

envoys, maintaining, against recent historiographical interpretations, the private nature of the fourteenth-century popes' interventions in the Anglo-French conflict. As Willershausen argues in the last section of his book, we should in fact distinguish the pope's and his representatives' private mediation in the Hundred Years' War from the public role of the Apostolic See as an institution, which was seen by the time of the peace of Brétigny-Calais as guarantor of peace among the parties and which was reaffirmed in the contemporary papal interventions concerning the clash between the Church and Crown in England over provision to ecclesiastical benefices. However, although suggestive and worth noting, this interpretation seems difficult to prove through the surviving evidence, as fourteenth-century papal documents and other sources do not really draw a clear and definitive distinction between the pope and his representatives as individuals and the Apostolic See as an office.

All in all, despite some of its controversial claims Willershausen's book has to be praised as the only comprehensive recent study which specifically addresses papal involvement in the first phase of the Hundred Years' War. Whether or not one agrees with the author's conclusions, the book evidently challenges the existing historiography and revises established historiographical interpretations, especially through the careful and fresh reading of fourteenth-century chronicles. On a presentation level, Willershausen's style still echoes the format of a doctoral dissertation and there is some confusion on details in the footnotes and the index, where names of persons and places are occasionally not included. Despite this criticism, the book has to be listed among the standard works which should be read and cited on this topic.

UNIVERSITY OF KENT,
CANTERBURY

BARBARA BOMBI

Carnal knowledge. Regulating sex in England, 1470–1600. By Martin Ingram. (Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History.) Pp. xvi + 465 incl. 13 tables and 2 maps. Cambridge–New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017. £64.99. 978 1 107 17987
JEH (69) 2018; doi:10.1017/S0022046918000258

The regulation of sexual activity is a topic not far from the news headlines in any era it seems, but, as Martin Ingram points out, 'it is incontrovertible that legal regulation of sexual behaviour in both men and women was so important as to be a defining feature of late medieval and early modern society' (p. 32). The era covered by the book is one in which age at first marriage was late, and where disentangling oneself from an unsuitable marriage was normally only possible in the sense of a formal separation from 'bed and board' which left neither party lawfully able to remarry. Inevitably, this led to many circumstances in which sexual activity outside marriage, or sinful 'fleshely medlynge' as William Harrington put it in 1515 (p. 44), was brought to the attention both of the state and the church courts. With this in mind this book seeks answers to the key questions of 'How was the law used to control sex in Tudor England?' and 'What were the differences between secular and religious practice?' One of the ways in which the book answers

these questions is by demonstrating the extent to which ordinary people concerned themselves with the sexual lives of their peers. And indeed, as Ingram observes, this was a society ‘where people were expected to observe their neighbours’ behaviour and to evaluate their sexual “honesty”’ (p. 32). For cases to reach the courts incidents, suspicions or behavioural patterns had to be reported, either formally or through the spreading of gossip which was rife in this era (p. 194). Thus the book is infused with stories and words of those accused of sexual misconduct, such as John Wymborne who in January 1478 was brought before a church court for adultery with Alice Norton. The couple denied the offence but were ordered to stay away from one another, only to be cited again in the October, at which time Wymborne admitted that ‘he was in the house of the said Agnes, around ten o’clock of the night’. Wymborne himself then sued a neighbour only the following month for spreading the rumour that he had been ‘found between the legs of a certain woman’ (pp. 127–8). As in this instance, Ingram’s examples show time and again that language used in the charges is often remarkably direct. The depth of research and skilled analysis offered by *Carnal knowledge* adds to the sum of scholarly understanding of attitudes to sexual behaviours and its consequences in premodern England in ways which mean that for anyone interested in social, ecclesiastical or sexual history this book is required reading. Its recent publication in paperback makes this study available to a wider audience and so is welcome.

LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY

SARA READ

White eagle, black Madonna. One thousand years of the Polish Catholic tradition. By Robert E. Alvis. Pp. xv + 349 incl. 19 ills and 5 maps. New York: Fordham University Press, 2016. £28.99 (paper). 978 0 823 27170 2

Polonia reformata. Essays on the Polish Reformation(s). By Piotr Wilczek (Refo500 Academic Studies, 36). Pp. 148. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016, €80 978 3 525 55250 6.

JEH (69) 2018; doi:10.1017/S0022046918000027

Robert E. Alvis and Piotr Wilczek concur that despite the growing number of English-language works on Polish history, the history of Christianity in Poland remains sparsely covered in English. This claim requires some nuancing. Since the turn of the millennium academic presses have published monographs on various aspects of Polish or Polish-Lithuanian ecclesiastical history by, *inter alios*, Brian Porter-Szűcs, Neal Pease, Barbara Skinner, Piotr Stolarski, Serhii Plokhyy, Magda Teter, David Frick and Richard Butterwick-Pawlikowski, as well as translations of Jerzy Kłoczowski’s *A history of Polish Christianity* (Cambridge 2000) and Wojciech Kriegseisen’s comparative *opus* on early modern confessions and the state. Numerous articles on Poland and Lithuania have also appeared in the columns of this and other Anglophone journals. The problem rather lies in the reluctance of some authors of general histories to trouble themselves with understanding developments in Poland and Lithuania – despite their evident importance to the history of Christianity, long before John Paul II appeared on the balcony of St Peter’s in 1978. In this regard, while Diarmaid MacCulloch acquitted himself admirably in both *Reformation* (London 2003) and *Christianity*