

Its sexually-charged and masculine language (of undressing, piercing, scattering) calls into question West's description of the poem as a "curiously prim meditation on the nuptials of Jacob's father," as the wording of that description fails to take into account the significance of the marriage of Isaac in biblical typology. Jean Daniélou's *From Shadows to Reality* appears in West's bibliography, and might have been usefully drawn upon in discussion of "Isaacs Marriage."

In general, however, this book is so enlivening to read because its author has clearly made good use of, and enjoyed, his opportunity for research. I liked especially his exposition of the evidence that Royalists connected Charles Stuart, who was crowned King of Scotland in 1651, with the suffering Jacob. The Stone of Destiny was thought to be the same one on which Jacob had slept at Bethel. That Charles could not sit on it at his coronation, because it had been removed to Westminster in 1297, would, West suggests, have symbolized to Vaughan the disturbance of the patriarchal line from Jacob's day. Whatever particular reservations one might have, West's discussion of Vaughan's meditation on the patriarchs, and their relevance to contemporary Anglican sufferings, is an important contribution to understanding.

Donald R. Dickson, ed. *Thomas and Rebecca Vaughan's Aqua Vita: Non Vitis* (British Library MS, Sloane 1741). Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2001. liii + 270 pp. \$35.00
Review by ALAN RUDRUM, SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY.

Insofar as modern students of literature are aware of Thomas Vaughan (1621-1666), it is as the twin brother of the poet Henry Vaughan. Yet during his lifetime, being of a more swashbuckling disposition, he made more stir in the world than did Henry. His work was known outside Great Britain and was read in German translation through the eighteenth century. Substantial extracts were copied into commonplace books on both sides of the Atlantic. Like his twin, he published prolifically during the period 1650-1655 and is generally regarded as the most notable alchemical or

“occult” philosopher after Robert Fludd. Henry Vaughan wrote that Thomas had given all his books and manuscripts to Sir Robert Moray, the first President of the Royal Society. The only manuscript known to have survived is a notebook of personal records and alchemical recipes, now in the British Library, and now printed in its entirety for the first time, in a diplomatic edition, with a substantial biographical, contextual and textual introduction, a useful glossary of alchemical terms, and a bibliography.

The Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies series is to be congratulated and thanked for this volume. Nothing by Thomas Vaughan has ever appeared in so handsome a format. Donald Dickson, too, is to be congratulated and thanked. Sloane MS 1741, if not quite in the Aubrey league, still has its difficulties, and Dickson’s editorial competence has navigated them splendidly. Beyond that, and perhaps even more impressive, is the archival research which underlies the introduction. We might expect archival competence from the author of *The Tessera of Antilia*, but we also know how inhibiting the law of diminishing returns can be when we contemplate biographical data which has been raked over in detail by our forerunners, in this case Gwenllian Morgan and Louise Guiney, F. E. Hutchinson, Thomas Willard, and the present reviewer.

I am writing these words on April 17, the date on which Thomas Vaughan’s wife, Rebecca, died: “My most deare wife sickened on Friday in the Evening, being the 16 of April, and dyed the Saturday following in the Evening, being the 17. And was buried on the 26 of the same Month, being a Monday in the afternoon, at Mappersall in Bedfordshire. 1658.” This is just about where one of Dickson’s impressive pieces of archival research begins. It has, of course, long been surmised that the place of burial was also the place of Rebecca’s birth. There is independent confirmation that “Rebecka, the Wife of Mr. Vahanne”, was indeed buried at Meppershall in Bedfordshire on April 26, 1658; but who was she? One clue lies in a letter of 1652 from the alchemist George Starkey to Robert Boyle giving the news that Thomas Vaughan had married the daughter of a certain cleric of no fortune: “Philosophus

maximus Thomas Vaughan nuperimme uxorem duxit, clerici cuiusdam filiam, nullius fortunam." We know from Sloane 1741 that Thomas and Rebecca were married on 28 September 1651. Using a revision of another early source, *Walker Revised*, Dickson discovered that the rector of Meppershall, Dr. Timothy Archer, had eleven children; though only nine of them are accounted for in the baptismal records, we know the name of a tenth (Marie), and as Dickson has shown we can deduce from the intervals between the known births when the eleventh, Rebecca, is likely to have been born. Archer's wife was named Rebecca; Dickson points out that the Archers seemed especially fond of using family names, and "there was a daughter named Rebecca in every generation of every branch at this time." So far, so good, but so what, some might ask, who have not taken in T.S. Eliot on the importance of facts. In this case the answer is that we now have yet more evidence of the "ultra" and intransigent Royalism of the Vaughan family and those with whom they were allied. According to *Walker Revised*, Timothy Archer was dispossessed by the Parliamentarians sometime before 15 October 1644 and imprisoned in the Fleet for eighteen years. This fits in with just about everything else we know of the friends of Henry and Thomas Vaughan—in the case of Thomas, for example, his close friendship with Thomas Henshaw.

