

and kept it. The second case study is of the Bacton altar cloth, first recognized by Janet Arnold as a piece of Tudor embroidery related to Elizabeth I's lady-in-waiting Blanche Parry and now in the care of the Royal Historic Palaces. Parry probably donated this very expensive silver and silk cloth, originally part of a skirt, to decorate the parish church altar where she planned to be buried. But despite Lynn's valiant efforts, she is forced to concede that it is impossible to connect either garment to the court without reservation. Nonetheless, as an introduction to Tudor fashion, the book does an excellent job of ensuring that visitors to Hampton Court and the other Royal Historic Palaces gain a strong sense of how seriously clothing was taken in the past and why it deserves to be studied with care today.

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The Jesuit Missions of Paraguay and a Cultural History of Utopia (1568–1789).
Girolamo Imbruglia.

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In *The Jesuit Missions of Paraguay* Girolamo Imbruglia analyzes the use of Jesuit missions in European discussions about utopia and shows how they alternatively served as examples or counterexamples of the ideal society. He uses this point of reference to trace the secularization of political thought over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. According to Imbruglia, the perception of the Jesuits' missions to Paraguay went through four different phases. The first two phases concern the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and Jesuit descriptions of their own missions. At first, they saw the missions as having the character of biblical prophecy. Paraguayan missions subsequently came to embody the ideal society of the Counter-Reformation, based on the model of the primitive church, and were progressively seen as ideal political Christian communities. These themes are discussed in chapters 1–3, which also provide an overview of traditional debates on the right to convert, of European positive and negative perceptions of missions as political entities in the seventeenth century, and of Jesuit spirituality.

Chapters 4–6 address the third phase: the perception of various (mostly French) Enlightenment authors, such as Montesquieu, Rousseau, Voltaire, d'Alembert, and so forth. In the age of Enlightenment, missions faced intensified criticism and were used to discuss the idea that utopia should not be based on a Christian model, which could only bring about despotism, but rather on strictly political categories, notably the republic as the locus for freedom and equality. Missions progressively came to be seen as authoritarian communities maintained through religious superstition, in which no political happiness could ever be achieved. In the eighteenth century, the ideal of

colonization became increasingly based on economic incentives. The natives would naturally accept the model of enlightened European civilization—based on reason rather than superstition—not because of religious ideals, but rather because it would bring them economic comfort and happiness. As Imbruglia describes in chapters 7–8, by the end of the eighteenth century, the perception of the Paraguay missions entered into a fourth phase: the republican ideal usually associated with utopianism was fully replaced by the ideal of happiness. Missions were not happy places, and they should have had a civilizing rather than a Christianizing purpose. Missions still benefited from a strong positive image, but the accounts were increasingly critical; they were no longer seen as being potential models for Europe, but rather as experiments belonging to the past.

This is a very erudite book, which relies on an extended bibliography, and which will be incredibly useful to anyone interested in the role missions played in European political thought. Above all, the book contributes to the discussion on the role of new worlds in the evolution of European political thought, a subject that has often been neglected by the historiography. The author offers an in-depth analysis of eighteenth-century discussions of the relationship between sovereignty and law and freedom and equality, of the various characteristics and values of different types of government, and of the question of common property, central to the utopian ideal, as it related to these issues.

The book is without a doubt at its strongest when it comes to eighteenth-century debates and discussions, especially in France. However, a more detailed analysis of the Christian humanist roots of seventeenth-century debates and a comparison with Protestant (Calvinist) ideals might have been useful here. Utopia, as a common trope since the Renaissance, was concerned with the best form of government, and a more detailed discussion of what missionaries themselves had to say about their policies could have provided more insight into the Christian humanist tradition at the heart of their project. In this regard, a closer reading of the anglophone scholarship (Hans Baron, Quentin Skinner, Brendan Bradshaw, and J. C. Davis, among others) would have been helpful for the analysis of utopia. The concept of utopia belongs to a very long tradition, and the Christian and civic humanist—not only Platonic but also Ciceronian—contexts would have benefited from a more in-depth exploration. This of course does not deny the impressive contribution of this book in correcting the tendency in the historiography to ignore the broader horizons of European political thought; it is a valuable addition for anyone interested in the history of the Jesuit missions and ideal-society tropes.

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