

of justification by faith alone should they be proscribed.

Out of this austere environment of sensory deprivation came the Elizabethan Church of England, so many of whose leaders had their experience of reformed religion shaped by Calvin's teachings in Geneva. The Word, spoken, read, and commented upon, was everything. The English Church excluded almost all kinds of visual stimulus; black-letter texts on whitewashed walls and a royal coat of arms were the best that most congregations could look at. It is true that polyphonic choral music survived in cathedrals (where bishops also survived), but the setting for worship was otherwise bleak. The rich tradition of mystery plays ceased (despite the fact that Calvin's successor, Theodore Beza, composed religious dramas). English theologians of Calvinist descent reinforced the harsh creed evolved in Geneva, especially two Cambridge divines, William Ames and William Perkins, who would have a formative influence over the separatists who began to leave for America after 1620. Antipathy to images and devotional symbols was part of the baggage of the Puritans who were settling in Massachusetts. Their imaginative life was inwardly directed, and intensely recorded in print. Dymess comments admiringly on the vitality of the accounts of spiritualised living that appeared in seventeenth-century New England, where the "Paradise within" imagined by Milton seems to have been more fully realised than in the old country.

Distrust of visual richness persisted, and continues to this day in the churches of the nonconformist congregations. That these congregations have developed their own distinctive aesthetic is undeniable, but this aesthetic resists neat formulation. This book forces us to think empathetically about the difficulties that seriously reformed Protestants have always had with visual culture; whether their rejection of what is rich, elaborate, and heightening to the senses is adequately compensated by spiritual and intellectual satisfactions will always remain debatable.

Gerald Curzon. *Wotton and His Worlds: Spying, Science and Venetian Intrigues*. Philadelphia: Xlibris, 2004. 178 pp. \$33.00 Paper. Review by DENNIS FLYNN, BENTLEY COLLEGE.

The author of this biography of Sir Henry Wotton introduces himself as a neurochemist and amateur historian of the Tudor and Jacobean periods, whose interest in his subject stems from the fact that it was Wotton who first

communicated to England what he called “news” of Galileo’s discoveries through a telescope. Curzon recognizes that Galileo’s work, more than mere news, was “of earth-shattering—indeed, of universe-shattering importance.” Wotton, on the other hand, although he treated these discoveries as newsworthy, commented that they would make Galileo “either exceeding famous or exceeding ridiculous,” a dilemma proving that Wotton did not really grasp the importance Curzon finds here. Instead, Wotton sent a fresh copy of Galileo’s *Sidereus Nuncius* (1610) to Lord Treasurer Robert Cecil, earl of Salisbury, with a note commending the book as a novelty worth King James’s attention. What the King and Salisbury made of Galileo’s book we do not know. For his part, Wotton seems immediately to have dropped the matter; he never mentions it again in extant writings.

In making Wotton’s news of Galileo a central focus, the sum and substance of the “Science” listed among three of Wotton’s “Worlds” in the title of the book, Curzon inflates a trivial matter and thus exhibits a flaw often found in work of this sort. Actually, Wotton had no notion of what science is. Except for shipping Galileo’s book, nothing in Wotton’s biography supports the idea that “Science” was one of his “Worlds.” Curzon’s “Chapter 6: The New Philosophy Calls All in Doubt,” asks the lopsided question, “What is the justification for giving Galileo a place in Wotton’s world?” The answers Curzon gives remind us of certain unsatisfying biographies of Shakespeare, echoing their repeated use of locutions such as “they must often have,” “they would have,” and “they may also have.” Curzon admits that Wotton “probably did not clearly distinguish magic from science.” In truth, only by coincidence can his handling of *Sidereus Nuncius* seem scientifically noteworthy.

One other regrettable feature of this book is its questionable assurance, in view of the twentieth century, concerning the superior enlightenment and civilization of modern times. This assurance of the scientist spills over into moral and political matters that are not so easily judged. Curzon finds that sixteenth- and seventeenth-century mental processes in general were “tortuous,” not as efficient as ours are today, because “they did not see truth in the ‘either-or’ terms in which we tend to see it now.” In those days, Curzon maintains, human powers of reason were generally still weak, still plagued by contradiction, and comparatively “vulnerable to self-deceit.” This last stipulation seems especially ironic, itself an example of self-deceit.

