

election, justification and sanctification. Yet there were significant changes and discussions, often leading to dissent between traditional and more radical viewpoints. The doctrines of inability and prevenient grace, for instance, aroused strong debate, and some theologians adopted stances which emphasised the importance of free will. Debate was lively, groups diverged, but most remained under the broad banner of Arminianism.

McCall and Stanglin have produced an impressive work, thoroughly researched, and well referenced, covering several centuries from the initial Remonstrant doctrines of Episcopius and, later, Limborch, through to Watson, Pope, Bowne and Miley, among others, who revised Arminian thought in the nineteenth century. Any student of Methodist history in need of instruction in Arminian theology would do well to place this book at the top of their reading list.

KEIGHLEY

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*English convents in Catholic Europe, c.1600–1800.* By James E. Kelly. Pp. viii + 225 incl. 1 map and 3 tables. Cambridge–New York: Cambridge University Press, 2020. £75. 978 1 108 47996 7

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There has been an exponential growth in interest in the history of post-Reformation English female religious orders over the last two decades, much of it informed by the *Who Were the Nuns?* project funded by the AHRC in which the author of the book under review played a significant role. With the exception of the continuing community of Syon Abbey, which eventually found a home in Lisbon, the history of these communities began in 1598 with the founding of a Benedictine community in Brussels, though it is important to note that some women had already joined local continental communities and the first abbess at Brussels had previously spent twenty years with the Benedictines in Rheims. By the later seventeenth century there were twenty-one English convents representing nine religious orders. One of the key purposes of this volume is to provide a summation of this recent rich historiographical output, and this is achieved in clear and lively prose in which the argument is illustrated by a pacy narrative with well-chosen examples emanating from a deep familiarity with the material. The chapter on recruitment shows the importance of geographical and familial networks in shaping the choices which young women made in deciding which house to enter, but ecclesiastical politics also played its part, with the split between Jesuits and seculars at home being an important factor in the earlier years. Much of the material in this chapter is drawn from these years and it would be interesting to know how enduring those patterns were after the 1660s, when there were more convents to choose from and the character of the English mission had changed. In discussing enclosure Kelly declares his other purpose in the book, to show that the English convents, while identifying with the mission, were part of the wider, what he calls ‘global’, Catholicism following Trent. Undoubtedly the convents were committed to enclosure, marking it with elaborate ceremonial and continually worrying about the impact of their schools, necessary both for the English mission and their own finances, on the practice, and they were noted for their adherence to it, approvingly by the

bishops in whose dioceses their houses were and disparagingly by some of their English Protestant visitors. Notwithstanding the ladder required to gain access to the Conceptionist house in Paris, survival required communication with the outside world, spiritually through confessors and chaplains, almost always English priests, and materially through agents, usually English gentry or merchants, and suppliers of goods and services, mostly from the local community, and the houses were always under the authority of the local diocesan bishop. Finances were raised largely from English sources and through the dowries brought by their mostly gentry novices, though some houses received considerable support from the Spanish and imperial royal households, and senior French ecclesiastics seem to have been generous to the Paris houses. These gifts were by nature political, and potentially problematic, as with the crucifix carried into battle against the Elector Frederick and given to the Antwerp Carmelites by the Spanish friar Dominic Ruzzola. English gifts were also potentially fraught and it is worth considering the Benedictine house at Pontoise, which became closely associated with James II and later the Jacobite diaspora, enjoying a period of prosperity in the 1690s and 1700s, but less so after 1745 so that vocations fell off and its finances collapsed, making it the only English convent to fail when it closed in 1786. That fact points to the resilience of the other houses, and in chapters on religious culture and liturgical life Kelly provides a picture of a rich artistic and musical culture of a European Tridentine nature. Indeed music was so important to convents in making their churches attractive to local elites that in the early 1700s the Paris Augustinians were prepared to forgo dowry sums in order to procure the best singers for their choir. The devotional life of the convents also expressed European Tridentine values: at Bruges the Augustinians promoted the Stations of the Cross as a means of contemplation, and as early as 1702 had a painting depicting the new devotion to the Sacred Heart in their noviciate. One feature of events in England placed these convents at the centre of Tridentine devotion: martyrdom. With the opening of the catacombs in 1588 relics abounded in Catholic Europe and the convents sought and received many from Rome, some procured through the English College in Rome and at least two through members of the unenclosed, and thereby suspect, English followers of Mary Ward, whose Ignatian spirituality did not sit well with papal understanding of the female religious life. As English convents they had, of course, relics of their own from the recent past, thereby linking the sufferings of English Catholics with those of the early Christians, providing the convents with a special place in the Tridentine world. Kelly undoubtedly demonstrates the case that these convents were part of the wider Catholic Reformation as well as being part of the English mission, but when we come to consider the balance within that dual identity the question becomes more complex. Kelly notes that the convents rarely looked to non-English confessors or chaplains, willing to accept Scots only as a last resort, and he notes also that there was very little contact between these houses and the male colleges and other houses from either Scotland or Ireland. There is no evidence of contact between the English convents and non-English houses of their orders. Perhaps this was not of their choice as most were restricted to recruiting English sisters by the bishops in order to prevent their houses from being in competition with local convents. Furthermore, politics made such contact difficult and

