H-Net Reviews
in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Linda Gregerson, Susan Juster, eds. *Empires of God: Religious Encounters in the Early Modern Atlantic.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011. ix + 334 pp. $59.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8122-4289-8.

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Published on H-Albion (August, 2011)
Commissioned by Jeffrey R. Wigelsworth

Religious Faces of Early Modern Atlantic Empire

In this collection, Linda Gregerson and Susan Juster have assembled an elegant, coherent examination of the emergence of Atlantic empires through the "intimate connection between religious and political narratives of discovery and resettlement" (p. 1). Though the theme of religion and empire is nothing new, this volume offers the fresh perspective that can be achieved when scholars from such diverse disciplines as history, literary studies, and modern languages join interpretative forces. To echo J. A. Pocock's call to return the politics to studies of state formation, this volume joins an important conversation that returns religion to the discourse of empire.

Gregerson and Juster have achieved a nuanced whole that appraises and assesses encounters between peoples that resists simple characterizations. They identify four links between religion and empire discourses: causal, oppositional, dialectical, and affiliate. These conjoined to form the foundation for an ideological, as well as commercial, "blueprint for global supremacy" (p. 2). This volume fits squarely within the work of other literary scholars and historians, citing in particular Stephen Greenblatt, Anthony Pagden, J. H. Elliott, and Robin Blackburn, among others who have sought to explore structures of colonialism, and develop through comparative analysis, a history of the early Atlantic world that apprehends trends (p. 4).

Part 1, "Launching Imperial Projects," comprises four essays that survey religious dimensions of empire goals of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries on both sides of the Atlantic. Rolena Adorno's essay in chapter 1 focuses on Spanish conquests in the Americas. Drawing upon earlier insights by canon law scholar Kennth J. Pennington and later José Cárdenas Bunsen, the Bartoloméo de las Casas that emerges here is one who, in contrast to his contemporaries who used theology and philosophy to argue for Spanish domination of the Amerindians, used legal arguments to persuade king and court that New World peoples ought to rule themselves.

Next, Carla Gardina Pestana attends to the relationship of English and Dutch Protestants in the context of Atlantic world expansion. The same linguistic tropes of cruelty used to describe Spain provided an odd template for the criticisms the former Protestant allies leveled at one another in their rivalry for overseas dominance. De las Casas reappears here this time as a weapon in the polemical war between English and Dutch. Characterizations he had made of Spanish invaders in the Americas, became a useful mold for attacks helping the English "construe themselves better colonizers," than the Dutch (p. 56).

Recent scholarly analysis has concentrated attention on religious "sameness" in discourses that justify colonial expansion. Barbara Fuchs advances these inquiries through consideration of how religious differences themselves work to reveal similarities between Spain and England. Both used a parallel rationale to legitimize their efforts at colonial expansion that only superficially seemed to depend upon confessional distinction. To get at this, she interrogates a wide range of texts about New World encounters to argue that apparent differences were tactical. Her closing argument is a fascinating reading of converted *picaro*s.

Linda Gregerson's finely crafted essay in chapter 4 examines problems faced by Protestant evangelists peculiar to New World conversions. For them religious authority and meaning was squarely situated in scriptural text, yet the culture they confronted was "among a people [without] a tradition of literacy" (p. 80). The first Bible printed in North America was an Algonquian translation developed over fifteen years' time by John Eliot. Not only a literary and literacy achievement, it was used "as an instrument for Christian conversion" (p. 72). Gregerson

firmly acknowledges the "inseparability of state formation and empire building," while also staking the claim that complexities of the colonial experience included issues of literacy, spiritual rewards, and potential temptations of material goods.

