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Anthony Grafton, *Bring Out Your Dead: The Past as Revelation*. Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 2001. vi + 360 pp. Notes and index. ISBN 0-674-00468-X.

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A man leads a cart through a plague-stricken village calling, "Bring out your dead!" When, in response to this summons, a not-quite-dead victim is heaped onto the cart despite his protests that he's still alive, he is promptly clubbed down. For moviegoers of my generation, the title of Anthony Grafton's latest collection of essays, *Bring Out Your Dead: The Past as Revelation*, instantly recalls that indelible scene in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, perhaps the greatest of all historical comedies (if there is such a genre). But, for the discerning reader/moviegoer, the title does more, because it stands as earnest for the kind of irreverence that made the Pythons famous, that take-no-prisoners humor that treats nothing, not even the Calvary, as sacred (witness the closing scene in *The Life of Brian*). Grafton implies the promise of irreverence in his subtitle, "The Past as Revelation," for his revelations almost always come at the expense of historical pieties that obscure the complexity of reality, pieties that he takes Pythonesque pleasure in desecrating. But the title does still more, for it illustrates the ideal of *imitatio* that inspired the humanists, whose vast erudition is the subject of this collection.

Not only does Grafton "follow" the Pythons by using their words and evoking their scene--the lowest level of *imitatio*--but he also ascends to the highest level, by emulating their spirit. In this way, he slyly exemplifies the arcane and elusive ideal that underlies the whole humanist program, making it crystal clear to an unwitting, modern audience.

Although *Bring Out Your Dead* ranges over the whole landscape of humanistic scholarship--from Alberti to Vico, from Rome to Leiden, from Bernays to Panofsky--it focuses primarily on the strange world of late humanism, the world of sixteenth-century erudites and seventeenth-century antiquarians and polyhistorians, all denizens of the fabled "Republic of Letters." Grafton seeks to reanimate this republic and its citizens. Already quaint by the eighteenth century, they have been rendered utterly alien to us by the subsequent demise of classical education. Their passion for humanistic learning seems to us the desiccated pursuit of scholars cut off from the world. In order to correct this misimpression, Grafton evokes their intellectual universe from within--analyzing their studies, their methods, their interactions. He typically begins each essay with a hook--a scene or an anecdote designed to draw the reader into what might appear forbidding material.

In my experience, hooks often serve as *entrée* to meager fare, a means of easing the reader into the dry, unpalatable business of analysis. But in Grafton's hands, they lead to an intellectual banquet, full of interesting guests, witty conversation, and food for thought. Mind you, we may not have met many of these guests before--like Bartholomaeus Schöbinger or Melchior Goldast in Chapter Eleven (to choose an instance at random)--but Grafton evokes their world through the sheer weight of his learning, which is anything but ponderous. Not that Grafton wears his learning lightly--each essay is a virtual blizzard of detail--but it is presented in such a disarmingly off-handed way. For example, in "Portrait of Lipsius" (Chapter Twelve), he happens to mention that, after a dispute with fellow Tacitean scholar Claude Chifflet, Lipsius went through his working copy of Tacitus effacing all marginal references to Chifflet's

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name, entered alongside Chifflet's textual emendations. (By this means, Lipsius definitively appropriated Chifflet's discoveries and, in the process, revealed something about his own attitudes and personality.)

No doubt, Grafton actually held Lipsius's copy of Tacitus in hand, went through it carefully enough to note the excisions, knew of the dispute with Chifflet, and thereby put two and two together. The scholarly effort that for Grafton engendered a toss-off line would, in lesser hands, have become the subject of an arcane (and boring) scholarly article that would have rendered the dispute meaningless. In short, these essays are dense with the kind of scholarship that by its very effortlessness evokes the richness of a lost world.

Grafton introduces the collection with a bravura piece on sixteenth-century Italian humanism that takes us from the study of the Ferrarese scholar, Celio Calcagnini, to a carnival freak show, via a recently published commentary on the ancient medical writer Dioscorides by the Florentine humanist, Marcello Virgilio Adriani. Upon encountering Adriani's reference to a particularly striking pair of Siamese twins--whose configuration was likened to one of Dioscorides' medicinal plants--Calcagnini noted in the margin of the text, "A monster from France. I saw it too." Grafton draws out the multiple implications of this passing comment, not the least of which concerns the dialogue between the textually oriented scholarship of the Florentines and the empirically oriented scholarship of the Ferrarese.

For our purposes, though, the comment epitomizes the surprising fact that Adriani, whose text had no illustrations, could describe a plant with reference to a carnival exhibit, knowing that his scholarly audience would get the reference. Suddenly, late humanism doesn't seem so desiccated and lifeless anymore (as Ferrarese empirical engagement also attests). From here Grafton proceeds with Pythonesque pleasure to unravel the Burckhardtian piety that disassociates humanist scholarship from the Renaissance "discovery of the world and of man." Of course, criticizing Burckhardt may seem heretical only to a purist like me, but Grafton's aim is much wider. He seeks to rehabilitate--indeed to reanimate--a whole scholarly world that we regard as justifiably obscure. He aims to show that this world lies not on the periphery of the Renaissance but at its very center, and that students of the period can ignore it only at their peril.