closed off opportunities, but the exasperation expressed by the Benedictine sisters at Paris about their French servants suggests other factors also came into play. This is an excellent survey based on close reading of the recent literature, which opens up new questions about the lives of these resilient and redoubtable women who contributed significantly to post-Reformation English and European Catholicism.

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*Adam Boreel (1602–1665). A Collegiant's attempt to reform Christianity.* By Francesco Quatrini. (Church History and Religious Culture, 81.) Pp. xvi + 423 incl. 12 colour ills. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2021. €160. 978 90 04 42000 7; 1572 4107 JEH (73) 2022; doi:10.1017/S0022046921001950

This book is a much-needed new study of the Dutch Hebraist and Collegiant Adam Boreel (1602–65). We are taken through the life of this fascinating person (part I ‘The Life of Adam Boreel’) and receive a thorough introduction to and analysis of his extant works (part II ‘The Thought of Adam Boreel’). The myriad of captivating individuals that receive attention – Menassah ben Israel, Galenus Abrahamsz and Passchier de Fijne to mention a few – showcase a period in which innovative minds and personalities engaged with each other, creating transnational and interdisciplinary networks of knowledge. Quatrini leads us gently through the subtle streams of thought that influenced Boreel and his contemporaries, and consequently introduces a great variety of denominations – from Spiritualists, Millenarians and Mennonites, to Collegiants and Anabaptists. In differentiating and connecting these groups Boreel is an impressive and valuable guide. There is a notable Anglo-Dutch dimension to Boreel’s life and work that ‘places him at the cutting edge of the Dutch and English intellectual world of the seventeenth century’ (p. 383). Within this tumult of exchange, the book is filled with intriguing nods to religious aspects of the period that give the life and work of Boreel further colour and depth, such as the Rosicrucians or Judah Leon’s model of Salomon’s temple, famous throughout Europe but now sadly lost (pp. 69–70). There is much reading pleasure to be found here.

Boreel is a complex character: a Hebraist educated at Leiden, founder of the non-confessional Amsterdam College, and spokesperson for the Amsterdam Collegiants in the 1640s and early 1650s, involved with the Whitehall Conference on the readmission of the Jews into England in the mid-1650s, and an irenic missionary. His vision of a non-confessional and non-institutionalised community, in the *Cultum conniventiae*, where lay readings and discussions of the Scripture were the only worship (chapter viii) nicely captures his key tenets. His most important, albeit anonymously published, work *Ad legem et ad testimonium* (1645), argues against ecclesiastical authority, promoting instead freedom to prophecy and religious toleration. The tract prompted two published critiques, by Samuel Desmarets and Johannes Hoornbeeck, and Boreel clearly relished the debate, publishing four further pamphlets (1647–8), encouraging all to respond to his work. This call for open discourse stands, however, in stark contrast to his disinclination to publish many of his other works.

Overall, Quatrini gives the impression of a man driven by powerful convictions of toleration, in which the state was not allowed to meddle in spiritual affairs, where