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Catholic Culture in Early Modern England (review)

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Asian and African peoples through the context of his encounters in those lands; Ubaldo Iaccarino and Pedro Lage Reis Correia present analyses of his reactions to the arrival (and martyrdom) of Spanish Franciscans in Japan; M. Antoni Üçerler and Jesús López-Gay analyze the main documents that Valignano wrote about Japan, the *Sumario de las Cosas de Japón* (1583) and the *Principio y Progreso de la Religión Christiana en Japón* (1603–04); and Marcello Valignani and Marisa di Russo present specific details about Valignano and his family relations in Italy. Valignano, however, deserves better, and it is hoped that this volume will not dissuade young scholars from delving into his rich legacy.

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Catholic Culture in Early Modern England. Edited by Ronald Corthell, Frances E. Dolan, Christopher Highley, and Arthur F. Marotti. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press. 2007. \$40.00 paperback. ISBN 978-0-268-02294-5.

The editors of this collection, who are leading figures in early-modern Catholic studies, have brought together a superb and wide-ranging group of essays. “Culture” for this collection means writing, but also relics, interior decoration, and embroidery; “England” is more a category up for analysis than a firm demarcation—geographic, linguistic, or otherwise—as evinced in the book’s reach into Latin literatures, international religious politics, and European Catholicisms. The result is a book that moves in a number of promising directions for research in the burgeoning field of early-modern Catholicism.

In the collection’s lead essay, Peter Davidson focuses on what he calls “symbolically articulated spaces,” buildings whose space or structure bear a “demonstrable relation to the kinds of mental or interior space articulated in contemporary books of devotion” (20). In doing so, he shifts the study of the spaces of English Catholicism beyond priest holes or domestic chapels to consider other forms of devout spatiality. In “Women Catholics and Latin Culture,” Jane Stevenson demonstrates the importance of Latin literacy not only for future nuns but also for educated Catholic households and offers a useful comparison of Latin literacy in Catholic households with more familiar paradigms of Protestant gentlewomen’s education. Sophie Holroyd’s innovative and richly illustrated essay focuses on the embroidered vestments produced by Helena Wintour and argues that the texts and emblems of Wintour’s embroidery express her devotional choices (emphasizing especially her devotion to the Blessed Virgin). Caroline Hibbard’s study of Queen Henrietta Maria’s court, a cosmopolitan one by any standard, emphasizes the international character of early-modern Catholicism and outlines the considerable tension between Henrietta Maria’s international religious and political connections and England’s post-Reformation political climate in which an insular antipopery played such an important role.

In a lucid and rich essay, Gary Kuchar proposes Mary Magdalene as an important model for the recusant subject, arguing that Robert Southwell's popular *Mary Magdalene's Funeral Tears* uses the shift from Mary's longing for Christ's body at his tomb to her spiritual relationship to Christ after the resurrection to comment on "the recusant experience of social isolation and religious abandonment, while providing a model example of how one should cope with such marginalization" (136). Mary's melancholy is ultimately restrained within the terms of classical moderation, suggesting, Kuchar argues, some unease with the powerful feminine spiritual model she represents. Heather Wolfe provides a detailed and fascinating study of the work of Dame Barbara Constable, who "wrote and compiled at least eleven original works and collections . . . transcribed twenty-five spiritual works, maintained her community's register of letters and instructions, and emended scribal copies of contemplative treatises" (158). Her translating and transcribing labors were crucial for ensuring the continuity of traditions of medieval English contemplative writing, and her original works suggest a similar interest in aiding Catholic devotional practice both in exile communities (lay and religious) and in England. An appendix provides a list of Constable's transcriptions and original works.

Molly Murray's essay argues for the importance of formal conventions and patterns in Catholic conversion narratives, and especially for the importance of the Augustinian model in William Alabaster's narrative of his conversion. She thereby contests the notion that early-modern life-writing became more expressive as Protestant and especially Puritan writers broke free of old constraints and expectations. An appendix provides the formal questions that those admitted to the English College in Rome had to answer, questions prompting some of the life-writing Murray examines. Anne B. Myers studies relics as discussed in John Gerard's *Autobiography of a Hunted Priest*; for Gerard, to document the survival, preservation, and veneration of relics is to record the ongoing and defiant vitality of the English Catholic community. Mark Netzloff analyzes English Catholic writing for its role in the early-modern conceptualization of English nationhood "as a locus of identification ('Englishness'), one that was open to contestation and reimagining, rather than as a stable or monolithic entity ('the English nation') that could be dominated by any particular community" (237; emphasis in original). He turns to the English Catholic diaspora to locate Catholic constructions of nationhood, especially in attempts to preserve "English" traditions in Catholic colleges on the continent and in Richard Verstegan's antiquarianism.

Sanok pushes the generic and temporal boundaries of self-conscious national mythologizing to include Catholic hagiographies, focusing on *The Lives of Women Saints of Our Contrie of England*, in which gender may have been deployed to shame masculine readers into imitations of female saints' staunch faith, even as the collection marked a difference between a feminized past and the more masculinized present. In the collection's final

essay, Donna B. Hamilton studies Anthony Munday's translations of Iberian chivalric romances, in which an emphasis on an international, unified, and Catholic Christendom would seem to conflict with English Protestant fears of Catholic foreignness and contamination, whether or not particular details of Catholic worship and practice are maintained or excised in translation.

This book may legitimately claim to be the most important current essay collection on its subject. It is strongly recommended reading for any scholar interested in pursuing research in the area.

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Histoire littéraire des Bénédictins de Saint-Maur, Vol. 1 (1612-1655), Vol. 2 (1656-1683). By Philippe Lenain. [Bibliothèque de la Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique, Fascicules 88 and 89.] (Louvain-la-Neuve: Collège Érasme. 2007, 2008. Pp. iv, 559; iv, 665. Vol. 1, €65.00; Vol. 2, €75.00 paperback. ISSN 0035-2381, fasc. 88, 89.)

In 1621, Pope Gregory XV issued a bull establishing a new branch of the Benedictine order known as the Congregation of Saint-Maur. This exclusively Gallican reform movement stressed stricter adherence to the Rule of St. Benedict while also allowing for some interpretation of the Rule to suit contemporary needs and preferences. Most notably, intellectual labor, rather than physical, constituted the *labora* of the members of the order. They took up their pens and poured over ancient and medieval texts with all the fervor and attachment to duty that the first disciples of St. Benedict would have given when grasping their plows in the service of the Rule. Throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and even on the eve of the French Revolution, the Maurist literary production was prolific and profound, earning for the order a reputation for superior scholarship in the humanities and sciences.

In the late-eighteenth century, when the usefulness of religious orders was called into question and their very existence threatened, the Maurist Dom René-Prosper Tassin attempted to compile a list of all the literary works written by the members of the Congregation, no doubt, among other reasons, to showcase the contributions of Maurists to the intellectual life of France. He completed this monumental task in 1770 at age seventy-three, but his work remained incomplete. Later researchers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries added to Tassin's catalog especially with the inclusion of works after 1770. The reprinting of key texts by members of the Congregation in the early-twentieth century revealed the need for an updated compilation. Prompted by the monastic historian Dom Yves Chaussy, Philippe Lenain undertook this task with the publication of this multivolume work, *Histoire littéraire des Bénédictins de Saint-Maur*.

To date, Lenain has published the first two volumes, which cover Maurist literature from 1612 to 1655 and from 1656 to 1683. He envisions two more