Book Reviews Comptes rendus

Ernest Sullivan II. *The Influence of John Donne: His Uncollected Seventeenth Century Printed Verse*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1993.

Anthony Raspa, ed. *John Donne: Pseudo-Martyr*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993.

The two books under review provide invaluable materials for both the Donne scholar and the student of seventeenth century intellectual history. In *The Influence of John Donne*, Ernest Sullivan does precisely what his title and subtitle promise. He offers a comprehensive and meticulously described bibliography of all printed instances of Donne's poetry throughout the seventeenth century (including translations and adaptations) in publications other than the seven editions and issues of the collected *Poems* published between 1633 and 1669. And he provides an extensive discussion of the significance of the texts he has assembled and in considerable measure discovered. He identifies the range and extent of Donne's readership and influence, and offers suggestive speculation on reading practices and the uses of poetry throughout the century.

Sullivan has located and analyzed a very large number of uncollected printings of Donne's verse, demonstrating that 38 of his poems were introduced in this fashion to a print audience (an audience quite different from the coterie audience amongst whom his poetry originally circulated in manuscript). Further, he has substantially increased the identification of uncollected titles (83 in place of 46) and editions (239 from 65). His findings effectively refute two generally accepted notions concerning Donne's reputation — that few of his poems saw print in his lifetime and that what popularity he did have had diminished rapidly by the Restoration. From Thomas Dekker's *A Knight's Conjuring* (1607), where two lines of "The Storme" are quoted, to Mary de la Rivière Manley's *Letters* (1696) where a line from "The Will" appears, Donne, Sullivan argues, was a continuous presence through the century.

He is able both to name 59 known readers of Donne's poetry (largely but not exclusively other writers) and to identify an entirely new and unsuspected reader-

ship (described as “functionally illiterate” although the term is never adequately defined). In texts such as *The Philosophers Banquet*, or *The Academy of Complements*, or *The Marrow of Complements*, handbooks and manuals including advice on topics and styles of conversation and letter writing, Donne regularly turns up with illustrative lines or model sentiments or phrasing. He also appears, frequently unacknowledged, in the work of other writers. Sullivan sketches this material in fascinating detail. What is missing from this discussion, however, is a full consideration of the relation of a Donne text to its place of publication. He remarks that overall the selections constitute a list not unlike one a twentieth-century reader might put together, but he does not account for frequency of citation. *The Anniversaries*, for example, appear often. What principles of taste or understanding might have been operative? Nonetheless, the argument is entirely original, and constitutes an important intervention in the cultural history of the period.

Finally from the bibliographic point of view, the work is extremely valuable as an aid in dating and establishing Donne’s texts, insofar as a citation can offer a *terminus ad quem* as well as a source of variant readings. The main body of the book consists of chronologically arranged descriptive bibliographies of all works containing some Donne verse (whole or in part), followed by sections describing works containing translations, adaptations and *dubia*. There is a chronology of printings and two indexes.

Anthony Raspa’s edition of Donne’s *Pseudo-Martyr* (1610) offers a richly detailed historical and theological context for a difficult text, hitherto only available in a 1974 facsimile edition. The organizing insight of his informative introduction to this treatise whose rhetorical purpose was to convince English Catholics to take the Oath of Allegiance, is the epigrammatic statement, “Donne writes as a canonist in order not to be a canonist.” Raspa shows how Donne defends his arguments in terms of Catholic canon law but shifts the grounds to “The Protestant ‘dictate of conscience’ and its associated law of nature” (p. xxxi). This point is developed in terms of Donne’s complex personal religious history as the great-great-nephew of Thomas More and as the nephew of the Jesuits Elias and Jasper Heywood, who by this period was not only a convert, but a propagandist and apologist for the English Church (*Ignatius his Conclave* was published the following year). But the personal forms only a small part of the multiple contexts adduced. These touch on contemporary debates over martyrdom; the relation between secular and spiritual powers, seen through Paul V’s excommunication of the Doge of Venice in 1606, as well as in two earlier controversies between the papacy and secular rulers; the events surrounding the Gunpowder plot and hence the passing of the Oath of Allegiance; James’ defence of the Oath (*Triplici Nodo*) as well as Catholic rebuttals (Robert Parsons, 1608); Donne’s legal training, and more.

Raspa argues that throughout the text Donne is trying to convince himself that his religious convictions are settled, hence Donne’s emphasis on the continuity of Christian history. From this perspective, *Pseudo-Martyr* advances a complex legal

case, arguing simultaneously on behalf of James and of his English-Catholic subjects. Thus "secular and spiritual powers could be legitimately united in the ruler. . . [but he] separated for his subjects to the benefit of both" (p. xlix).

All of these arguments are developed in the "Introduction" and supported in great detail in the extensive "Commentary" that follows the text. The notes identify and explain the *marginalia* as well as many of the references in the text. The textual apparatus also includes useful information concerning the extant copies of the 1610 edition (many more than the *STC* lists). There is also an illuminating discussion of the roles of Stansby and Burre (printer and bookseller for *Pseudo-Martyr*) in the field of religious controversy.

Given the clearly painstaking research that went into preparing this edition, and its obvious value for students of Donne and of Renaissance religious history, it is perhaps churlish of me to raise objections, but I do have a few demurrals both small and not so small. A small one concerns the inference that Donne had no Hebrew in his repertoire of languages, a traditional position that has been largely discredited. More serious, though, is the lack of an adequate context for *Pseudo-Martyr* in Donne's writing overall — its relation to the Satires, for example, especially "Satire III"; to the prose letters; to the flurry of publication in the years 1610 to 1612. Further, there has been considerable recent scholarship on Donne as casuist, recusant, polemicist, but very little of this (or any other Donne scholarship) appears in these pages. Why did Donne write this tract? The question is only very obliquely addressed.

My greatest hesitation, however, concerns the text itself. I do not understand the logic behind the decision to correct some punctuation, capitalization and typography silently. Either the text is an accurate transcription or it is not. There are as well certain apparent errors that these principles of emendation do not account for. I did a spot check on the opening pages against the microfilm of the Huntington Library copy and found to my dismay a number of inexplicable errors. On the title page *Pseudo-Martyr* is missing its hyphen, and a comma follows instead of a period. The page offers itself as if it were a diplomatic transcription of the original, but the line breaks of the biblical texts are not followed. In the *Table of Contents* there are several small errors (Chap. VI: "wherein" for "wherin"; Chap. X: "cited by those authors" for "cyted by those authours"; p. 9, l. 17: omission of a bracket before "since." None of these is serious in the sense of Donne's 1629 sermon on the text "Nothing is to be neglected as little," where he points out the heretical implications of the accidental addition of an "i" (*homoiousion* instead of *homoousion*). But are there other errors? A text of this sort should have (nearly) none. Still I do admire the great learning displayed everywhere in this volume, only wishing that it had acknowledged the work of others beside Carey and Bald.

JUDITH SCHERER HERZ, *Concordia University*