schemes on the continent, none of these 'would ever be hatched on English soil, nor would the Queen's life ever be for a minute in danger'. The so-called plots were described either as rumours or deceptions instigated by Elizabeth's Protestant ministers to falsely incriminate Mary Stuart.

It is noticeable that Martin mistakenly places the separation of the Elizabethan espionage system into different groups within the larger factionalism between Essex and the Cecils that occurred in the 1590s. Actually, as early as the late 1570s, the divergence over English interventionist policy regarding the continental Protestant wars—whether such intervention should serve first the 'advancement of the Gospel' or state interests and ruling legitimacy—had split Elizabethan espionage into rival components. Burghley and Walsingham individually organised their own spy systems to reflect these objectives. In the 1580s, the two systems monitored, defamed, and impeded each other, as well as contended for Catholic intelligence, in order to undermine each other's prominence, and benefit their respective parties in policy debate. Martin misunderstands the mid-Elizabethan espionage system as a collective and constitutional state service under the sole leadership of Walsingham, and thereby neglects the different involvement and influence of Burghley and Walsingham on Catholic counter-espionage. In 1590, Walsingham's death with no male heirs meant the surviving portion of his intelligence service was divided between his son-in-law Essex, and, ironically, his conservative rivals, the Cecils. The majority of Walsingham's intelligence employees, such as Nicholas Faunt, Arthur Gregory, Thomas Lake, Geoffrey Davis, Anthony Standen, Charles Chester, and Anthony Roston, preferred service with Cecil due to his more profitable patronage. In 1601, the execution of Essex and the victory of Cecil in the factional struggle finally drove the divided Elizabethan espionage system towards a union.

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Susan Doran and Paulina Kewes, eds., *Doubtful and Dangerous. The Question of the Succession in Late Elizabethan England*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014, pp. xvi + 320, £75.00, ISBN: 978-0-7190-8606-9 (hardback), £16.99, ISBN: 978-1-7849-9359-7 (paperback)

The succession to the throne after the death of the last Tudor was an issue which hung over the entire Elizabethan period. It was at the

https://doi.org/10.1017/bch.2017.10 Published online by Cambridge University Press

centre of the crisis of 1569-72, the various debates over the queen's marriage (most notably in recent historiography the Anjou match), the fate of Mary Stuart, the 'monarchical republican' interregnum plan of the mid 1580s, and much else. Recently, as historians have explored the complexities of the 'long English Reformation', the elements of continuity within Catholicism, and the febrile debates between and within various religious persuasions, this uncertainty over the fate of the religious settlement has added a further dimension to the tendency to see the reign as dominated by anxiety for the future.

This volume reflects these concerns, and also draws on the close interest recently paid to the tensions within and beyond the regime during the 1590s. Susan Doran and Paulina Kewes must be congratulated for bringing together a very strong lineup of authors in this volume of fifteen contributions. The editors themselves contribute two jointly-written initial chapters: an historiographical introduction of the issue and a substantial chapter revisiting the succession in the period up to the Armada; both are very useful surveys. Furthermore, each contributes a solo essay. Kewes's fine essay discusses the attitudes of puritans to James VI, illuminating the close attention to events, the manoeuvres of activists and the wheels within wheels all set off by the incomplete and contested religious settlement, while Doran's discusses the consequences of James's Scottishness.

Catholic themes recur throughout the book; an illustration of just how far Catholic history has become part of the mainstream of early modern British historiography. One of the most interesting features on the political scene in Elizabeth's last decade, the Archpriest controversy and its ramifications, receives extensive treatment in two essays. Peter Lake and Michael Questier revisit the controversy in the context of the succession, pointing out that one of the effects of the Appellants' espousal of James's claims, and of the Elizabethan regime's support for the Appellants, was that the regime was 'sending very public ... reassurances northwards that James was indeed now the man' (p. 85). At the same time the Appellants were making their pitches as good, obedient subjects of the state to both the outgoing and incoming monarchs. The dedicatee of the volume, Patrick Collinson, in his last published work, deals with the role of Richard Bancroft, bishop of London and hammer of the puritans, in the Archpriest controversy, and the relevance of the succession to that involvement. This is something of a companion piece to his book on Richard Bancroft, and, in contrast to Lake and Questier, Collinson prefers to draw the most straightforward available conclusion: that Bancroft was seeking to divide the English Catholics, and that the significance of this for the succession was probably only a secondary concern. This of course leaves open the question of whether other

https://doi.org/10.1017/bch.2017.10 Published online by Cambridge University Press

elements in the regime had wider objectives, as Lake and Questier argue.

