

information that might have caused the editors to revise their estimate on page 423 of the probable number of copies that may have been sent out to booksellers before Herrick demanded that replacement leaves be printed to correct numerous errors. Moreover, a fascinating piece of reception history is provided by the Christie's database record of Ruskin's manuscript annotations in his copy: *Corinna's going a Maying* is "lovely" and the close of the final stanza is "Horatian," *His Poetrie his Pillar* consists of "quiet unaccented iambs," a passage in *The Mad Maids Song* is "curious," and *A Prognostick* is "low." Surely, this commentary from the arbiter of nineteenth-century aesthetic taste ought to have found a place in the Oxford Herrick?

Given the editors' obvious attention to textual detail, the errors and inconsistencies in other parts of the edition are surprising. Rather annoyingly, *contemporary* is used to mean "seventeenth-century" in some places—"contemporary trade binding" (439) and "contemporary hand" (445)—but "twenty-first century" in others: "contemporary readers rightly demand more attention to matters of political, historical, and biographical significance" (vii). And there's a genuine howler in the ownership information for Texas A&M's copy of *Hesperides*, which Cain and Connolly identify as belonging to "Texas Ancient and Modern University."

Siobhán Collins, *Bodies, Politics and Transformations: John Donne's Metempsychosis* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2013), x+202 pp. Review by ANNE LAKE PRESCOTT, BARNARD COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY.

This informative if not always limpid study of John Donne's *Metempsychosis* (1601) does not make that poem fully clear—nobody could manage that—but as she follows the Edenic apple's soul through fifty-two stanzas (weeks?) of degeneration she offers a graduate course on Renaissance vegetables, animals, and human bodies, from the mandrake (a fine pair adorns the cover) to . . . ? Donne hints that these transmigrations will lead to a modern figure, sometimes identified as Robert Cecil. Tracking such shifts, Collins explores issues crucial to understanding the poem as it moves to its inconclusion. The "riddle in *Metempsychosis* is partly a mystery of union," she says, and since

to solve it necessitates conflating the “he” and “she,” body and soul, self and other, Donne offers plurality and openness, not clarity and certainty. His pre-modern self is fluid, fragmented, liminal, with “identity as process.”

Chapter I, on “Body / Word: Textual Materiality,” considers the pre-Cartesian body/soul, as well as how a “text cannot be conceived outside of its relation to the realm of matter” (15). I wonder: what of imaginary books like those Donne conceived for his *Courtiers Library*? Or must a “text” be woven into materiality to be “text”? Do kilobytes count? What of a printed book with imaginary books housed in it? Similarly, must “individual authorship” be “associated with the printed book” (17)? Ovid might wince. Collins’ pronouncements may not convince, then, but they do inspire meditation. Donne, she claims, “challenges the increasing polarity between subject and object, word and body” (25), and his manuscript circulation goes with his “poetics of selfhood as liminal and ever-changing rather than fixed” (26). When he does use print it is a “testament” to his “understanding of and adherence to the importance of materiality” (28). Perhaps, but to assert this may mean having one’s inky cake and eating it too.

Chapter Two considers “Thresholds: ‘Porches and Entries.’” For Donne, says Collins, a text is “both a temporal structure and an architectural anatomy” because both body and text “house the soul” (29). A prose epistle can be a threshold to such a house, after all, and the subtitle, “Satyricon,” recalls satyrs, mixed creatures (30; an appendix notes a possible allusion to Petronius’ *Satyricon*, to which I would add the recently translated *Satyre Ménippée*, a polemic in support of moderate Catholics). Donne’s preliminary phrase “Infinitati Sacrum” is also a mix, notes Collins: infinity is imperfect, and “Sacrum” recalls the “os sacrum”—the tailbone (31); yes, witty. Chapter Three, on “Separation: Genesis and the Fall,” examines Eve’s apple, the soul of which “prioritizes an image of mutuality between the sexes,” and Collins agrees with those who find Donne’s misogyny more mocking than serious. Wonder, an alternative to the curiosity that got Eve into trouble, lies “in the interplay of faith and knowledge.” Chapter IV, “Memory: Reading the Self,” comments on the poem’s ludic quality, citing Lucian’s *Philosophies for Sale*, and associates Donne’s “ambivalent concern with the permeable sexual body” (60) and hence his poetics

with “transformation and change” (61). This chapter is typical in its informative density: two paragraphs on pp. 63-64 offer the *Ad Herennium*, hybridity, Thierry of Chartres, the soul’s liminality, memory, reading, identification, the autobiographical mode, manuscript production, Walter Ong, rhetorical strategies, memory, desire, wonder, gifts, lack of closure, narrative, dismemberment, readerly imagination, and the passions. Exhaustive—and exhausting. What gives hope to Donne, says Collins, is memory that stretches from the Creation to Salvation (68). But we read through our bodies, and “Closure is resisted in favor of contemplation.” Related to Donne’s desertion of his Catholic faith, moreover, is the “battle of engagement and disavowal throughout *Metempsychosis*” as the poem “complicates and destabilizes any suggestion of transcending bodily desire.” Even Paul and Plato, of course, might agree that such a task is neither stable nor simple.

