

But none were accepted.” What Curzon does not explore on the basis of these remarks is the possibility that the Cecils may have pressed Wotton into service with Essex for reasons of their own.

In fact, the “Worlds” of “Spying” and of “Venetian Intrigues,” a brace of related “Worlds” surrounding the incongruous and negligible “World” of “Science” in the book’s title, were the main area of Wotton’s activities and interests. Here Curzon has contributed a wealth of background detail including Wotton’s superstitious entertainments of witchcraft, alchemy, and spiritualism; his sexual foibles; his anti-semitism; his priggishness; and yet his nearly enchanted fascination with Venetian high and popular culture. Curzon is also quite good on the subject of Wotton’s visionary pet-project, the conversion of the Venetians to Protestantism. The rich, sometimes delightful detail of these often humorous considerations makes Curzon’s book a worthwhile read, although it can never challenge the serious *Life and Letters* (1907) by Logan Pearsall Smith.

Robert Whalen. *The Poetry of Immanence: Sacrament in Donne and Herbert*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002. xxi + 216 pp. \$45.00. Review by JONATHAN NAUMAN, USK VALLEY VAUGHAN ASSOCIATION.

In this neo-historical study of the role of sacrament in seventeenth-century English devotional writing, Robert Whalen attempts to reconstruct the literary resonances and politico-religious implications of certain Anglican images of Holy Communion, with special focus on the poetry and prose of John Donne and George Herbert. While he presumes the current regime of cultural studies as context, Whalen’s basic view of sacrament is not Marxian, but liberal humanist: the Eucharist is a noble cultural construction that can plausibly answer real human needs. Specifically, it provided seventeenth-century Anglicans “an avenue of escape” from the personal discomforts and uncertainties of individual devotion, allowing Anglican experience of God to become a communal event within a broader “Christian *mythos*” (150-51). As a reader, Whalen seems to me to follow Calvin at a secularized distance, softening the hostility of modern psychological “demystification” with the reformer’s view of sacrament as a concession to human frailty. Enough sympathetic interest in seventeenth-century sacramental thought is retained in the process to give this study a literary complexity and theological perspicacity

well beyond the expectations its theoretical tenors raise.

Whalen places his work on the contemporary critical scene as a *via media* between the continental-meditative “Catholic Puritanism” of Louis Martz, and the Protestant readings pursued by recent Herbert criticism under the ethos of Barbara Lewalski’s *Protestant Poetics*. He contends that the early Stuart Anglican Church developed a “sacramental puritanism” in an attempt “to reconcile the potentially contrary imperatives of sacrament and devotion,” and that the Establishment cultivated “puritan devotional enthusiasm through an internalized yet fully sacramental and sacerdotal apparatus” (xii). While he shows the usual cultural-critical awareness of political imperatives driving religious imperatives, Whalen does not presume that Donne’s or Herbert’s devotional lyrics merely reflect political or religious controversy, and he makes a number of attempts in his introduction on “The Eucharist and the English Reformation” to undermine easy modern assumptions about the Catholic-Protestant sacramental divide—in particular, the simple opposition between a Catholic physical and objective presence of Christ in Holy Communion and a Protestant Divine Presence generally more spiritual and subjective. Prior to the Reformation, in the ninth and eleventh centuries, there had been debates about the mode of Christ’s presence in the Eucharist that in some ways anticipated later Protestant contentions (4-5), and Whalen shows that most Protestants sought to conserve an objective presence of Christ in the Eucharist, with many also characterizing that presence as physical. The Anglican tradition in particular seriously reconsidered the physical aspect of the Eucharist in the wake of Hooker’s attempt to combine Protestant spirituality with a national regimen of liturgy, and this provided Donne’s and Herbert’s early Stuart church with a full range of possible Eucharistic theologies.

