limited groups—kin and friends, high-ranking clerics—enjoyed a greater license for frank speech before the powerful, and words might also flow more readily at meetings in a time of heightened tension, such as negotiations in wartime.

Althoff's vision of medieval politics is therefore relatively static. It is not, admittedly, wholly without change. He shows (chapter twelve) that by the twelfth century, the broad, agreed principles which rituals were best suited to express were increasingly supplemented by more detailed commitments and undertakings set down in writing. He assures readers that "it is no accident" that this amended, perhaps weakened, role for ritual followed the papal Reform movement and the conflicts to which it gave rise (166). But while we might imagine how the papacy's radical new claims to intervene in secular affairs, founded on textual, biblical authority, must have created an altered field for the customary rules of play, the connection might have been demonstrated more explicitly than is the case here. Althoff's pieces on papal Reform are placed instead within a self-contained section, with relatively little attempt at linking them to his larger arguments about rules and rituals.

The question of change is linked to a still more fundamental one, concerning the nature of Althoff's medieval world of power as performance. His cast of actors is small, consisting almost entirely of emperors, kings, popes, and high nobles, secular and spiritual, drawn mainly from the German-speaking lands of the Holy Roman Empire (repeatedly referred to, confusingly, simply as "the realm"—an insensitive anglicization of *Reich*?). Althoff reflects that his rules-based model illuminates no medieval society so well as it does high medieval Germany. The reason for this he makes clear from the start: Germany constituted a "pre-state society" (vii), in which, in the absence of mature institutions of government, peace and order depended upon establishing recognized conventions governing the behavior of those born to practise violence. These essays are the work of a historian most at home in the post-Carolingian East Frankia of the tenth and eleventh centuries. Althoff is, after all, the author of a book about the Ottonians subtitled "Royal Lordship without a State" (*Die Ottonen* [2000]). But this subtitle alerts us to something else, evident also in the essays in this volume. Althoff is a historian with a mission: definitively to banish the shadow of the State and its accompanying toxic language of nationalist power-worship from German medievalism. But necessary as such cultural bomb-disposal may be, its accomplishment comes at a price. It leaves us asking just how much politics, even in high medieval Germany, is omitted and obscured by a viewpoint focused only upon the interpersonal transactions of the gilded few. It leaves us wondering, too, whether Althoff's world of high-stakes performativity, in which a summit meeting might be thrown into painfully visible crisis by a spat about seating arrangements, is such an archaic one after all.

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# Wirtschaft, Krieg und Seelenheil. Papst Martin V., Kaiser Sigismund und das Handelsverbot gegen die Hussiten in Böhmen

## By Alexandra Kaar. Vienna and Cologne: Böhlau, 2020. Pp. 387. €55 (HB). ISBN 978-3-205-20940-9.

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The measures taken against Hussitism across fifteenth-century Europe increasingly attract the attention of historians. The last two years witnessed the publication of three

monographs dealing with the theological polemic against Hussite teachings and a book on the exile of Catholic clergy from Hussite Bohemia. Alexandra Kaar has enriched this thriving yet still developing research area with a monographic treatment of the embargo on trade with the Hussite heretics. As its title (*Economy, War, and Salvation*) suggests, the book moves on the borders of economic, military, and religious history. It explores the period of the Hussite wars from 1420 till 1436 and looks closely at the normative framework and practical implementation of the ban on commercial relations with the Hussites. The sources include papal, conciliar, and royal mandates as well as documents and letters related to litigations and accusations; the preserved correspondence from Nuremberg and, to a lesser extent, Olomouc is most valuable in this respect. The topic and the major sources have been studied before (especially the Nuremberg *Briefbücher*, which became the subject of several studies by Miloslav Polívka). Nevertheless, Alexandra Kaar's collection of both edited and unedited sources is unprecedented and provides an excellent starting position for her analysis and interpretation.