Chapter 5, on “Liminality: Plant/Human,” offers information on mandrakes and circles. “[P]reoccupied with the revolutions of grotesque bodies turned to dust as they swirl one into another irrespective of rank or gender,” Donne is obsessed by “the fragmented body” and “nullified self.” The thirsty mandrake root is Christ, we read, and Collins cites Isaiah: ‘he shall grow up as a tender plant... and as a root out of a thirsty ground’ (82). This hairy root is “the most abhorrent of all vegetation” (Collins says it recalls the genitalia, but my pure eyes see only bodies with branching limbs). [L]iminality,” moreover, is reflected in Donne’s reference to Noah as a “holie Janus,” door symbolism found also in “the erotic vulnerability and strength” of the poem’s “womb symbolism,” leading Collins to comment on “the womb of the ark.” A little later the ape and elephant are related to mandrake in “popular myth,” and there follows more on mandrakes, liminality and hybridization. Strain—but interesting strain. Chapter 6 is on “Devoured Bodies: Birds and Fishes”: we are born, sin assaults us, and we decay (97). This chapter explores eating (including plagiarism), and by linking “birth, food, sex and death in a degenerative cycle” Donne, his faith in transition, “parodies the Eucharist” (99). A note relates this to the “cannibalistic imagery” informing “many of Donne’s profane love poems” (102). Collins offers material on cannibalism in medicine—curative “mummy,” for example (103-105)—but then returns (106) to a complex analogy with the

Eucharist, although she might warn the inexperienced reader that the Church of England explicitly rejected the views described here. After commenting on the Bakhtinian grotesque body, Collins explores material on swans. The final chapter is on "Courting Politics: Vivarium of Beasts." Here Donne's narrator connects "profane time" with the court, and like others Collins associates the poem's torn whale with the death of Essex, although she doubts that the poet felt much sympathy for him. (Why on pp. 119-20 early modern elephants cannot kneel but on the next page they do just that needs explaining.) Can the elephant brought low by a mouse comfortably parallel, as Collins says, monasteries destroyed by corruption? Was that what happened under Henry VIII?

The "Conclusion" is nicely titled "Wonder." We wonder at Donne's universe but also wonder what he is up to. Her "contention," she says, has been throughout that Donne "does not allow for transcendence of the body" (137), and indeed that he identifies with it. Our nature is an "on-going cycle of appetitive desire" in a poem that "registers" both "degradation and celebration," yet degeneracy does not have the poem's "last word" (139). One appendix describes the manuscript and print versions, with criticisms of the ongoing Variorum Edition that this reviewer is not competent to judge. A second traces the poem's critical reception.

Some assertions in this clever book seem overdone. Did Donne's generation leave a "medieval world of absolutes" for "a new, rapidly changing world, a new realm of liminality or transitional space that challenges any notion of certainty" (87)? Donne's lines on the "new philosophy" are often quoted to sustain such assertions, yet many in 1601 were confident enough of the truth to kill for it, and earlier generations had lived with plague, wars, famine, conquests, heresies, rebellions, splits between Pope and Emperor, and Ottoman expansion: an older Europe stable in faith, safely stratified, and with little sense of self is one sustaining fiction of Renaissance studies. It is not wholly wrong, but sometimes to perceive increased complexity is to simplify. Other claims likewise give pause. Collins cites Donne's reaction to Galileo (34), but whatever Copernicus' ability to halt the sun, by 1601 Galileo had not yet further shaken the cosmos. She might be clearer, moreover, that the "new Philosophy" is more astronomy than the

increased mechanism that is a theme in this book: Descartes is still to come. Although Donne tended to resist sacramental clarity, moreover, even he might be baffled to read on the same page that the Eucharist is “memorial in essence” and that it “involves the transformation of wine to blood, bread to body” (63). One seems Calvinist, the other Catholic. Nor are Catholics alone in accepting the “real presence” (110); Lutherans do too. Do the four elements “correspond to the four humors of the Galenic body” (21)? Surely a humor *combines* two elements. As for the soul’s relation to the body, the period’s inconsistent terminology (*spiritus, anima, animus, ratio*) further obscures what is rational soul, what is generated by the body, what is condensed from air, what is super-rational, whether we inherit the immortal soul or God infuses it, and so forth. Donne expressed his own bewilderment, as Collins says, in a letter with no year specified but probably to Henry Goodere. He had company.

Despite some slips, this is a book for Donne scholars to ponder, not least for the (mis)information it offers about plants, animals, and even the puns thus rendered possible. If Collins’ pages can be as dense as diamonds her learning can shine as brightly.

Nabil Matar, *Henry Stubbe’s The Rise and Progress of Mahometanism*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2014. xiv + 274 pp. \$50.00.
Review by JONATHAN BURTON, WHITTIER COLLEGE.

Scholarly work interested in Islam and early modern English literature may be divided into three eras, each with distinct hermeneutic tendencies: The first comprised works published between 1915 and 1937 take as their concern the historical accuracy and aesthetic merits of early modern literary works interested in Islamic worlds; a second wave moving through the 1960s and 1970s explored European images of Islam. Finally, a third, post-Saidian wave from the mid 1990s to the present has drawn on the analytical tools of postcolonial theory to highlight hybridity, multiplicity, and cultural permeability. Nabil Matar has been a leading figure in this third wave, steadily producing two complementary streams of work crucial to the field. Initially, he published *Islam in Britain* (1998), *Turks, Moors and Englishmen in the*