Whalen’s readings from Herbert and Donne begin with Donne’s secular works: “the abundance of sacramental imagery and allusion in the secular verse relative to that of the divine poems is startling” (61). Rather than considering these profane references a “merely topical occasion for witty blasphemies (though these abound),” Whalen contends that the erotic and satirical uses of Eucharistic imagery imply “genuine religious concern.” He differs from Theresa DiPasquale’s inclination to deduce scurrilous rejection of Roman Catholicism from Donne’s profanations, suggesting rather that the erotic subject material doesn’t decisively subordinate the transcendent and sacramental images, and that the religious allusions function as a “satirical dimen-

sion of a poetry that would celebrate human love even while light-heartedly recognizing both its limitations and pretensions" (22-23). This inclination of Whalen's to feel a real force in both the religious and the erotic components of these poems seems to me right-headed. All the same, I find it difficult to postulate detached attitudes of celebration or light-hearted satire while under the raw rhetorical power of Donne's secular lyrics. Any reader of these poems, in the seventeenth century or the twenty-first, will I think feel a perverse dynamism absolutely inimical to readerly detachment, a casual violence against ways of thought able to contain, suppress, or redirect sensuality. In a number of cases, including the characterization of Donne just quoted, Whalen evades this aspect of Donne's scurrilous verse, and the evasion results not so much from the scholarly distance necessary for examining how the poems use Christian sacrament as from Whalen's efforts to place his readings on the contemporary critical forum by expounding the poems within modern allegories and theory-driven oppositions—Saussure's *langue/parole*, for instance (24), and Marx's and Foucault's versions of use/exchange (36).

These problems foreshadow further difficulties in Whalen's more straightforward doctrinal detections and assessments in Donne's secular and divine poems. I consider it quite useful, and by and large quite accurate, to see what Whalen's thesis would present: a Donnean poetic in which controversial doctrinal categories undergo a continuous scrutiny and "playing out." But at times I feel that too much pressure is applied to passing references and reminiscences, that Whalen pursues (albeit with more historical plausibility than in the examples above) what even a seventeenth-century reader would have considered a tangent. Take, for instance, Whalen's reading of "To Mr *Tilman* after he had taken orders," which interprets the following lines as an implicit repudiation of the Roman Catholic teaching on transubstantiation and the "indelible mark":

Onely the stampe is changed; but no more.
 And as new crowned Kings alter the face,
 But not the monies substance; so hath grace
 Chang'd onely Gods old Image by Creation,
 To Christs new stampe, at this thy Coronation. (ll. 13-18)

Whalen responds to this passage as follows:

The Aristotelian categories of substance and accident are evoked here in an analogy linking the authorities of Ordination and royal

currency. If “face” and “substance” echo the categories comprising a Roman Eucharist, however, the analogy in this case *denies* a transubstantive change. Just as currency has value by virtue of bearing the king’s stamp while its material significance is unchanged, so has Tilman’s Ordination the external mark of an authority which, though otherwise absent, continually informs his office. If the king is deposed or withdraws his authority, the coin may become worthless even though it bears his visage and mark; likewise, Donne implicitly cautions, Ordination does not confer power in such a way as to preclude its ever being withdrawn. (47)

I do not think that Donne’s mention of monetary “substance” in this poem yields sufficient warrant even tentatively to deduce any statement on change in the substance of the Eucharist. Also, I do not see that Donne’s image of Tilman being reminted by God and receiving a “Coronation” superseding the *imago Dei* “by Creation” argues that Tilman’s Ordination lacked an indelible mark; in fact, if I thought that the indelible mark were at all at issue in this poem, I might suspect that Donne supported the idea, since the poet would not be likely to insinuate that Christ’s kingship could be deposed or his authority withdrawn! Whalen’s differentiation between transcendent Protestant and immanent Roman Catholic models of Ordination is clear, interesting, and carefully articulated; and Donne probably did endorse the Protestant model when, as an ordained Anglican clergyman, he wrote this poem. But the poem is not about the Anglican model of Ordination. It champions Ordination’s spiritual gains, which “surmount expression” (l. 25); it attacks the contempt felt by the seventeenth-century gentry for ecclesiastical careers (ll. 25-36); it praises Holy Orders for mediating between man and heaven (l. 48); it praises the ordained man as “a blest Hermaphrodite” (l. 54); but it does not so far as I can tell even implicitly consider what might happen if Tilman and the Church parted company in the future.

