

and sharp, many rendered in beautiful color. The book serves well as an illustrated overview, and it is a welcome addition to the discussion about Donne's religious thinking, especially for students and readers of Donne who want to move beyond general introductions and get to know the poet on a deeper level.

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Lived Religion and Gender in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe.

Sari Katajala-Peltomaa and Raisa Maria Toivo.

Themes in Medieval and Early Modern History. New York: Routledge, 2021. xii + 154 pp. \$160.

Using the intersection between faith and gender as its lens, Katajala-Peltomaa and Toivo's study aims to shed light on a significant part of the lived religious experience in early modern Europe. Spanning four centuries, different faiths, and a plethora of geographical regions, this book uses a variety of case studies sourced from both secular court and ecclesiastical canonization records to examine the everyday religious practices of individuals, communities, and institutions. Focusing on events associated with communal life, rather than theological doctrine, these rich microhistories unearth a more nuanced and flexible approach to understanding contemporary notions of gender. Readers are offered a rare glimpse into early modern religious practices (with all of their great variability), situating faith in the broader context of work, power, agency, family, sexuality, corporality, morality, religious crisis, and witchcraft.

Katajala-Peltomaa and Toivo argue, as well as successfully demonstrate, the need for destabilizing fixed gender categories and pushing beyond traditional binary (and therefore static hierarchical) classifications. They propose another working model, one that examines "masculinities and femininities in the plural," allowing for an expansion in historical approaches (7). Correspondingly, their findings both confirm and contradict widely held assumptions concerning medieval and Renaissance notions of gender, slightly blurring the line traditionally used to divide masculine and feminine behaviors in the scholarly literature.

The book is organized into three main sections. The first examines how gender expectations and religious practices affected domestic life, particularly one's role in the home, household, and family. One such case concerns a peasant family from fourteenth-century England. By examining the family's testimony in a local saint's canonization records, Katajala-Peltomaa and Toivo demonstrate how gender roles, particularly in an agrarian context, tended to be more equal, as this kind of lifestyle required a large amount of collaboration among spouses. The documents also indicate that both the husband and the wife appeared to share childcare responsibilities, as well as play an active part in their town's communal and religious life.

Public acts of religion and gender, as well as how they varied during the Reformation, are discussed in the book's second chapter. Both men and women, for instance, participated in pilgrimages, yet the length of the journey tended to be codified by sex. While men were permitted to make long journeys, women were encouraged to visit local shrines. The relationship between women and the practice of worshipping saints, particularly with the help of wax votives, prayers, fasting, and/or chants, is also examined. Men, by contrast, used their positions at work and at home to facilitate their religious experiences, namely through concepts of independence, authority, and responsibility. Secular and clerical masculinities are also discussed, along with the concepts of male chastity, willpower, and role-twisting, further queering traditional gender norms.

The third and final section examines performed religion and gender in the religious sphere, spanning sainthood and episodes of spiritual ecstasy to demonology and witchcraft. According to Katajala-Peltomaa and Toivo, early modern bodies appeared to be dualistic entities, forced onto a continuum that stretched from holy to diabolical and understood as vessels that could connect with God or the devil. As a result, one's corporeality, especially in relation to male and female monasticism, needed to be continuously monitored and controlled. The hierarchical distinction between virginity and chastity is similarly explored. Katajala-Peltomaa and Toivo also discuss the rise of demonology and witchcraft cases in fifteenth-century Europe. They caution against an oversimplification of these events and note that cases varied by geography, time period, dominant local religion, and source material. In territories located in the northeast of Europe—like Finland, for instance—the popular image of the witch was male, as men were convicted at higher rates in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Although the vast range of topics can leave the reader feeling a bit overwhelmed at times, Katajala-Peltomaa and Toivo provide an extremely thoughtful and convincing analysis based on archival sources from an assortment of geographical locations. Gender categories most certainly existed, yet Katajala-Peltomaa and Toivo demonstrate their consistent instability, encouraging historians to look more carefully at the complex systems used to negotiate identities in the lived experience of many distinct historical communities.

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Mediterranean Crossings: Sexual Transgressions in Islam and Christianity (10th–18th Centuries). Umberto Grassi, ed.

Viella Historical Research 18. Rome: Viella, 2020. 170 pp. €30.

This short book packs a real punch. Comprised of six chapters plus a detailed introduction, it contributes in new and interesting ways to our knowledge of gender and sexual diversity in the late medieval and early modern Mediterranean.