Jeffrey D. Burson and Ulrich L. Lehner, eds.

Enlightenment and Catholicism in Europe: A Transnational History. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press. Pp. x + 482. Pb, \$46.

Study of the “Catholic Enlightenment” flourishes as never before. While the term “katholische Aufklärung” was coined by Sebastian Merkle in 1909 and the subject was invigorated in the aftermath of Vatican II, it is in the last decade that studies inspired by the concept have acquired critical mass. Moreover, their authors have entered the lists in debates over the wider “religious enlightenment” postulated by David Sorkin (who alongside Jonathan Israel and Hamish Scott warmly endorses the volume under review). Charging at the gallop are Jeffrey D. Burson and Ulrich L. Lehner. The latter is an especially prolific scholar, not least as the editor of major texts. Lehner, the author of *Enlightened Monks: The German Benedictines 1740–1803* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), has this year published two major syntheses: *The Catholic Enlightenment: The Forgotten History of a Global Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016) and the significantly titled *On the Road to Vatican II: German Catholic Enlighteners and Reform of the Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016). In 2010, he co-edited with Michael Printy (the author of *Enlightenment and the Creation of German Catholicism* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009]), *A Companion to the Catholic Enlightenment in Europe* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010). The contributor of the distinguished chapter on France in the Brill *Companion*, Jeffrey D. Burson, the author of *The Rise and Fall of Theological Enlightenment: Jean-Martin de Prades and Ideological Polarization in Eighteenth-Century France* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010), as well as numerous shorter studies, has joined Lehner to edit the present collection. This book takes a distinctive biographical approach: no less than twenty-one figures claimed for the “Catholic Enlightenment” are presented by nineteen authors.

Enlightenment and Catholicism in Europe follows the pattern of the Brill *Companion* in its geographical organization. It goes beyond it to include “transnational” individuals who were active in several states, such as the Jesuit scientist Ruggiero Boscovich, ably covered by Jonathan A. Wright. This approach helps bring into the fold influential and controversial thinkers from the British Isles, with their Protestant ecclesiastical establishments: the Irishman Luke Joseph Hooke (written by Thomas O'Connor), the Scot Andrew Michael Ramsay (penned by Gabriel Glickman), and the Englishman Andrew Geddes who, as Mark Goldie argues in a sparkling essay, “pressed the Catholic Enlightenment to its limits, and beyond” (41). Fittingly, the first chapter is devoted to Pope Benedict XIV, and Mario Rosa provides a typically nuanced profile of

this “ambivalent enlightener.” An essentially papal perspective also characterizes Dries Vansysacker’s piece on the Savoyard Giacinto Sigismondo Cardinal Gerdil. Other figures are anchored in the contexts of their states; indeed the contested relationship between church and state is at the heart of several essays, especially Thomas Wallnig’s lucid treatment of Abbot Franz Stephan Rautenstrauch in the Habsburg monarchy and Andrea J. Smidt’s presentation of the diverging reform programmes of Caroline regalism and the bishop of Barcelona, Josep Climent i Avinent (which whetted this reviewer’s appetite for further articles on Enlightened episcopal reformers). Jerzy Lukowski’s provocatively subtitled account of the Piarist pedagogue Stanisław Konarski (“a Polish Machiavelli?”) foregrounds his hero as a constitutional thinker, without quite losing track of him as a “Catholic reformer.” Analogously, the Neapolitan thinker Antonio Genovesi appears first and foremost as a political economist in Niccolò Guasti’s contribution. Figures enmeshed in revolutionary and counter-revolutionary politics include Adrien Lamourette (depicted by Caroline Chopelin-Blanc), Joseph de Maistre, and Hugues-Félicité Robert de Lamennais (well juxtaposed by Carolina Armenteros), the aforementioned Geddes and the Pole Hugo Kołłątaj, dubbed “the revolutionary priest” by Anna Łysiak-Łątkowska.

Theology and ecclesiology come to the fore with Lehner’s two contributions, learned chapters on the Benedictine Beda Mayr and the Jesuit Benedict Stattler. Openness to newer trends in philosophy and science is evident in Francisco Sánchez-Banco’s account of Benito Jerónimo Feijoo y Montenegro and Massimo Mazzotti’s piece on Maria Gaetana Agnesi. The latter is notable not only for covering the only woman profiled in the book; this is a fascinating insight into some Catholic social contexts of scientific and philosophical discussion. Paolo Vismara stresses that his hero, Lodovico Antonio Muratori, merits his exceptional place in Catholic Enlightenment studies through the breadth of his scholarship and outlook—part post-Tridentine, part enlightened. Apologetics take centre-stage in Burson’s excellent essay on Nicolas-Sylvestre Bergier, tellingly subtitled “an enlightened anti-*philosophe*.” Racing down the “outside left” of the “Catholic Enlightenment” was Johann Pezzl, fierce satirist of monks at the “high-water mark” of Josephinism. Pezzl kept just inside the touchline, according to linesman Ritchie Robertson (243–44). In turn, Wallnig concludes his essay on Abbot Rautenstrauch by raising the question “by the time monasticism had become truly enlightened, had it ceased to be truly monastic?” (223).

Therein lies the nub. Is it possible to discuss—let alone establish—what was “truly Catholic” and what was “truly Enlightened”? On the one hand the title of the volume, *Enlightenment and Catholicism in Europe*, presents the

opportunity to set out a spectrum between various radical and traditional positions—a postulate made by Sorkin which lends itself to elaboration. This would help avoid the temptation to shoehorn diverse figures into a single category—a danger which the editors rightly wish to avoid. They may however have fallen into the opposite trap. Burson has written an impressively informative, erudite introduction. It is replete with nodes, intersecting dynamics, constitutive dialectics, discursive fields and even “a dialogic, diachronic dance” (17)—also expressed as a “shifting constellation of discourses” which “crescendo and decrescendo across time and geography” (13). Finally these fabulous fireworks fizzle out feebly. The editors have chosen to use “Catholic Enlightenment” and “Enlightenment Catholicism” interchangeably in a minimalist, yet expansive definition, which encompasses any author who sought to integrate modern science and thought into Catholic teaching and also all those who wanted a reformed Catholic Church to contribute significantly “to the Enlightenment pursuit of happiness and social justice” (13–14). For the present, semantically inclined reviewer, the former is “Enlightened Catholicism” and the latter is “Catholic Enlightenment.” The former was compatible with anti-Enlightenment; the latter was not (as I have argued in my contribution to the Brill *Companion* and elsewhere). As Burson’s own article—among others—shows, the study of eighteenth-century apologetics and polemics can bring these forward positions and redoubts into sharper relief.

The University of Notre Dame Press has produced an attractive, but by no means a faultless volume. The index is but a perfunctory list of names. Including places and concepts would have facilitated the transnational insights advertised by the title. The use of the Harvard system of referencing impedes the flow of the text. Moreover, the copy-editing leaves something to be desired. One glaring error is in the very title of Lukowski’s essay, repeated in the running headings: Konarski’s dates are given as 1700–1772. The correct date—1773—is provided on p. 451. However, the quality of the individual chapters (many of which draw heavily on their authors’ previous monographic studies) ranges from good to excellent. Taken as a whole this welcome book will stimulate further discussions of a subject that no serious *dix-huitiémiste*, ecclesiastical or otherwise, can afford to ignore.

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