

acquisition, and subsequent use of all such production. The essay collection does well to contextualize both sides of the often nebulous print culture discussion: how the printed work was created, and then what happens to that work after it leaves the press.

Would that the editors/indexers thought to make the index a bit more useful by including concepts/themes/ideas—anything that would help draw the essays together and highlight the common themes, even though this was not a specified goal of the editors. As it is, the index is restricted almost exclusively to proper names, the majority of which only have a single page reference that frequently only leads to a mention of the name with little historical or biographical content (e.g., the index to Queen Anna Jagiellon leads only to her name being used to define her court physician, Kasper Wilkowski), and few names appear in more than one contribution. While Volek's essay highlights female patronage, a concept such as women printers/book producers ideally could have been reflected in the index, as passing comments to women working in the book industry are buried in other essays by Lovas, Płaszczyńska-Herman, Brophy, and others. Short of scouring the index for female names—not all of which are even indexed—the role of women in the book industry remains hidden.

The twenty-four essays (and introduction) create a weighty tome, and I would not want to haul it home from the library with too many other books in tow—hopefully your library has access to a Brill online subscription. While the geographic considerations of the volume can be applauded, I wonder how that may play out in research and teaching. Researchers seem to always fracture such volumes, plucking out only the bits of information germane to their current project. Perhaps those who assign readings out of this volume might think of dividing it up by section and consider the essays through their respective groupings rather than as independent case studies.

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The Political Discourse of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: Concepts and Ideas. Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawicz.

Routledge Research in Early Modern History. Abingdon: Routledge, 2021. vi + 270 pp. \$160.

This book, part of the Routledge Research of Early Modern History series, provides an analytical survey of early modern concepts as they were used in the political discourse of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (1569–1795). It comprises an introduction, remarks from the translator, eight chapters, each on a chosen political concept, and a conclusion. This is Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawicz's second book made available to English readers since *Queen Libertas: The Concept of Freedom in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth* (2012).

In the introduction, Grześkowiak-Krwawicz justifies the need for this publication, making a convincing case for the unique development of Polish political thought from the classical tradition. As throughout the rest of the book, Grześkowiak-Krwawicz argues for the robust culture of political debate in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, best exemplified by the rich output of political writings during the period. The book's translator, Daniel J. Sax, further demonstrates this by explaining his decision as translator in retaining ideas as they were used during the existence of the Commonwealth, either in the original Polish or Latin. The reader is then taken to eight chapters analyzing chosen political concepts used by prominent political writers of the two-hundred-year period of the Commonwealth. A conclusion ends the book, offering both a summary and an analysis of other concepts, which are, according to the author, less commonly used in early modern Polish political discourse; an explanation is offered as to why that is the case.

Chapter 1, titled "*Rzeczpospolita* – The Commonwealth," deals with the idea of the *res publica* or the common good (understood as a "concept of the state"), the citizens' place in it, and the "vision of government." In chapter 2, "*Prawo* – The Law," the author analyzes the law and its place in political debate, how its role was understood, and how it shaped civic and social life. Chapter 3, "*Wolność* – Freedom," focuses on the evolving concept of freedom and how it was revered and universally accepted as a right to be claimed by all those who had the right to it. Chapter 4, "From *Forma Mixta* to the Separation of Powers," deals with that vision of the state which demonstrates the perceived relationship between the powers in the Commonwealth.

The analysis in chapter 5 centers on the concept of "*Zgoda* – Concord" as it was used in the political culture to mean both concord and consensus. Chapter 6 is titled "*Cnota* – Virtue as Advice for the Commonwealth," here understood as the role of the attitudes and behaviors of the players of political life in shaping the quality of civic and political life. Chapter 7 concentrates on "*Amor Patriae* – Patriotism," initially derived from the classical understanding of love for one's homeland that transcends all earthly things. Finally, in chapter 8, titled "The Perceived Superiority of the 'Old Ways': *Dawny* – Age-Old"—the author focuses on the value of the past and how the past served not just as a repository of experiences but also as an instrument in authority-building. The author concludes with an analysis of concepts absent from usual political discourse. She looks at the absence of two concepts: sovereignty and state, and looks at the possible consequences of this absence in political debate. The focus, however, of the discussion is the infrequent use of the word *property* in political discourse. This, the author explains, originates from the fact that property ownership had never been an issue since it had never defined the political class. Rather, it was membership in the nobility that allowed one to enjoy these political rights and privileges.

This book is a valuable resource for scholars and students of intellectual and cultural history, particularly those interested in early modern political thought. It provides a wealth of insight for anyone seeking to understand the political legacy of the

Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. It offers a deep understanding of the history of this region in Europe—a heritage which still informs the political culture today.

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Souls under Siege: Stories of War, Plague, and Confession in Fourteenth-Century Provence. Nicole Archambeau.

Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2020. xviii + 262 pp. \$49.95.

Life was not easy in late fourteenth-century Provence, what with successive waves of the Black Death, political turmoil, and mercenary warfare to contend with—just ask anyone who was there. That, in effect, is what Nicole Archambeau has sought to do in her new book. Drawing on archival material from an inquest held in 1363 to investigate the potential canonization of Delphine de Puimichel, Countess of Ariano, Archambeau seeks to tease out from selected testimony supporting Delphine’s sainthood how people were affected by the larger turmoil of their time, and how they dealt with it. This approach could potentially offer true insights into the strategies used to navigate the chaos, violence, and uncertainty that surrounded them. And Archambeau offers strong historical context for the various events that shaped this environment. But ultimately, the witness testimony rather underwhelms this ambition. It seems that while they had plenty to say about Delphine’s piety, the witnesses did not want to talk about much else.

The last third of Delphine’s life (she died in 1360) took place against the backdrop not just of the first wave of the Black Death but also of the political uncertainty precipitated by the power struggle that followed the death of King Robert of Naples (at whose court she had resided for a time), during the uneven reign of his granddaughter Joanna. On top of that, when the inquest was launched in 1363, Provence was dealing with aftereffects of the second wave of plague that had moved through Europe from 1360 to 1362. The witnesses, therefore, who testified before the inquest to offer their experiences, recollections, and impressions of their “holy countess” had lived through a traumatizing time.

Archambeau focuses on the testimony of a handful of the more than sixty witnesses who were interviewed by the inquest, to explore different facets of their inner and outer lives. The experience of Delphine’s longtime maid Bertranda, for instance, is showcased to highlight the impact of political turmoil, precipitated by the power struggle that followed Robert’s death in 1343. While Archambeau offers a detailed discussion of that turmoil, Bertranda herself offers no actual direct commentary on the political events of her lifetime. Instead, as Archambeau observes, she uses the death of King Robert as a reference point for demarcating time and events, suggesting, but only obliquely, the significance of the moment.