

and her theological use of it. Another exemplary note is the one for lines 574–92 (167) of the *Tale* that in a nutshell explains the history of parchment, gold leaf, patent letters, bulls, and seals. Both scholars and students will profit from the ample and meticulously researched information in such notes.

As a kind of counterpoint to de Pizan's profeminism, the editors included "A Poem on Man and Woman" by Jean Gerson, translated from the Latin by Thomas O'Donnell. Gerson, chancellor of the University of Paris at the time, was a noted theologian and prolific writer as well as an ally of Christine de Pizan in the acerbic debate about the thirteenth-century *Romance of the Rose*, chronicled by de Pizan herself in a dossier of various documents produced by herself, Gerson, and their adversaries. Gerson's poem dwells on the harmony that should exist between man and woman, whose souls are equal, even if they are not equal in earthly reality, a conundrum already treated by Saint Augustine. All in all, this volume is a model of its kind and should find a wide readership.

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The Variorum Edition of the Poetry of John Donne, Volume 4.2: The Songs and Sonets Part 2; Texts, Commentary, Notes, and Glosses. Jeffrey S. Johnson, ed. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2021. lxxxviii + 1,016 pp. \$85.

With *Songs and Sonets*, volume 4.2, the penultimate addition to a collection of eleven large reference books, the monumental Donne Variorum project has approached completion. Volume 4.3 was published in 2022. Moreover, thanks to Digital Donne, an online research tool that since 2005 has unceasingly updated critical commentary, Donne's complex lyrics may yield endlessly to new close readings and analysis. Conceived in 1980 as an eight-volume project with Gary A. Stringer as its general editor, and supported by NEH grants since 1986, the Variorum began publication in 1995 with volume 6, *The Anniversaries and the Epicedes and Obsequies*. Stringer managed the Variorum until 2014, when its current general editor, Jeffrey S. Johnson, began to guide the final publications: volume 5, *The Verse Letters*, in 2019, and this three-part and longest volume, *Songs and Sonets*, which began its release with 4.1 in 2017.

Volume 4.2 includes twenty-five of the poet's undisputed fifty-three love lyrics, each introduced in stark isolation in original spelling and modern type, so a reader meets the text on its own terms with no glimpse of critical interpolation. Next follows the justification for that poem's copytext with a transmission diagram of textual antecedents and a historical collation of all its substantive variants from an array of manuscripts and seventeenth-century print sources. Several of the manuscripts here see their first use in textual scholarship as editors pursue Donne's lost original holographs. A meticulous

reader may posit their own readings. Is it the duty of the “vnruly Sunne,” for example, to “warne” or “warne” the world? Is that poem’s heading “The Sun Rising” or “*Ad Solem*”? Textual notes register both options with eight further contemporary variants. In fact, this comprehensive edition includes all seventeenth-century variants that affect meaning, nonverbal variants that affect meter, spelling variants that suggest puns, and any variants that hint at textual history.

A new section lists the poems a second time in order to treat the published critical commentary on each, beginning with a chronology of general analysis, interrupted by new chronologies for special topics. Critical remarks on “Valediction, Forbidding Mourning,” for example, include a subset for “The Compass (and Other Imagery),” while those on “The Canonization” devote over five pages just to “The Phoenix Image.” Balanced, objective, and dauntingly thorough summaries of analysis published through 1999 set out all the issues in each poem. An older scholar may grow nostalgic perusing once more the remarks of, for example, Cleanth Brooks, William Empson, Louis L. Martz, or Helen Gardner, the distant stars of one’s introduction to Donne, while contextualizing later criticism brought nearly up to date. A reader can trace the evolution of critical approaches, from biographical speculations to formal New Criticism, and from interpretations of the poems as dramatic monologues, assertions of authorial irony, or reflections of androgyny through the discovery of their classical poetic models and historical debates over theological doctrine. Meanwhile, of course, Digital Donne extends the work.

Because Donne circulated and revised his lyrics separately and privately rather than arranging them for print publication, the editors sequence them according to early posthumous print arrangements. Fortunately, they point out, the canon is relatively stable. It is the extensive and rapidly growing body of critical commentary that requires them to divide the volume into three parts lest they deliver an unwieldy artifact of nearly three thousand pages. Volume 4.2 runs from “The Message” through “Twicknam Garden.” By discovering the way to employ manuscript variants, whether authorial or scribal, the whole Donne Variorum reaches back beyond even the earliest print editions toward the poet’s likely intentions. Exemplifying the very highest standards in textual scholarship, it establishes the new authoritative critical text for Donne’s poetry.

As a single volume, 4.2 will prove invaluable for readers who focus intently on any of the poems included in its discussion or as a hardcover accompaniment to Digital Donne. It belongs with its ten counterparts in every center for the serious study of Renaissance and Jacobean literature.

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