

the introduction, her analysis ceases to theorize landscape in a way that interrogates the specific perceptual and subjective processes that contribute to its construction. Nevertheless, we may see the principle of cultural construction at work in the proliferation of tales, legends, myths, hagiographies, memoirs, treatises, court records, and other sources testifying to the competing, yet also mutually reinforcing, narratives that turn the land into a repository of the culture's values and multiplicitous histories. Her book occasionally falters when the litany of examples loses any manifest connection to landscape, particularly because questions of aesthetics rarely factor into her analysis. Granted, specific meanings located in or imposed upon the land are what interest her; the "content" of these places, and not the pleasure derived from looking at them, drives her discussion and leads to a proliferation of detail that is often fascinating but sometimes repetitive. Evincing a fascination with the variety of ways in which people read the landscape as God's artwork, she elucidates how the Reformation affected the topography of the British Isles as well as patterns by which the inhabitants interpreted the land in which they lived. Scholars of religion, antiquarianism, rurality, and related fields will profit from this dense and nuanced book.

Ruth Connolly & Tom Cain. *Lords of Wine & Oile: Community & Conviviality in the Poetry of Robert Herrick*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. ix + 335pp. Review by SIOBHÁN COLLINS, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK.

Editors Tom Cain and Ruth Connolly provide an excellent "Introduction" to this outstanding collection of essays by a host of international critics. Cain and Connolly detail the textual and political history of the transmission of Herrick's poems in both their manuscript and print communities, providing new insights along the way. Returning Herrick's poetry to the "socio-literary contexts from which it emerges" (8), they remind the reader of the wide-spread manuscript circulation of his verse during the 1620s, prior to its appearance in Herrick's single major volume of poetry, *Hesperides*, which the author brought to press in the momentous year of 1648. With its 1,400

poems, *Hesperides*, they write, “documents both the destruction of the pre-war Caroline literary culture in which Herrick had been a leading figure, with its coterie sensibility of intimacy, sociability, and exclusivity centered on manuscript exchange, and the construction of a new, print-based royalist culture” (13). According to the editors, the constructed disorder of Herrick’s printed book reflects and promotes the socio-literary ethos and material circumstances of manuscript community and verse miscellanies. Moreover, whilst bearing witness to and negotiating increasingly threatening socio-political contradiction and strife, *Hesperides* also offers a timely resolve by serving as a mnemonic artifact to the poet’s “belief in poetry as the servant of community and conviviality” (23). The editors maintain that an appreciation of “sociability” as a concept central not only to the composition, transmission and reception of Herrick’s verse, but also to his literary influences and relationships, is the most promising critical approach to reading the poet’s work.

Katherine Maus’ opening essay challenges the dismissive legacy of critical approaches to Cavalier poets, which she sees in the continued belittling of Herrick’s works as insignificant and slight in subject and form. Maus chooses to “decouple” the literary observations that focus on Herrick’s concern with “diminutive things” from the reductive conclusions that most often attend them (28). This involves a reimagining of what constitutes literary value and greatness, an approach which also underpins the next two chapters, written by John Creaser and Leah Marcus, respectively. Maus, Creaser and Marcus each dispute the notion that there exists a unifying narrative to *Hesperides* that acts as a framework for reading each poem in the volume. Maus aligns her approach with that of the sympathetic attention given to previously “derogated phenomena” by feminist and queer studies (28), basing her reevaluation in the incongruous juxtaposition of verse in Herrick’s sequencing of *Hesperides*. Herrick, she argues, disrupts linear narrative pattern and momentum in favor of a “flightiness” (30) that hints at his poetic subjectivity and insists upon “the revelations that lie in recreation and play” (38), which historicist modes of reading tend to disparage.

Creaser also decries historicist approaches; his Herrick is a poet for whom playful virtuosity is a communal act that privileges intimate

collaboration with the reader. Reintroducing a new, and welcome, formal engagement with the individual poem, Creaser sees such virtuosity as a mark of genius that evades the overarching historicist agenda of “much recent scholarship.” Creaser is an agile reader; however, his argument that Herrick is not “committed to a given social alignment” seems hardly plausible, and is contested by many of the fine essays in this volume, and challenged most particularly and persuasively in the “Afterword” by Achsah Guibbory. Marcus, too, rejects historicist readings of *Hesperides*. While Creaser sees the aesthetic as the “predominant value” of Herrick’s poems, which reaches inclusively towards a community of diverse readers and conflicting viewpoints, Marcus emphasizes interruptions to conviviality, stating: “Herrick deliberately ... [mingles] beautiful poems with others that are ... coarse and ugly” (69-70). She maintains that Herrick intentionally and with delight disorients his print reader in order to counter any “hegemonic reading,” and understands this as similar to the pleasure postmodernists find in the “dissolution of forms and boundaries” (78, 79) as a result of technological alienation. Marcus takes issue with and offers an extended critique of Guibbory’s finding of a broad project of ceremonialism underlying *Hesperides* in her book, *Ceremony and Community from Herbert to Milton* (1998). In her “Afterword,” Guibbory debates the merits of such “anti-historicism” (305), offering a carefully considered response to the pressing question she herself poses: “How are we to conduct literary criticism and scholarship in the twenty-first century?”