Thomas Vaughan himself was evicted under the Act for the Propagation of the Gospel in Wales in 1650; the charges as given by Dickson (xiii) are a little less racy than those in Bodleian MS Walker E.7, fol. 213b, where he was described as a common drunkard, a common swearer, no preacher, a whoremaster, and in armes personally against the Parliament." Dickson remarks that in the MS notebook Vaughan himself suggests that the charge of drunkenness may have been accurate, but he does not deal with the accusation that he was a "whoremaster" ("Incontinency" in the account he quotes). Dickson points out that charges of scandalous living were levelled in more than twenty per cent of the cases reported by Walker, but does not fully discuss the possible implications of the fact that the charges against Thomas Vaughan were more serious than those against any other Breconshire incumbent. I draw upon

this fact in a discussion of his twin brother Henry's poems of mourning in an essay soon to be published.

Dickson quite rightly stresses Thomas Vaughan's obvious devotion to, and respect for, his wife; and the fact that she was his co-worker and Muse in the alchemical enterprise (she was not alone among women of the time in her alchemical work—Hartlib wrote that Henshaw's father was a "great chymist" and "so is his mother who is yet alive"). This, and the format of the MS from the date of her death on, is the rationale for Dickson's ascription of joint authorship of Sloane 1741. While his emphasis on the importance of the relationship in Thomas's endeavours is accurate enough, it leads him, I think, to downplay a little the intellectual bond between Thomas and his twin brother Henry. He writes that while Stevie Davies's view that "Henry's psyche was forged in the crucible of twinship" has sparked considerable interest in the nature of the twins' relationship, there is "little evidence, i.e. intertextual references in their writings, of this bond" (xi). While it is true that Henry's poems have more references to the Bible and to Herbert than to Thomas Vaughan, intertextual references we do find are significant: for example a major poem of Henry's ("Regeneration") has an important relationship with a major passage of Thomas's, the vision of Thalia in *Lumen de Lumine*. I have dealt with this, from Henry's side, in "Henry Vaughan and the theme of transfiguration," *Southern Review* (Adelaide) No. 1 (1963): 54-68; and from Thomas's side in "Thomas Vaughan's *Lumen de Lumine*. An Interpretation of Thalia" (Luanne Frank, ed., *Literature and the Occult*, Arlington: University of Texas, 1977: 234-243). In such important matters as their view of childhood, and their views on God's concern for the non-human creation, the Vaughans were at one, and at odds with majority opinion of their time. The first doctrine Thomas announces is that of the pre-existence, and the royalty, of the soul: a clear attack on Calvinist views. Like his brother Henry, he praised the state of childhood, but stressed the child's desire for knowledge rather than his innocence. Again, as in Henry's work, the historical figure of Jesus is less important to Vaughan than was Christ conceived cosmically, as in St. John's Prologue and in

Colossians 1:17. Christ's redemption is for the whole Creation—again, in mid-seventeenth century England, an anti-Calvinist position (*Anthroposophia Theomagica*, 56). See also, in this respect, *Euphrates*, 517-518: "I fear not to say, that *Nature* is so much the business of *Scripture*, that to me, the *Spirit of God*, in those sacred Oracles, seems not only to mind the *Restitution of Man* in particular, but even the *Redemption of Nature* in *generall*. We must not therefore *confine* this *Restitution* to our own *Speciè*" (references to the Clarendon Press edition).

In my edition of Thomas Vaughan's *Works*, only the personal entries of Sloane 1741 were reprinted, partly through cheeseparing on the part of the Clarendon Press, partly because enquiries I made among historians of alchemy turned up nobody who could make sense of the alchemical "recipes." The clue to his intentions, however, is clear from the fact that the physician Henry Vaughan thought of himself and his twin brother as having practised the same profession: "My brothers employm^t was in physic and Chymistrie . . . My profession also is physic." Dickson's account of the Vaughans' relationship to the iatrochemical revolution inaugurated by Paracelsus forms a substantial and significant part of his introduction, and, if justification were needed, justifies the reproduction of the notebook in its entirety. It is good to have so faithful a transcription of the manuscript I have pored over so many times, and always with a complex sensation compounded of affinity with, and unbridgeable distance from, the man whose pen marked the pages so idiosyncratically.

Abraham Cohen de Herrera. *Gate of Heaven*. Translated from the Spanish with Introduction and Notes by Kenneth Krabbenhoft. Leiden, Boston, and Köln: Brill, 2002. xxxiv + 548 pp. + 1 illustration. □135.00 / \$169.00. Review by WILLIAM E. ENGEL.

Scholars working in history of philosophy, kabbalah, *marrano* culture, and Spanish literature, at last have ready access to Herrera's *Gate of Heaven*. Not only is this the first English translation of *Puerta del Cielo*, but it is also the first complete annotated edition of