

biblical, historical, and theological references that buttress his position. Bryson's style is appealingly witty and accessible; this book would work well in both graduate and advanced undergraduate courses. In the manner of such fellow *provocateurs* of established readings as William Empson, Joseph Wittreich, John Rumrich, and John Rogers, Bryson offers in *The Tyranny of Heaven* a learned, stimulating, and welcome intervention into one of the most controversial arenas of Milton scholarship.

Jacqueline Broad. *Women Philosophers of the Seventeenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. x + 191 pp. \$55.00. Review by JAMES FITZMAURICE, NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY.

Seventeenth-century women's writing on philosophy, once a scholarly backwater, has become a mainstream of research in the last seven or eight years. Books written or edited by Sarah Hutton, Stephen Clucas, Eileen O'Neill, Susan James, and Sylvia Bowerbank have appeared, together with a good many journal articles. A new sense is emerging that women philosophers had a great deal to say, especially about political and natural philosophy. Religion, if not foregrounded, is almost always a backdrop, in particular as regards anxieties about what notions might contribute to or be consistent with atheism. Jacqueline Broad's study helps to situate several of these early women mostly by defining their thinking in relationship to that of Descartes and in particular with respect to his advocacy of soul/body dualism. She also states, and this observation is crucial, that Descartes opened the way for women to enter philosophical dialogue because his method did not require a contributor to have a classical education. Chapters are devoted to treatments of Elisabeth of Bohemia, Margaret Cavendish, Anne Conway, Mary Astell, Damaris Cudworth Masham, and Catherine Trotter Cockburn.

While many who study the history of philosophy look to published, systematic works, Broad often examines letters, which tend to deal with philosophical problems piecemeal. For instance,

Elisabeth of Bohemia, the Winter Queen, corresponded with René Descartes who, Broad tells us, described Elisabeth in a preface as “the only person I have so far found who has completely understood all of my previously published works” (13). There is plenty of evidence of Descartes’ respect for the views of Elisabeth in the letters, so Broad might have omitted the flattering quotation from the preface. Indeed, praise for royalty found in prefaces is so common as to be almost meaningless. Elisabeth, Broad goes on to say, had one major criticism of Descartes’ soul/body dualism. If soul and body are of completely different substances, then how does the soul induce the body to move? Substances completely alien to one another presumably cannot interact. Elisabeth also felt, according to Broad and *contra* Descartes, that “the body cannot be ignored when one is discussing the conduct of human beings, if only for completely pragmatic reasons of a social nature” (32). Simple suppression of emotion does not work, and, as Broad asserts, “Descartes’ neo-Stoicism seems particularly unpalatable for women thinkers” generally (33).

Broad is quite bold in pairing Margaret Cavendish and Anne Conway, two woman philosophers whose reputations have been regarded very differently. Cavendish for many years was generally seen as a slightly daft writer on natural philosophy, while Conway was taken to have been a serious correspondent with the highly respected Cambridge Platonist Henry More. Broad, however, is so daring as to suggest that Cavendish and Conway have more in common than Conway and More and treats the two women as something like intellectual equals, mainly noting as a difference that Cavendish was a materialist and Conway a spiritualist (78). As a materialist, nevertheless, Cavendish is like Conway in “ascribing life, perception, and a principle of self-movement to material things.” The materialism of the one and the spiritualism of the other have striking similarities. Further “both overcome the soul-body problem by making soul and body of the same substance” (71). Another difference, though lesser in importance, between the two women’s thinking, according to Broad, is that Cavendish felt

that faith was beyond reason while Conway found faith and reason to be compatible (88).

Much of Mary Astell's philosophical writing can be found in letters to John Norris, who was an occasionalist and who has been taken to be a Cambridge Platonist. As an occasionalist, Norris believed that God alone was the causal agent of all sensations and that when one tastes a "delicate fruit" the fruit itself is only the occasion for God's gift of a delightful gustatory sensation (100). If one accepts the occasionalism of Norris, Astell asserts, then one must agree that "God's workmanship [is] vain and useless" (104), which she refuses to do. God's workmanship and God generally, she says, are, to the contrary, characterized by "infinite wisdom." Broad, in her descriptions of the differences between Astell and Norris, denies that Norris ought to be labeled a Cambridge Platonist, and finds him rather to have been a Cartesian. Astell is, of course, best known for her advocacy of the founding of a female academy, which enterprise Broad feels is supported by Descartes' notion that "anybody can attain knowledge" (112). That is to say, women are not inferior to men intellectually and hence should not be excluded from learning. This position had an unexpected or unintended benefit for Astell, given that, when her proposal was ignored, Astell was able to call for "a course of study that women can pursue at home" (112).

Broad connects Astell's thinking to that of Damaris Cudworth Masham and plays down the connection that has been made between Masham and Ralph Cudworth (father to Masham), as well as the association between Masham and John Locke. Broad does, however, agree that Masham conducted an important correspondence with Locke. More importantly, Masham, like Astell, rejects occasionalism, though Masham does so by way of the "common-sense philosophy" of Edward Stillingfleet (119). Where Masham and Astell part company is in their understanding of how people love creatures on the one hand and God on the other. For Astell, people may love creatures with benevolence but only God with desire. Masham believes that "The only difference between our

love of creatures and the love of God is that we ought to love God above all things" (121).

The last of the women philosophers in the book, Catherine Trotter Cockburn, is perhaps better known as a playwright than as a writer on philosophy. Most of Cockburn's writing on philosophy came in the early years of the eighteenth century, but Broad justifies Cockburn's inclusion in the book because "in style and content she might be considered the last of the seventeenth-century women philosophers," for Cockburn opposes "Cartesian dualism and the Cartesian theory of substance" (141, 142). Like Damaris Masham, Cockburn felt that human beings should act as "members of the same body" (149). Hence women, and especially wives and mothers, should be educated for the sake of society.

All in all, *Women Philosophers of the Seventeenth Century* is pleasant to read, because it is lucidly written, and highly informative.

Jennifer L. Morgan. *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004. xi + 279 pp. + 16 illus. \$55.00. Review by ELISA OH, BOSTON UNIVERSITY.

In *Laboring Women: Reproduction and Gender in New World Slavery*, Jennifer L. Morgan explores how early modern English travelers and slaveowners constructed a gendered ideology of inheritable, racialized slavery that underpinned slave-owning societies in the Americas. Morgan argues that this system of beliefs about race was based on crucial definitions of the African woman's body and its potential to perform both agricultural labor and reproductive labor. Her overarching goal is to draw necessary attention to the presence of enslaved women in the archival record of early colonial life, particularly in Barbados and Carolina. Morgan goes on to assert that the English colonial understanding of race in the New World was fundamentally rooted in the gendered issue of reproduction. Her wide range of source material from the early sixteenth to mid-eighteenth centuries includes travel narratives, probate records, wills, inventories, letters, runaway advertisements,