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Madness, Religion and the State in Early Modern Europe: A
Bavarian Beacon (review)

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(Review)

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overwhelm the moral discourse in order to preserve the proper social status of women. In contrast to biological mothers, who nurse their infants, wetnurses frequently appear incompetent and lacking in moral integrity. The debate then presents exciting social issues like nursing, placing infants with wetnurses, hygiene and the risks of contagion, and hereditary contagion (syphilis), reflecting the state of medical knowledge at this time. This, then, is what Winn, in her commentaries and explications, reveals to us about the different scientific discussions regarding practical care in the different social classes of the time.

The rigorous establishment of the text, with abundant, detailed explanatory and historical notes, with rich and judicious commentaries using modern and contemporary criticism, provides the reader with ample knowledge of all the subjects treated by pediatrics. In this way, each of the branches of medicine is put in its historical and scientific context. *Cinq Livres, de la manière de nourrir et gouverner les enfans dès leur naissance*, as organized by Winn, presents pediatric medicine of the sixteenth century in its entirety, under the control of solid sources and contemporary social facts. The different illustrations reveal children under the care of women and experts. The examples are well-chosen. The glossary assembles medical and pharmaceutical terms of the time, but to keep the word *cistre* from being linked with *clystere*, it is necessary to classify the categories.

In sum, this work yields much about the convergence of the history of medicine, the history of ideas, and the sociology of childhood. The medical is reconciled with the cultural and sociological, making the *Cinq Livres* a work of a new era in pediatrics and medicine that has no absolute rules except those that follow nature and the character of each child. The publication of this modern work was a real scientific achievement in an era that renewed pediatrics with ancient medicine.

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David Lederer. *Madness, Religion and the State in Early Modern Europe: A Bavarian Beacon*.

New Studies in European History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. xx + 362 pp. index. illus. tbs. map. bibl. \$90. ISBN: 0-521-85347-8.

Professor Lederer's focus is spiritual physic — religious medicine applied to sufferers of a range of moral disorders — and he provides a cultural history of early modern psychiatry in seventeenth-century Catholic Bavaria. Included is a panoramic view of the history of mental health theory and practice from the sixteenth-century Aristotelian *de anima* renaissance and moral casuistry, which connected moral comportment with one's spiritual health, to later bourgeois psychiatry, Mesmerism, and, in a provocative closing excursus, to Freud's interest in seventeenth-century demonology.

Spiritual illness was thought to result in fever, madness, terror, despair, susceptibility to demons, and suicide. Early modern theorists linked humoral physiology with Aristotelian faculty psychology, popular cultural practices associated mental illness with immoral behavior and demonic agency, and religious authorities claimed jurisdiction over souls whose disorders might cause humoral imbalances such as melancholy, or maladies ranging from tribulations and fear to raging madness and demonic possession. Lederer argues that spiritual physic's practices were coherent with these three cultures, but that they also conflicted with unofficial healers and the emerging absolutist state.

Case histories of sufferers from spiritual maladies who became penitent pilgrims and were often maniacs (and sometimes demoniacs) are woven into a regional case study. Bavaria's important pilgrimage sites specialized in the cure of spiritual maladies, madness, possession, and the like. An unbroken succession of centralizing political administrations provides a rich documentary record for this study. Building on some 2,000 case histories of spiritual affliction from the *Bavarian Beacon* hagiographic miracle book, court records, and other ecclesiastical, legal, and financial sources, Lederer describes a heyday of ritual pilgrimage, prayer, penance, and saint-cults, which resulted in growing state opposition to clerical treatment of mental-spiritual afflictions.

Mandatory auricular confession (a "talking cure" [97]), a feature of post-Tridentine Catholic renewal, pilgrimage to sites of "the special dead," and relic collecting ("baroque necrolatry" [110]) were prominent features of the sacramental penance promoted by Jesuit teachers and confessors ("consummate dramatists and demonologists" [198]). The political elite of the nascent absolutist state sought to limit increasingly popular and often unruly pilgrimages and unofficial exorcisms. Ironically, the increased scrutiny of individual consciences in this penitential regime produced greater levels of guilt, fear, and despondency, which in turn contributed to rising levels of madness, despair, and, in a minority of cases, demonic possession. Lederer argues that there were lasting psychological effects of "an enduring climate of terror and despair" (101) in this period of general crisis.

The suicide rates which peaked around 1611 to 1635 prompted greater attention to decisions about dishonorable burials and added a political motive for preferring the secular insanity defense to a religious process countering demonic-inspired despair. Shameful burials declined, as did officially sanctioned exorcisms, and this marked a turning point in the diabolical crisis. Nonetheless, communities and Church authorities continued to contest the state's insanity verdicts and other inroads of the Wittelsbach state on local privileges. Ultimately "pragmatic reason of state policies" (203) prevailed.

Spiritual physic was in decline by 1650, as were exorcisms and witch trials. However, pilgrimages and exorcisms associated with spiritual suffering and treatment declined only slowly, and unofficial healers remained popular despite official attempts to control them, making the development of absolutism slow and imperfect. The secular insanity defense was an outcome of this psychological

revolution that grew out of Counter-Reformation struggles over the bodies of the mad and possessed.

Lederer surveys the history of early modern exorcism, from a period of real mania (1560–80) to official routinization by 1614 (largely the work of Peter Canisius) and its decline in the late seventeenth century. Two illustrative cases from the late 1660s, richly documented by the demoniacs and their exorcists, might have ended in witchcraft cases had not a Jesuit confessor to the Wittelsbachs sought other explanations and contributed to the decline of spiritual physic. Despite official policy, neither absolution nor confinement was fully implemented, and spiritual physic coexisted with the insanity defense until nineteenth-century constitutional change marked the victory of the ideology of confinement.

This fine and dense study is an important contribution to our understanding of early modern mentalities, popular culture and religion, pilgrimage, healing, exorcism, sainthood, and state formation.

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Claudia Swan. *Art, Science, and Witchcraft in Early Modern Holland: Jacques de Gheyn II (1565–1629)*.

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. xvi + 254 pp. index. illus. bibl. \$85. ISBN: 0-521-82674-8.

Claudia Swan's *Art, Science, and Witchcraft* examines the interactions between art and science in seventeenth-century Holland through the work of Jacques de Gheyn II, the prolific Dutch artist who painted some of the earliest flower still-life images. Among de Gheyn's vast production, the book focuses on two distinct groups of images, which differ drastically in subject matter, tone, and execution: the images representing the natural world of plants and animals and the images illustrating the magical world of witches and demons. Inspired by David Freedberg's concern to understand the relationship "between particular kinds of knowledge on the one hand and individual representational genres on the other" (5), Swan interprets de Gheyn's images of nature within the context of seventeenth-century natural history and the artist's imagery of witchcraft in relation to contemporary thoughts on demons, melancholy, and the imagination. The author also explains how de Gheyn's images of nature and witchcraft are described, respectively, by the critical terms *near het leven* and *uyt den gheest* that Karel van Mander introduced to Dutch art criticism in 1604 to define images made "after life" (*near het leven*) and images made "from the mind or the spirit" (*uyt den gheest*). Relating van Mander's terminology to "contemporary distinctions between naturalism and *phantasia* — and hence between mimesis and imagination" (196), Swan structures her book on the dichotomy between images of nature and images of witches, science and art, mimesis and imagination, and naturalism and *phantasia*.