

Crokey's pamphlets and their reception, he sees evidence of "contemporary fascination with, nervousness about, and acculturation to print media" (194).

Part 3, "Structures," connects the Warrens Court dispute to the larger cultural landscape of early modern England, arguing that the conflict persisted not only due to the doggedness of the individuals involved but also because of its connections to larger political, religious, and socioeconomic tensions. Peacey analyzes the networks of Smyth and Crokey, and, in the absence of direct evidence, extrapolates their mental worlds from the views of their associates, contrasting Smyth's conservatism and pragmatic royalism with Crokey's Puritanism. Conflicting ideologies inspired contemporary public interest in the case and showed how "legal, political, and religious controversies were playing out in local communities and everyday lives," not merely in seats of power (281).

Many microhistories end up being, at least partially, an argument for their own methodology. *The Madman and the Churchrobber* is no exception, and Peacey describes his approach as "longue durée microhistory" and "extended case method" (278). This method allows Peacey to track the conflict over time while still maintaining a microscopic focus on the details, from the slippers Smyth purchased for his wife to the charmingly precise insults of Crokey's vitriolic pamphlets. The "flavour of the contemporary rhetoric" is not limited to the title of this book, which gives us just two of the many insults that flowed between the two combatants (5). Frequent direct quotes enrich the text and bring the reader into the world of the protagonists.

Peacey comments several times on the potential challenges of his text, that he "might be accused of offering a dizzying chronicle" (72) and that readers might "despair about the possibility of keeping track of a convoluted story" (34). On this account he may not be entirely wrong, as the intricacies of how early modern law functioned are sometimes lost in the focus on the motivations of the protagonists, and he takes little time to contextualize contemporary politics. However, his fear that the "jigsaw puzzle" of the Warrens Court conflict "might not be so appealing to the reader" (278) is unfounded, as what might seem to be a dry inheritance dispute is revealed to be anything but.

Mireille J. Pardon, *Berea College*
doi:10.1017/rqx.2023.472

The State Trials and the Politics of Justice in Later Stuart England. Brian Cowan and Scott Sowerby, eds.

Studies in Early Modern Cultural, Political and Social History 40. Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2021. xvi + 434 pp. \$99.

The term *state trial* refers to legal proceedings before the law courts or in parliament that were linked to political issues such as treason, charges of political corruption, or general

maladministration. In itself the term is slightly vague, as it was coined initially by a number of editors in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who collected various material of cases that they considered state trials in one way or another, often making choices in their selection that could be quite arbitrary. It remains a fact, though, that particularly from the 1620s to the early eighteenth century, legal proceedings were used with impressive frequency to attack political opponents or whip up public sentiments against policies and political factions which one disliked or hated.

The 1620s saw impeachments against prominent ministers of the Crown, including the royal favorite, Buckingham, while the conflicts of the 1640s led to the execution of the Earl of Strafford, Archbishop Laud, and finally the king himself in January 1649. But it was the Restoration period that was marked by particularly frequent state trials. Not only were the surviving regicides tried and executed after 1660, but the Whigs later orchestrated proceedings in law courts as great media events designed to undermine their opponents. Some of these trials were not much different from straightforward judicial murders, such as the trial and subsequent execution in 1681 of Oliver Plunket, Catholic Archbishop of Armagh, a case analyzed in this collection by John Marshall.

During the last years of Charles II's reign the Tories took their turn in destroying their enemies, with the help of the law courts and loyal judges such as the infamous George Jeffries. Getting rid of political enemies was an important objective in itself, but these widely publicized trials could also be used to tar political opponents with the brush of treason and conspiracy. As Newton Key demonstrates in his chapter on "Constructing Conspiracy: Reporting the Rye House Trials," the records of such proceedings provided a lot of ammunition in the battle between Whigs and Tories in the 1680s. After 1688 the nature of state trials changed to a certain extent. Defendants were allowed legal counsel even when charged with treason, and the judges, now appointed for life and not easily dismissed for having the wrong political attitude, were less partisan than in the past. Paradoxically, it might be argued that their greater objectivity made legal proceedings against alleged traitors and conspirators more effective as a demonstration of state power, as they could now be seen as proof that the king or queen was ruling "according to the law rather than subverting it" (37), as Tim Harris and Stephen Taylor emphasize in their chapter on "State Trials and the Rule of Law."

Nevertheless, after 1688 the Whigs tried to take judicial revenge on the Tories, who had been in ascendancy since 1681. However, William III intervened and made sure that very little came of such plans (Mark Goldie, "Revolutionary Justice and Whig Retribution in 1689"). Some Whigs—the less pragmatic country Whigs—never forgave him; for them, the new order created by the Glorious Revolution would have required an exemplary punishment of all politicians who had supported the Stuart monarchy between 1681 and 1688, although that might have raised awkward questions about the Whigs who had initially cooperated with James II. But legal proceedings could also be used to sort out rules and norms for the behavior of officeholders. Charges of corruption figured prominently in many state trials, but mostly, as Mark Knights states,

“the conviction of an individual seemed to excuse the need to examine the wider problems of which those individuals were simply a series of representatives” (66). In the last resort, the line dividing mere gratuities and legitimate gifts from downright bribes remained blurred at least until the end of the eighteenth century. Overall, this collection of essays edited by Brian Cowan and Scott Sowerby offers a nuanced and rich insight into an important aspect of seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century English political culture.

Ronald G. Asch, *Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg*
doi:10.1017/rqx.2023.470

A Companion to Boniface. Michel Aaij and Shannon Godlove, eds.
Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition 92. Leiden: Brill, 2020. xviii + 562 pp. \$288.

This study gathers current English-language scholarship about the monk Wynfrith, whom Pope Gregory II renamed Boniface and who labored in German-speaking lands for almost forty years until his martyrdom with fifty-two companions in the present-day Netherlands. Sixteen scholars offer essays, organized into four parts: biography and cultural context, written sources, geographical spheres of activity, and historical reception.

Part 1 reveals biographical aspects: Boniface's English upbringing, monastic training, and his notable engagement of women as missionary partners. The late Rudolf Schieffer outlines Boniface's life as a monastic founder, papal legate to German-speaking lands, and eventually archbishop of Mainz. For Barbara Yorke, there is a similarity between Boniface's Wessex and Continental German lands. Both were Christian frontiers with dual religious cultures. James T. Palmer introduces the connection between Boniface's missionary efforts to bring Christianity to new communities and his work to reform existing churches. Felice Lifshitz gives a fine historiographical introduction to the study of women monastic missionaries. Her goal is “to define feminist consciousness” (70) in her subjects. She does this by studying books produced by women. For Lifshitz, Boniface was a gender egalitarian who likened himself to Paul and Thecla, collaborating in evangelization.

Part 2 examines written sources. It looks at Boniface's erudition and correspondence, the surviving hagiographic *vitae*, and his influence on penitentials and church councils. Emily V. Thornbury considers Boniface's educational background, which was centered on the teaching of Latin from classical models. Michael Aaij's study of Boniface's correspondence supports Palmer's assertion of Boniface's twin goals of conversion and reform. Shannon Godlove's two essays on the extant *vitae* are written with respect for postcolonial questions about missionary activity. In that light, she replaces the term *missionary* with *Christianizer*. Godlove also explores the Pauline interpretation of