Myconius, claimed, for instance, that Luther's 95 theses traversed Germany in fourteen days, and 'all Christendom in four weeks, as if the angels themselves had been couriers and brought them before all people's eyes' (p. 3).

Kaufmann's book is a delight; it is both scholarly and engaging, clearly displaying the author's mastery of his subject. This is a book where you will find complex ideas expressed concisely and clearly, and often with the additional benefit of a pithy, memorable phrase. In this, too, the work of the translator Tony Crawford is to be highly commended. Kaufmann also appreciates the occasional humorous anecdote. His tale of Portuguese sailors celebrating their first Mass on Indian soil in a church adorned with what they first considered to be images of unfamiliar saints, only later realizing it was likely a Hindu temple, is a good example (p. 11).

One regrettable point; this English language edition of Kaufmann's history lacks the sumptuous colour illustrations and maps of the German original, which boasted 103 illustrations, 58 of them in colour. By contrast, this volume contains just 25 illustrations, all in black and white. Some vestiges of the richer fare of *Erlöste and Verdammte* have, however, crept into the text on a couple of occasions. On pages 152 and 240 respectively we find embedded in the text some image captions for the title page of a text by Mathis Blochinger and Dr Martin Luther's Miracle 1618.

This minor quibble aside, Kaufmann's history is an essential read for all Reformation scholars, and especially for those who teach courses on Reformation history; they will greatly profit from its insights, and will find it a useful reading to assign to their students. It belongs in every institutional library and on every scholar's bookshelf.

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Susan M. Cogan, *Catholic Social Networks in Early Modern England. Kinship, Gender, and Coexistence*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021, pp. 296, €124.00, ISBN: 978-94-6372-694-8

The ties that bound people in the later sixteenth century did not materialise spontaneously at the accession of Elizabeth. They wound themselves through past generations for whom the artificial boundaries between 'medieval' and 'early modern' were meaningless. It is apt, therefore, that Cogan treats in detail the fifteenth-century antecedents of her sixteenth-century subjects. Between an introduction and a conclusion there are five thematic chapters: the late medieval origins of early modern networks; post-Reformation kinship and social networks; architecture, gardens, and cultural networks; Catholics, political life, and citizenship; Catholic networks, patronage,

and clientage. Amsterdam University Press has produced a handsome volume, typographical errors are scarce, and the appendix of ten genealogical tables is testament to Cogan's mastery of her source material. I missed only one pedantic element of the scholarly apparatus: a note on transcription conventions.

Cogan writes commandingly about a complex web of individuals with characteristically repetitive names. Disentangling the various connections is no mean feat, but even for a reader familiar with these individuals, the laser-focused analysis is sometimes difficult to follow. A little more colour from the fantastic correspondence at Cogan's disposal would have been welcome, and there are some tantalising roads not taken. She writes elliptically, for example, that 'steady messenger traffic between [the Treshams' seat at] Rushton and the Mordaunts' seat at Drayton indicates a strong connection between those families. Edward Watson of Rockingham Castle, six miles from Rushton, visited Rushton for sociability and business matters' (p. 89), leaving the reader eager to hear more about what this 'strong connection' meant.

Actors in the book are 'patrons' and 'clients'. In her cogent introduction, Cogan emphasises the flexibility of categories and individualised experiences (p. 26), but the way the categories are applied thereafter is not always persuasive. Can we really call Sir Thomas Tresham a client of Lord Burghley, the Earl of Leicester, and Sir Walter Mildmay? In 1581, amid the excitement of the arrest and trial of the Jesuit protomartyr Edmund Campion, Tresham and his kinsmen William, third Baron Vaux, and Sir William Catesby were questioned locally by Burghley, Leicester, and Mildmay. The same men were present for the Queen in Star Chamber when Tresham, Vaux, and Catesby were sentenced to close imprisonment in the Fleet for refusing to swear to the charge of having harboured Campion. The trial records evince their fury at Tresham in particular – he gave a characteristically verbose and obstinate defence. Cogan's assertion that the Cecils (principally Lord Burghley and his son Sir Robert) gave patronage to the Treshams among other Midlands Catholics does have support: Burghley seems to have been involved in procuring the release of Tresham, and other Catholic gentry, from precautionary detention in the bishop's palace at Ely during the 1588 Armada crisis; Tresham wrote to thank Burghley for procuring the release of Catholic prisoners at Ely in December 1588 (p. 239), but Burghley had also had a hand in imprisoning them in the first place. A petitionary letter in Muriel Tresham's name (p. 222), drafted by her husband, to Burghley, called him 'his [Tresham's] very principal means in like matter of relief'.[1] Of

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[1] Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, *Report on Manuscripts in Various Collections*, 8 vols. (London: H.M.S.O., 1901-13), 3:50, Muriel Lady Tresham to Lord Treasurer Burghley, 21 March 1590, in Sir Thomas Tresham's hand.

more personal import was Tresham's successful deal with Sir Robert Cecil in 1601 to secure his son Francis's freedom (and his head) in the wake of the Essex Rebellion for a payment of 3000 marks.

