

Francesca Bugliani Knox. *The Eye of the Eagle: John Donne and the Legacy of Ignatius Loyola*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2011. Religions and Discourse Series. 342 pp. \$75.95. Review by MITCHELL M. HARRIS, AUGUSTANA COLLEGE (SIOUX FALLS).

When I spotted the provocative title of Francesca Bugliani Knox's *The Eye of the Eagle: John Donne and the Legacy of Ignatius Loyola* for the first time, my curiosity was piqued. Here was an academic monograph that could seemingly go in many directions. For example, it could engage various points of argument in past Donne studies regarding the meditative tradition and Donne's poetry and prose, or it could re-examine Donne's Catholic upbringing and potential recusancy. Better yet, it could complicate one's understanding of meditative practices in post-Reformation England—that is, it could potentially reassess how Ignatius Loyola came to play a crucial role in both Protestant and Catholic literature. Upon cracking open Knox's text, however, one realizes that such potentially historically informed and nuanced arguments are never going to be considered. Instead, in *The Eye of the Eagle* one will only encounter a monolithic version of John Donne: an English poet turned divine who somehow managed to remain an ardent practitioner of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* despite serving a major role in the English Church during the early part of the seventeenth century. In other words, one encounters an argument that is based purely upon an ideological presupposition, narrowly focused in scope, and unrelenting in its untenable thesis: when it comes to the meditative tradition, Donne was always looking back to Loyola, nobody else.

In chapter one, Knox examines "John Donne Criticism and the Ignatian Legacy." To be sure, the criticism she examines is selective, her interpretation biased, and her motives suspect. Chapter two, "Discretion and Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises* in Donne's Time," initially looks like a great chapter. Here, Knox suggests that there are "historical and biographical reasons for thinking that Donne might have known and been influenced by the Catholic tradition of discretion and Ignatian spirituality" (21). What would appear to be particularly interesting is her examination of meditative books—both Catholic and Protestant—printed in England between 1579 and 1633. If ever

there were a place for Knox to make her readers historically informed about the presence of Ignatian spirituality, it would be here. Yet even here the case is thin and the conclusions premature. For example, in discussing how Protestants often adapted Catholic devotional books to suit their own purposes, Knox is willing to concede that “Ignatian spirituality could . . . in general appeal to Christians not belonging to the Roman Catholic Church” (59). But she does not stop there. Instead, she goes on to suggest that “the Society of Jesus, although committed to the personal conversion of people, did often give the Exercises, wrote or translated devotional books inspired by the *Spiritual Exercises*, with the purpose of reconciling souls to Roman Catholicism and papal authority” (59). In other words, the overarching premise of Knox’s text is that there is no true Protestant meditative tradition: it is always mediated through the Ignatian meditative tradition, which has its eye on conversion.

The rest of the book, then, is generally predictable. In chapter three, “Mental Prayer, Discretion and Donne’s Early Religious Poems,” Knox argues that the “Divine Meditations” (note her unwillingness to refer to them as the *Holy Sonnets*), when read “in the light of the material and dynamics of the First Week of Ignatius’s *Spiritual Exercises*,” make better sense to the general reader: “Donne’s concern with sin will not appear out of the ordinary” (72). Of course, Knox must suggest a specific sequential arrangement of the “Divine Meditations” (that of the 1635 poems) in order to make them align with the *Spiritual Exercises*. The sequential arrangement of the “Divine Meditations” that Knox proposes is questionable in and of itself, given that it largely avoids confronting the remarkable work achieved by the *Donne Variorum* editors’ work with the *Holy Sonnets*. The rest of the chapter examines *La Corona* (it’s the second week of the *Spiritual Exercises*), “A Litany,” and “The Cross.” Chapter four looks at the *Essays in Divinity*, while chapter five examines Donne’s biblical exegesis and the influence of Ignatian “discretion” upon his exegetical practices. In chapter six, “Donne’s Theology,” Knox widens the net, explaining “why Donne’s way of applying and engaging with theology in the *Essays* bears a strong similarity with the role Ignatius gave to theology in his *Spiritual Exercises*” (185). Chapter seven looks at Donne’s ecclesiology. Here, at

last, Knox is willing to concede a clear discrepancy between Donne and Ignatius's visions of obedience to the Church: "However favourable to obedience to the Church and its laws and decrees, Donne rejected obedience to things which were not essential articles of faith nor authentic laws or decrees of the Catholic Church" (255). Of course, the concession of dissimilarity is itself strange, considering that, as an English divine, Donne was not Catholic. *The Eye of the Eagle* promises more than it delivers, which is sad. I was hoping to learn more about Ignatius Loyola and the ways in which his legacy helped frame the debates—whether consciously or unconsciously—of post-Reformation England. Instead, one simply reads about a Donne who followed Ignatian spiritual practices by the book. Knox's Donne is thus a rather flat character, and this flatness seems to fly in the face of his rather impressive legacy—which includes his poetry, polemics, meditations, and sermons—that points to a rather complex and nuanced individual thinker—someone who struggled to make sense of his Catholic upbringing while finding a clear sense of duty and religious vocation within the Church of England. To find the story of that Donne, however, readers will need to turn elsewhere.

Nigel Smith. *Andrew Marvell: The Chameleon*. Yale University Press, 2010. xiv + 400 pp. \$45.00. Review by ALEX GARGANIGO, AUSTIN COLLEGE.

"Chime" is a word much in evidence in Marvell studies these days (rhyme words chime with each other, as do authors, subject matters, intertexts, contexts), and Nigel Smith's new biography chimes in with genial intelligence and erudition. Smith capitalizes on the 2003 edition of Marvell's prose from Yale (soon to be completed with a new and fuller edition of Marvell's letters), which has renewed interest in his overtly satirical, political, and theological writing after the Restoration (such as *The Rehearsal Transpros'd* and the *Account of the Growth of Popery and Arbitrary Government*), rather than the largely pre-Restoration poetry that still gains the lion's share of critical attention (for example, "To His Coy Mistress," "A Drop of Dew," and "An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland"). Marvell the