

Reviews

Baumgarten, Jens. *Konfession, Bild und Macht. Visualisierung als katholisches Herrschafts- und Disziplinierungskonzept in Rom und im habsburgischen Schlesien (1560–1740)*. Hamburger Veröffentlichungen zur Geschichte Mittel- und Osteuropas, 11. Hamburg & Munich: Dölling und Galitz Verlag, 2004. 323 pp., 36 illustrations. ISBN 3-935549-89-X, EUR 24.80

This volume is of interest to scholars working on lay religion because of its thorough analysis of the relationship between Catholicism, images, and power (or, to put it in other terms, religion, art, and politics) in the wake of Tridentine reforms and Catholic renewal. By examining two rather disparate areas (the city of Rome and the Hapsburg-held regions of Silesia) Baumgarten is able to illustrate how Catholic devotional ideals emanating from the epicentre were applied in the periphery of Catholicism or, as he put it “in the centre of the Catholic Church in Rome and in the periphery in Eastern Mitteleuropa” (13).

Taking three important Italian theologians – Carlo Borromeo, Gabriele Paleotti, and Roberto Bellarmino – as the focal point for his investigation of the “Catholic visualization theory,” Baumgarten uses his first chapter to examine how art for public consumption was used as a means to rule and control the faithful (“Visualisierung als Konzept von Herrschaft und Disziplinierung”, pp. 32–138). He rightly begins the chapter with an analysis of the Tridentine decree on art (32–41) and then follows it with its logical development in the theories of Borromeo, Paleotti, and Bellarmino (41–66) in order to arrive at a “model of the ‘New Seeing’ (*Neuen Sehens*)” peculiar to Tridentine Catholicism (127–38).

In the following chapter the author illustrates how this new theory of visualization was deployed in the “re-catholicization” process (“Visualisierung als Instrument zur Rekatholisierung: Herrschafts- und künstlerische Praxis in Wort und Bild”, 139–202). The first subsection outlines the Roman model (“Modelle der Disziplinierung in Rom”, 140–61), taking as examples the Cappella Paolina in S. Maria Maggiore, S. Stefano Rotondo, the Cappella Cornaro in S. Maria della Vittoria and, finally, the urban complex and colonnade for St. Peter’s and St Ignatius’. The second subsection applies that model to the Hapsburg parts of Silesia (161–202). Here the author focuses on visualization theory as a means to promote the *pietas austriaca* and then as a means to “re-catholicize” the region, and especially the cities of Glatz (today’s Klodzko) and Breslau (today’s Wrocław), both part of today’s Poland (they are located near its south-western border with the Czech Republic).

While confraternities are not the focus of this excellent study (in fact, except for three brief references they are not mentioned at all), one cannot help but wonder what role they played in the “re-catholicization” of the region and how their artistic commissions might have adhered to the theories of visualization examined

by Baumgarten. The work of scholars such as Barbara Wisch on “Counter-Reformational” art in Roman confraternities and archconfraternities, for example, certainly indicates that this is a rich area of inquiry for the “centre” that should not be ignored. And, as we saw in Dominika Burdzy’s article in the Fall 2004 issue of *Confraternitas* or in her review of Jerzy Flaga’s book in this issue, there are plenty of sources and materials on the confraternal movement in early-modern Poland (in the “periphery”) for scholars to delve into. Admittedly, the confraternal movement was not in Baumgarten’s radar, but perhaps Baumgarten’s analysis of visualization theories will inspire other scholars to put them there and to apply these theories to confraternity art and devotions “in the periphery in Eastern Mitteleuropa.”

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Black, Christopher F. *Church, Religion and Society in Early Modern Italy*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004. xxiii, 315 pp., 2 tables, 5 maps. ISBN 0-333-61844-0 (hardback), 0-33361845-9 (paperback). US\$ 85.

Christopher F. Black’s survey of the social and religious shifts in Italy that resulted from the Council of Trent is a magisterial study that is sure to become one of the standard references for teachers and researchers in this period. It achieves that most difficult of tasks for the historian, the balance of detail and overview, as it tracks the ways that religious changes sweeping across Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries affected the ways that religious institutions and their representatives worked in Italy.

The first two chapters provide a concise overview of the Reformation and its after-effects in Italy. The first provides historical background to the Reformation and the political situation in Italy, and the second focuses specifically on the Council of Trent. The remainder of the book is an examination of the ways that the post-Trent generation responded in matters of religious governance to the impetus for change that it provided.

There is much here that will be of interest to scholars of confraternity history. In particular, Chapter 7, “Confraternities, Hospitals, and Philanthropy,” addresses the kinds of activities that were undertaken by lay organizations, and the ways in which these were refocused by Trent. The level of detail is dense: Black brings together the findings of a great deal of recent scholarship under the headings of history, the attitudes of Church leaders to confraternities, relations between parishes and local confraternities, membership, processions, organization, and indulgences.

Church, Religion and Society in Early Modern Italy also examines Trent’s effects on the Papacy and the religious orders, Episcopal leadership, parish