In part 2, "Colonial Accommodations," five chapters explore colonial religion as distinctive experiences between Atlantic world native populations and Europeans. Cornelius Conover uses liturgical practice to analyze the meanings of the role of Catholic saints in Spanish territories. He identifies the neglect of religious practices as a lacuna in scholarship concerned with religion in the context of the Spanish empire. Liturgy, Conover maintains, provides a means to examine what he recognizes as a "shift" to explicit "imperial religion" (p. 88). With Philip of Jesus as his focal point, he argues that the cult of saints in the context of New World Spain "reinforced imperial ties," instead of giving "voice to local identity and contribut[ing]" to an "autonomous political consciousness." Rather than see religion as a force in developing local autonomy, Conover convincingly argues that the more challenging potential of liturgy is as evidence for questioning colonial resistance organized around a particular saint (pp. 104-105).

The remarkable account of French Jesuit Pierre Chaumonot provides Allan Greer with a case study, in chapter 6, to propose that the interpretation of sources produced by early modern missionary Jesuits needs "to get beyond the rhetoric of [Jesuit] self-presentation," to understand what them "tick" (p. 107). Simply identifying Chaumonot as a Frenchman turns out not to be straightforward, Greer shows, as the Jesuit himself seems to have "lost touch" with his native French language. Instead, Chaumonot was "constantly reinventing himself" (p. 118). Greer observes that Chaumonot not only studied his adoptive people and culture, he became his adopted cultural identity (p. 118). In this way, Greer makes a case for exercising discernment about Jesuit adaptations to the New World, which were not all what they seemed to be.

In chapter 7, Kristina Bross examines mission literature produced by Protestants to recover the communities of praying Indians. An Algonquian woman exhorted her children to remain with the praying Indian community after her death rather than return to the Algonquian tribal community. Using this and other accounts of her, Bross maintains that the specific treatise by Henry Jessey in 1650 strove to place the woman's deathbed scene within the larger contexts of global conversion and the *parousia*. Her central argument is that the Algonquian woman's death speech was a text put to different uses over time according to different spaces (p. 128).

Dominique Deslandres reminds us, in chapter 8, that dreams, "have always had a special place in monotheistic traditions," where they were seen as opportunities for the dreamer to have contact with the supernatural world, including God (p. 143). Yet, French Jesuits dismissed the weight ascribed to dreams by Amerindians. Deslandres mines the cultural exchange of dreams to ask how Europeans, who were part of that Christian tradition of dreams as religious vehicles, received natives' dreams. Contradictory because they could be legitimate sources of information, or dangerous according to the dreamer's perceptions, the dreams of American Indians and those of Europeans intersected to create what she characterizes as "symbolic shock" (p. 148). Dreams could also be an expression of resistance to colonialism and both an engine of conversion and obstacle to it (p. 153).

Using the introduction to Christoph Saur's 1751 almanac edition that contains "lengthy dialogues between Eirwohner (resident) and a Newkommer (newcomer)," Bethany Wiggin focuses on how it helped to create "a pacifist rhetoric to reach explicitly political ends" (p. 156). In a print war between Saur and Anglican pastor William Smith, Saur argued that Smith doubted German loyalty to English law and thought that the voting rights of all non-English-speaking Pennsylvanians ought to be rescinded. Saur declared that William Penn's very founding principles were under attack. In a charming and lively exposition, Wiggin examines the simple greeting phrase, "hau di thu," to show that Saur's use of this familiar expression in his almanac's dialogues enabled him to win over his readers. Through this rhetorical deployment, he was able to present readers with a "radical critique" of their present condition, suggesting remedies that urged a return to the territory's founding principles.

The three essays that comprise the final part are assembled under the theme of violence, and thus round out the volume's aim to examine colonial experiences between Old and New World peoples. Katherine Ibbet's essay on martyrdom in the colonial context examines the life of French missionary Marie de l'Incarnation (Guyart) (1599-1672). Martyr and captivity texts, both influential and popular genres in the late seventeenth century, together created "a new kind of text about the New World experience of trial and redemption" (p. 182). In contrast to other scholars' insistence on the "particularity" of the "captivity narrative in the American experience," Ibbet argues for an interpretation that grasps distinctively

American features of New World martyrdom while remaining situated within the traditional martyr narrative (p. 182). Thus, Marie's story is linked to that of her model, Teresa of Ávila, who provided a model of martyrdom writ small. Marie could see her suffering in compact contexts, like her convent, within the martyr narrative.