Successful petitions were often the result of a personal connection, and Cogan's work considerably expands our knowledge of the local networks of some of the Elizabethan giants. But can it really be the case that everyone who petitioned these Privy Councillors successfully can be counted among their clientage? Cogan acknowledges that the Treshams 'practised a strategy of simultaneously appealing to multiple patrons at the top of the Elizabethan state' (p. 217). Perhaps this is a marker of desperation rather than of secure patronage.

For Cogan, the patron-client model was a highly effective extension of state power. She sees the friendship between Tresham and William Wickham, bishop of Lincoln (his sometime custodian and a fellow lover of gardens), as vindication of the state's strategy: 'The development of a friendship between an officer of the state (and this includes the state church) was another avenue by which the state could strengthen its connections to recusants it perceived as a potential threat and hereby work to defuse that threat' (p. 241). If Wickham's friendship with Tresham had had this aim, it was not a success.

Cogan's book is a welcome and significant contribution to our knowledge of an important group of families. Cogan's Midlands can sometimes seem distant from the political context, though, and there are some gaps in the historiography with which she engages. Unpublished theses are not considered, and Cogan might have engaged with the work of Laura Verner, who also argues that Catholics in the Midlands deliberately cultivated networks to minimise the impact of persecution, and for survival.[2]

Chapter four, 'Architecture, Gardens, and Cultural Networks' is the book's most stimulating. Cogan argues powerfully that participation in these elite activities allowed Catholics to reassert their status and gentility, while also inflecting belief; Cogan is very wary of detecting Catholic symbolism, but makes a valid point about shared points of reference and deliberate ambiguity. Other scholars (*mea culpa*) have had their heads turned by the beguiling garden and building projects of Sir Thomas Tresham, but Cogan considers projects from across the confessional spectrum, too, tracing shared taste, materials, and personnel to great effect.

This is a valuable book for scholars interested in the operation of social networks, of Catholics, and their cultural activities.

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[2] Laura Verner, 'Catholic Communities and Kinship Networks of the Elizabethan Midlands', *Perichoresis*, 13:1 (2015): 73-95; idem., 'Post-Reformation Catholicism in the Midlands of England' (unpublished PhD thesis, King's College, University of London, 2015).

Interpretive differences do not detract from the book's meticulous archival research, and scholars should expand its insights into other regions to understand what elite English society looked like before the Civil Wars. Whether these were, as Cogan states, 'not a religious war' (p. 16) would be an ecumenical matter.

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Carlos Eire, *They Flew: A History of the Impossible*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2023, pp. 512, £30, ISBN: 9780300259803.

The canonization of the Capuchin Pio of Pietrelcina, commonly known as Padre Pio, in 2002 was the final step in the process of legitimizing a friar whose supernatural talents included levitation, bilocation (appearing in two places at once), gifts of prophecy, the ability to heal, and the receiving of the stigmata. This might seem extraordinary to modern sensibilities: how could phenomena such as bilocation and levitation be legitimized in the twenty-first century? Surely such things, in a post-Enlightenment world, should be considered impossible? It is exactly these sorts of questions (and assumptions) that are challenged in Carlos Eire's thought-provoking new book.

At its core, the book asserts that accounts of phenomena such as bilocation and levitation in the early modern world have been too quickly discarded or ridiculed by scholars, cast aside as oddities during a period many have characterized as transitioning away from superstition and towards enlightened, rational, and scientific modernity (with all the Weberian and Whiggish assumptions that details). Yet, as Eire notes in their introduction, it was at the dawn of the so called 'age of modernity' that accounts of these phenomenon reached their peak, challenging readers with a reminder that flying friars and bilocating and levitating nuns 'walked the earth and ostensibly hovered over it at the same time as Isaac Newton' (p. 19). Instead, Eire argues for the need to view belief in these impossible events as a very real and 'essential component of a culture's worldview' (p. 6). This moves beyond the reductionist question of 'did these events actually happen?' and towards a more nuanced analysis of 'the fact that some people believed that such things did happen' (p. 20).

Eire continues to challenge this assumption by arguing for the validity and importance of testimonies concerning these phenomena, also too often discarded as anecdotal with no point of reference beyond themselves. Instead, Eire argues that 'a history of the impossible is a history of *testimonies* about impossible events'. It is these testimonies that form the basis of the analysis of the book, with Eire insisting