

des biens du ménage. Pour ce qui est de la gestion du patrimoine, Courtemanche croit à un écart entre le droit et la réalité. Il n'y aurait là rien d'étonnant, cet écart ayant été démontré dans d'autres régions de France et en Angleterre. Mais cela n'atténue pas la difficulté de mesurer avec un peu de précision la participation effective des femmes aux destinées du ménage, elles qui sont actives surtout lorsqu'il s'agit d'aliéner et très peu lorsqu'il s'agit d'acheter. Le poids du mari se fait aussi sentir dans les testaments où il arrive tout de même que, dans 40 p. 100 des cas, celui-ci choisit, pour des raisons qui nous échapperont toujours, de ne pas laisser à sa femme la gestion des biens familiaux. On voudrait donc bien suivre l'auteure lorsqu'elle affirme le caractère associatif du mariage médiéval mais, dans cette étude comme dans bien d'autres, la preuve qui en est faite n'est pas tout à fait suffisante pour emporter définitivement l'adhésion.

Cette gestion du ménage, l'auteure l'a approchée de façon très extensive, y incluant des éléments divers qui nourrissent également le chapitre : protection de la réputation menacée par le moindre propos malveillant, petite criminalité féminine manifeste dans les biens volés par les femmes, surveillance de la progéniture dont les femmes sont responsables de l'éducation, vision des hommes d'église sur les tâches attribuées aux femmes. L'information ici fournie est riche mais les liens qui unissent ces thèmes au propos central du chapitre ne sont pas toujours suffisamment mis en évidence, ce qui donnera peut-être au lecteur l'impression de ne plus trop savoir où il s'en va.

Ni victimes ni souveraines, les femmes du Manosque médiéval ont très certainement joué un rôle important dans la société de leur temps. Elles avaient accès au patrimoine familial et en disposaient jusqu'à un certain point. Quelle était leur situation par rapport à celle de leurs frères? Égale? Moins bonne? Cela est malheureusement impossible à mesurer. Le problème auquel se heurte la recherche vient des sources elles-mêmes qui permettent une analyse de la présence et de l'activité féminine en fin de parcours, au moment par exemple de la rédaction d'un testament, sans qu'on puisse savoir comment ce parcours a été jalonné. C'est là que le bât blesse mais Courtemanche n'est nullement responsable de cette situation, inhérente dirait-on à toute recherche sur la période médiévale. Il faut lire cette étude qui nous montre des femmes, actrices à part entière dans la vie de la cité, et non seulement courroies de transmission, du moins avant 1348 qui semble avoir été une date charnière après laquelle va s'amorcer un virage vers la « primauté du droit paternel » (p. 230).

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Barbara B. Diefendorf and Carla Hesse, eds. — *Culture and Identity in Early Modern Europe (1500–1800): Essays in Honor of Natalie Zemon Davis*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993. Pp. viii, 280.

Natalie Zemon Davis has been one of the exemplary historians of early modern Europe in the last 35 years; this collection of essays by her former students reflects

her interests and her influence in impressive fashion. It is a true *Festschrift*, a gift that both honours and embodies the values of its intended recipient.

Most such books, despite their apparent focus on a single scholar and mentor, tend to lack a scholarly or pedagogic unity; while some of the articles they contain are regularly cited, others seem to have short half-lives, and the books themselves are seldom recommended. With the exception of a couple of essays, this book is an extended, if diversified, consideration of a number of central issues which have concerned many historians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries over the last few decades, often as a result of the challenges and suggestions of Professor Davis herself. It stands as a work well worth recommending to students interested in the socio-cultural history of early modern Europe.