Both Alexandra Gajda and Thomas McCoog consider the claims that Robert Cecil and his allies, Lords Buckhurst and Howard of Effingham, considered a Spanish successor, though neither is wholly conclusive. McCoog also shows how indecision on the part of Spain and the papacy led to the failure to mount a serious effort on behalf of a Catholic candidate against James. Furthermore, as Alexander Courtney shows, the crypto-Catholic Lord Henry Howard played a key role alongside Sir Robert Cecil in the correspondence with James which made a smooth succession possible. Again, these were all signs of the continued influence of Catholics in public life, a reminder of the salience of Catholic ideas, Catholic critiques and the potential of Catholic action even at the end of Elizabeth's reign. Indeed, the role of Robert Persons, recurs in virtually every chapter, showing how far his notorious *Conference about the Next Succession* set many of the terms of debate.

Broader archipelagic and European contexts are also covered. Rory Rapple considers the neglected topic of the impact of the uncertainty over the succession on the ongoing wars in Ireland. His thought-provoking essay finds several suggestive implications of succession-oriented thinking on the complex web of motives among the participants in Ireland. He suggests that the rebel earl of Tyrone's motive was ultimately to secure himself a bargaining position when the crucial moment arrived, and demonstrates how thoroughly the succession permeated political life, with the likes of Tyrone, Essex, James and others setting themselves up as brokers to help solve the problems they had often created themselves.

This volume's achievement is not so much to radically revise the major elements of our understanding of the transition between monarchs in 1603. Probably its greatest contribution in this regard is to stress the uncertainty—the doubtfulness—of the matter, and how late in the reign that persisted. In that respect it is slightly regrettable that no author chose to essay a counterfactual—what other candidate might realistically have succeeded? What it does most enjoyably, however, is to offer a wonderful cross-section of the complexities of the political universe of Elizabethan England: monarchical, religious, aristocratic, urban, British, Irish and European ideas and motives pulling in different directions as individuals and groups sought to defend their interests. This is mostly practical politics; there is little abstract political thinking, as Blair Worden points out in his Afterword; Malcolm Smuts's analysis of John Hayward's political thought is the major exception. Essays by Arnold Hunt, Richard McCabe and Richard Dutton on the ways the succession crept in to (and crept out of) sermons, rumour and literature reinforce this. This

close, detailed attention to political conjunctions and their implications for different sections of society shows very clearly how divisive and dangerous the succession and the religious and political future of England remained in Elizabeth's later years.

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Francis Young, *The Gages of Hengrave and Suffolk Catholicism 1640-1767*, Catholic Record Society Monograph Series, 2015, pp. 277, £50.00, ISBN: 9780902832299

The Gages of Hengrave and Suffolk Catholicism, 1640–1767 follows in the footsteps of previous publications for the Catholic Record Society's monograph series in providing a comprehensive examination of post Reformation Catholicism. It is well researched and builds upon previous work by Francis Young on Catholicism in East Anglia including 'The Bishop's Palace at Ely as a Prison for Recusants, 1577–1597', *Recusant History* 32 (2014) and 'Papists and Non-jurors in the Isle of Ely, 1559–1745', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society,* 104 (2015). The volume would therefore be of interest to historians of East Anglia as well as those concerned with the history of Catholicism.

The central premise of the book is asserted in the opening paragraph, namely that Catholic history is essentially family history. The family of the Gages are central to this volume, as would be expected, but equally kinship networking common to early modern society is seen extensively in action in this account of East Anglia. This study draws in other families such as the Rookwoods, Darcys and Kytsons who were fellow recusants, and also conformists such as the Herveys, Springs and Jermyns. The books also places the Gages, later to be the Rookwood-Gages, in the context of wider Suffolk gentry networks.

The book covers a period from the mid seventeenth century through to eighteenth century; this excludes the more frequently examined eras of the Tudor and early-Stuart eras but widens the study to cover the later periods of Civil War and revolution. The structure is largely chronological and takes the reader through the successive phases of the family's life. The Gages themselves were gentry but the examination of local society also draws in those who fell within their orbit from other social groupings. The societal interactions of the period also involve conformists of the lower social groups, and analysis of these relationships could perhaps have been further developed to allow for

https://doi.org/10.1017/bch.2017.10 Published online by Cambridge University Press