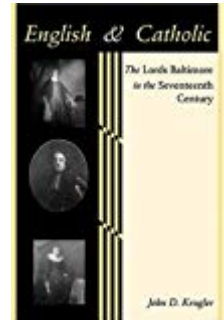


**John D. Krugler.** *English and Catholic: The Lords Baltimore in the Seventeenth Century.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004. xiii + 319 pp. \$46.00, cloth, ISBN 978-0-8018-7963-0.



**Reviewed by** Jerome de Groot

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*English and Catholic* considers the various Lords Baltimore through the seventeenth century, focusing in particular on their involvement in English government and then their colonial government. A prominent Catholic family, they were increasingly influential at state level until they became tainted by their close relationship with Spain. In the reorganization following Charles I's and Lord Buckingham's disastrous negotiations in Spain over the former's marriage, George Calvert, the first Lord Baltimore, found himself out of favor and unlikely to regain his position. As a consequence, he directed his family's wealth and fortunes to Ireland and then across the Atlantic, firstly in Newfoundland and thence in Virginia.

For Krugler, the Baltimores' Catholicism is constant, their "Englishness" more fluid. During the early seventeenth century they negotiated a kind of position which enabled them to keep their religion whilst still appearing loyal. Given that one of the biggest problems about Catholicism was that of authority--insofar as English Protestants suggested Catholics' loyalty was to the Pope, rather than the monarch--this was both astute

and difficult. However, in the more tolerant reigns of James I and Charles I the family prospered--the Protestant-Catholic binary was less problematic, and religious identity became less dogmatic for a while. Krugler argues that Maryland permitted the family, whose religion he suggests was the keystone of most of their decisions, to create a new social context and move towards religious freedom. To a great extent, then, this toleration came as the consequence of an interrogation of the relationship with Englishness that colonization undertook.

The charter for Maryland was granted on June 20, 1632. This was just weeks after the death of George Calvert, who had put so much into the enterprise. His son was left to develop, sustain, and defend the new colonial enterprise. He did this with some skill and acuity, negotiating with a hostile Virginian government and establishing trade networks. Despite some difficulty, his "Maryland design," the formation of a stable society through, in particular, religious tolerance, progressed steadily. The British wars of the 1640s gave the second Lord Baltimore the opportunity

to effect the creation of a political entity which was mainly secular and increasingly independent of its country of origin. In particular, central to Krugler's thesis is the argument that "the state, his government, would *privilege* no particular religious group" (p. 154, original emphasis). The 1649 Maryland Act of Toleration was the first legislation which afforded toleration to all Christians. This religious freedom was colonial *realpolitik* in action, however, intended to form an harmonious and prosperous community, rather than an idealized abstraction of church and state.

This maneuvering seemed moot when a parliamentary commission wrested control of the colony from Lord Baltimore in the early 1650s. His published defense of his ownership of his lands includes the assertion that "All Lords of Mannors or Liberties here in England may, in some kinde, be aswell accounted Monarches within their severall Mannors and Liberties as the Lord Baltemore in Maryland." [1] This notion of the colony as a minor nation in itself, whilst never likely to gain support in London in 1653, demonstrates the direct, pragmatic approach that the Baltimores had to their possessions. The colony should be seen as a direct analogue of the home country, with the same liberties afforded the ruler; furthermore, the tract makes clear the near feudal sense of the state as a Russian-doll network of little "Monarches within their severall Mannors." When it suited, the Baltimores could happily cleave to traditional notions of Englishness—in particular, legal and proprietorial.

The Baltimore's governorship of Maryland was restored in 1658 by Oliver Cromwell. Poor government, economic depression, and the revival of anti-Catholic feeling in the 1670s and 1680s led in 1689 to the overthrow of the family, their exile, and the end of the experiment of religious freedom. All in all, the Baltimores' Maryland colony proved to be troublesome, idealistic, and relatively unsuccessful.

Krugler's treatment of the family and their various fortunes is clear-sighted and detailed, and his arguments are meticulously supported throughout. He argues, somewhat counterintuitively to standard historiography, that "English Catholicism both restricted and amplified opportunities for those who professed the faith" (p. 9). Rather than be set back by anti-Catholic feeling and legislation, the family found fortune through force of will, effort, and the opportunities afforded by the new world. As such, this book nuances our understanding of the ways in which religious affiliation might affect elite families. It also complicates our understanding of early colonial politics and organization.

#### Note

[1]. *The Lord Baltemores case concerning the province of Maryland, adjoyning to Virginia in America. With full and clear answers to all material objections, touching his rights, jurisdiction, and proceedings there. And certaine reasons of state, why the Parliament should not impeach the same* (London: 1653), 9.

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