methodological bind by claiming for some ideas, including his own principles of historical scholarship, a trans-historical quality that absolves them from historical scrutiny. This is not a very satisfactory solution, particularly for someone who purports adherence to materialist doctrines. But I do *not* think that it is a fatal or irreparable flaw or one that sets into question the validity of his historical findings about the Italian cities. In any case, a longer (perhaps prefatory) meditation about the methodological foundations of *Power and Imagination* would be a desirable, and even necessary, addition to the volume.

I have one further, minor, though still annoying, difficulty with *Power and Imagination*: the inadequacy of its bibliographic references. Too often, quotations from and paraphrases of both primary and secondary sources are included without so much as a footnote. Moreover, the bibliography itself is far from complete, and presumes a good deal of prior knowledge on the part of the reader. Since the book is intended, at least in part, as an introductory text, the references and bibliography should be greatly expanded.

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Darryl J. Gless. *Measure for Measure, the Law, and the Convent*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1979. Pp. xviii, 283. \$15.50 (U.S.).

If a power-failure were to interrupt a performance of *Measure for Measure* almost anywhere, the audience would in no time be arguing in the dark. Readers, critics, scholars, have long used their freedom to look up from the text and argue in the light – and heat – of controversy. Mr. Gless brings Protestant theology and anti-Catholic polemic to bear on this argument.

Where to begin an assessment of this useful, provocative book? Perhaps by clearing up, as the author does not clear up, the question “what sin would Isabella commit” is she yielded to Angelo’s proposition to save her brother’s life? Fornication, to be sure – usually a sin of weakness not of malice, easily repented, easily forgiven (with a sad second look at the second “easily”). But in this instance, the weakness of the flesh is certainly not what might have prompted Isabella, and indeed Angelo, hideous to himself, is at pains to make himself and the suggested deed hideous to her. Surely he is a tempter to infidelity – to forswear her vows not only as a novice but as a Christian, to presume on grace in the future while despairing of it in the present. As if that were not enough, the act if committed would have been one of the grossest imprudence, for such a bargain would not have been kept, as subsequent events prove. This, it seems to me, is the anchor for any interpretation of the play in a Christian context, Protestant or Catholic.

Having made the right and only choice, the young Isabella is so exhausted by making profession beyond her capacities (a common failing in a novice and perhaps in any wayfaring Christian) that she is overcome by anger and scorn at the weakness of her brother. Here the author is very perceptive of the failings of her religious instruction as they show in her speaking of prayers as bribes, her ferocity of expression amounting to her calling her brother “thou fool,” her

general spiritual naivety. He can be a little heavy-handed. When Lucio tells her that Claudio has got Juliet with child, she simply says, sensible girl that she is, "Oh, let him marry her." Mr. Gless is in such haste to scrutinize scripture and come up with Exod. 22:16 cf. Deut. 22:28-9 that the fresh air, the blast of fresh air, in the play at this moment is too soon ended: the stuffiness of the study is just as close as that of the convent.

What I admire particularly is the treatment of the Duke. We see demonstrated his absolute domination of the play from its opening scene and the effectiveness of his ministrations – the more effective because none of the persons whose lives he touches is ever a mere animated puppet. Interesting evidence is brought to show that in Jacobean thinking a king is not a mere *laicus*, though I would have liked to see it more clearly stated that he was not therefore a *sacerdos*. It is a very high doctrine indeed that allows the supreme magistrate to dress as a clergyman, hear confessions, break the seal of the confessional and tell untruths in doing so. "Be absolute for death," moreover, still does not come across to me as a word of the Spirit.

ch; Some small points. While nuns are members of regular orders, it is misleading or call them, or even prioresses among them, "regular clergy." As for the suggestion that the name Lucio suggests light-weight, this strikes me as fanciful: its first association is as Italian for Luke, and this has no application; beyond that it gravitates to light (*lux*), not light (*levis*).

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