



Liturgical Liaisons

The Textual Body, Irony, and Betrayal in John Donne and Emily Dickinson

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DESCRIPTION:

When Jesus offers his body as a promise to his disciples, he initiates a liturgical framework that is driven by irony and betrayal. Through these deconstructive elements, however, the promise invites the disciples into an intimate space where they anticipate the fulfilment of what is to come. The Last Supper, symbol of unfinished life and sacrifice, becomes the common thread between John Donne and Emily Dickinson, whose poetics acquire liturgical - and therefore eschatological - features, and body and text become the same.

By tracing the displacing and yet co-ordinating theme of the body as a textual presence, Liturgical Liaisons opens into new readings of Donne and Dickinson in a way that enriches how these figures are understood as poets. The result is a risky and rewarding understanding of how these two gurus challenged accepted theological norms of their day.

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