In chapter 11, Patrick Erben examines connections between religious beliefs, material books, and community. Through analysis of how the Dutch *Martyrs' Mirror* (1660) was translated and reprinted in Pennsylvania for German-speaking Mennonites, Erben poses the question of how American Mennonites managed to transition from witnesses of martyrdom through reading to witnesses as actors (p. 192). This chapter is a thematic parallel to Ibbet's preceding essay in that this presents another example of martyrdom in small contexts through the decision to translate and disseminate *Martyrs' Mirror*. Erben argues that the process of producing the translation itself "underscored the central metaphorical link between suffering bodies and text" (p. 193). Erben raises questions about pacifism in an increasingly militarized context while conceding that assessing the book's reception by the Mennonite community during the Revolutionary War is beyond the scope of his essay. (Perhaps someone will pursue the reception of religious texts in the turbulent revolution years.)

Co-editor Susan Juster examines the violence of iconoclasm in the colonial context of New England. Her analytical framework uses an approach that combines cultural anthropology with literary theory while remaining firmly planted in the historical moment of British settlers in the New World. In New World martyrdom, the devil was recast as Catholic and as Indian. Juster argues that in "an important sense Indians constituted 'living images' whose destruction was sanctioned by the reasoning" that provoked and legitimated iconoclasm in the Reformation era in the Old World (p. 226). Destruction of human beings–of the New World Indians–was iconoclasm through a process she characterizes as "interchangeability of people and icons," not mere effigies then but attacks on people, on Indians, were acts of iconoclasm. This leads Juster to assert that, whereas iconoclasts in the Old World attacked symbols and icons "as if they were people," their New World counterparts attacked people "as if they were objects" (p. 229). Though asserting that ethnicity can obscure religious motivations for violence, Juster concedes that the indifference of white southern Protestants to religious violence directed toward Catholics (Spanish and native), "makes it difficult to assign clear iconoclastic motives to their actions," though a "clear circumstantial case" can be made against the Carolina settlers, for example (p. 235). This frank acknowledgment strengthens an argument that might otherwise seem strained.

In the book's final essay, Paul Stevens addresses the British Empire's rise, decline, rise, and final fall. Taking a cue from Winston Churchill, Stevens turns to Edmund Spenser to argue that Protestantism stimulated imperial expansion. In a challenge to historian David Armitage's analysis of empire in his influential *Ideological Origins of the British Empire* (2000), Stevens posits that ideology can and did both shape and drive the creation of empire. Where Armitage see the origins of empire in an event, to wit the expansion of overseas trade which he identifies as the defining feature of British empire, Stevens believes that this underestimates the individual. Stevens calls it a "stretch," for Armitage to assert that there are "no ... Protestant origins to British imperial ideology" (p. 241). Instead, Stevens identifies Protestant doctrinal emphases on grace, as a force in English and British colonial enterprises. Using works replete with examples of grace and mercy, by Spenser and Shakespeare, he pursues a connection between Protestant expressions of divine grace and imperial ideology, important because of the confidence the doctrine afforded Protestants.

This significant collection will interest historians and literary scholars alike, especially those concerned with Atlantic world empire building. It will also be useful to teachers of upper-division undergraduate and graduate student courses as provocation for stimulating discussions. This volume makes a solid and significant contribution to the current turn to add religion as a fourth lens to the post-revisionism trinity of gender, race, and class. Essays in this volume demonstrate effectively and cogently how analyzing religious ideologies alongside those of race, gender, and class enhances our understanding of the actions and motivations of actors in the past and on both sides of the Atlantic.

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Citation: Renee Bricker. Review of Gregerson, Linda; Juster, Susan, eds., *Empires of God: Religious Encounters in the Early Modern Atlantic*. H-Albion, H-Net Reviews. August, 2011.
URL: http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=32291

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