

Editorial

WE'RE DELIGHTED TO PRESENT A SPECIAL issue of *The Dalhousie Review* devoted entirely to selected papers presented at a conference here in Halifax last October on the theme "Interiority in Early Modern England, 1500–1700."

We used to call that period the "Renaissance," but the old name is being replaced. One reason for this is that the term carries the implication that things were dead previously, so it's faintly pejorative toward the medievals. Even if we count Early Modern developments as big improvements—the replacement of medieval dogmatism, ignorance, superstition, and rigid class structure with respect for education, humanism, science, and some degree of social mobility—we're not supposed to use names with built-in insults.

Another defect of the term 'Renaissance' is that it implies the resurrection of ancient learning and values. What started in Italy around the fourteenth or fifteenth century and was in full bloom in Britain during the sixteenth and seventeenth was rather the invention of new kinds of artistic, social, scientific, and political thought and practice.

What's so striking about the Early Moderns is that they are recognizably *us*, for the first time. It's easy to find the seeds of our own culture in earlier times, of course, but pre-modern thinkers and writers do tend to appear to us as denizens of rather exotic and distant tribes. The language the English Early Moderns are speaking has delightfully contorted syntax and considerable variability in orthography, but it's definitely modern English. And what they're talking about is mostly what we talk about. The name 'Early Modern' is tendentious too; but it is more accurate.

If they suddenly became us, then figuring out what went on then is a way of finding out what we are now. Much of the change that characterized the era can be summed up as the growth of "interiority." That word can mean many different things, as you'll see. I'll leave it to you to find out what these meanings are, as you read this issue.

Among the articles included here are, we're very happy to say, the presentations of the two keynote speakers, Jonathan Sawday (The University of Strathclyde, Glasgow) and Elizabeth Hanson (Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario). Conference participants submitted more of their presented papers than we had space to print. We wish we could have published more

of them, but we had to choose. We picked the papers that best avoided deep technicality and heavy-duty theoretics, and that, we felt, would have the most appeal to our readers, who come with all sorts of educational backgrounds and interests. Their subject is sometimes an obscure historical figure or a little-known piece of writing, but these articles nevertheless present engaging and enlightening pictures of personalities and of their times.

The conference title restricts its theme to England, and so do most of our essays; but you'll find in here a Scots cleric, a French philosopher, and some Continental anatomists. Despite occasional geographical diversity, there's a great deal of thematic connexity—another criterion for our choice among the submissions. Our essays are arranged in an order that takes advantage of this overlap; you might notice the connections of almost every one with those immediately before and after.

We're grateful to the Interiority organizers for concocting their splendid conference, and for distributing our invitation to submit papers. These organizers were Goran V. Stanivukovic (Saint Mary's University), Simon Kow (University of King's College), and the past editor of this journal, Ronald Huebert (Dalhousie University).

R.M.