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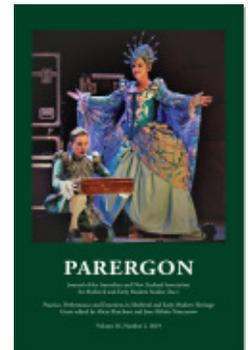
*Contested Reformations in the University of Cambridge,  
1535–1584* by Ceri Law (review)

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**Law, Ceri**, *Contested Reformations in the University of Cambridge, 1535–1584* (Studies in History New Series), Woodbridge, Royal Historical Society, The Boydell Press, 2018; hardback; pp. x, 235; R.R.P. £50; ISBN 9780861933471.

Martin Bucer's funeral at Cambridge in 1551 could be described as 'a display of Protestant piety and celebration' (p. 1), but his exhumation and burning six years later signalled 'Catholic condemnation and triumph' (p. 1). By 1560 the deceased and desecrated Bucer was reinstated as a member of the university (p. 112) though his heresies were so odious to some that Great St Mary's Church was reconsecrated on account of Bucer's body having lain therein (p. 76). The tale of Bucer's body is the story of the disputed legacy of the Cambridge Reformation. Chancellor John Fisher went to the scaffold in 1535 and Emmanuel College was founded on Puritan principles in 1584. The period between these events is investigated here.

This is a valuable book in confirming and correcting traditionally held beliefs about the role of the University of Cambridge during the Reformation, but the monograph brings new questions to the historiography. It has often been assumed that Cambridge educated the reformers while Oxford burned them. Ceri Law makes clear it is not quite that simple. Instead, she argues that her assessment differs substantially from earlier historiography, which she concludes not only reveals important insights but simultaneously conceals a great deal of the reality of the consensus, conflict, and compromise that characterized the half-century of university history under examination (p. 3).

Her thoughtful and well-researched book gathers together a plethora of useful and provocative observations. These include that in 1535 the university curriculum was rewritten (p. 1); conformity not resistance was crucial to the Reformation at Cambridge (p. 6); the White Horse pub story may be true but not factual (p. 18); Cambridge was not, simplistically, a Reformation university (p. 42); university men who supported the 1549 *Book of Common Prayer* were almost as likely to support oaths of Catholic orthodoxy in 1555 (pp. 72–74), indeed Oxbridge remained vital to renewed Catholicism (p. 97); rood screens went up and down with some regularity at Great St Mary's (p. 171); Cambridge maintained, at least from time to time, a modicum of academic freedom where debates about religion could still be heard (p. 178); very few students studied theology directly (p. 184); and in the end notions of religion and university are not fixed or stable concepts (p. 189).

Perhaps the book ultimately reinforces the idea that Reformation itself, and not just in England, was hardly a monolithic achievement or a linear development. Hugh Latimer was steadfast to the stake and Stephen Gardiner desired to restore Cambridge to full Roman Catholic conformity (pp. 72–73). The reformer Robert Beaumont, once a Marian exile, by 1565 wanted to punish clerics refusing to wear a surplice (p. 169). Andrew Perne, five times Vice-Chancellor, was a veritable theological weathervane (pp. 76–78). Perne preached the sermon in 1557 at the heretication of Bucer (p. 76) and took to the pulpit again in 1560 when the

proceedings were reversed and the dead heretic was rehabilitated (pp. 112–13). Perne was consistently faithful to the prevailing current of religion. William Cecil managed to survive the vicissitudes of Reformation and served almost four decades as Chancellor. Purity of doctrine and fidelity to tradition were among the factors prompting a 1582 report to conclude: ‘the whole bodye of the Universitie is oute of frame’ (p. 22). Cambridge, like any institution, was made up of many people and those people disagreed. The academic context should not, Law warns, be underestimated as a context for resistance (p. 140). During the Elizabethan era, it was treason to proselytize others into Roman obedience (p. 151), whilst Catholics organized book burnings in an effort to root out heresy (pp. 78–79). Treason and bonfires were serious. Other protests were more benign. In 1565, believing the vice-chancellor was too ‘popish’, university students seized his horse and mockingly shaved the horse’s head, causing the mane to resemble a tonsure (p. 169).

Law’s fundamental arguments and conclusions cannot easily be gainsaid. She is right to argue that Cambridge did eventually become a Protestant university. Ultimately its teachings and practices were reformed. The early infusion of Lutheran ideas, the later accommodation of Presbyterian commitments, led to an even later acknowledgement that religious diversity could not be eliminated and indeed it was perhaps undesirable to even attempt it. Barnes, Latimer, Cranmer, and a number of their colleagues were among the most significant figures in the English Reformation and each had some roots in Cambridge soil. The study of Reformation at the University of Cambridge is an exploration of social, political, and religious considerations, and a close reading of those factors reveals that the results of Reformation were ‘both decisive and divisive’ (p. 38).

Perhaps the state of Reformation in the University of Cambridge can be put down to a deliberate policy on the part of authorities who refused to ‘open windows into the souls of university men’ too widely (p. 123), and this, coupled with strategic conformity, helps to explain the nuanced and conflicted history of religious change in this chapter of Reformation history.

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**Lemon**, Rebecca, *Addiction and Devotion in Early Modern England* (Haney Foundation Series), Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018; hardback; pp. xv, 280; 4 b/w illustrations; R.R.P. US\$65.00, £50.00; ISBN 9780812249965.

This volume traces changing understandings of addiction, demonstrating the concept’s former associations with devotion, which the modern, clinical sense obscures. Lemon, a literature scholar, draws on multiple disciplines to argue her case, and her work should assist scholars in several fields.

Etymologically, the word derives from the Latin ‘to speak’; an ‘addict’, in Roman contract law, was one sentenced, bound over to someone or something. In sixteenth-century England, addiction developed connotations of devoting oneself