

1669. The first chapter, which puts forward a “political and mental map” of Ireland at the outset of this period, is essentially an historiographical overview, positioning the original research which follows in relation to important work by Toby Barnard, Nicholas Canny, Aidan Clarke, Sean Connolly, and others whose works have helped to define the 1640s and 1650s in Ireland. Striking here is a particular effort on McCormack’s part to contend with Anne Creighton’s 2000 dissertation on the Catholic interest in Restoration Irish politics which, though an exceptional piece of original research deserving of publication, is given rather more attention throughout the book than many more seminal studies. Other works—for instance, Barnard’s seminal *A New Anatomy of Ireland* (2003)—are notably absent from the discussion, despite McCormack’s clear interest in the material and cultural worlds of her subjects.

In the chapters that follow McCormack attempts to chart the languages of discontent and loyalty through which the English in Ireland came to understand themselves as the realities of the Restoration came into view. Chapter topics range from specific figures (Roger Boyle, earl of Orrery in chapter 2) to detailed petitioning and legal procedure (chapter 3) and close readings of intellectual discourse (Sir William Dromville’s “Declaration” in chapter 5). She grounds these chapters on an impressive foundation of original research gathered from across Irish and English repositories. Unsurprisingly, a number of key personalities emerge here, including Boyle; Butler; the Talbot family of Malahide; Father Peter Walsh; and Nicholas French, bishop of Ferns. Many of these have received detailed attention from historians already; however, the strength of McCormack’s study lies in her balancing of these personalities across a wider political landscape, tracing their intellectual foundations while also maintaining a nuanced sense of their motives and contexts. Chapter 6, dealing with the particularities of establishing notions of Catholic loyalty, is particularly effective in this regard, showcasing McCormack’s research at its best while also situating the Catholic-Protestant divide in shades of gray rather than black and white.

On occasion, the otherwise meticulous research falters. There are, for instance, a surprising number of points where, despite contentious assertions, no reference is made to the wider historiography or original research to support the claims. In some instances, this means that entire groups are spoken of as having “greeted” an event or as having reacted to policies in terms which risk lumping rather than comprehending them in greater depth. This is out of keeping with McCormack’s subtlety elsewhere in the book. In terms of structure, the admirable approach of working thematically through the period rather than simply narrating these changes means that the argumentative line is occasionally obscured. Subsections within the chapters might have aided in ensuring that thematic shifts were clearly demarcated and chronological variation justified.

McCormack’s account is thorough and detailed throughout and certainly brings to light important issues that have so often been pushed aside by the greater attention afforded to the violence and dislocation of the “revolutionary” periods which surround it. The impression of Restoration Ireland that McCormack provides is of a society not necessarily pervaded by violence, but rather clinging to memories of it and perpetually concerned with its reappearance (whether genuinely or to exploit it). It is, as such, a poignant and timely book.

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FEMKE MOLEKAMP *Women and the Bible in Early Modern England: Religious Reading and Writing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013. Pp. x, 266. \$100.00 (cloth).
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In *Women and the Bible in Early Modern England* Femke Molekamp examines “the diverse cultures of Bible-reading in which early modern women engaged, and maps their connection to

forms of female writing” (6) in England between 1550 and 1670. Molekamp argues that there was a specific link between the development of these reading cultures and the “growth of original, interpretive, female religious writing” (9). She largely succeeds at this, although the work does not quite deliver the breadth it promises.

After the introduction, Molekamp begins in the first chapter with the Bible as it was read and used in the home. Focusing on the Geneva Bible, which she notes was the most influential and widely used of all the English Bibles, Molekamp examines a vast array of Bible-associated issues that related to readers. These included such Bible-reading aids as the paratexts and the marginal notations, which Molekamp identifies as one of the “most defining features” of the Geneva Bible (23). Different editions of the Geneva Bible were produced to reach various literacy and educational levels, and the paratexts and marginal notes reflected that, as well as the clear desire of the Bible’s editors to control biblical interpretation. These were particularly important for women, for, as Molekamp explains, not only were women “less likely than men to be fully literate” (28) but the desire to shape women’s reception of the Bible was acute since even men who supported women’s Bible reading nonetheless betrayed a good deal of anxiety about women’s interpretative abilities.

Yet Molekamp’s further exploration of women’s personal marks and insertions in their Bibles demonstrates that, while receptive to such guidance, women were quite capable of expressing “their personal theological convictions” (40) as well as noting both the application of specific Biblical texts to their individual circumstances and recording “personal life-writing” (39). Women’s interactions with their Bibles extended even to the materiality of the Bible itself. Noting that early moderns “styled their Bibles to conform to their preferences” (42), Molekamp, looking in particular at the embroidery that women used to decorate their Bibles, argues that for women there was “an obvious connection to be made between reading, writing, and needlework” (45).