The author's aim is twofold: to describe the anti-Hussite embargo as an instrument in the fight against heresy, and to look at the trade ban as cultural practice with some symbolic value—an aspect neglected in previous scholarship (80). Stefan Stantchev's *Spiritual Rationality: Papal Embargo as Cultural Practice* (2014) provided Kaar not only with larger background and parallels from the Mediterranean but also with a good deal of methodological inspiration (21, 83). Consequently, Kaar's book is divided into three main parts: the discussion of the embargo as an instrument of war is followed by its interpretation as a "process of symbolic communication" (217), and by an attempt to synthetize the two approaches under the heading of "practice of government" (281). The second part offers some excellent examples of how the embargo was used by Catholic authorities as a means of propaganda, while the third part traces how much influence the subjects, especially municipalities, had on those who imposed the embargo (a bottom-up process). It seems to me, however, that the spheres of propaganda and governance are difficult to hold apart and that their combination under one heading would have better balanced out the extensive chapter on instrumental aspects (which, after all, is longer than the other two chapters combined). Moreover, while the symbolic dimension of the ban on contacts with heretics is well demonstrated, and the crucial role of communication in enforcing the embargo is beyond doubt, I am not sure whether the label "process of symbolic communication" is apposite (e.g., 280). The sources document lively written communication, not ritual action or any complex, symbolically encoded performance—even though the letters and charters often pursued an additional goal of outward presentation, thus encompassing a symbolic element (298, 317).

Alexandra Kaar decided to structure her book thematically rather than chronologically. She discusses the actors and geography of mercantile relationships, individual commodities in long-distance and local trade, the measures adopted for enforcing the embargo, as well as the penalties imposed for its breach. As a result, individual cases, especially those relatively well documented in the sources, are discussed repeatedly in various chapters. The book is furnished with extensive introductory, concluding, and summarizing sections, which leads to further repetition. The numerous internal references do facilitate the use of the book but not the fluency of reading. The reader soon becomes acquainted with recurrent characters of prominent delinquents, but a chronological overview of the legislative acts enforcing the embargo and perhaps also of the best-documented cases of such traffic would have been useful somewhere at the beginning of the book.

On the other hand, the advantage of the analytical structure is the resulting vivid, wide-angle portrait of the relationships between the Hussites and the Catholics under the trade embargo. As the author says early on, imposing a complete blockade was impossible under the conditions of premodern government (15). Foreign merchants maintained contacts with their Catholic counterparts in Bohemia and Moravia, who in turn were frequently and inevitably in touch with their Hussite neighbors (215). The importance of Catholic towns near the Bohemian border (Plzeň, Cheb, České Budějovice) and in Moravia increased without

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diminishing the role of Prague as the main hub for long-distance trade (308). Food and consumables (rather than military equipment and material) dominated the black market, for neither party could get by without imported goods (152). The means of control and enforcement of the ban were inspired by the mechanisms of medieval feud (313); black marketeers were usually punished with arrest and seizure of cargo (191). As the author revealingly observes, the periods of more intensive prosecution correspond to moments of increased fear of the Hussites and do not indicate more intensive trade (250). Imposing or overseeing the ban often served propagandistic purposes, mostly as a defense against charges of tepidity against heretics. The sources also suggest that the embargo was believed to have a preventive function in relation to sin, since contact with heretics as well as greed threatened one's salvation (222, 294).

Records from the Second Hussite War against King George of Poděbrady would enrich this picture and enhance its comparative potential (315); they, however, stay outside the scope of the present book. Focusing on the first wave of Hussite crusades, Alexandra Kaar provides a detailed and reliable account of the anti-Hussite embargo. This thorough and carefully written monograph will be a welcome source of information for anyone interested in the Hussite wars, the history of trade, and everyday life in confessionally mixed areas.

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# The Jews and the Reformation

## By Kenneth Austin. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2020. Pp. 288. $45 (HB). ISBN 9780300186291.

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The present volume offers a broad and highly nuanced picture of Christian–Jewish relations in the age of the Reformation. In fact, its scope is much broader than the title might initially suggest. Encompassing most of the early modern period and vast territories in West and Central Europe, Kenneth Austin's book takes us on a journey that begins with the expulsion of the Jews from the Iberian Peninsula and their ghettoization in Italy during the late fifteenth and the early-sixteenth centuries and ends with the Jewish settlement in Amsterdam and the readmission of the Jews to England during the seventeenth century. Along the way, we are introduced to the attitudes of greater and lesser Reformers toward Jews and Judaism, the various attempts of secular rulers to control and regulate the Jewish minority in their territories, the flourishing of Christian Hebraism and the constant fear of "Judaization," and the entanglement of Jewish Messianism and Christian Millenarianism. All these events, trends, and developments, the author asserts, are interrelated, and must be jointly considered in any attempt to narrate a full and comprehensive history of Christian–Jewish relations in the Reformation era.

The book focuses on Christian attitudes toward the Jews on three different, yet closely intertwined levels. Christians from all confessions—Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed—were concerned with the Jews living in their midst and with the question how to deal with this minority. But they were also concerned with the Jews of the past—the Old Testament people of Israel—as well as with the Jews of the future, whose role at the end of time and their expected conversion to Christianity became a significant issue. As the author argues, "[i]t