

The new approaches and topics set out here will certainly aid in the fulfillment of Canny's plea, attracting a new generation of historians while revitalizing the field and those already working in it, ensuring the continued growth of interest in early modern Ireland. Each of the essays, too numerous to consider individually here, set out larger developments and themes in clear and accessible language suitable for undergraduates and those new to the subject, such as Annaleigh Margey's helpful overview of plantations, their evolution, theorization, and historiography, while offering novel and nuanced interpretations sure to reinvigorate advanced scholars.

Valerie McGowan-Doyle, *Lorain County Community College / Kent State University*
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Women, Food Exchange, and Governance in Early Modern England.

Madeline Bassnett.

Early Modern Literature in History. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. x + 248 pp. \$109.99.

Bassnett's groundbreaking monograph puts women, food, and politics center table. She places a full plate before readers. In Mary Sidney Herbert's *Psalms*, Elizabeth Clinton's *The Countesse of Lincolnes Nurserie*, the diary of Margaret Hoby, and Mary Wroth's *Urania*, food exchange is a part of divine gift-giving. These women cultivate a "Protestant food ethic" wherein they become "intermediaries" of "God's good governance" (12, 17). By moving women's relationship with food beyond the kitchen, situating food as a divine gift, and adding politics to the mix, Bassnett becomes an influential voice in ongoing table talk on hospitality and charity. Thus, she builds upon work by Felicity Heal (named in her bibliography) and is in direct conversation with David Goldstein and Julia Reinhard Lupton (see their edited collection *Shakespeare and Hospitality* [2016]). More importantly, she provides an invaluable perspective on early modern food studies, which, barring the excellent scholarship on recipes and domesticity, has largely left women behind kitchen doors. Those interested in food studies, women's writing, women's religio-political agency, or the history of English Protestantism should not hesitate to add this monograph to their bookshelves.

The argument, presented in two sections, spans five main chapters, an introduction, and a short epilogue. The first section focuses on the providential (Sidney Herbert and Clinton) and the second on the physiological (Hoby and Wroth). Chapter 4 persuasively fuses the two sections, finding gastronomic links between Protestant theology and humoral theory in Hoby's diary. Hoby, through temperate spiritual dieting, becomes a site of godly governance in her estate and the region of York, a recusant stronghold.

Each chapter balances the local with the national and international. Sidney Herbert's *Psalms* advises Elizabeth I to renew "militant Protestant expansionism" (25). Clinton employs a microcosm-macrocosm analogy to critique James I's failed paternal governance of England, his household, and England's international reputation when he refuses to interfere in the Thirty Years' War, abandoning both "daughter and the Protestant cause to . . . Catholic forces" (65). Wroth shares this Protestant critique of James I. As Bassnett argues in chapter 5, Wroth uses the Lady of Dobollo from *Urania*, part 1, to model how a ruler should choose just war and Tacitean simplicity (rooted in local foods) over "peacetime luxury" and notorious ante-suppers (143). Chapter 6 proposes that in part 2 of *Urania*, fruit (a gift associated with elite women) becomes a "diplomatic gift" that establishes international political alliances (187).

The most intriguing chapters are on Sidney Herbert and Clinton, who both respond to England's recurring dismal dance with dearth from the 1590s to the 1620s by using their poetry and prose to advise or admonish monarchs' husbandry skills. These chapters contribute to the growing pool of scholarship on literary responses to early modern agricultural crises, but Bassnett is the first to place women into this conversation. Husbandry largely remains Adam's domain while food prep remains Eve's. Bassnett illustrates the opposite. Attention to agricultural metaphors, imagery, and allusions in *Psalms* 50, 65, 72, 68, and 85 reveals Sidney Herbert's assumed advisory role to Elizabeth I, whom she urges to cultivate Protestant English husbandry as a weapon against famine and continental Catholicism. Sidney Herbert displays keen awareness of using her religious translations as tools for political commentary. Likewise, Clinton's ostensibly domestic argument on maternal nursing doubles as an acerbic admonishment of a king's self-proclaimed role as England's wet nurse. Clinton sees the crop failures of the 1620s as James's failure to provide for and nourish England; therefore, she suggests a regional, secessionist stance of governance, locating such in a mother's breast milk, possibly "the ultimate home-grown food," which renews, nourishes, and builds community (13).

Just as religious translations are never apolitical and domestic writing never remains indoors, private diaries are never solely for oneself, nor are prose romances ever merely fictional. In an enjoyable, alliterative writing style (the "bountiful Bridget" or "the pitfalls of pleasure and the pleasures of rigour" [89, 169]), Bassnett successfully proves her point that women and food are not to be kept behind kitchen doors; rather, food is at the very center of politics, and women are the negotiators who bring it to the table.

Lauren Shook, *Texas Lutheran University*
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