nielsen's disappointing overview of the author in literary theory, which by focusing on the usual names continues the field's chronic avoidance of relevant scholarly traditions such as analytic aesthetics and editorial theory, and Chantal Zabus's and Mita Banerjee's political takes, which unfortunately compromise their reliability by featuring a tendentious use of historical evidence, analytical categories of little discernible heuristic value ('fathering/mothering/othering the text') and a great deal of needless bombast ('writing oneself into being').

The last batch of 'perspectives', practical ones, opens with the hardest science of the book in John Burrows and Hugh Craig's 'Attribution', which presents a promising method for attributing works to previously identified authors on the basis of the statistically significant occurrence of unshowy function words and word sequences previously found to be particularly frequent or infrequent in an author's corpus. There follow Robert J. Griffin's reliable but rather shapeless outline of the practices of anonymity and pseudonymity, and Jack Lynch's overview of the 'crimes of writing' of plagiarism and forgery, with an interesting account of William Henry Ireland's eighteenth-century forgeries of plays and documents that he presented as Shakespeare's. The next few essays are uniformly strong, beginning with Dirk Van Hulle's overview of various issues in the theory of editorship, which starts from a contrast between the English tradition centred on Shakespeare (no manuscripts) and the German one centred on Goethe (plenty of manuscripts), and continues by proposing a more complex

taxonomy. The next two essays, by Daniel Cook and Trevor Ross, respectively, tackle some jurisprudential aspects of authorship: Cook considers the problems that 'secondary' practices such as pastiche, parody, rewriting and fan fiction pose to the idea of ownership inherent in authorship, while Ross's account of censorship distinguishes the underlying ideas of literary value in illiberal societies (to teach official truths by pleasing) and liberal ones (to make readers aware of the plurality of perspectives). I am not sure why Ross calls propaganda 'coercion', nor of why Andrew King uses the word 'body' to mean 'person' in the next essay on publishing and marketing; whatever the reasons, King convincingly examines how recognition of the author's name is used in marketing to induce repeat-purchase. Finally, Jason Pushkar's essay considers the elements of collaboration, less acknowledged in literature than in television and film but still present, and proposes that authorship should be seen as an institution, i.e. as a category that organizes literary production.

While the quality and focus of these essays is somewhat uneven, there is certainly enough good scholarship here to make this book a useful reference for researchers interested in authorship.

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Books Received

Elisabeth Bronfen, *Serial Shakespeare: An Infinite Variety of Appropriations in American TV Drama*. Pp. 288. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020. £101.70 (ISBN 978 1 5261 4231 3).

Journals received

Friends Historical Society, correction to 71 (2020)

Genealogists' Magazine, xxxiii, 9 (Mar 2021)

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