

points, commenting on Perry's sources, and drawing attention to errors in the 'Essay'. In addition, he includes a useful appendix containing short biographies of the principal figures treated. The volume dovetails with Dr Cunningham's ongoing project to publish new editions of Grosseteste's own works. In 2004, Southern wrote that when 'Grosseteste's writings are made available in modern critical editions [...] it] seems likely that [...] he will take his place in the first rank of medieval Englishmen'.<sup>2</sup> How Perry would have agreed!

This volume will interest readers of *British Catholic History* as a life of a remarkable Catholic ecclesiastic —in Perry's words, 'a perfect scholar [...] an illustrious linguist, poet, orator, philosopher and mathematician, as well as a prime theologist [*sic*], and eminent prelate' (p. 5). But, of greater interest, since the Bishop's career can obviously be investigated in detailed modern accounts, is the historiographical dimension: the distinctive treatment of Grosseteste's life, the reasons why Perry adopted his stance, and the skills which he deployed in writing his 'faithfull sketch'.

Winchester

Colin Haydon

Ulrich Lehner and Shaun Blanchard eds., *The Catholic Enlightenment: A Global Anthology*, Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2021 pp. 304, \$34.95, ISBN: 9780813233987

Readers will no doubt be aware that in recent years one of the growth areas of scholarly enquiry for the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries has been that focused on the Catholic Enlightenment. Two of the leading proponents of this movement have been Ulrich Lehner, (*Catholic Enlightenment: The Forgotten History of a Global Movement* (2016) and Shaun Blanchard (*The Synod of Pistoia and Vatican II* (2020)). Now, as editors, they have brought together a team of ten other scholars, whose efforts have resulted in *The Catholic Enlightenment: A Global Anthology*, which is part of the 'Early Modern Catholic Sources Series' published by the Catholic University of America Press.

The historiography of the Enlightenment traditionally was dominated by the more extreme, secular, anticlerical figures, such as Diderot, Rousseau and Voltaire. In reality though there was a middle ground where Christianity, modernity and scientific and scholarly advancement flourished; the editors state in the introduction that Catholic Enlightenment is 'among the oldest claimants for a separate place under the Enlightenment's sun' (p. 2). Yet in spite of this reality,

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*

a great hindrance faces researchers and teachers of the eighteenth century, readers are told: the unfortunate dearth of translated writings of the men and women of the Catholic Enlightenment. This volume's objective is to address this problem, by providing 'a single point of departure to delve into some of the most important and interesting primary sources of the Catholic Enlightenment' (p. 1).

One of the great challenges that the editors faced was proposing a satisfactory new definition of Catholic Enlightenment, and consequently selecting sources that would reflect this. However, they did not succumb to such a temptation, opting instead to go for a deliberately broad and inclusive classification that would 'paint a pluriform and multivalent picture of the world of Catholic Enlightenment that reflects its transcontinental reality and is appropriately inclusive of women, laity, and non-Europeans' (p. 1). This approach is one of the volume's great strengths, its contributors extending beyond the male clergy of Western Europe; the choice of fifteen historical figures from ten countries accurately reflects the true diversity of 'engagement with enlightened learning, ideas, and methodologies' (p. 8).

Readers are presented with an often-surprising array of historical figures and subject matters. Yes, they include some like Lodovico Muratori (1672-1750), who is sometimes portrayed as the archetypal enlightened Catholic, who used contemporary scholarly methods to defend orthodoxy. However, there are also more surprising and juxtaposing entries, like that of chapter five, 'On the Indigenous Use of Cannabis' by José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez de Santillana (1737-1799), a scholar priest in New Spain. In his conclusion he 'exculpated the plant, supported its medicinal nature, and condemned only its abuse' (p. 118), reconciling scientific thinking with the Catholic faith.

One of the great qualities of this volume is that it seeks to reintegrate women into the history of the Catholic Enlightenment. All too often forgotten women like the Italian mathematician and philosopher Maria Gaetana Agnesi (1718-1799) played a significant role in the scholarly advancements of the age. Agnesi is best-known as only the second woman to be granted a university professorship (though she never served), Pope Benedict XIV appointing her to the chair of mathematics and natural philosophy and physics at Bologna in 1750, her masterpiece the *Instituzioni analitiche* (1748) having offered a comprehensive introduction to calculus in the vernacular. Her *Il cielo mistico* (*The Mystic Heaven*), produced in this collection, acted as a guide for those who wished to meditate on the mysteries of Christ's life and death (p. 39). The inclusion of Agnesi, though, is a timely reminder for those who might be tempted to characterize all Catholic

Enlightenment thinkers as reformers: Agnesi, we are told, was an example of those whose willingness to ‘participate in the cultural debates of the time and to get involved in charitable activities was not necessarily accompanied by a commitment to religious reform’ (p. 39).

Church reform was, however, very much the concern of a number of figures chosen to feature in this volume. Some of these were interested in more moderate reform, such as Tomás da Encarnação Costa e Lima (1723-1784), the bishop of Pernambuco. He promoted the reform of pastoral care in South America, throwing his weight behind the changes decreed by the Portuguese enlightened reformer, the Marquis de Pombal. Similarly, John Carroll (1736-1815), the first Catholic bishop of an American diocese and subject of the volume’s final chapter, steered a middle course, preaching on the divine right of the papacy whilst also espousing the fruits ‘about the democratic experiment in government and culture’ (p. 274).

There were others, however, whose reform agendas, for both within and outside of the Church, were considerably more radical. Two of those with such agendas were Joseph Berington (1743-1827) and Benedict Maria von Werkmeister (1745-1823). A secular priest, Berington sought greater freedoms for English Catholics by portraying the Church as reasonable, loyal and non-threatening to its Protestant neighbours and rulers, as outlined in his *State and Behaviour of English Catholics* (1780). He was an ardent advocate of the vernacular liturgy, and ‘targeted chronic stumbling blocks such as the papal deposing power and the canard that Catholics not “keep faith with heretics”’ (pp. 255–56). ‘Perhaps the most outspoken of the Catholic Enlighteners in the Holy Roman Empire’, von Werkmeister pushed boundaries even further (p. 168). Having illicitly celebrated Mass in a vernacular setting that he himself had composed, this former monk pushed for the abolition of mandatory priestly celibacy, amongst other reform efforts.

*The Catholic Enlightenment: A Global Anthology* is a most welcome addition to the growing *corpus* of works focused on the Catholic Enlightenment. It provides specialist and non-specialist readers alike with an accessible and manageable introduction to the topic, with each chapter containing short explanatory introductions and further reading lists. For those seeking to broaden their understanding of the movement, and indeed of the wider history of the Church in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this volume will be an invaluable introduction and asset.

University of Durham

Cormac Begadon