

Natural and Political Conceptions of Community: The Role of the Household Society in Early Modern Jesuit Thought, c.1590–1650. Christoph Philipp Haar. Jesuit Studies: Modernity through the Prism of Jesuit History 17. Leiden: Brill, 2019. viii + 314 pp. \$158.

The study of the early Society of Jesus seems to be gaining ever more momentum. Numerous books in recent years have examined not only the Jesuits' role in the religious reforms, struggles, and transformations of the Reformation era, both in Europe and overseas, but also their impact as a cultural force in the early modern age. Christoph Philipp Haar contributes to that discussion in his insightful *Natural and Political Conceptions of Community*, which focuses on the Jesuits' conception of the nature and role of the household and its relationship to the wider political community. More specifically, he examines the writings of some of the major Jesuit theologians from the late sixteenth to the mid-seventeenth centuries. One of the strengths of this study is its extensive examination of the sources that these early modern Jesuits relied upon and, to various degrees, modified and made their own. Paramount were the writings of Aristotle and Aquinas, the latter of whom was greatly indebted to the corpus of the great Greek polymath. In addition, the major works of Plato and Augustine, as well as those of some significant Franciscans and Dominicans, influenced the discussions and writings of the early Society of Jesus.

Chief among these Jesuit thinkers were Francisco Suárez, Luis de Molina, and Rodrigo de Arriaga, who built upon the foundations of their great forebears. Haar's primary interest is in their political and legal ideas in relation to theology and spirituality, and, more specifically, the relationship between the household and the political community or commonwealth. The Jesuit writers were in general agreement regarding the naturalness of both the household and the political community, and believed that these vital human institutions were, in significant ways, interdependent. Notably, especially in comparison with many earlier thinkers, the household had a very important role in Jesuit political thought. According to Harr, "the household community was firmly located on the horizon of Jesuit thought on natural and political conceptions of community" (276). Of course, on that broad Jesuit philosophical and theological horizon, there were differences of opinion, as, for example, between Molina and Suarez in the debate over nature and grace. The latter was in his way less Augustinian—i.e., less skeptical of the human condition after the Fall but before the gift of divine grace.

Another area that Haar discusses is justice in economic and political life—what he refers to as legal justice. He examines Thomistic and Scholastic thought in this regard, and then looks at the writings of several Jesuits, especially Gregorio de Valencia, Adam Tanner, and Leonardus Lessius. Haar notes that Suárez, the best known of the Jesuit Scholastics, did not write on this topic, which may be the reason that it has not been much explored. Of particular import, unlike Aristotle, the Jesuits used the concept of legal justice to draw connections between the household and politics. Based on his

various contentions, Haar thus sums up his thesis: “the Jesuits sought to combine political right based on contract . . . with the general, or legal justice that produced a stable, peaceful community and that represented a standard by which to measure the community’s legitimacy” (279).

This very scholarly work examines in considerable depth an understudied area of Jesuit academic discourse regarding the family community and the political realm. Although a bit dense at times, it expands our understanding of the wide range of topics that various early modern Jesuits engaged with, and how these fit into the larger structure of their philosophical and theological worldviews. Moreover, in addition to discussing the views of leading Jesuit voices of the period such as Suárez and Molina, Haar has broadened our understanding by incorporating into his study the writings and insights of a number of lesser-known but important Jesuit theorists. Thus, it contributes to our considerably expanding knowledge of the early Society of Jesus and its intellectual and pastoral impact.

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The Sacred and the Sinister: Studies in Medieval Religion and Magic.

David J. Collins, ed.

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Theodor Adorno suggests that language was born in the cry of surprise. The same could also be said for the study of magic and religion in the work of Richard Kieckhefer, for whom this volume is a festschrift. The most compelling aspects of Kieckhefer’s work lie in his exploration of key polarities of medieval religious thought as well as those implicit in modern approaches to the period: sacred versus sinister, holy versus unholy, magic versus religion, conventional piety versus radical outliers, *fascinatio* versus *ecstasia*, and magical thinking versus rationality. His most significant articles have provokingly demonstrated the ways in which these apparent contraries in medieval culture may share significant and startling commonalities—the ways, for example, that the necromancer may be considered the devil’s contemplative. Using this approach, he has argued for subtle reappraisals or reorientations in our thinking. Apparent outliers in medieval mystical piety, for example, should be considered less as anarchic principles opposing convention than as examples of *conversio*, a turning back to religion. The intent of this volume is to celebrate Kieckhefer’s work by extending his project, particularly, as the editor David Collins says, his exploration of “the interplay between holy and unholy, sacred and profane, and supernatural and natural in medieval Europe” (9). As one might expect with an edited collection, not all the articles fit securely within