As if looking at Wotton’s life through the wrong end of a telescope,

Curzon gives us some misstatements of fact and some distorted interpretations. Thus he thinks religious toleration was “an unfamiliar idea” to Wotton and his contemporaries; but in actuality the subject was widely known and discussed, despite Curzon’s observation (supported by the *Oxford English Dictionary*) that the word “tolerance” was not used before the eighteenth century. This may be so, but reading the dictionary for another few inches would have revealed that the words “tolerate” and “toleration” were common usage in Wotton’s time, as in the title of a 1609 pamphlet: “An Humble Supplication for Toleration and Libertie.”

In fact, Wotton himself wrote a book on the subject of religious toleration, *The State of Christendom*, which argues at length that “liberty of conscience” would be more desirable than the religious policy of the Elizabethan regime. According to Curzon, it is “highly unlikely” that Wotton wrote this book, despite the fact that it was published as his in 1657, seventeen years after his death, and is extant also in several anonymous manuscript copies that began to circulate in the mid-1590s. Departing from the judgment of professional historians of the period, Curzon tries to support his novel contention by arguing that the book is “about seven times longer” than any of Wotton’s other writings, and that it contains some expressions of opinion “inconsistent” with Wotton’s known views. But the book is a compilation based on Wotton’s readings and experiences during years of studious travel, and it has long been interpreted as using a fictional persona for purposes connected with the political program of the earl of Essex, Wotton’s employer in the 1590s. Here Curzon has simply been unable to square his preconceptions about the limitations of early modern political thinking with the idea that Wotton could have written about toleration.

On the other hand, Curzon’s bluff and downright naivety almost leads him to some fresh insights not found in the work of previous biographers. Wotton’s early travels, beginning in the late 1580s, covered about four thousand miles, criss-crossing Europe during a period of four years. He embarked at the suggestion of Salisbury’s father, William Cecil, baron of Burghley, and may have remained in Burghley’s service throughout the trip. Curzon is the first biographer of Wotton to express surprise that, after such a beginning, Wotton on returning to England entered the secretariat of Burghley’s emulous and contentious godson, Robert Devereux, earl of Essex: “Burghley must have had responsible posts for him in mind. Offers were probably made.

But none were accepted.” What Curzon does not explore on the basis of these remarks is the possibility that the Cecils may have pressed Wotton into service with Essex for reasons of their own.

In fact, the “Worlds” of “Spying” and of “Venetian Intrigues,” a brace of related “Worlds” surrounding the incongruous and negligible “World” of “Science” in the book’s title, were the main area of Wotton’s activities and interests. Here Curzon has contributed a wealth of background detail including Wotton’s superstitious entertainments of witchcraft, alchemy, and spiritualism; his sexual foibles; his anti-semitism; his priggishness; and yet his nearly enchanted fascination with Venetian high and popular culture. Curzon is also quite good on the subject of Wotton’s visionary pet-project, the conversion of the Venetians to Protestantism. The rich, sometimes delightful detail of these often humorous considerations makes Curzon’s book a worthwhile read, although it can never challenge the serious *Life and Letters* (1907) by Logan Pearsall Smith.

Robert Whalen. *The Poetry of Immanence: Sacrament in Donne and Herbert*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002. xxi + 216 pp. \$45.00. Review by JONATHAN NAUMAN, USK VALLEY VAUGHAN ASSOCIATION.

In this neo-historical study of the role of sacrament in seventeenth-century English devotional writing, Robert Whalen attempts to reconstruct the literary resonances and politico-religious implications of certain Anglican images of Holy Communion, with special focus on the poetry and prose of John Donne and George Herbert. While he presumes the current regime of cultural studies as context, Whalen’s basic view of sacrament is not Marxian, but liberal humanist: the Eucharist is a noble cultural construction that can plausibly answer real human needs. Specifically, it provided seventeenth-century Anglicans “an avenue of escape” from the personal discomforts and uncertainties of individual devotion, allowing Anglican experience of God to become a communal event within a broader “Christian *mythos*” (150-51). As a reader, Whalen seems to me to follow Calvin at a secularized distance, softening the hostility of modern psychological “demystification” with the reformer’s view of sacrament as a concession to human frailty. Enough sympathetic interest in seventeenth-century sacramental thought is retained in the process to give this study a literary complexity and theological perspicacity