

*Rituals of Politics and Culture in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Honour of Edward Muir*. Edited by Mark Jurdjevic and Rolf Strom-Olsen. (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies. 2016. Pp. 440. \$49.95. ISBN 978-0-7727-2185-3.)

*Rituals of Politics and Culture in Early Modern Europe*, a compilation of essays in honor of Edward Muir, takes as its theme a subject to which Muir has contributed as much as any living historian: the relation of ritual to the political and cultural life of early modern Europe. Contributors include both distinguished scholars of early modern Europe and several young scholars (largely former graduate students of Muir at Northwestern University). The high quality of the essays testify to the centrality that ritual has come to occupy as a hermeneutic for understanding culture and politics in the early modern period and as a vindication of the anthropological turn in history, to which Muir's work has been fundamental.

The volume begins with an editorial introduction to the work of Edward Muir, then turns to a number of essays inspired by Muir's interests and methodologies. The range of categories to which the framework of ritual is applied is impressive. We have here some familiar suspects: studies of the ritual aspects of early modern processions, religious ceremonies, coronations, and pastoral visitations. But the volume also includes a number of essays that analyze topics whose ritualistic aspects have been less well-appreciated: the production of book manuscripts, the procedures associated with granting pardons for sex crimes, the historiographies of the Burgundian ducal court, and the "deep play" of the Renaissance gaming table.

One major theme that emerges from this collection of essays is the polyvalent nature of most early modern rituals. The success of any given ritual often seems to have depended on a certain slipperiness in its meaning: thus, as both Patricia Fortini Brown and Monique O'Connell point out, political rituals might simultaneously function to project the dominant state's power and to affirm the local traditions and concerns of subject communities. Similarly, Celeste MacNamara's study of rural confraternities in the Veneto shows that the Counter-Reformation flourishing of rural devotion played out largely in the spaces of "mutually beneficial compromises" between Church and community. Or, as Susan Karant-Nunn demonstrates, the veiled faces at a Saxon elector's funeral might simultaneously represent an expression of real grief, a calculated conformity to the societal expectation to cry, or even some hybrid emotion generated from the ritualized cultivation of grief in the funeral procession. Thus, the volume as a whole seems to affirm that rituals were most successful when the same ritual could be molded in different ways to meet the needs and expectations of diverse audiences.

This work will likely be of much more use to historians of early modern Italy than to others, since the preponderance of essays are on Italian topics. Nevertheless, on the whole, this impressive work contains much excellent scholarship by many leading historians, and though a few essays in the volume do stray from the topic

of ritual, even in these cases, the meeting of ideas with Muir's work remains a welcome constant.

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*Exercer l'autorité: l'abbé de Cîteaux et la direction de l'ordre cistercien en Europe (1584–1651)*. By Bertrand Marceau. [Bibliothèque d'histoire moderne et contemporaine, Vol. 58.] (Paris: Honoré Champion. 2018. Pp. 745. €150 paperback. ISBN 978-0-8061-4497-9.)

A revision of a doctoral dissertation defended at the Sorbonne in 2013, this book is a lengthy, thorough, and at times tedious study of what may be viewed as a rather narrow topic. Directed by Alain Tallon, Marceau's thesis focused on how abbots of the abbey of Cîteaux exercised their authority over two-thirds of a century. The period is in fact a particularly vibrant one in politics, church history, and related matters from the latter stages of the French Wars of Religion to the majority of the young King Louis XIV. In the context of the Cistercian order, 1584 corresponds to the beginning of the twenty years of Edme de la Croix as abbot of Cîteaux, while 1651 was marked by a general chapter of the order.

Marceau's book demonstrates how complex and contested the exercise of abbatial authority could be. The abbot of Cîteaux was both abbot of one abbey only, albeit an exceptionally important one, and, *ex officio*, also superior general of the Cistercians, not only in France, but wherever houses of the order were. He had to deal with a broad range of overlapping and competing claims to authority. Monastic chapters, in his own monastery, or of the whole order, were a source of alternate authority. In France the monarch used the title Most Christian King and claimed rights over the Church that included appointment of abbots as well as of visitors sent to reform religious houses. Cardinal Richelieu was for a time not only first minister to Louis XIII but abbot of Cîteaux, though he was hardly a monk. State authorities intervening in monastic affairs also included the French *parlements*, courts that could support or oppose legal claims of the Cistercians. The abbot was a feudal lord and had plenty of secular legal matters to deal with in addition to everything else. Cistercian houses outside France had to contend with claims of their own 'secular' rulers, and these rulers often posed obstacles to any French or other foreign supervision in their territories, thus challenging the very notion of an international religious order. (Jesuits were hardly the only order to face this kind of difficulty.) Popes also claimed authority over the Cistercians, no matter their location or nationality, and local bishops chafed at assertions of exemption of religious from episcopal jurisdiction. Among Cistercians themselves, the seventeenth century was a time of growing tension between those favoring a stricter observance (one that would, for example, forbid consumption of meat) and those wishing to retain a more moderate observance. Abbots of Cîteaux had to manage this source of division, one difficult to heal. The tension would eventually result in a separate Order of Cistercians of the Strict Observance (Trappists), though this development came later than in the years studied here.