

his times. For the interested general reader, the biography presents a comprehensive and informative interpretation of Cnut's life that will encourage repeat reading. For those familiar with his life there is perhaps more to disagree with, but Bolton nevertheless presents an interesting and thought-provoking view of Cnut's reign that will inform debate for years to come.

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MICHAEL J. BRADDICK and PHIL WITHINGTON, eds. *Popular Culture and Political Agency in Early Modern England and Ireland: Essays in Honour of John Walter*. Studies in Early Modern Cultural, Political and Social History 26. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2017. Pp. 311. \$99.00 (cloth).

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Over the past four decades, John Walter has written brilliantly on a broad array of interconnected issues—on the politics of subsistence and the history of the state; on crowds and riots, protest and violence; on political agency and political consciousness; on gesture and gender; on religious commitment and confessional division; and on the entangled operations of power and resistance, legitimation, and negotiation. An accomplished essayist and master of the microstudy, he has been a key figure in the cohort of historians who have put the “political” back into social history; equally significantly, he has led the charge among a much smaller group of historians who have put the “social” back into high political history. The heavyweight list of contributors to this festschrift, *Popular Culture and Political Agency in Early Modern England and Ireland*, drawn from Walter's colleagues, collaborators, and friends, makes clear his significance in contemporary early modern studies. The fourteen essays collected by editors Michael Braddick and Phil Withington are short and suggestive rather than definitive, but they are uniformly interesting and range impressively across social, cultural, and political history, reaching back into the later Middle Ages and forward into the nineteenth century, but centering primarily on early modern England and Ireland.

Braddick and Withington cede responsibility for an overview of Walter's career to Keith Thomas, whose occasionally combative assessment contextualizes Walter's work in its Cambridge and Essex academic milieus, and in the new, anthropologically informed social history. Richard M. Smith and Paul Slack offer interesting papers on aspects of governmentality and the history of the state. Smith sketches out the later medieval social and political origins of a new set of relationships between the crown and the village elites it would come to depend upon to exercise power in the localities; while Slack explores how the economic and political crisis of the 1620s created conditions for an intellectual rupture that would transform how English governments would understand and administer the economy.

Alexandra Shepard and Amanda Flather explore women's agency within the gendered “grids of power” that structured early modern society. Shepard cleverly uses civil law depositions to reconstruct how women presented themselves as “earners and producers” (78), and suggests that women's self-conception as honest laborers with multiple responsibilities may have provided a legitimating script for participation in popular protest. Flather sketches a potentially fascinating argument about the gendered experience of Laudianism in the 1630s, suggesting that a distinctive female experience of the new ceremonialism shaped women's participation in a variety of anti-Laudian protests from refusing to be churched to acts of iconoclasm to formal denunciations of scandalous ministers.

Keith Wrightson develops these discussions of agency, class and gender by exploring the “everyday time consciousness” (94) revealed in testimony to the Durham church courts. He quantifies interesting divergences between the time consciousness of rural and urban, male and female, old and young witnesses, and he concludes by urging further work on how “people’s quotidian senses of time ... related to their daily agency within particular communities of practice” (106).

Andy Wood and Steve Hindle’s essays focus on the short- and long-term politics of early modern enclosure and protest. Wood’s marvelous analysis of a nineteenth-century Lancastrian ghost story about the restless spirit of an abusive early Tudor landlord evokes the complex intersections of place and work, memory and folklore, power and resistance in a northern community across two centuries. Hindle’s astute case study of the aftermath of the 1607 Midland Rising reconstructs the double-edged nature of legitimating discourses of early modern magistracy, focusing on the enclosing landlord Sir John Newdigate who was both smeared by his plebeian critics and prosecuted by the crown for failing to live up to the ideals that legitimated elite power.

J. C. Davis’s essay adds to Hindle’s analysis of the legitimating discourses of elite power, surveying the centrality of the Golden Rule in early modern writing, and exploring the Rule’s place in understandings of elite obligations to the governed. The mandate to “do unto others” was part of a shared discursive terrain upon which early modern power relations were negotiated. Mark Knights and Phil Withington offer suggestive essays on political concepts and keywords, with both historians mining digitized databases to quantify their keywords’ frequency and associations. Knights’ focus is “corruption,” and he neatly emphasizes its indelible religious meanings and association with popery. Withington is interested in “democracy” both as (Aristotelian) concept—he tracks the terminology’s late Elizabethan and early Stuart “assimilation into the English printed vernacular”—and as practice in the political “taskscape” of “English corporate citizenship” (207).

The final three essays focus on the 1640s. Michael Braddick analyses John Lilburne’s “mastery of the techniques of political mobilisation” (224) made possible by revolutionary crisis, a mastery that provided new ways to exercise political agency from outside the traditional elite while also enabling radical “intellectual creativity” (225). John Morrill engages with Walter’s recent work on the 1641–42 English Protestation Oath, offering a case study of the politics of the Irish Catholic Oath of Association between 1642 and 1647. Through astute close textual readings, Morrill explores how different versions of the oath attempted to forge Irish Catholic unity while revealing the “tension between primary loyalties” that would pull that unity apart (255). Clodagh Tait explores the histories of emotion—experienced and represented—revealed in victim depositions about the 1641 Irish Rebellion. Tait notes the subtle politics of the victims’ insistence on the experience of “passive” emotions like grief rather than “active” ones like anger, and tentatively explores the meanings of the emotional “euphoria” allegedly experienced by perpetrators of violent atrocity.

These essays showcase important trends in early modern study, and their fusion of different methodological approaches along with a close attention to the intersections of elite and popular experience make this book a fitting tribute to a historian whose work has done so much to overthrow the fences that obstruct our access to the past.

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