Historicism, Psychoanalysis, and Early Modern Culture by Carla Mazzio: Douglas Trevor
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Immediately, even before picking up this compelling collection of essays on the complicated intersections of historicism and psychoanalysis, coedited by Carla Mazzio and Douglas Trevor, the reader is faced with another split subject: On the cover, gazing directly toward the viewer, is a suggestive synthesis—the vexed visage of Henry VIII and Sigmund Freud. Indeed, at once “intimately entwined” and yet always already “contestatory and ever-shifting,” this provocative portrait reads as a compelling metaphor for the split subject within. Insofar as the objective of this collection is “to begin to rethink what might seem to be a methodological incompatibility and to challenge the seeming eclipse of one mode of inquiry by another,” and insofar as the essays, thus, respond to “a whole series of dialogues between seemingly disparate methodologies and discursive practices,” it is precisely the ripped seam—the tattered edge that both joins and divides the likenesses of Henry VIII and Sigmund Freud—that initially speaks volumes.

The clever tweaking of the split subject does not stop with the cover illustration. Once inside, Mazzio and Trevor, who, for example, open their introductory essay with the statement that “Psychoanalysis is history,” provide a thoughtful and useful context in which to read the individual essays and the collection as a whole, offering an overview of the tense relationship between historicism and psychoanalysis, from the trials associated with the rise of the new historicism in the 1980s to the tributes of recent theorists of early modern literature and culture. Acknowledging the convergence and conflation of traditions, narratives, and discourses, encouraged by the reconfigurations of once distinct boundaries, the essays in this collection “attempt to map out new histories of early modern subjectivity,” returning “to questions of identity and subjectivity from a post-Burckhardtian, cultural materialist perspective.” Indeed, the once seemingly/seeming disparate diptych portrait of Henry VIII and Sigmund Freud, now in dialogue, embodies the critical issue most central to this collection: The practices of historicism and psychoanalysis, no matter how tenuous, are deeply entwined.

In the first section, “Fielding Questions,” five thoughtful essays investigate a variety of critical vocabularies. Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass theorize Renaissance fetishisms as well as the intersection of Freudian and Marxian concepts of the fetish. James Siemon builds upon the post-Lacanian/post-Marxist work of Slavoj Žižek, incorporating Pierre Bourdieu’s theories of social analysis, to suggest the “(dis)positions” of Shakespearean characters and the multiplicity of theatre-house exchanges. Karen Newman examines how representations of early modern Paris suggest an intersection of class and economic exchange, an emphasis on spatiality not specific, she suggests, to nineteenth-century theories of modernity and subjectivity. John Guillory focuses on the relationship between violence and philosophy in Hamlet, linking aggression with the philosophical incompleteness of early modern theology. Eric Wilson combines the critical theories of Marx, Freud, and Žižek with a reading of Ben Jonson’s The Alchemist, reexamining the cultural materialist accounts of the object.

The second section, “Graphic Imaginations,” is made up of four essays, all of which focus on the relationship between textual form and transmission. Tom Conley examines the first printed edition of François Villon’s Le Grand Testament, suggesting a link between the cartography of the incunabular era and the mapping efforts of poets and writers. Jeffrey Masten, focusing on an excerpt from an early-seventeenth-century commonplace book, historicizes the interpretation of dreams. In her essay, Carla Mazzio argues that the
vocal inadequacies of love melancholy were conditioned by the changing status of print culture. Douglas Trevor reads George Herbert’s *The Temple* as anticipating some of the fundamental concepts of Lacanian psychoanalysis; he also considers Lacan’s indebtedness to early modern religious discourses.

The next four essays, organized around the theme “Depth Perceptions,” examine early modern notions of spatiality, interiority, and subjectivity. Jonathan Goldberg offers a new reading of *Coriolanus*, suggesting that both the oral and anal spheres can be read as sites of self-formation. Kathryn Schwarz, similarly concerned with modern and early modern theories of subjectivity, reads Amazonian mythography in Renaissance texts as anticipating Lacan’s “mirror stage.” David Hillman engages with *Hamlet* in an examination of the reconceptualization of the self in terms of an inside-outside binary, a dichotomy central to issues of faith and skepticism in early modern England. Katharine Eisaman Maus turns toward the diverse approaches to the supernatural in the plays of Shakespeare and Jonson in her investigation of early modern debates about sorcery and variable notions of the self.

Two essays on Shakespeare as author, subject, and icon round out the collection under the heading “Legacies.” Returning to *Hamlet*, specifically to the graveyard scene, Margreta de Grazia makes a link between land acquisition and social status and interiority. Marjorie Garber shifts the focus from land realty to furniture, examining Shakespeare’s bed and Freud’s couch, suggesting that this fetishistic object both drives and brings together the seemingly/seemingly incompatible practices of historicism and psychoanalysis; as such, it offers an effective conclusion to this admirable collection of critical and complex essays.

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**Recinti: Donne, clausura e matrimonio nella prima età moderna.** Gabriella Zarri


Between the covers of *Enclosures (Recinti)*, Gabriella Zarri has encased some of the most important work on the interrelationships among women, religion, and politics of the early modern period of the last two decades, all of it her own. For historians of religion and of women, it is convenient to have in one volume some of the best work on these topics from a scholar who has spent more than fifteen years considering religious women of the Renaissance. For historians who work in the areas of social, cultural, and political history of early modern Italy, this volume makes accessible Zarri’s scholarship, which tills all these fields. In fact, Zarri addresses in this work several of the most engaging issues of early modern scholarship today, including the recently renewed interest among historians of Italy in the development of the state, women’s education, and ritual and symbolism in early modern Europe.

Zarri uses the image of enclosures to divide her work into three parts: “Monastic Enclosures,” “Familial Enclosures,” and “Beyond Enclosures.” Detailing the links between the monastic enclosure of the convent and the communities in which these institutions were situated, “Convents and Cities” lays the foundation for understanding the rest of the work. This chapter is a good example of how Zarri weaves the economic, political, and cultural together in her arguments. She demonstrates how economic and political ties linked pre-Tridentine convents and cities. The lords of a city were the patrons of the city’s convents. Abbots and prioresses were appointed for political or monetary reasons, and novices were largely supplied by politically involved noble and patrician families. Links were also of a spiritual nature. Intercessory prayers performed by monks and