

### Book Reviews

*Folie et dératisation à la Renaissance*, Brussels, Éditions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 1976, 8vo, pp. 234, illus., 525 FB. (paperback).

An international symposium was held in November 1973 at the Institut pour l'Étude de la Renaissance et de l'Humanisme in Brussels. The subject was the title of this book, which contains fourteen papers presented at the meetings, together with the discussion they generated; nine are in French and five in English. They cover a wide range of topics related to many aspects of the Renaissance: these include folly in non-religious music; Bosch and Bruegel on human folly: the fool in fifteenth-century France; burlesque therapy, mostly involving attacks on the so-called *pierres de tête*; folly and society in the comic theatre of the Pleiade; the ship of fools; madness and demonology in the sixteenth century; Rabelais; Don Quixote and melancholy; metaphors and evaluation of madness in sixteenth-century Italian literature; the debate between Wier, Bodin, and Scot on melancholia and witchcraft.

Each essay is a careful and fully documented study written by an expert in his field, and some are elegantly and profusely illustrated. Together they provide an important contribution to the history of psychiatry, in a period that is of great importance, yet exceedingly complex and difficult to handle adequately. This book can be warmly recommended.

HERBERT STANLEY MATSEN, *Alessandro Achillini (1463–1512) and his doctrine of 'Universals' and 'Transcendentals'. A study in Renaissance Ockhamism*, Lewisburg, Bucknell University Press, (London, Associated University Presses), 1974, 8vo, pp. 332, £11.00 (\$27.50).

Achillini of Bologna and Padua was both philosopher and physician, and concerning the former he was an interpreter and transmitter of Aristotelian learning, using the medieval technique of analysing philosophical problems in isolation from each other as in the academic disputation. He was mainly responsible for a revival of interest in William of Ockham at Bologna, and is considered to have played a significant role in the transition from medieval to modern thought.

This excellent book is the author's doctoral dissertation, prepared under Professor Paul Kristeller and now revised. Essentially, it adds to the growing number of studies on Renaissance Aristotelianism, and two problems from Achillini's writings, "universals" and "transcendentals", are selected for treatment. Its value derives from its handling of broad implications for the history of thought as well as providing detailed and reliable information on its specific subject. There is a chapter on Achillini's life and works, and it is to be noted that his status in the medical profession was high. Brief reference is made to his medical writings, but the author is not fully aware of the relevant literature. The next task will be to relate Achillini's medicine to his philosophy and to Renaissance thought in general.

RICHARD CAVENDISH, *A history of magic*, London, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1977, 4to, pp. [vi], 180, illus., £4.95.

The interest of the public in the occult continues unabated and this book is geared to serve it. The author is a leading authority on magic and has published widely on