Any singling out of exceptional or particularly intriguing pieces in this collection will tell more about the reviewer's concerns and interests than the relative merits of the individual essays; nonetheless, such a privilege is inevitable in any review of a *Festschrift*. Virginia Reinburg's study of lay prayer in late medieval society opens the presentation of issues relating to "spiritual identities" by challenging the strong intellectualist tradition of explanation which sees pre-Reformation religion as ritual behaviour without "understanding". Her short, concisely argued piece puts lay religious practices in their own context, "the complex and disorderly language of late medieval patronage — with its complicated hierarchies, overlapping jurisdictions, private laws and outside appeals". She suggests that new "Reformed" ideals may have provided an alternative model of Christian practice and belief, but they did not succeed in replacing older, deeply rooted ones. On the other side of this issue, the religiosity of many adherents of Reform involved more than an exclusive focus on belief, as Barbara Diefendorf shows in her study of the reception and use of the Huguenot Psalter before and after the St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre. She argues convincingly that, although "the Huguenots' affinity for the Psalms was theological, it was also emotional and aesthetic." Keith Luria's examination of the ritual and emotional context of return to Catholicism in seventeenth-century Poitou is a similarly nuanced consideration of the ways in which religious history involves much more than doctrinal considerations. Protestant nobles were part of a kinship and patronage network which could never have accommodated complete religious separation; Catholic daughters often were married to Huguenot sons and *vice versa*. When the agents of reconversion developed rituals of reconciliation which clearly established a gulf between true believers and heretics, this threatened the connections essential for local elites and made return to orthodoxy much harder to resist. The last essay in this section, Jodi Bilinkoffs's analysis of five "holy women" of Avila and their confessors, looks at gendered relationships in religious contexts. While underlining the clear interdependence of the two groups, she tends to overstate the equality of their relationships; the priests did "depend" on the penitent women in some ways, but it was the women, not they, who were without power in the official framework provided by the church and it was the priests who validated the women's spiritual lives.

Laurie Nussdorfer introduces the section on "social identities" by addressing the relationship between oral culture and the notarial documents which are often our

only means of access to it, providing an exemplary introduction to the difficulties faced by historians who wish to take the people of the past on their own terms, not ours. Perhaps because his subject is too large for full consideration in a brief paper, James Amelang's study of neighbourhood identity in Barcelona is less satisfying. Although he briefly mentions change over time, this reader was left with the sense that an essentially atemporal description did not do justice to the complexity of his information. Andrew Barnes's clear statement of the argument that the chief consequence of the Counter-Reformation was the deracination of rural Christianity provides a sensible overview of others' archival research. Less connected to the themes and subjects central to this book, both chronologically and culturally, is Peter Sahlin's examination of traditional elements in the revolt in Ariège against the 1827 Forest Code. His peasants lived in a very different world from nearly all the other groups discussed here and, as he himself admits, the revolt occurred in a modern political context: the Revolution of 1830.

Elizabeth Cohen's racy micro-historical study of a Roman "love" letter and her intelligent consideration of the problems of written communication in an era of semi-literacy is the first of four studies of "cultural identities". The effects of literacy are approached from a very different angle by Alison Klairmont Lingo, who shows the diverse and contradictory consequences of the publication of books on female health. Despite its focus on the aristocracy, probably the most "Davis-like" piece in this collection is Jonathan Dewald's innovative consideration of the ways in which Corneille and Racine altered the classical stories on which many of their plays were based; placed against family life among the seventeenth-century French elite, they illuminate some intriguing tensions and anxieties. As an example of how perceptive historians can make old and familiar texts reveal much about the world in which and for which they were composed, this essay can hardly be surpassed. Carla Hesse's interesting discussion of Louise de Kéralio is the work which is most out of place in this book; its connections to the central themes of Davis's work and to early modern socio-cultural history are tenuous, and its subject seems to demand a different venue.

With this final exception, the book seems remarkably unified, a worthy tribute to a risk-taking scholar and engaging mentor who, more than anyone else, has stood at the centre of early modern French studies in America during the past 30 years.

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Colin Jones — *The Cambridge Illustrated History of France*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994. Pp. 352.

This volume is a beautifully illustrated history of France from Roman times to the contemporary age at a reasonable price (\$39.95). About half the book is devoted to the period since the Revolution. Because much of it is composed of illustrations, charts, and maps, it reads considerably shorter than its 352 pages. The text is well-