

others. His complex, unexpected, and convincing reading of l. 25 of "Air and Angels" allows the reader to make satisfying sense of the chiasmus in ll. 27-28. Introduction of the concept of palinode, or retraction of what has been advanced in another poem, is a productive way of looking at poems that seem to contradict each other, such as "The Canonization" and "Nocturnall." Wiggins sees pairs of contradictory poems as the sort of game playing in which a courtier takes a position as a move in order to provoke a response. The courtier, according to Wiggins, is led by his own dependent status to use artifice to bring out truth.

Donne, Castiglione, and the Poetry of Courtliness certainly repays the reader with original insights into the poems it treats. But beyond that, Wiggins offers a convincing way of seeing Donne's poetry as purposeful and deeply felt but not anachronistically confessional. By respecting Donne's late Renaissance context he brings the poetry alive in a way that twentieth-century orthodoxies often fail to do.

Susan J. Owen, ed. *A Companion to Restoration Drama*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2001. xvi + 456 pp. \$99.50. Review by SUSAN B. IWANISZIW, INDEPENDENT SCHOLAR.

This collection of 25 essays written by a number of stellar specialists in Restoration drama fulfills its titular promise to complement the dramatic texts and contemporaneous criticism that constitute the received canon. The collection also stimulates an expansion of that canon by its inclusion of less familiar but no less fascinating topics, which makes it an ideal text for mapping a Restoration revival. Despite the relative brevity of this literary period, *circa* 1660 to 1714, the re-introduction of drama after Charles II's restoration, its public staging and its topical economic, political, and cultural themes demand renewed scholarly inquiry in our own age of rapid global transformations.

Happily, the collection as a whole is sufficiently varied and well-written to be entertaining and instructive for the novice and

experienced scholar alike. These essays are anchored in history—whether the history of political systems, staging, or authorial biography—and few fail to fulfill this criterion of excellence. Mita Choudhury's disconcertingly saurian introduction to her critique of *The Prince of Angola* and her scant research into John Ferriar's involvement with Manchester's role in the abolition of the slave trade constitute one of the few disappointments of the book. For the most part, the editor has judiciously fostered a cultural studies approach, organizing the essays into three major sections. Part I, "The Drama in Context," covers the historical, theatrical, and social ramifications of dramatic entertainment; Part II, "Kinds of Drama," deals with variations in genre and issues of popular appeal; and Part III, "Dramatists," juxtaposes playwrights, both familiar and unfamiliar, whose works promote useful comparisons and contrasts in terms of authorship, genre, theme, or context.

Accordingly, this collection serves two vital functions. Primarily, it familiarizes students and new teachers with the vast range of canonical and innovative plays that competed for audience attention at this historical juncture. The essays constitute a reflexive network that includes plot summaries, crucial authorial, political, and social background as well as details about the theaters and techniques of stage performance. The clarity of presentation in these chapters makes the book an especially valuable resource for students embarking on research and for teachers establishing a new or more adventurous course curriculum. Totally self-justifying are those chapters that include readings and background material for essays or course construction based on genre or on themes such as libertinism, monarchical representation, actresses, and character types. At the same time, of course, the essays tend to solidify and expand existing knowledge while rarely venturing on to wholly novel ground. Secondly, then, this volume provides for the seasoned scholar a comprehensive reference source illuminating in one handy volume the vast range of Restoration theatrical entertainment, both staged and printed. To be sure, the essays cannot lay claim to closure in any one topic, but each serves as a viable template from which to fashion further development. The notable

gap in the collection is a chapter on the emergence of extra-literary publication in the forms of literary biography appended to printed works and literary magazines that typically included dramatic reviews. To be fair, these extra-textual materials emerged toward the end of this era and typically acquired cachet later in the eighteenth century. Overall, Owen must be commended for the helpful organization of chapters, her editorial expertise in consolidating and facilitating the expansion of existing scholarship, and for her index which permits a quick cross-reference of innumerable themes and approaches.

The chapters are invariably well-formulated, but their variety is so great that appreciation of individual studies depends upon subjective interests. Of idiosyncratic importance to this reviewer are the editor's own contribution, "Restoration Drama and Politics: An Overview," that exposes evidence countering the common fallacies circulating in modern scholarship about the effects of political loyalties on dramatic production and reception (Part I); Todd S. Gilman's "London Theatre Music, 1660-1719" that provides an edifying account of the musicality of the Restoration stage—the music ranging from songs and tunes in the spoken play to the masque or musical interlude, the semi-opera or dramatic opera, and the English Italianate opera (Part II); and the much-needed treatments by Christopher J. Wheatley and Don-John Dugas of the minor writers Thomas Shadwell and Thomas Durfey and Elkanah Settle, John Crowne and Nahum Tate respectively (Part III).

More generally, in Part I, dramatic culture is refracted through a variety of social and cultural lenses. Edward A. Langhans recapitulates the standard history of theatrical revival supplemented by analysis of scenic innovation, the use of the forestage, and audience status. Matthew J. Kinservik reviews the methods and effectiveness of theatrical regulation to encompass performance, morality, and business modalities. Brian Corman, on the other hand, establishes a much-needed assessment of the reception history of various plays in order to illustrate the symbiosis of canon and repertory. Without doubt, contemporary scholarship frequently

fails to take into account the contemporaneous popularity of public entertainment in order to focus on those texts that fit fashionable critical paradigms. Now a paradigmatic text for colonial inquiry, Aphra Behn's *Widow Ranter* was performed, in its own time, quite unsuccessfully; its enthusiastic reception now is a salient example of our inadvertent distortion of Restoration tastes and mores. In Part II, in a chapter covering the conventions of authority and genre, Sandra Clark stresses the crucial mode of adaptation in the repertory at a time when the theaters were opened under strict regulation and new plays scarce. Addressing the well-known adaptations of Shakespeare's plays—including Nahum Tate's immensely well-received but now almost universally denigrated *King Lear*—Clark also reminds us of the almost forgotten re-workings of Beaumont and Fletcher plays which, as she observes, were far more popular than Shakespearean adaptations during the early years of the Restoration (284). Part III continues this essentially authorial-generic/authorial-thematic emphasis to encompass such combinations as Paulina Kewes's excellent evaluation of Otway's and Lee's plays and the changing valence of their embodiment of history within contemporaneous culture; Miriam Handley's informative contrast between the reputations of William Congreve and Thomas Southerne; and Richard Kroll's erudite evaluation of William Davenant's influence on John Dryden in a chapter that implicitly challenges Owen's own methodology in his criticism of any overly coherent or transparent application of thematics (315).

The overriding impact of Owen's volume is cautionary. Without knowledge of the conventions operating during the Restoration, culturally and theatrically, we cannot assess or analyze its dramatic themes and their import with any degree of authority. This volume guides us, as Kroll's chapter implies, perhaps too easily through the maze of overlapping and competing performances, texts, and contemporaneous and modern criticism, but it does not fail to illuminate the complexity and range of this remarkable, yet much maligned, age of theatrical innovation.