

turies as “a time of expanding possibilities for English women poets” (242). To prove her point, she provides an insightful survey of ways to consider progress in English women’s writing, from that of Aemilia Lanyer to Aphra Behn.

In the end, Wright’s study underscores the value of the ground-laying work of scholars of the 1990s and early 2000s, which has clearly paved the way for her own scholarship. With this book, Wright provides readers of early modern English women’s poetry a valuable resource for textual and paratextual histories regarding these women’s *oeuvres* and models for further close readings of their poetry.

Judith H. Anderson and Jennifer C. Vaught, eds. *Shakespeare and Donne: Generic Hybrids and the Cultural Imaginary*. New York, New York: Fordham University Press, 2013. viii + 291 pp. \$55.00. Review by GRAHAM ROEBUCK, MCMASTER UNIVERSITY.

The editors have assembled nine challenging essays, varied in approach and focus, that consider possible literary relationships, including dialogue, between the poet-priest and the poet-playwright. If this is how we initially categorize Donne and Shakespeare, the editors prepare us to think about them differently. In the context of literary genres and the imagination of the age, as transgressors of generic boundaries they are “themselves generic hybrids” (Introduction, 2). There is little speculation about the possibility of direct interaction between the two contemporary denizens of London’s theatrical and literary worlds. Donne as “a great frequenter of Playes” is mentioned in passing. The implications of Sir Richard Baker’s brief notice of his “old acquaintance” and his progress from youthful pursuits to his becoming “so rare a preacher” are not pursued in this volume. Likewise, the debate raised by earlier scholars about Donne’s attitude to the theater exemplified by Patrick Crutwell’s confidence in Donne’s “deep and lively experience of the theatre” (*The Shakespearean Moment*, 1960) and Victor Harris’s claim that “Donne rejects the theatre” noting his “antipathy toward the theatre nearly every time he mentions it” (“John Donne and the Theatre,” *PQ*, 1962) is also not pursued. These are not the questions asked. Direct influence and borrowings are incidental

to the focus of the collection, which is on the “immediacy of cultural cross-fertilization” carried on “the cultural winds” (Introduction, 3). The biological metaphor—the editors are not engaged in a “literalized search for hybrids in full bloom” (3)—enables studies that are “broadly cultural, theoretical, and imaginative” (3).

There are four parts, thematically labeled. In Part I: “Time, Love, Sex, and Death,” the first essay, by Matthias Bauer and Angelika Zirker, proposes the centrality to Donne’s writing of the “manifold deaths of this *world*” (17), quoting *Death’s Duell*, that is “inspired, as well as elucidated, by a dialogue with Shakespeare” (18). Interaction between “The Extasie,” “Epitaph on Himself,” and the tomb scene in *Romeo and Juliet* is explored in this well-informed study. Other pertinent sites of life and death discussed include Puck’s epilogue to *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and Prospero’s island. A good deal of fascinating work is found in the copious notes—as is the case with some other essays. A second collection might almost be compiled from them.

Catherine Gimelli Martin’s essay probes the ways Shakespeare’s plays—*Othello* and *Much Ado* are explicated in detail—and Donne’s love lyrics express the desire to transcend change and mutability. She challenges the view that the Western love lyric “exalts mutability” (38). Why did Donne move from amorous changeability to constancy? Like Benedick he “unwittingly wanted constancy all along” (45). Donne was no libertine, but rather like the “semi-insecure cynic who speaks his harshest” lyrics, is nearly identical with Benedick (48).

The final essay in Part I by Jennifer Pacenza deals with puns on the word “die” used by the two writers. Described as “the most speculative in the volume” (Introduction, 6) it examines a longing for the perpetual sexual moment found in Shakespeare’s “masturbatory” sonnets (65) and compares this with Donne’s striving to escape linear time in his poetry. To this end the author wrestles with “ontological classification attempts to fix the body in a grid of predefined binaries of signification” (63).

