Dale K. Van Kley

Reform Catholicism and the International Suppression of the Jesuits in Enlightenment Europe. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018. Pp. 370. Hb, \$38.00.

The story of the events leading up to the worldwide suppression of the Society has been told many times, but in his latest work distinguished historian Dale K. Van Kley brings both an unequalled knowledge of the primary sources, and a deep understanding of the tensions among the various players to the conversation. The result is a thought-provoking and original, if densely written work of scholarship. Van Kley's focus is on France and Spain, but his grasp of events across the continent enables him to support his thesis, which, stated simply, is that the movement known today as "reform Catholicism" was much more influential in the Society's downfall than was the secular Enlightenment. His choice of the term "reform Catholicism" rather than "Catholic Enlightenment" is deliberate, since the distance between the Society's Catholic opponents and the secular Enlightenment was often great.

The expulsions and suppressions of the Jesuits in various European countries has been most often presented as an inexorable fall of the dominoes culminating in *Dominus ac redemptor*. Van Kley's narrative is not only more subtle than this; he also sheds light on the relation between these events and intellectual and theological debates within Catholicism. The enduring importance of Jansenism is documented repeatedly: far from being a movement that faded in the second half of the eighteenth century, Van Kley shows how it became a "rigorist component" of Reform Catholicism whose influence spread far beyond France. This influence was often combined with competing and even contradictory impulses. In France itself, the regional *parlements*, which Van Kley notes continued to be somewhat Jansenist, were a fountainhead of great anger against what were seen as ultramontane attacks on the Gallican liberties. Yet while the salons of Paris were centers of the secular Enlightenment, the French capital was also where less self-consciously intellectual "patriots" took to the streets to defend the rights of their national church. By contrast, the Catholic reform movement in Spain, which also embraced anti-Jesuit elements, was driven by the passions of the monarch and his high ranking officials, who held the common people in contempt and regarded the Jesuits responsible for the Esquilache riots (in which the common people had been most conspicuous) that had disrupted the kingdom. Both monarchies hoped to expand their power at the expense of the Society, but Van Kley rightly points out that Madrid was far less concerned with matters ecclesiastical than it was with those temporal. As when he reminds the reader that France's edit of 1764 was more generous than those promulgated by Portugal or Spain, Van Kley

provides an antidote to the often-used and simplistic trope of the “Bourbon courts” as a coordinated prime mover of the suppression.

Van Kley teases apart the skeins of a familiar narrative to reveal important differences among players, noting that in France what he calls a “patriotic ideology” cast Jesuits as villains along with “despotic bishops” and the monarchy. This was in (a frequently overlooked) contrast to the enlightened monarchies of Europe, whose rulers and their episcopal allies pushed for the suppression of the Jesuits. In fact, the French anti-Jesuit program did not provide a model to the rest of Europe, but remained in many ways contrast to it. Spain, being a Bourbon monarchy, is often portrayed as an eager ally of Louis xv. Van Kley reminds us that not only did the French king always remain cool to the idea of the destruction of the Society, but that his Spanish counterpart was genuinely and enthusiastically anti-Jesuit, as was the court of neighboring Portugal. Developments in Italy were likewise more complex than the traditional narrative suggests. The events leading up to the papal *Monitorio* against the duke of Parma are admirably contextualized here, again challenging the simplistic story of the Bourbon plot.

While many historians scorn counter-factual history, when used judiciously this approach can throw the dynamics of actual events into high relief. Towards the end of the book Van Kley invites us to imagine a schism that left Rome in communion with only the non-Bourbon Italian states, Austria, Poland, and several territories of the empire. The result proposed would surprise some but is defensible given the case already made that the Catholic reform movement owed much to the renegade archdiocese of Utrecht.

Van Kley’s assessments of persons and projects can be refreshingly accurate and pithy, as when he characterizes the Society’s centennial folio publication *Imago primi saeculi* as “vainglorious.” The reader is also enlightened about little-known aspects of eighteenth-century intellectual culture: the attempt to give the Spanish Catholic Church a pedigree extending back to the mythologized Christian Visigothic kingdom, and the centrality of the controversies surrounding Molinist theology, even in the eighteenth century, to anti-Jesuit plotting are but two such examples. Van Kley closes this book noting that the Society, once restored in 1814, would not regain its “daring and capacities for innovation” until the era of Vatican II. In this book, we find lurking behind the activities of its opponents a Society whose daring and innovative aspects had withered almost to extinction before the sequence of events that led to 1773 had even begun. The Society many saw as a threat and against whom so many strove lacked the vitality and resolve of its Reform Catholicism opponents, even though their efforts are shown to have been far from united. The Jesuits seem to have been doomed from the start.

A sweeping drama with scores of players, the book would have benefited greatly from a more complete index. And how could the indexer have overlooked Parma? Moreover, while this work's end notes are impressively detailed and complete, the very quantity of documentation from primary sources makes their access as end notes as opposed to footnotes less than completely convenient. When the inconvenience of their location is combined with the underdeveloped index and a narrative crowded with names, the reader is occasionally left struggling to remember what the significance of the personalities cited might be.

The volume is also plagued by a number of typos and by more than a few sentences that seem not to have been proofread. These are however only modest quibbles and will not prevent Van Kley's ambitious work from being a significant contribution to our understanding of European religious history of the eighteenth century.

Paul Shore

University of Regina

ShoreP@BrandonU.CA

DOI:10.1163/22141332-00602008-09

Markus Friedrich and Alexander Schunka, eds.,

Reporting Christian Missions in the Eighteenth Century: Communication, Culture of Knowledge and Regular Publication in a Cross-Confessional Perspective. Jabloniana: Quellen und Forschungen zur europäischen Kulturgeschichte der frühen Neuzeit, volume 8. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2017. Pp. 196. Hb, €52.00.

This book, the result of a 2008 workshop at Goethe University Frankfurt in Germany, examines the role of European periodical publications in disseminating information about distant religious missions in the first sixty years of the eighteenth century. This period was chosen specifically because it corresponds to the historical moment when large-scale Protestant missions began to produce a textual record that is comparable to that of Catholic missions, and when those records began to be regularly reported in periodicals that covered not only a single mission or region, as was the case in seventeenth century examples such as the famous *Relations* from New France, but missionary efforts more broadly. Profiting from this particular development in the history of mission reports, the book's nine chapters "do not primarily analyze the content of the reports, but instead mainly concentrate on the technologies and procedures employed to shape and broadcast information" (8), as these technical