

than in the original plays; the endings were altered to reveal complex persons whose biological compatibility with white women signified racial pollution and threatened the body politic.

Chapter nine examines two of the longest playing and most popular tragedies of the eighteenth century: Thomas Southerne's *Oroonoko* and Edward Young's *The Revenge*. These "Royal Slaves," sons of African kings "cast as grandly heroic, even sublime" aroused audience pity (149). Possibly, these stage performances piqued consciences to unjust slave practices.

Vaughn's chapter ten, "Afterthoughts" speaks to political and racial ramifications of white and black actors playing black roles; her closing remarks advocate flexibility in today's theatrical productions. *Performing Blackness on English Stages 1500-1800* expertly argues drama's crucial role as both a "receptor and a creator of racial attitudes in the early modern period" (17). Exceptional illustrations enrich the engaging and readable chapters. Vaughn's study undeniably provides a wealth of knowledge for theatre historians, literary critics, and scholars of "whiteness studies."

Gary Kuchar. *Divine Subjection: The Rhetoric of Sacramental Devotion in Early Modern England*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2005. xii + 297 pp. \$58.00. Review by KATE NARVESON, LUTHER COLLEGE.

Defining devotion as an act that alters the way a believer interprets affliction, Gary Kuchar argues in *Divine Subjection* that early modern devotion taught readers "how to experience themselves as properly desiring subjects" (2). Devotion, therefore, involves a rhetoric, "a formal means of arousing readers," which Kuchar analyzes in relation to psychoanalytic approaches to the creation of the subject. Devoting chapters to Southwell, Crashaw, Donne, and Traherne, he attends in particular to the way their devotional writing responded to desacramentalizing forces, whether Protestant critiques of Roman Catholic and Laudian "sacramentality" or scientific claims about the body. Kuchar's use of "sacramental devotion" thus refers not to devotion involving the sacraments of the church but to something like devotion predicated on a sense of "the sacred." He draws on the work of C. John Sommerville and Debora Shuger, seeing a "sacramental" devotion as one that conceives a "communicable and hence recognizable continuity among

self, community and cosmos” that was challenged by a shift “from a religion of immanence to a religion of transcendence” (4). In the face of desacramentalization, “the analogically structured sacramental mind sees a crisis in the coherence of the world as a crisis within the integrity of the self” (18); devotion addresses that crisis.

A major strength of the book, then, is that rather than concerning himself with the ways in which devotional literature was Roman Catholic or Protestant in theology, Kuchar sees in both traditions a struggle with “ontotheological” crises, as “devotion registers and seeks to mitigate the increasingly complicated relations . . . between transcendent ideals and historical realities” (8). In devotion, Kuchar argues, “sacramental writers reconstitute within the self” a sense of continuity between created order and spiritual. Kuchar does not interrogate the general consensus that the Protestant mainstream participated in the secularizing shift, even though one of his examples of sacramental devotion is by Joseph Hall, and his study therefore does not test its claims on the vast body of best-selling devotional writing. His subjects, rather, are outside the mainstream: the recusant Robert Southwell; the Laudian turned Roman convert Richard Crashaw; the uncategorizable Protestant convert John Donne; and the mystic Thomas Traherne. Despite this choice, the move to consider as central to devotion issues of religious subjectivity rather than confessional identity is overdue and welcome.

Kuchar’s approach links the rhetoric of devotion to the formation of subjects whose subjection, understood through a Lacanian psychoanalytic lens, is both religious and social. His first two chapters examine the “gendered nature of sacramental rhetoric” in works by Southwell and Crashaw, who both use rhetorical extremes to “predicate a devotionally arousing vision of the continuity between eternal and temporal orders vis-à-vis female ideality” (10) even as they seek to contain the predication’s emotional excesses. Chapters 3 and 4 then examine how Donne and Traherne “register desacralizing transformations of external structures as inwardly felt experiences” and seek to reconstitute a unified desiring subject (19). Kuchar argues that central to all of these cases is a use of hyperbole to express “the profound sense of lack and thus the experience of unquenchable longing one feels before God” (20). If the believer is reconstituted as an infinitely desiring subject, then lack of affect is a sign of spiritual death, and therefore devotion is called on to arouse the affections and to teach “how and what to desire,” a process that involves

“a traumatic and yet vivifying encounter with the desire of God” (24). This account of devotional psychology is not new, but Kuchar offers a theoretically sophisticated approach by discussing devotion in terms both of historically contingent forms and of “processes that psychoanalytic theory claims are inherent to subject formation itself” (29).

