

*Legenda Major*, or *vita*, suppresses the more radical aspects of her life by excising any mention of her stigmata or activism. While this subdued Catherine persists in printed editions by Wynkyn de Worde (1492, 1500) and Henry Pepwell (1521), a generation later, in 1570, John Foxe appropriates her for his great Protestant martyrology. *The Book of Martyrs* uses Catherine's criticism of the papacy to demonstrate the inevitability of the Reformation. Finally, in 1601, her *vita* is printed abroad for a recusant readership. To be English, then, is to be malleable.

Reading Catherine within the context of mystical and visionary texts casts her as an anomaly in her adoption by such disparate causes. One way to give shape to this variation and to clarify her Englishness might be to expand the argument generically, locating Catherine within hagiography. Doing so seems prudent, since "most surviving English manuscripts concerning Catherine" correspond with her year of canonization, 1461 (13). Reading Catherine hagiographically, and thereby considering the evidence of her cult, would acknowledge the fluid nature of literacy of the period and likely corroborate the larger claim that the paucity of manuscripts does not fully reflect the saint's English presence. In the same vein, since scholarship has shown how other fifteenth-century female saints' lives are similarly revised to be more "sanitized and orthodox" than their earlier *vitae*, Catherine might be positioned as part of a larger devotional movement (141). Foxe, too, likewise collects several medieval saints to speak for his Reformist agenda. Brown has provided a great service in her detailed analysis of Catherine's English manuscript tradition; placing this tradition alongside hagiography would provide context for the changes the texts undergo.

Allison Alberts, *Independent Scholar*  
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*Prayer and Performance in Early Modern English Literature: Gesture, Word, and Devotion*. Joseph William Sterrett, ed.

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Prayer was ubiquitous in the early modern period, and in recent years there has been a renewed interest in the study of prayer in the fields of literature and history. This particular volume aims to explore the performative aspect of prayer. As Joseph Sterrett notes in the introduction, a prayer "is always dependent on a performance," whether real or imagined (2), and when it came to prayer in early modern England, performance was always "fraught with controversy" (5). The authors of the thirteen essays assembled here thus approach prayer not only as an activity directed toward God, but also as a social activity and process defined by, aimed at, and judged by a community of believers.

Several authors draw on Marcel Mauss's treatment of prayer as social phenomenon or on J. L. Austin's notion of performative utterances. This emphasis on performance is salutary and provides a compelling framework for thinking anew about familiar issues: the relations between inner thoughts and outer words; the value of set versus extemporaneous prayers; the relations between individual and corporate worship; the conflicts that swirled around the Book of Common Prayer; and the function of prayer in diaries, poems, and theatrical works. At least six essays examine prose prayer books or tracts. Brian Cummings, Graham Parry, and Sterrett explore questions concerning the body and bodily gestures in texts for public and private worship, with Cummings making the provocative argument that Protestants (like Luther, Bucer, Cranmer, and Calvin) were not so much focused on "disembodying prayer" but rather on reviving "its meaning by constructing a new theory of the passions in prayer" (36). Several essays address the function of prayer in creating or sustaining communities. Katrin Ettenhuber argues that Donne's *Encoenia* prayer and sermon served to affirm the corporate identity of the worshippers at a consecration ceremony. Robert Wilcher examines Charles I's failed attempt to promote national unity through prayer. Donald R. Dickson argues that Henry Vaughan's prose works were prayerful devotional aids as well as acts of political resistance.

Seven of the essays address plays, poems, musical anthems, and diaries, and in doing so examine the challenges and rewards of using human artifice in prayer and the multiple modes of performance that might be encoded in aesthetic works. Chloe Preedy, Alison Findlay, and Christopher Hodgkins offer close readings of the "doubly-performative" nature of prayers in plays by Peele, Marlowe, Shakespeare, and Heywood. Findlay astutely analyzes the role of prayer in creating community, and Hodgkins offers a powerful reading of Claudius's failed prayer in *Hamlet*. Effie Botonaki draws attention to female and male diarists who became authors by setting down their prayers as cognitive and devotional aids. Helen Wilcox carefully analyzes a selection of devotional poems that foreground prayer as a "process" (167) and that involve the performance of the poet, the church, the reader, and God. Finally, Noam Reisner persuasively argues that Milton's four invocations in *Paradise Lost* are where we can truly observe the man "at prayer, and where the trope of private, inward-looking plea and meditation" lends authority to the "heaven-bound voice of public poetry" (207).

Surprisingly, there are no essays on Catholic theories of prayer or Catholic writers, a regrettable absence since Catholic prayers continued to circulate in recusant circles and across confessional lines, and because Catholic worship remained a focal point for Protestant self-understanding. It is disappointing to note that only two of the thirteen essays deal with female writers despite the fact that early modern women were very active in overseeing household devotion and in producing prayer books and devotional poems.

All in all, this is a valuable collection that prompts the reader to focus on the performative dimension of prayer, and in assembling essays on plays, poems, prose prayer

books, sermons, and music, the volume will be valuable to historians and literary scholars.

Micheline White, *Carleton University*  
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*The Reformation of Prophecy: Early Modern Interpretations of the Prophet and Old Testament Prophecy.* G. Sujin Pak.

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With a broad sweep of original sources and a firm command of secondary literature, Pak has produced a careful reading of relevant works by three groups of Protestant Reformers—Luther and his followers; the Swiss Reformers, from Zwingli through two generations of his faithful; and Calvin, with his adherents—on the definition of the *prophet* in biblical times, with its relevance for the sixteenth century. She adds an extensive analysis of the presuppositions and modus operandi of the exegetical-hermeneutic methods that led these three groups to treat Old Testament prophetic passages traditionally interpreted as Christological in varying ways.

Throughout, Pak notes the similarities among the three groups but highlights nuanced differences that help explain the formation and development of the three confessional traditions. Luther and Zwingli used 1 Corinthians 14 to shape their expression and defense of the priesthood of all believers until the rise of uncalled Anabaptist preachers working outside the medieval parish system. Pak's chapter on Anabaptists' appeal to 1 Corinthians and other passages to defend their practices provides an illuminating comparison. Increasingly, the successors to the biblical prophets became for these two and their successors the regularly called and ordained ministers, with an emphasis on their task of proclamation of God's Word. Bullinger began a trend, spread across the three groups, to define the prophetic office in terms of its functions rather than simply as an office.

In German the word *Amt* means both office and function, so that this perception of the importance of proper performance of one's ministerial office appears prominently in Luther and Melancthon already in the 1520s. Pak traces the continuation of Luther's, Zwingli's, and Calvin's positions through their co-workers, Melancthon, Bullinger, and Beza, into the next generation, demonstrating that the founders had set in place a standard interpretation of the role of prophets that, with only minor deviations, remained. The use of the term *prophet* for pastors or preachers diminished as the focus on their function became more prominent. Pak's analysis of Lutheran understandings of prophecy might have been aided by a clearer presentation of the distinction of law and gospel as an operative hermeneutic principle rather than a doctrine. Luther's