

problem with the damned is that they are closed in on themselves and have in fact become unrecognizable to others. The problem with sodomy is not “homoeotericism,” which is positive, as can be seen on the Terrace of Lust, but abuse (147). It is not, evidently, a problem of lust at all, even on the terrace of the same name.

The volume’s forays into philosophy are enriched by quotations garnered from a wide variety of thinkers, from Kierkegaard to Ricoeur. It begins by acknowledging the question of personhood in the modern abortion debate, as well as in the animal-rights movement. This is a sincere and heartfelt reading of the *Commedia*, not as a distant historical document, but as a guide for life, a guide to interpersonal relations, a guide to recognizing the personhood of the other.

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A Companion to Vittoria Colonna. Abigail Brundin, Tatiana Crivelli, and Maria Serena Sapego, eds.

The Renaissance Society of America Texts and Studies Series 5. Leiden: Brill, 2016. xxi + 562 pp. \$259.

In the sizable companion dedicated to her, Vittoria Colonna remains a shadowy figure with biographical information shoehorned into a timeline. It is true that Colonna’s complex personality, eluding a clear-cut profile, complicates a simple portrayal: torn between the anti-intellectual spirituality of Valdéz and a rationalist Renaissance humanism, she is both a saint (Burckhardt) and “la Marchesa de Pescara” (her signature), cherishing power and self-fashioning her myth.

Part 1 of *A Companion to Vittoria Colonna* integrates Colonna’s *carteggio* into the epistolary culture of the Cinquecento, focusing on her letters with men of prominence. Three *Litere della divina Colonna* were singled out for solitary print and immediately reprinted in Venice in 1545, suggesting public interest in Colonna’s feminist remakes of Catherine and Magdalene and her euphoric deification of the Holy Virgin. Part 2, “Poetry,” however, does not deliver on its promise. Neither intrinsic nor Petrarchist elements of her sonnets are analyzed, nor is there a thematic summary of her oeuvre. But Maria Serena Sapego steps into the breach. Tiding Vittoria’s *rime* “a textual conundrum,” she admits to dispensing with clarification and conclusion, though she provides knowledgeable insights into various themes and singles out sonnets to reach a profound understanding of them.

Excellent textual scholarship, laying the groundwork for the imperative critical edition of Colonna’s poetic corpus, is joined by studies of the dissemination of manuscripts (Abigail Brundin), print publication (Tatiana Crivelli), and overdue linguistic analysis of Colonna’s Italian (Helena Sanson), which will guarantee this companion a place on the reference shelf, more so as Colonna’s sonnets are itemized by Robin in the ten Giolito anthologies. Colonna’s exemplariness rounds off part 2. While Virginia Cox

narrows Colonna's self-fashioning down to medals *alla antica*, superseded by fashionable *imprese*, Paolo Giovio imagined Vittoria's humanism radiating like a bonfire on top of Egyptian pyramids. Whereas Diana Robin, relying on circumstantial evidence, infers Colonna's exemplary status from the number of poems in Domenichi's anthology, Ulrike Schneider substantiates Colonna's exemplary female Petrarchism in a groundbreaking intertextual study based on a textual analysis of Colonna's *rime* in comparison to Stampa's poetry. Her meritorious work is not mentioned in the bibliography, though it comprises about 350 authors.

In part 3 ("Vittoria Colonna and the Arts"), Gaudenz Freuler explores the pictorial evidence, reconsidering the idealized Petrarchist representation of Vittoria and the painting of Piombo, who used a model, identifying the poetess via accessories. Freuler refutes Vittoria's identity in Michelangelo's *teste divine*, ignoring her striking physiognomy (according to Giovio, her Arsacid nose), though her features recur in three life drawings by Michelangelo, infatuated as he was with Colonna's appearance (sonnet 166). Maria Forcellino, contenting herself with documenting the mesmerizing friendship between Colonna and Michelangelo, re-thematizes Michelangelo's gift drawings already covered by excellent scholarship, and offers new evidence for Michelangelo's singlehanded transformation of the drawings *Crucified* and *Pietà* into paintings for Cavalieri. Anne Piéjus meticulously researches musical settings of Colonna's *rime spirituali*, an inspirational source for composers of madrigals in a diversity of religious and cultural environments.

Colonna's personal shadowiness is also true for part 4, on religion, as it focuses on the discourse of her theological contexts. Colonna's problematic relationship with her spiritual rector Reginald Pole is not expanded upon, however; and while Stephen Bowd announces the friendship between Contarini and Colonna in the title, he digressively touches on a variety of different subjects in the body of the text without substantiating their relationship. Emidio Campi's "Colonna and Ochino," with a theological analysis of her *rime spirituali*, clarifies Colonna's Christology and her subtle understanding of *sola fide* that she owed to Ochino, in Campi's view; Cardinal Morone, on the other hand, emphasized to the Inquisition Colonna's independence from Ochino, whose earth-bound image of the divine and human godmother was counteracted by Colonna's daring ontology ("Little inferior to her infinite son is his eternal mother" [Carteggio, letter 169]). Though Eleonora Carinci's chapter on the religious prose texts focuses on the evangelical context of her *Pianto*, she also refers to both Colonna's medieval absorption into Christ's wounds and her spiritual sublimation, touching on Colonna's innovative merging with the *Pietà*; but she only quotes from Colonna's fascinating finale, projecting her own "poisoned" (and painfully ambivalent) feelings into a godmother with her dead godson in her lap. Yet, as her son's mediator on earth, she knows only one remedy: faith.

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