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Hirschfeld, Heather. The End of Satisfaction: Drama and Repentance in the Age of Shakespeare

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such visual representations are as important as the text itself and of much interest these days to visual historians of these early trans-cultural ambassadors. However, a quick Google search turned up a free ebook of the 1638 original, with the illustrations included; so the choice is justifiable, and does not truly detract from Butler's extraordinary investment in the man and his time.

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Hirschfeld, Heather.

The End of Satisfaction: Drama and Repentance in the Age of Shakespeare.

Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014. Pp. xii, 239. ISBN 978-0-8014-5274-1 (hardcover) \$55.

In *The End of Satisfaction*, Heather Hirschfeld interrogates the significance of satisfaction (from the Latin *satisfacere*, to do or make enough), elucidating how the conceptual and affective dilemma it poses in Reformation doctrine, its place in early modern structures of thought and feeling, and its imaginative representation on the English Renaissance stage inform its discursive purchase across multiple sociocultural vocabularies, including those associated with revenge, finance, and marriage. Reminding us that satisfaction signified a special calculus between transgression and atonement, the third stage of the sacrament of penance concerned with the “doing enough” or “enough done” to compensate God for human sin, Hirschfeld traces the term's history—from its prominence in religious controversy, whereby its meanings and values shifted and changed under the tremendous pressure of the Protestant Reformation, to its use on the early modern stage, whereupon, she argues, the effects of that pressure continued to resonate in secular economies of compensatory exchange: of violation and vendetta, of debt and repayment, and of erotic desire and fulfillment.

Worrying the word in the book's introduction, Hirschfeld notes how the dynamic significance of satisfaction as a principle of commensuration underwriting a range of theological transactions or exchanges has been nearly ignored by literary scholars, largely as an inherited consequence of a Protestant reorientation that focuses on the concept's appetitive dimension, almost exclusively in reference to something that humans want and/or get. The penitential

aspect of satisfaction, by contrast, is governed by a simultaneously vague and exacting notion of “enough” as an amount that would mollify a creditor or injured party—a sense of reparation that is principally other- rather than self-directed, but also constitutes a fundamentally circuitous instead of unidirectional exchange. Acknowledging both the juridical Roman and metaphysical Aristotelian pedigree of the concept, Hirschfeld focuses on how the former’s contractual connotations inform early Christian theology’s reciprocal, transactional sense of obligatory reparation in which both sides are understood as active participants, and the eventual efforts of Continental and English Protestant theologians to explicitly, self-consciously re-evaluate satisfaction in the process of doctrinal change. Following Hirschfeld’s premise, this overdetermined semantic and affective discourse, central to both Protestant and Catholic theologies, in turn exerts pressure on secular penitential enterprises, such as revenge, trade, and marriage, and the drama portrays fraught pursuits of satisfaction precisely when and because it is declared impossible. Subsequent chapters of her book thus exemplify how representations of satisfaction in a selection of early modern plays expose the complications and fault lines of Protestant theology’s putative solution to satisfaction—Christ’s utter sufficiency—together with the subjective problems it poses: the inability to make or experience sufficiency, the unattainability of enough, and the longing for a *satis* now announced off limits and unavailable.

In her first chapter, Hirschfeld examines in detail the Protestant reevaluation of satisfaction, sketching a broad history of approaches to atonement and then dwelling at length on the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century dismantling of the sacrament and related shifts in penitential practices and affects. Here, Hirschfeld sets the stage for her later chapters, arguing the inseparability of penitential and secular economies, which not only share a conceptual vocabulary but also intersect in more concrete, practical ways: repentance and the language of satisfaction, Hirschfeld insists, intervene directly in other forms of exchange. Chapter 2 successfully associates the problems of insufficiency and achieving satisfaction with the protagonist’s notorious fascination with hell, over-reaching aspirations, and ultimate inability to repent in Christopher Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus*. In the following chapter, Hirschfeld examines the genre of revenge tragedy and its hero’s demands for justice in terms of Reformation debates about original sin, the efficacy of confession, and the impossibility of setting things right. Considering Thomas Kyd’s *The Spanish Tragedy*, Shakespeare’s

Hamlet, and Thomas Middleton's *Revenger's Tragedy*, Hirschfeld brilliantly illuminates how generic demands for revenge simultaneously prompt demands for repentance, and thus vexed demands to punish and take vengeance on the self: elaborate revenge strategies aimed at others become cannily conflated with reflexive revenge strategies, both of which seek but finally elude satisfaction. One of the genre's great achievements, in this light, is its seamlessly combining contemporary theological suspicion about doing and feeling enough in the punishment of an offending self with the classical Senecan impossibility of doing and feeling enough in the punishment of an offending other. The book's fourth chapter reads the penitential bonds between Antonio and Bassanio in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* as rooted in economic morality plays like William Wager's *Enough is as Good as a Feast* in order to expose the extent to which Protestant penitential logic and economic morality are at cross-purposes in their interpretations of sufficiency. Finally, chapter 5 relates Othello's marital anguish in Shakespeare's *Othello* to Reformation challenges to satisfaction as a forsaken objective, contrasting that tortured vision with the comparatively parodic and nostalgic longing of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Love's Pilgrimage* for the sacraments of penance and matrimony and their promises of satisfaction.

Ultimately, Hirschfeld's study succeeds at sensitizing her reader to the theological and historical complexities of satisfaction, and her incisive readings of religious and revenge tragedies convincingly illustrate the interpretive rewards of acknowledging such semantic nuance. Although the final sections on economic and marital representation seem comparatively strained, the resounding success of the early chapters resonates throughout. Meticulously researched and carefully crafted, *The End of Satisfaction* makes a crucial contribution to a growing body of scholarship advancing our understanding of how profoundly Reformation theology impacted a wide range of early modern English discourses, attitudes, and experiences, and exposing the considerable extent to which doctrinal ideology—the language of repentance and satisfaction—reverberates not only in period sermons and overtly religious works but also in the ostensibly secular drama written for and performed daily on the commercial London stage.

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