Part II, entitled “Moral, Public, and Spatial Imaginaries,” contains two essays that make us think again about the spaces of early modern imaginative engagement—the first in the confines of Court and theater, and the second unconfined celestial space.

Jeanne Shami and Mary Blackstone collaborate in an important addition to study of pulpit and theater, asking how playwright and preacher, major competitors (86), engage their audiences. Their texts are *Henry V* and two sermons, both preached at Whitehall, one in 1617/18, without King James present, and the other in 1627 in the presence of Charles I. Much of the effectiveness of stage performance and sermon depended upon the “relative nearness or distance” of the audiences (95). Negotiating these distances with all the art and rhetorical variety at their disposal, Shakespeare and Donne, as the essayists show, “engaged their audiences more immediately in the performative event” than some scholars, talking of metatheatrical moments as distancing, think (103). Donne and Shakespeare are here convincingly located at the “forefront of the cultural and political changes that marked their age” (109).

Douglas Trevor’s “Mapping the Celestial in Shakespeare’s *Tempest* and the Writings of John Donne” sets out to correct misunderstanding of the reception of theories about the multiplicity of worlds, of which the most significant was Giordano Bruno’s, raising profound theological problems. Arguably, he paid for this speculation with his life: burned at the stake in Rome in 1600, although he had racked up an impressive array of other offences against Roman orthodoxy. Trevor sees the implications of Bruno’s thought, amplified by others and founded on the discoveries of astronomers, as less transgressive than was once thought. Empson, notably, assumed that the skepticism of the age, especially Montaigne’s, would have rejected life on other worlds, but, “the opposite is true”—Montaignian skepticism powerfully emboldened the expanded universe’s possibilities (114). *Ignatius His Conclave* is, of course, the Donne text relevant to this theme. For Shakespeare it is *The Tempest*. Trevor deftly argues the case for the significance of the moon in that play.

Part III: “Names, Puns, and More” has a short, unfinished, essay by the late Marshall Grossman, to whose memory the volume is dedicated, with a response by David Lee Miller. This poignant dialogue is powered by their lifelong commitment to the supremely important power of language. Hamlet’s linguistic sparring with Claudius in Grossman’s essay and Luther’s “theological grammar” in Miller’s are prime themes. The final essay in this part is Julian Lamb’s study of

the pun—impossible to define—with discussions of Sonnet 135 and “A Valediction of Weeping” and the “tennis balls” scene in *Henry V*. Wittgenstein’s ideas on the physiognomy of words are brought into play before turning to puns on Will, More, and Donne. The argument surprises wittily at every turn as we see criticism’s best moves checked by the lowly (often despised) pun.

The fourth Part, “Realms of Privacy and Imagination” presents Anita Gilman Sherman’s essay on fantasies of a private language. Wittgenstein is also a major interpretive presence in this study (along with Stanley Cavell), which engages early modern notions of private language(s), naming, and the further fantasy of perfect knowledge. The problem of privacy and solitude is the skepticism those desires engender—the “impossibility of knowing the marriage of true minds from the inside” exemplified in the “deliberate poetic obscurity” of “The Phoenix and the Turtle” (173). The notion of Donne’s “The Ecstasy” as a response to Shakespeare’s puzzling poem is revisited, with a helpful review of the generic tradition to which both belong. The sharply contrasting visions of perfect knowledge may be attributable to personality (184).

The final and longest essay in the collection is by Judith H. Anderson. It covers a great deal of ground, summarizing many of the themes and concerns of the volume as a whole, although also taking directions not previously examined, or not previously made central, such as Aristotelian psychology (sometimes hybridized with versions of Platonism) and its bearing on cognition in Shakespeare and Donne. Its large purpose is to elucidate the workings of the early modern imagination. The urgent attention to the mind’s operation, the essay makes clear in its treatment of Hamlet, Macbeth, and Leontes, is Shakespeare’s overriding concern (201). As the Introduction puts it, the “cognitive, formal, and cultural concerns” examined in this essay “inform the whole volume” (13). Scholars will welcome the wide range of topics and the stimulating arguments of this volume.