focusing on the local courts and assuming that what happened there formed a greater part of ordinary people's perception of the law, Johnson is able to argue that we need to consider the forces working from the bottom up in addition to those working from the top down. Demonstrating that these bottom-up forces had any effect on what was going on at the top is beyond the scope of the book. One is reminded, however, of the painful process by which the central royal courts reformed themselves over the course of the fifteenth, and particularly the sixteenth, century, and one has to wonder if the bottom-up forces were not among the causes of that reform.

The book contains a number of insightful generalizations. The local courts in rural areas strove to build community, and at least in some cases successfully. The urban courts were more conflictual, both because of their multiplicity and, perhaps, because the crowded conditions of late medieval urban areas had already made for a bit too much community. The expertise of the mariners meant that the litigants and their circle had to be brought into the decision-making process of the maritime courts. In the forest areas, the expertise was with the forest officers, and that meant that the tenants of the forest areas were pawns in a process designed exclusively for the purpose of protecting the nonhuman ecology of the forest.

None of the four subjects chosen to illustrate the common characteristics of the local courts was characteristic only of the local courts, nor was any of them totally new in the fifteenth century, though there was certainly a dramatic increase in the use of English to express legal ideas. Johnson's description of the way in which medieval people shaped nature and then regarded what they had done as natural is striking, as is his conceptualization of the use of lay people with local knowledge as an economy. We have charters written on behalf of unfree landholders from the thirteenth century, but the final paragraph of the chapter on written documents is convincing: the rebels of 1388 burned written documents; those of 1450 produced them.

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The Puritans: A Transatlantic History. David D. Hall.
Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019. vi + 518 pp. $35.

Many historical topics have generated huge quantities of scholarly energy. The fall of the Roman Empire, the European Renaissance and Reformations, the rise of nation states in Europe, the French Revolution, the Industrial Revolution, the American Civil War, the causes of World War I, and the Holocaust quickly spring to mind. If we think of such subjects as mountain ranges, these belong in the Himalayan category, and Puritanism is certainly among them as well. David Hall's book is a deeply informed, highly nuanced masterpiece, and anyone seeking a wise, sure-footed guide among the Puritan peaks should begin with this fascinating volume. It is required reading not only for new students but also for the many veterans such as this reviewer who have for decades applied themselves to understanding the Puritan movement from its inception in the mid-sixteenth century until its demise late in the seventeenth.

At 356 pages of text and 133 of footnotes, it is weighty but reads smoothly because Hall's writing is precise, clear, and engaging. He often captures a key idea in vivid prose. For example, he says that the early Puritans thought of the published homilies issued under Edward VI and his stepsister Elizabeth as "pebbles cast into a sea of spiritual darkness" (44). As for Elizabeth: "famously, the queen said no to the men who wanted to marry her. The no that resonates in this book is hers to a further reformation. . . . Enter the Puritan movement" (45). Although he does not quote Conrad Russell on this point, he here aligns himself with Russell's perceptive dictum that "the diagnostic sign of a Parliamentarian is [Simonds] D'Ewes's belief that Queen Elizabeth 'rather settled a beginning of a Reformation than a Reformation" (*The Causes of the English Civil War* [1990], 20). Hall's way of putting this is that the Elizabethan Puritans thought of her settlement as "a way station on a journey that would conclude when the state church had become emphatically Protestant" (44).

One of the many virtues of Hall's approach is that, instead of remaining in one of two separate silos (Reformation in England and Scotland), he considers "them side by side as companions who share the same project" (4), and then shows how and why, despite their commonalities, they not only went in different directions but developed particular fissures within themselves. The third silo he successfully connects to the other two is the version of Puritanism that initially emerged in New England in the 1630s. The welcome result is to enable his readers to gain new insights into the political dynamics that at times brought the Reformers together and at other times divided them. Proponents of all three of these Puritan movements shared, among other features, a fierce opposition to what they saw as the idolatry and superstition of Roman Catholic worship, an apocalyptic outlook combined with emphasis on divine providence, and an insistence on "an evangelical and social activism predicated on transforming self, church, and society into a 'new order' approximating the kingdom of Christ" (24).

Hall attends intently to the presence of Puritan Reformers in each of the three venues who were ready "to blur the hard edges of reform" rather than demand open resistance to the monarchs they had to contend with such as Elizabeth I and the early Stuarts (38). His sensitive presentation of the situation of Puritans in Scotland and England under those monarchs whose policies left a door (or at least a small window) open to the moderates to pursue their goals by making certain compromises then gives way to his exposition of the new and threatening situation they faced beginning with Charles I's tilt toward Laudianism in the mid-1620s. As Hall puts it, "the more Charles expanded on what his father had begun, the more he undermined each of the assumptions that had enabled moderates in the three states to downplay 'conscience' and endure the 'old non-conformity'"(205). The outcome was rebellion, first in Scotland in 1637 and then in England in 1642. Hall's account of the 1640s and 1650s completes his masterful and enlightening survey.

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Thomas Fuller: Discovering England's Religious Past. W. B. Patterson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018. x + 368 pp. $85.

Moderates had an uncomfortable time during England's tumultuous seventeenth century. Individuals who nailed their colors to the mast and became avowed partisans risked emphatic defeat, depending on the religious, political, and military events of the day. But emphasizing the virtues of the middle ground, and the necessity of compromise, practically guaranteed disdain from whichever group of hardliners was in charge, whether Laudians, Puritans, or vengeful Cavaliers. And in terms of long-term reputation and scholarly attention, those written off as trimmers and Vicars of Bray have rarely attracted the adulation of any group of writers, keen to emphasize and enhance a particular tendency or movement in England's past. It is thus refreshing to encounter W. B. Patterson's careful and extensive account of a man whose witty mildness is attractive to modern liberal readers. The book also acts as a companion piece to Patterson's previous studies of different aspects of the broad religious middle ground, notably work on James VI/I's dreams of reuniting Christendom, and on William Perkins, the great communicator of Calvinism to the English.

Patterson's account is predominantly chronological, mixing details of Fuller's life and career with a recurring focus on the many and varied publications that flowed from his fluent pen. Thus we see the boy born in 1608 to a clergyman of the same name progress through Cambridge, take orders, benefit from patronage and employment, and endure the problems of the 1640s and 1650s. Although he became a chaplain in the Royalist armies, and at various times to both Princess Henrietta and the restored Charles II, Fuller was not fully embraced by the Royalist establishment. Too prone to see the best in moderate Puritans, and too keen to emphasize English kings' constitutional obligations, Fuller ultimately returned to live in London in 1646. He would appear successfully before the Triers during the Interregnum, and favored both comprehension and toleration as a means of healing and settling up to his early death in 1661. Evidence is brought to bear from a variety of archival sources, not least a careful trawl of the various parish registers relevant to his clerical career.

The heart of Patterson's work, though, is a series of detailed readings of Fuller's published works, particularly his *Church-History of Britain* (1655) and the *History of the Worthies of England*, published posthumously in 1662, but also a wide range of more miscellaneous texts: sermons, meditations, occasional tracts, histories of things as