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# Akhimie, Patricia and Bernadette Andrea, eds. Travel and Travail: Early Modern Women, English Drama, and the Wider World

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# Book Reviews / Comptes Rendus

**Akhimie, Patricia, and Bernadette Andrea, eds.**
***Travel and Travail: Early Modern Women, English Drama, and the Wider World.***
Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2019. Pp. viii, 367 + 3 ill., 2 maps. ISBN 978-1-4962-0226-0 (paperback) US$52.50.

*Travel and Travail: Early Modern Women, English Drama, and the Wider World* is a compilation of sixteen outstanding essays brought together by editors Patricia Akhimie and Bernadette Andrea. Exploring historical and literary sources, the authors use "travel" as a term of analysis to bring visibility to women during a period of "travel ban promulgation" in early modern Britain. The essays demonstrate that an increasing number of women and girls travelled beyond the borders of the British Isles and others came to Britain despite the "general ban on women's movement outside the domestic sphere" (1). This work reflects on women's travel through the lens of gender intertwined with religion, ethnicity, race, sexuality, and the socio-political climate of not only Britain but also the wider world. The authors persuade us to rethink and re-examine the notions of historical women travellers, their writings, and their experiences in historical sources, and their imaginative representation within the literary texts of Shakespearean Britain (2–3).

One of the most valuable assets of this selection is to demonstrate how these women travellers were geographically, racially, socially, and religiously diverse. Their experiences, how they presented themselves in their own writings, and how their stories were imagined in literary genres such as Shakespeare's plays and beyond, show them often crossing these boundaries. The contributing authors—Richmond Barbour, Karen Robertson, Amrita Sen, Carmen Nocentelli, Bernadette Andrea, Patricia Akhimie, Elisa Oh, Laura Williamson Ambrose, Laura Aydelotte, Stephanie Chamberlain, Michael Slater, Eder Jaramillo, Ruben Espinosa, Dyani John Taff, Suzanne Tartamella, Gaywyn Moore, and Mary Fuller—have examined a wide range of documents. In this rich collection, their sources include travel accounts, colonial archive documents, maps, conduct books, biographical treatises, biblical commentaries, material culture, and plays performed on stage, just to name a few. The subject of women and travel is approached through critical, theoretical, and visual analyses (3).

Akhimie and Andrea have organized this work into two parts. The first, "Global and Local Trajectories," looks at women who travelled between Europe and the Islamic world and across the Atlantic colonies, by tracing their experiences through the lenses of race, class, and religion. We find women travelling for the purpose of settlement or work, demonstrating at the same time the opposing masculine anxieties over female travellers. This in particular is evident in relation to the challenges the British East India companies faced in formulating policies surrounding their travel, based on the British patriarchal ideologies of women's domestic role (23, 42–44). Other essays bring to the fore the forgotten women in the service of the British trading companies who become visible in the archives only in "moments of crisis," sometimes as dangerous influencers in the context of transculturation and sexual anxieties. Elite women, who used mobility as agency outside their gendered spaces of domesticity, also appear in this work (64, 72, 159). The idea of respectability and how it was constructed in relation to women who travelled appears in many contexts, such as religious women and cross-cultural exchanges beyond the notions of "patriarchy and militarism" (103, 113). We get a glimpse of the Native women bridging the gap between the colonizers and the colonized but at the same time seen as the racialized and the gendered "other" (140).

Part 2, "Gendered Travel on the English Stage," shifts the book's focus to literary sources for the historical and imaginative representation of woman travellers. Here one finds both literary and visual illustrations of women travellers and the re-assessment of the "conventional" notion of women's "domestic travel" (1–3). The stories here are diverse, and speak of traversing gender boundaries and the narrative of women being transformed by crossing boundaries of domesticity, labour, and mobility (275, 326). The "patriarchal anxieties" over women travelling, particularly in the context of contact with non-Europeans where a woman's modesty and sexuality were often seen to be in danger, is an interesting read (216, 241). In some cases, race and gender are shaped by the English notions of religious and national identity, or "foreign femininity" (251). And finally, we learn that women had many reasons to desire travel, including their obsession with adventure and exoticism; for some, it was a way to step outside their "protected spheres." Authors show that geography for women who travelled was seen as a source of both possibility and limitation (195, 203). One can observe that there is an obvious connection between what the editors call "historical" and "literary" sources. Together, the two sections debate the views

on travelling women in the context of contemporary travel guides and conduct books, which presented them as suspicious, dishonest, and unchaste.

In recent decades, the subject of women and travel has been explored by scholars in a number of ways; however, the essays in this compilation tackle the gender gap that existed in the foundational studies by demonstrating that travel was not only culturally significant, it was also a physical movement locally and globally during the "Age of Discovery" (4–5). They answer important questions pertaining to women's agency as "voluntary" and "involuntary" travellers. They discuss the gendered challenges of travel and how women's agency was documented in historical archival sources and imagined in the literary texts by their contemporaries. This collection is a must read for scholars of interdisciplinary history. For junior historians, this work is an exposure to a global movement of women travellers and their experiences and can be a superb asset in a number of diverse projects. These stories place women in the context of larger issues surrounding the early modern world—beyond their local cities and, what was considered at the time, domestic spaces.

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**Arand, Charles, Erik H. Herrmann, and Daniel L. Mattson, eds.**
***From Wittenberg to the World: Essays on the Reformation and Its Legacy in Honor of Robert Kolb.***
Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018. Pp. 358 + 3 ill. ISBN 978-3-525-53126-6 (hardcover) €90.

Robert Kolb's service to the discipline of Reformation history is nearly unparalleled. Over the past half century, while authoring or editing some eighteen books and one hundred articles, he has been at one point or another director of the Center for Reformation Research, president of the Society for Reformation Research, president of the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, and co-editor of the latter's peer-reviewed periodical, the *Sixteenth Century Journal*. Those who know Kolb mainly in this capacity, however, may be less aware of his extraordinary service to the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and to the generations of pastors, scholars, and missionaries he has helped to train