Despite the caveats in the above examinations, Whalen’s readings from Donne’s sacred poems and 1626 Christmas sermon deliver an indefatigable and largely successful effort to read these works as “public, performative manifestations of religious interiority, their function analogous to that of sacraments” (82). Whalen interestingly shows Donne walking the boundary between Reform and Roman definitions of the Eucharist, articulating a Reformed sacramental doctrine in scholastic terms, attacking transubstantiation

while advancing “a formula remarkably similar to the one it would displace” (91). Occasionally one feels that Whalen could give some theological positions more benefit of the doubt. Supralapsarian Calvinism, for instance, need not imply that “communicants’ willingness to receive sacramental grace” has “no bearing at all on whether or not [grace] is in fact conferred” (94), for Calvinists of all descriptions held that God’s predestination would effect appropriate proximate causes within its economy, including the intentions of the human agent to partake of the sacrament in a worthy manner. Nor need we rap Aquinas for varying from conventional Aristotelian usage in his “separation of substance and accident” (6) in the Paschal bread and wine. St. Thomas did not intend in any case to limit Christian thought to what might have occurred to Aristotle, and his controversial theory of transubstantiation, his attempt to describe the sacrament through the concepts of “substance” and “accident,” would never have been attempted if the Christian Church hadn’t been claiming from earliest times that a miraculous and mystical change took place in the physical being of the consecrated Eucharistic species.

When we pass to Whalen’s readings from George Herbert, we find him again hypothesizing a poetic use of sacrament to counteract subjectivist dangers in devotional piety: “celebration of ceremonial forms not only complements but indeed is an integral feature of the devotional subjectivity [Herbert] cultivates” (127). Whalen would portray Herbert’s sensibility as comfortably sacramentalist and predestinarian at once, and he affirms the widespread observation that Herbert downplayed his avid awareness of theological controversy in order to construct a stable and eirenic devotional persona. Like Hooker, Herbert was able to sidestep open commitment to a doctrinal description of the Eucharistic mode by professing a deep reverence for the *mysterium tremendum* of *hoc est corpus meum*.

To take and taste what he doth there designe,

Is all that saves, and not obscure.

Whalen does give some support to R. V. Young’s recent remarks on Herbert’s doctrine, admitting that some of Herbert’s poems allow very Roman Catholic readings. In “The Invitation” there seems to be a change in the Eucharistic species before reception: “drink this, / Which before ye drink is blood”; and “The Agonie” strongly implies that Christ’s blood is experienced by the communicant as wine. But for the most part Whalen finds Herbert accomplishing an Anglican project similar to Donne’s sacramental ambivalence. “The Win-

dows,” for instance, delivers a Puritan-friendly argument about the basic importance of a preacher’s inner sanctity, but presents such thoughts as if they naturally followed from ecclesiastical architectural features that Puritans were inclined to denounce as distractions (131). Whalen is quite sensitive to Herbert’s much-noted achievements in tone: “A careful balance of respect and light-hearted familiarity or ‘domestic simplicity’ integrates stylized ritual with the rhythms of Christian existence” (135). His readings include an interesting take on “The Collar” as a pre-Eucharistic self-examination (142) and a close reading of “The Glance” as carrying implications of Eucharist and Baptism: in both cases, I find myself convinced that the ethos of sacrament is indeed in the poem’s background, though absent from its literal argument. Whalen’s impassioned and sympathetic reading of “[Love [III]]” as a divinely-granted transformation of the poet’s self (158-159) delivers what I experienced as this study’s high point, an inclusive and completely convincing close reading of what may be Herbert’s greatest poem.

Whalen ends with a few brief comments on sacramental images in Richard Crashaw and Henry Vaughan. Crashaw’s devotional “inwardness” is less extensive than Herbert’s, Whalen notes; and unlike Donne, Crashaw excludes sacramental motifs from his secular verse. Whalen finds in Henry Vaughan’s “The Sap” a “detailed investigation of ‘real presence,’” but an implication in the poem’s early lines that the Eucharist acts as a lodestone of infused natural grace troubles him; and he finally avers that the poem “documents a sacramental operation in which inside and outside have become but equally ephemeral reflections of each other” (174); i.e., it seems to Whalen that Vaughan has lost any clear concept of the Eucharist as a means of grace truly external to the human subject. I think this reading derives from Whalen’s connecting two images in Vaughan’s poem that were probably meant to remain distinct. “The Sap,” like many of Vaughan’s sacred verses, has not the tight internal construction and unity that one dependably finds in Herbert’s verses; and the spiritual life force that Vaughan’s “sapless Blossom” learns about in the poem’s first ten lines, the “something” God infused to make the plant “stretch for heav’n,” is not, so far as I can tell, the same internal force as the one described in lines 39-43:

There is at all times (though shut up) in you
A powerful, rare dew,
Which only grief and love extract, with this

Be sure, and never miss
 To wash your vessel wel.