Having constructed a multifaceted view of domestic Scripture, in the second chapter Molekamp moves on to the various kinds of Bible-reading engaged in by women: “from active, annotative reading, to private meditative reading; linear to non-linear approaches, reading typographically, providentially, proverbially, and even prophetically” (83). She also begins to link these modes of reading to women’s writing, a topic that carries over into her third chapter, on how Bible-reading created female communities in a variety of forms, arguing that “women not only participated in, but (depending on status) could organize, devotional reading at home” (85). Here Molekamp quite properly emphasizes women as mothers and mistresses of households, since in these roles women were often religious instructors; indeed, a significant number of catechisms were targeted for use by mothers and “appear to take for granted the mother’s authoritative role in biblical and theological learning. Women further demonstrated this authority by contributing to the genre ... as writers” (91). Yet the Bible and the “vibrant communal devotional lives” built around it facilitated women as writers beyond purely didactic material, as women “frequently drew on this cultural matrix in producing manuscripts and printed texts” (101). While in other forms of religious writing, such as collections of prayers and meditations, women still often invoked the role of mother and, in particular, alluded to the mother-daughter relationship, they yet gave voice to a greater range of religious expression and sought a greater religious influence. Molekamp demonstrates that in these as well as their other authorial forms, women’s ability to anchor their writing in scripture allowed them to assert an authoritative voice.

Having dealt with the various sorts of Bible reading done by women, both alone and in groups, as well as devotional writing aimed at communities, in her fourth chapter Molekamp more deeply examines women’s engagement in “affective, meditative reading” (120). This is perhaps the most successful and compelling section of the book, as Molekamp makes expert use of women readers/writers like Elizabeth Melville and Anne Lock to demonstrate the “critical connection ... between the richly affective devotional reading experiences encouraged by and for women and the forms of religious female writing” (149). She builds in this in the final

two chapters by focusing on the two parts of the Bible that feature most prominently in women's devotional reading and writing: the Psalms and the Passion. In her conclusion Molekamp recapitulates her thesis and major points; she follows it with an appendix of some poems by Anne Rhodes and a bibliography.

Molekamp describes her work as an "historicist study" (14), but it is firmly based in literary criticism, which is both its great strength and minor weakness. She does an outstanding job with the texts, offering a great deal of nuance and subtlety in her analysis. However, while those outside the field of literary criticism will find this work useful, they may also find it at times tedious. It would have been beneficial if Molekamp could have integrated her research more with historians' work on devotion. Nonetheless, this is an excellent book.

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RENAUD MORIEUX. *The Channel: England, France and the Construction of a Maritime Border in the Eighteenth Century*. Cambridge Social and Cultural Histories. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016. Pp. xiv, 402. \$120.00 (cloth).
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The Channel, Renaud Morieux's historical study of the waterway alternately known as the English Channel, La Manche, and a number of other terms, is first and foremost an exploration of the waterway as a zone of contact between France and England. It is, however, a book with multiple aspirations. Over the course of three parts, Morieux explains how "the Channel" came to be defined as a specific geographic entity, how England and France struggled to assert state sovereignty over the waters that divided them, effectively turning the Channel into a maritime frontier, and how the lower sorts of maritime laborers—fishermen, smugglers, and privateers, among others—nevertheless continued to transgress, interact, and establish relationships across that border. By drawing on the "entangled histories" approach prevalent in studies of the Atlantic, Morieux intends to challenge the dominant "Second Hundred Years War" paradigm of eighteenth-century Anglo-French relations, which, he suggests gives too much credence to the eighteenth-century notion that such conflict was inherent rather than the outcome of historically contingent and negotiated processes and thus "privileges conflict over exchange, war over commerce, and draws far too neat a dividing line between war and peace" (2).

In part one, "The Border Invented," Morieux takes up this theme by positing that until the late seventeenth century, people living in France and England would have had many reasons to believe they were historically connected. When intellectuals debated the origins of the waterway that divided the two kingdoms, they did so in terms of biblical time, suggesting that the separation of the two lands must be of relatively recent origin, perhaps stemming from the Flood but certainly postdating the time of human arrival in the British Isles. A providential God must have deliberately placed the two near to one another so that they could have commerce and improve the conditions of mankind. With the shift towards conceptualizing the history of the earth in geological time, however, the waterway was retheorized as ancient, pre-dating human arrival in the islands and suggesting a more naturalized, permanent division between England and France. The waterway continued to carry a variety of labels (including the generic "Mer Oceane" as well as the more nationalized "Oceanus Britannicus" and "Le Canal de France") until the 1690s, at which point both English and French mapmakers began much more frequently to describe it in their label of national choice; by the 1760s it was rare to see it termed anything other than the English Channel or La Manche.

In part two, "The Border Imposed," Morieux examines the attempts by both kingdoms to strengthen their sovereignty and the reach of their bureaucracies into the Channel. This was