

being the object of David's adulterous affections, Bathsheba does not play the part of an evil woman in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures; and she appears in the opening New Testament lineage of Jesus Christ, apparently as part of St. Matthew's demonstration that the central genealogies of sacred history included a number of women who, like the Virgin Mary, gave birth to sons amidst circumstances that would be considered irregular. Charles Williams, in his early twentieth-century biography of James, notes that when the King maintained that royal authority passed immediately and unproblematically to the nearest heir, he provided himself with no defense against the succession of Mary Stuart. It seems unlikely that James alone among the authorities of Europe took Mary Stuart's revoked abdication seriously, and all too likely that James, amidst his ambitious hopes for succeeding Elizabeth, "merely and naturally forgot" about his mother. But in the figure of Bathsheba, Mary Stuart could receive a displaced but reverent recognition, even while her suppressed claims continued to be tacitly evaded. Something other than the ideal or norm had occurred in the case of Bathsheba, but without her Israel would not have had Solomon.

Richard C. McCoy. *Alterations of State: Sacred Kingship in the English Reformation*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2002. 218 pp. \$29.50. Review by DAVID A. SALOMON, BLACK HILLS STATE UNIVERSITY.

Richard McCoy's *Alterations of State* is a welcome addition to any scholar of the seventeenth century. The book is a study of, as its subtitle puts it, "sacred kingship in the English Reformation," and it approaches its subject through the work of John Skelton, Shakespeare, John Milton, and Andrew Marvell.

Illustrated with pages from contemporary literature, the book aims to be a study of kingship and what Ernest Kantorowicz referred to as "the king's two bodies." The authors surveyed were

chosen, we are told in the preface, because they lived and worked at the beginning, middle, and end of the early modern period. They also approach the issue of kingship from a variety of different perspectives, from the sacred to the profane.

The book's opening chapter, "Real Presence to Royal Presence," is perhaps its best. Here McCoy distinguishes between the body of the King, the body of Christ (the Eucharist), and the metaphorical body of the King. He notes the dispute over the burial of Henry VII, and the battle to, alternatively, revere or deride his tomb. Henry VIII, McCoy claims, "proved to be a halfhearted reformer," due mostly to his attempts at "godly rule."

The chapter on John Skelton is well-written and informative, though its argument is best summed up by McCoy in one sentence—"Skelton was a zealous defender of royal authority and traditional religion"—although McCoy does then show us how Skelton became satiric fodder for the Protestants. Poetry is viewed here as memorial monument, the equivalent of a cold stone slab erected in memory of a dead hero. McCoy argues throughout that, when the physical monuments were removed, the poetic ones were erected. Thus Skelton's poetry was replaced, in a sense, when Mary Tudor restored Westminster Abbey.

The chapter devoted to Shakespeare notes the failure of the Elizabethan Settlement, renaming it the "Elizabethan Compromise." Here McCoy regards the development of a cult of Elizabeth that in some way replaced the body of Christ with the body of the Queen; nevertheless, Elizabeth's tomb never became a pilgrimage site even though it "remained an object of veneration." Because it was first performed at the end of Elizabeth's reign, *Hamlet* reflects "the political anxieties of an unsettled succession as well as the religious ambiguities of the Elizabethan era." As has been noted in earlier critics, the word "doubt" is most significant in *Hamlet*, and McCoy shows how the play continually "raises doubts about the adequacy of commemoration, Protestantism's replacement for intercession of the dead." McCoy on *Hamlet* is a nice complement to Stephen Greenblatt's recent study, *Hamlet in Purgatory*.

The chapter on Milton is most disappointing here. Though it runs to little more than thirty pages, Milton's name does not really appear until ten pages in. In a study that concerns itself with commemoration of the dead, one hoped to see discussion of "Lycidas," but instead we get an extended discussion of several of the prose works. Although they are of course important, in the context of a book that deals mostly with poetry (Skelton, Shakespeare, Marvell), one would have liked a bit more consistency here. *Paradise Lost* is eventually addressed, and McCoy's analysis of the closing books of the epic is lucid and helpful. Ultimately, "*Paradise Lost* . . . affirms one of the Reformation's fundamental premises: there is no sacred space." This statement, one of the most important in McCoy's study, provides a link to other important works such as Eamon Duffy's *Stripping the Altars*. Had this chapter in McCoy's book more carefully examined the idea of sacred space in Milton's work, it would have had, I think, more relevance to McCoy's overall study.

The final chapter (the book lacks a "conclusion" as such) looks at Andrew Marvell and the Restoration. After Milton's death "civil idolatry seemed to be making comeback," and plans were afoot to re-bury Charles I in St. George's Chapel. Christopher Wren's and others' designs for the monument are welcome illustrations. The chapter's point is to contrast Milton's approach to sacred kingship with Marvell's.

If there is one major criticism of this book, it is its length. The text of the study comes in at 156 pages, while almost 50 pages are given to notes. The chapter on Milton, in particular, is at times superficial, and the chapters are at times disconnected, reading as a series of lectures loosely given under the same umbrella theme. Concluding remarks would have helped to make the connections and bring the reader in from the rain. Nevertheless, this is a solid study of an important issue in our field.

Luke Wilson. *Theaters of Intention: Drama and the Law in Early Modern England*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000. x +