This “powerful, rare dew” is not the human tendency to long for God, the “thirst for dew” of line four, but rather the human ability to weep penitently: Vaughan is advising his reader to approach the Eucharist only after honest self-examination and repentance. (Whalen does note in connection with Herbert and Southwell how this sort of tear imagery can be used to “span internal and external dimensions of religious experience,” 150.) I cannot finally agree with Whalen’s speculation that Vaughan harbored “a genuine distrust of sensory experience,” or that his poems effect “a deliberate if muted diminution of sacrament and ceremony” (175). Vaughan’s distinctive visionary landscape, a landscape that seems prior to any specific focus on the objective sacraments, actually amounts to a defense of a world view that would recognize a true mediating functionality in the sacraments. Vaughan’s Christian anthroposophic cosmos, charged with dynamic intentionality emanating from and returning to God, tacitly opposes the impending despiritualization of the non-human creation, the nascent instrumentalist materialism and Deism of the Enlightenment; indeed, its seeds and keys and set ascents might plausibly be accused of hyper-objectivizing the flow of divine grace. Moreover, there are plenty of indications that Vaughan held a remarkably objective, physical view of Christ’s presence in the Eucharist. In one passage, for instance, we find him aghast that

Some sit to thee, and eat

Thy body as their Common meat. (“Dressing,” ll. 37-38)

Vaughan’s sacramental reverence often has a partisan edge, but we have no warrant to presume that it was disingenuous. Similar rhetoric occurs often enough in Vaughan’s poetry and prose to convince me that ceremony and sacrament held an important place in his religious life.

But Vaughan’s poetic vision, in which everything tends to become a window on transcendence, in which an orphic poetic sensibility rejoices in the rejection of worldliness—this vector has little to offer Whalen’s main thesis, which, though sympathetic to the Eucharist as “the human rendered *sub specie aeternitatis*” (177), finally places all sacramental thought in a cultural materialist world of competing communal fictions. The immanent, incarnational strains of Eucharistic theology are presumed valuable by Whalen not on Donne’s or Herbert’s terms (“Is this a sufficient and accurate description of what God does when this sacrament is celebrated?”), but within the terms of modern

social psychology (“Does this description of the Eucharistic rite help its assistants to overcome the discomforts of devotional isolation?”). The New Historicism’s assumption of the right to pressure texts, on grounds of a deconstructive turn inconsistently applied, has probably compromised a number of Whalen’s readings. But the study is remarkably resistant to the cultural materialist inclination to reduce religion to sociology and politics. At one point, Whalen mentions contemporary allegations that New Historicism fails to address poetry as poetry. He replies that “the detailed close readings provided here should allay such concern” (113). Although some problems remain, Whalen has certainly demonstrated that cultural materialist studies do not predictably lack either sympathy or tact.

Jessica Wolfe. *Humanism, Machinery, and Renaissance Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. xi + 305 pp.+ 10 illus. \$65.00. Review by IRA CLARK, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA.

A study of the multiple analogies to machines employed by Renaissance humanists from the late fifteenth-century court of Urbino through the early seventeenth-century court of James I might seem to lack promise. Nevertheless Jessica Wolfe’s inquiry opens up a complex of complementary and contrary concepts that range from rhetoric, compartment, and the arts through pedagogy, ethics, diplomacy, and warfare. Providing force for her intriguing intellectual and cultural history is, aptly for an era dominated by the humanist concentration on language as the center of knowledge, Wolfe’s interrogation of multiplicities signified through a host of interrelated terms that play around humanity-inhumanity, art-nature, reason-passion. Among these are “means and instruments” that include not only machines but also people; “technologia” that refers to methodical study, discipline, and art as well as to artifice, human contrivance, and fraud; “engine” that can denote wit as well as machine and tool, subtle policy and deceit; “ingegno” that can refer to an engine, art, and cunning; “virtù” that signifies both mechanical force and political efficacy; “metis” that indicates cunning intelligence that enables the weak to overcome; and “subtlety” that includes acuity and precision, excessive intricacy, and dishonesty. Such slippages of terms from one linguistic and intellectual domain to another in our view (membership in as yet undefined domains in theirs) suggest the potential in Wolfe’s theme that instruments “distort and confuse as