In his first chapter, Kuchar argues that Southwell’s texts employ the rhetoric of the plaint that “encode[s] socio-religious conflict as an inwardly experienced drama of submission and resistance,” as the recusant subverts oppression by embracing it in a more powerful submission to divine authority. Kuchar reads the plaint as a gendered representation of an “excessive” passion for Christ that is “simultaneously celebrated and contained,” betraying “long-held anxieties about the devotional power of women” (38-9). Denying that the embrace of suffering was pathological, Kuchar contends that “Southwell made of disempowerment a strangely empowering and socially disruptive stance” (91). The next chapter traces the way that Crashaw pushed the exploration of feminine spiritual desire to new extremes. Kuchar holds that what is most striking about Crashaw is that his “poetry reveals both the limitations and the promise of a ‘feminine engendered faith,’” in which the “Logos has a female face” even while Crashaw remains “within the confines of a Neoplatonic logocentrism.” What is significant about Crashaw’s conversion, then, is that it embraced an “effeminate” sacramental vision that sought to “accommodate feminine modes of spirituality” (148).

The next two chapters focus on the body as the site for the devotional imagination’s most fraught struggles. Kuchar explores how for Donne, the new physiology “desublimated” the Galenic body by displaying its insistent materiality, and thus triggered a crisis in identity. He contends that Donne responded through “the sacramental force of language,” so that “the resurrected body, with its ideal organization of parts, fill[s] the gap . . . left by the partial demystification of the Galenic body” (178), as Donne developed the symbolic force of the Galenic lexicon to envision a spiritually meaningful body. Turning to Thomas Traherne, Kuchar draws on phenomenology, and in particular the work of Merleau-Ponty, to argue that Traherne responds to Baconian empiricism by making the body “not an object unto itself as such, but a medium of experience” (184). Knowledge is not separate from faith since consciousness of the body’s participation in Being is an essential medium of perception of the divine. Traherne employs the rhetorical device of the

catalogue as a form that arouses wonder and desire for Being as expansive and inexhaustible.

In his conclusion, Kuchar offers a reading of Donne's "Batter my Heart" that draws together the aspects of devotional "subjection" explored in earlier chapters. He persuasively argues that whereas most critics have read the poem as revelatory of Donne's own psychological conflict, in fact Donne intentionally represents an onto-theologically specific sort of anxiety, which Kuchar reads in terms both of the theology of repentance and regeneration and of Lacanian theories of subjection, this chapter offering the book's most successful coordination of historical context with current theory.

Divine Subjection is a stimulating book, and any reservations this reviewer has are a function of its method. The study's central claim about historical causation is of the broad sort, appealing to a paradigm shift that characterized a rather elastic historical "moment" (the early modern period seems to include the fourteenth-century mystic Henry Suso) to explain the psychological trauma triggering devotion. All texts, then, whether responding to the oppression of recusants or the new anatomy, become instances of reaction to desacramentalization. All texts, similarly, are treated as psychological records of the author's trauma and process of subjection. Occasionally it can seem as though Kuchar is not offering new insight into devotional psychology so much as translating it into the terminology of Lacanian psychoanalysis. Nonetheless, at its best, the study delivers on its promise to "estrangle" the dynamics of devotion, and it is admirable for its demonstration that political and scientific forces registered directly on religious consciousness and were experienced as pressures that had to be accommodated as the believer articulated a sense of religious identity. Kuchar's demonstration that religious identity involves the fashioning of desire, as much as of belief, is also of great value.

Jan P. Hogendijk and Abdelhamid I. Sabra, eds. *The Enterprise of Science in Islam. New Perspectives*. Boston: MIT Press, 2003. xxii + 386 pp. \$45.00. Review by DARIN HAYTON, HAVERFORD COLLEGE.

Jan Hogendijk and A.I. Sabra have assembled an impressive collection of essays on Islamic science. Contributions range across the Islamic world from Andalusia to northern India. In light of the wide geographic scope, it is