The collection consists of fifteen pieces--ranging from full-blown articles to book introductions to reviews--all but one of which were previously published, between 1988 and 1999. They are loosely grouped together under four categories: "Histories and Traditions," "Humanism and Science," "Communities of Learning," and "Profiles" of individuals. Rather than review all the pieces, or the rubrics under which they are gathered, I will focus on what I regard as Grafton's more iconoclastic efforts.

Following his shot at Burckhardt in the introduction, Grafton takes one at Panofsky--or, at least, at one aspect of Panofsky--in Chapter One, "Panofsky, Alberti, and the Ancient World." His target is the historicizing Panofsky of *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*, the Panofsky that purists like me love and cherish. This is the Panofsky who identified the distinctive contribution of the Italian Renaissance with the reintegration of form and content in art, a reintegration ultimately engendering the notion that antiquity lay irretrievably in the past. The only problem with this notion is that it's just too tidy--even for me. At first glance, a painting like Raphael's *School of Athens* would seem to confirm Panofsky's conclusion, for here the artist depicts each of the ancient philosophers--Plato, Heraclitus, Pythagoras, Ptolemy, and Zoroaster, among others--in a fashion we might describe as "historically correct."

Yet upon closer examination, this historicizing principle evaporates, leaving us with a much more ambiguous relation between past and present. Raphael gathers his ancient philosophers together in a would-be Athenian *stoa*, even though he knew they lived in different times and places; he mixes among them other figures, like Averroës, who he knew were not ancients; he gives Plato and Heraclitus the

faces of his contemporaries, Leonardo and Michelangelo; and, he models the would-be *stoa* more on Bramante's architecture than on that of antiquity. The School of Athens thus expresses a vision of the past that manages to be both historical and atemporal, that celebrates the greatness of antiquity while annihilating the distance between it and modernity.

The same kind of (what we would today call) "creative anachronism"—dare I say *Pythonesque* "irreverence"?—is apparent in Grafton's Alberti, whose humanism "made manifest a self-conscious, creative, and wholly consistent relationship between classicism and modernity" (p. 30). Grafton finds that the true locus of Alberti's humanism, and of humanism in general, lies not in the rigid historicism of Panofsky's Renaissance and Renascences, but in a more flexible and playful relation to antiquity. And to complete his iconoclasm, Grafton ironically conjures a second Panofsky to critique the first—the Panofsky of *Meaning and the Visual Arts, of Idea, and of Pandora's Box*. In this, Panofsky, "A carnival funhouse replaces the stately hall of symbolic forms that perfectly reflect each *Zeitgeist*" (p. 25). Using the evidence of Alberti's humanism, Grafton argues convincingly that this second Panofsky offers a much more effective model for understanding the reading of ancient texts and the use of classical forms in the Renaissance.

In Chapter Five, "The New Science and the Traditions of Humanism," Grafton resumes a theme he had first sounded in *Defenders of the Text* (1991), namely the survival—indeed, the flourishing—of humanism long into the age of science. We are too accustomed to reading Descartes' critique of his education as the death knell of humanism. Grafton shows how this educational program retained its appeal well into the seventeenth century, along with the literary methods popularized by its greatest pedagogues, Guarino and Erasmus.

Although its methods remained largely unchanged, humanism nonetheless underwent a subtle transformation, developing a more empirical focus on material objects, both natural and man-made. One might be tempted to see this change as an effect of the new science, but Grafton is quick to tie it to revived interest in a classical text, Pliny's *Natural History*. Supplemented by Aristotle's works on animals and Theophrastus's on plants, Pliny's encyclopedia helped inspire the late humanistic habit of collecting "curios," a habit that gave such collections pride of place, alongside one's classical library. And these collections are of a piece with the antiquarian movement that transformed humanism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a movement that ultimately refashioned the knowledge of antiquity. Far from marking a baroque phase of late humanism, antiquarian debates testify to the flourishing of a Republic of Letters that nourished all forms of learning, literary and historical as well as scientific.

