

Trust in the Catholic Reformation. Genoa, 1594–1664. By Thérèse Peeters. (Studies in Medieval and Reformation Traditions, 231.) Pp. x + 337. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2022. €108. 978 90 04 18458 9; 1573 4188
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The historiography on the impact of the Catholic Reformation over the institutions and the society of the Italian cities between the late sixteenth century and the seventeenth century can rely on a robust body of works. Yet a quick glimpse at this historiography clearly demonstrates how most of the works have focused on Naples, Rome and Venice. Thérèse Peeters finally fills a major gap by providing a ground-breaking study which examines how trust and distrust were two crucial elements in the process to implement the Tridentine reforms in Genoa between 1594 and 1664.

The author's declared aim is to shed light on how the multi-layered society of the powerful oligarchical republic of Genoa experienced and reacted to the process of the Tridentine reforms. The book is structured in seven chapters which are preceded by a lengthy introduction which brings the reader into the thorny historiographical debate on Catholic Reformation, early modern Catholicism and on the categories of trust and distrust. The first chapter sets the agenda as it describes the political and religious landscape of Genoa and, at the same time, focuses on the most eminent figure of the Catholic Reformation in the city, Cardinal Stefano Durazzo. The second chapter is more specific as it begins to unveil how and to what extent Tridentine initiatives were carried out in Genoa. The author uses three different case studies – the secular clergy, the Lazarists and the Jesuits – to demonstrate how and through what means the practices of trust were used to achieve the reforming programme advocated by the Council of Trent. The third chapter investigates whether and how the laity of Genoa reacted to the Tridentine regulations. In this part, the author avails of a scandal provoked by clothing as an avenue to demonstrate how the betrayal of trust was a source of discontent rather than the behaviour of a priest who openly lived at a distance from the Tridentine standards.

The fourth chapter analyses the world of female religiosity in Genoa. In this case, Peeters stresses how the female convents of the city were largely dominated by distrust and this implied a strict set of rules and tight control. The fifth chapter is woven together with the fourth as it continues to examine how, in some specific cases, distrust became trust. By using the example of the Brignoline, the Medee and the Turchine, the author sheds light on three closely related initiatives carried out by female orders which were seen with trust. The sixth chapter returns to male orders, and particularly to the Lazarists who had to gain the trust of both lay and religious authorities in order to settle in Genoa. The final chapter zooms in on the experience of the Jesuits and more specifically on candidates for the Society – based in Genoa – who volunteered to go to Corsica as missionaries. Though the lens of the Jesuit *indipetae*, the chapter emphasises how and to what extent trust affected and influenced the lives of single figures.

Based on a consistent array of primary sources combined with selected secondary literature – made up of works written by leading Italian and international scholars – this book provides a new perspective on how to understand and assess how the Tridentine reforms were implemented in Genoa. Well-researched and

clearly written, Peeters's book represents a welcome addition to an historiography which, until now, has often overlooked the importance of the impact of the Tridentine reforms on the republic of Genoa. The fact that the book has been published in a well-known scholarly series confirms the quality of Peeters's work.

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Magic in Malta. Sellem Din al-Sheikh Mansur and the Roman inquisition, 1605. Edited by Alexander Mallett, Catherine Rider and Dionisius A. Agius. (Islamic History and Civilization, Studies and Texts, 185.) Pp. xviii + 593 incl. frontispiece and 19 colour figs. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2022. €139. 978 90 04 49893 8; 0929 2403

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When the Roman Inquisition was founded by Pope Paul III in 1542, with the bull *Licet ab initio*, its overriding concern was the spread of Lutheranism and other forms of Protestantism. One suspects that when a subsidiary tribunal was established in Malta in 1541 its particular preoccupation was possible heretical encroachment within the Knights of St John who had governed the island since 1530. That the Inquisition's interests were, however, somewhat broader in scope is well evidenced by its trial of Sellem bin al-Sheikh Mansur, who was the son of an Egyptian astrologer and was captured by the Knights and enslaved in Malta sometime in the late sixteenth century. In 1605 Sellem was denounced to the Inquisition for practising magic at the behest of some local Christians. The extant documentation of this trial is preserved in the cathedral archives in Mdina in Malta, and a transcription (in Italian, Latin and Arabic with a facing English translation) forms the first part and chapter of this volume, while a second part and chapter provides a micro-historical commentary. Both of these parts are by Alexander Mallett and Catherine Rider, while three other parts assemble a further ten chapters by various other scholars and the volume concludes with a chapter of 'remarks' by its editors. All these chapters find their springboard in the transcription of the trial's records, whence they explore various aspects of everyday life in the Malta of the time. The institutional structures of the Church, the Inquisition and the Knights, the details of the practice of inquisitorial procedure (interrogation and torture) and of sacramental confession, the institution of slavery, relations between Christians and Muslims, all receive attention. Most of all, though, the focus is on the practice of magic in its various forms (divination, necromancy, geomancy, talismans and amulets, the casting of spells, the recourse to astrology) among both Christians and Muslims. The wealth of material assembled in this volume casts light not only on Malta but on the entire Mediterranean world at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

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