

## Introduction

Wright, Gillian; Coolahan, Marie-Louise

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## Marie-Louise Coolahan and Gillian Wright

### Introduction

The early decades of the twenty-first century are an exciting period in research on Katherine Philips. Modern scholarship on Philips's writing can be said to have begun in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with such landmark publications as Edmund Gosse's essay "The Matchless Orinda" (1883) and editions of Philips's poetry by Louise Guiney and John Ramsden Tutin (1903, 1904) and George Saintsbury (1905). For much of the twentieth century, however, Philips remained something of a niche author, all too aptly described by Maren-Sofie Røstvig in 1962 as "today [...] known only to the specialist".<sup>1</sup> Recent growth in Philips scholarship can be dated to the late 1980s and early 1990s, when the convergence of several factors facilitated both interest in and access to her works. Pioneering studies such as Margaret Ezell's *The Patriarch's Wife* (1987) and Elaine Hobby's *Virtue of Necessity* (1988) inspired new generations of readers to explore early modern women's writing, while concurrent research on early modern manuscript circulation by scholars such as Peter Beal, Arthur Marotti, and Ezell also opened up new ways of understanding Philips's writing life, early reception, and posthumous reputation.<sup>2</sup> Greater interest was in turn fostered by greater availability: the Stump Cross edition of Philips's works, published between 1990 and 1993, was followed by the microfilm series *Orinda: The Literary Manuscripts of Katherine Philips* and the websites Early English Books Online and Perdita Manuscripts 1500-1700.<sup>3</sup> Collectively these resources, both physical and electronic, made it possible for scholars across the world to read the full range of Philips's works both in modern edited texts and in their original formats. The subsequent flowering of Philips scholarship is best illustrated by David Orvis's and Ryan Paul's *The Noble Flame of Katherine Philips* (2015), the first essay collection devoted wholly to her work, which reproduces influential recent articles on coterie circulation, genre, and sexuality as well as including innovative studies of iconography, music, and religion.<sup>4</sup> As *The Noble Flame* indicates, Philips scholarship since the 1990s has taken diverse routes, developing trajectories through royalism and politics, print and manuscript dissemination, literary archipelagism, and the return to aesthetics sometimes known as the New Formalism.

The vibrancy and diversity of current Philips scholarship is amply demonstrated by the present issue, which focuses on literary relationships between Philips and other seventeenth-century writers. Our own aim, in this issue, is to advocate and model new avenues of approach for thinking about Philips's documented, collaborative, imagined, and creative relationships with other literary producers. Philips's place(s) in the seventeenth-century literary landscape will, we believe, be one of the major strands in future research on her work. Another such strand – form and reception – will be addressed in a subsequent issue of this journal.

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### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Maren-Sofie Røstvig, *The Happy Man: Studies in the Metamorphoses of a Classical Ideal*, vol. 1, 1600-1700 (Oslo: Norwegian UP, 1962) 260.

<sup>2</sup> Margaret J. M. Ezell, *The Patriarch's Wife: Literary Evidence and the History of the Family* (Chapel Hill, NC: U of North Carolina P, 1987); Elaine Hobby, *Virtue of Necessity: English Women's Writing, 1649-1688* (London: Virago, 1988); Peter Beal, *Index of English Literary Manuscripts*, vol. 2, 1625-1700, pt 2, Lee-Wycherley (London: Mansell, 1993); Arthur

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Marotti, *Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1995); Ezell, *Writing Women's Literary History* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 1993).

<sup>3</sup> Katherine Philips, *The Collected Works of Katherine Philips, the Matchless Orinda*, ed. Patrick Thomas, G. Greer, and R. Little, 3 vols (Stump Cross: Stump Cross Books, 1990-3); *Orinda: The Literary Manuscripts of Katherine Philips (1632-1664)*, 4 microform reels (Marlborough: Adam Matthews, 1995); Early English Books Online (<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/>); and Perdita Manuscripts 1500-1700 (<http://www.amdigital.co.uk/m-collections/collection/perdita-manuscripts-1500-1700/>).

<sup>4</sup> David L. Orvis and Ryan Singh Paul, eds, *The Noble Flame of Katherine Philips: A Poetics of Culture, Politics, and Friendship* (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne UP, 2015).

**Marie-Louise Coolahan** is professor of English at the National University of Ireland, Galway. She is the author of *Women, Writing, and Language in Early Modern Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010), as well as articles and essays about Renaissance manuscript culture, women's writing, early modern identity, and textual transmission. She is currently Principal Investigator of the ERC-funded project, RECIRC: The Reception and Circulation of Early Modern Women's Writing, 1550-1800. *Address:* Department of English, School of Humanities, NUI Galway, University Road, Galway, Ireland. [email: [marielouise.coolahan@nuigalway.ie](mailto:marielouise.coolahan@nuigalway.ie)]

**Gillian Wright** is senior lecturer in English Literature at the University of Birmingham. Her publications include *Producing Women's Poetry, 1600-1730: Text and Paratext, Manuscript and Print* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2013) and *Early Modern Women's Manuscript Poetry* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2005), co-edited with Jill Millman. She is currently editing Aphra Behn's poetry for Cambridge University Press. *Address:* Department of English Literature, University of Birmingham, Birmingham B12 2TT, United Kingdom. [email: [g.wright@bham.ac.uk](mailto:g.wright@bham.ac.uk)]