The next three chapters, by Michelle O’ Callaghan, Nick McDowell and Line Cottagnies, respectively, focus on socio-literary contexts in their reading of *Hesperides*. O’Callaghan offers a fascinating discussion of how Herrick’s socio-literary communities link with his modes of production—manuscript and print. She argues that Herrick’s affiliation with Jonson, particularly Jonson as scribal coterie poet, pre-1616, is constructed by Herrick through a fiction of literary descent. This affiliation involves a self-fashioning that aims towards future poetic circles, and serves as a vector for continuity and tradition. She reads *Hesperides* as a print memorial to Jonsonian scribal communities, with their “convivial rituals” (102) predicated on social and literary ties between author and reader. McDowell posits Herrick’s connections to a

royalist literary coterie of the 1640s, the “Order of the Black Riband.” This coterie, McDowell informs, politicized and preserved pre-war cultural traditions of patronage, literary sociability and collaboration by linking convivial poetic practices and manuscript circulation with royalism and print. The Order, McDowell suggests, may have offered Herrick material support during his preparation of *Hesperides* for press following his exile from Dean Prior in 1646. In a complementary essay to the two above, Cottagnies argues that in *Hesperides* Herrick, like Katherine Philips, draws on a royalist discourse of friendship, which, conducted through the medium of print, gave to literature a new autonomy, and ascertained the conditions for poetic fame and literary immortality.

Conviviality within exclusive literary communities may be threatened with a dilution and loss of energy in print culture, according to Richard Wistreich, whose informative essay traces two of Herrick’s Charon dialogues through their publication history. With a remarkable appreciation for the complexity of their musical-literary genre, cultural origin and “resilience under transplantation” (155), Wistreich details how Herrick offsets the distancing nature of a wider print audience and ensures the on-going communal dynamism of his song-dialogues by integrating references within the lyrics to their classical lineage and contemporary socio-literary circles. Ghostly classical allusion in Herrick’s poetics is the focus of the next two chapters by Stella Achilleos and Syrithe Pugh, respectively. Achilleos concentrates on the poet’s close literary affinity with the Greek poet, Anacreon, who appears in Herrick’s symposiastic verse, “Besmear’d with Grapes” (192). Achilleos argues that little attention has been given to how the figure of Anacreon is so frequently evoked in *Hesperides* as the convivial verses in which he appears are often trivialized as apolitical, rather than contextualized in light of the period’s controversy surrounding festivities and communal drinking. In “Supping with Ghosts: Imitation and Immortality in Herrick,” Pugh completes the focus on classical allusion in this trio of chapters. Her wonderfully evocative and learned essay illustrates Herrick’s recognition and continuation of the Ovidian theory of poetry as an “on-going conversation between poets living and dead” taking place in the “virtual space of literature” (220-1). Herrick’s many allusions to both classical and near-contemporary

poets are orchestrated around convivial exchange between the living and dead, ensuring the perpetual life of poets within “a cycle of immortalizing imitation” (249).

Significant gaps in Herrick criticism are addressed in the final two chapters: Stacey Jocoy analyses Herrick’s collaboration with musicians, particularly his relationship with the court musician, Henry Lawes, evidence of which she discovers embedded within early modern musical scores, manuscript and print. The relationship with Lawes, Jocoy discovers, reinforces the potency of the cultural politics of Herrick’s lyrics by increasing both their appeal and dissemination. Graham Parry’s chapter aims to make sense of Herrick’s complex and seemingly varied religious identities in *Noble Numbers*, a diverse collection of devotional verse often neglected by critics. Rather than attempting to reconcile the various voices within *Noble Numbers*, Parry finds that they are revealing of the varied religious allegiances and beliefs of post-Reformation England as well as Herrick’s “generosity of spirit” (295): quiet, confessional poems about Herrick’s own private experience jostle with ceremonial verses that address the Christian reader, and ones that extend inclusively across ages and creeds; all carry a central theme, that of God’s ultimate benevolence.

The eleven chapters in this edition, as well as the “Introduction” and “Afterword,” bring to the fore Herrick’s importance as a major seventeenth-century poet. This is an essential read for Herrick scholars, and provides also a detailed bibliography of further reading as well as a useful index. Challenged by the editors to consider how we might read *Hesperides* today “as a book rooted in the cultural history of the lyric poem and in the practices of reading and writing which informs its creation” (23), the critics, as mentioned, employ a range of methodologies which at times support and at times clash with one another. This is a significant edition that offers comprehensive and valuable insights into the poetry of Herrick and its role in early modern literary culture as well as into the theory and practice of literary criticism at this point in time.