In two essays, "Printers' Correctors and the Publication of Classical Texts" (Chapter Seven) and "The World of the Polyhistorians" (Chapter Nine), Grafton not only brings out the dead but seems to raise them up, reanimating long ignored or misunderstood figures. Printers' correctors have lately been touted as representatives of a new social type engendered by the technology of printing, but Grafton's review of how they actually did their work undermines the impression of their modernity, revealing the scribal origins of print culture. Long forgotten and even more misunderstood are the polyhistorians, the erudite, German compilers of all known knowledge who "loaded seventeenth-century bookshelves to the breaking point with their huge folios" (p. 167). Already by the eighteenth century, they were figures of ridicule, Latinate pedants in an age of vernacular literature and modern science. Grafton succeeds, however, in unearthing the two enterprises at the heart of their tangled studies, humanism and encyclopedism, eloquence and erudition. As late humanists, these scholars sought to maintain their intellectual independence from French cultural hegemony by means of Latin eloquence; as encyclopedists, they sought the integration of knowledge in an age of information overload. And although the grandiosity of their encyclopedic efforts may strike us as bizarre, they nonetheless managed to expand intellectual horizons in creative and fruitful ways. Taken together, encyclopedism and humanism mark the polyhistorians as the last holdouts of a Latin-speaking *Respublica litterarum* that was inexorably giving way to a French-speaking *République des lettres*.

Grafton's pieces on Jean Hardouin and on Petronius and neo-Latin satire (Chapters Ten and Eleven) reveal him at his iconoclastic best. The Jesuit antiquary Jean Hardouin (1646-1729) used the evidence of coins and medals to argue that all but a handful of classical texts were fourteenth-century Italian forgeries. Rather than dismiss Hardouin's brand of hyper-criticism as pathological, Grafton questions just how unusual Hardouin's "extravagances" really were and what made his work bizarre. Further, he uses the extreme case of Hardouin as an opportunity to explore the manners and morals of the Republic of Letters. Careful examination reveals Hardouin as a prodigious scholar of considerable ability and (at least initially) as a member in good standing of the Republic of Letters. When his fellow citizens came to the defense of the classical tradition, they began by taking Hardouin seriously and treating him with respect. Indeed, as fellow antiquarians, they heartily endorsed his emphasis on non-literary evidence. But Hardouin's reasonable emphasis soon became over-emphasis, as he transformed numismatic evidence into an instrument of almost Cartesian doubt, discarding whole texts on the basis of a few anachronisms, from which he spun evidence of a vast conspiracy. Yet even when his fellow citizens finally rejected him, they did so more for religious than scholarly motives, when Hardouin's demolition of textual authority extended from the pagan classics to those of the Church. This aspect of Hardouin's scholarship draws on a tradition of enlightened Christianity extending back to the humanist movement. But his fellow citizens rejected this more charitable reading of his work because, in the final analysis, theirs was a republic where scholarship was subordinated to confessional politics. True, Hardouin was (to put it mildly) an obsessive personality, but Grafton shows how his obsessions reveal much about his scholarly world, and how that world's rejection of him reveals its true nature.

In a similar vein, Grafton employs early modern misreadings of Petronius's *Satyricon* to reveal the intellectual boundaries of late humanism. In particular, the article concerns the reception of one of the most famous scenes in the *Satyricon*, the *Cena Trimalchionis*, or "dinner at Trimalchio's," where Petronius uses a gossipy conversation among first century *parvenus* to caricature their social milieu. The colloquialisms and solecisms of this passage contrast sharply with Petronius's otherwise refined literary Latin, leading late humanists to reject the passage as a forgery. Whereas most modern scholars have dismissed these misreadings as laughable, Grafton finds in them evidence of a lost intellectual world, where the great writers of antiquity were considered by a later age as incapable of violating the standards of taste they had created. Rather than stop here, though, Grafton pushes on to question why scholars steeped in the language and history of Rome could work from such an erroneous assumption. Surely the satirical nature of the passage would seem obvious to late humanists who had themselves evolved the genre of neo-Latin satire. If anything, though, this genre served as a further barrier to the proper reception of the *Cena*. Although late humanists recognized Petronius's satirical intent, they practiced a form of satire both purist in style and learned in content. Thus contemporary literature shaped the reception of a classic by reinforcing the accepted definition of classicism as combining eloquence and erudition. And, Grafton concludes ironically, this combination has been obscured by the modern tendency to separate the history of scholarship from the history of literature, thus creating the same kind of barrier for the modern understanding of late humanism that the late humanists experienced in trying to understand Petronius.

In a previous iconoclastic effort, *From Humanism to the Humanities* (1986), Grafton and his collaborator Lisa Jardine described the drudgery of a humanist program of education that, by its very regimentation, fostered intellectual docility while inculcating a fashionable Latinity. Despite the criticism this work has received, it remains a necessary corrective to earlier studies of humanist education, based on the humanists' own educational propaganda rather than actual classroom practice. Yet, as *Bring Out Your Dead* amply demonstrates, the early modern world teemed with the graduates of humanistic schools whose hard-fought proficiency in classical languages enabled them to combine eloquence with erudition. Although this particular combination may have served to limit their intellectual horizons, it nonetheless disclosed a genuine curiosity and, at times, even daring. Perhaps some day Grafton will revisit the theme of humanist education and its heritage, especially in the light of his more recent work on late humanism. Hopefully, though, he won't draw his inspiration from George Romero's zombie epics.

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