would integrate diverse early inter-colonial and international cultural influences far beyond the memory or awareness of Virginia's residents at the turn of the seventeenth century.


This collection of eleven essays looks at the role of science in the Society of Jesus, focusing especially on its early years in the sixteenth century. The essays study everything from the Jesuit involvement in the Galileo affair to their involvement in the Storia letteraria d'Italia, an encyclopedic journal published in the latter half of the eighteenth century. The volume opens with the argument that, in the past, there has been a consensus that there is “little reason” for “historians to study Jesuit science strongly” (viii). The essays that follow prove this consensus misguided. Mordechai Feingold’s “Jesuits: Savants” attempts to reconcile the image of Jesuits as theologians with their study of science and mathematics. The fifth General of the Society of Jesus, Claudio Acquaviva, demanded that no Jesuit defend, or even study, any opinion or principle that contradicted the received theology or philosophy. Feingold argues that, unable to find support with Jesuits, Galileo turned against the Society, giving rise to a still unresolved question about Galileo’s trial. Still-restricted documents in the Vatican archives leave us wondering what role the Jesuits, particularly Robert Bellarmine, had in the Galileo trial. The point is further elaborated in William A. Wallace’s contribution to the volume, “Galileo’s Jesuit Connections and Their Influence on His Science.”

Ugo Baldini’s essay on the Academy of Mathematics of the Collegio Romano aims to uncover what was being studied at the Collegio before 1610. Baldini shows that scientific study at the Academy was significant but controversial as the conflict between scientific reasoning and religious faith continued to plague those Jesuits wishing to study the former while living a life of the latter.
The movement from the medieval model of cosmology to the renaissance model is outlined in Edward Grant’s “The Partial Transformation of Medieval Cosmology by Jesuits in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries.” Grant illustrates the Jesuit (and non-Jesuit) reaction to the various cosmological principles. His conclusion, that “Theological constraints—at least after 1616—compelled the Jesuits to reject the earth’s daily and annual motions and to assume instead the earth’s immobility and centrality,” is well-researched and documented with nearly one hundred endnotes (146).

Roger Ariew brings the Jesuit concerns to one of the most important philosophical figures of the period: Rene Descartes. Ariew tells us of the Jesuits’ condemnations of Descartes and Cartesian philosophical and scientific principles. He also reminds us that Descartes’ works ended up on the Index of Prohibited Books in 1663. The antagonism between the Jesuits and Descartes only escalated, and eventually, Ariew writes, “some Jesuits became enemies of Cartesian philosophy and science” (182). Alfredo Dinis reports that the “general misconception about the Jesuits’ lack of freedom in their search for truth” is actually based on “an uncritical reading of the documents of the Order” (196). And, indeed, the Constitutions of the Society are dense and often misinterpreted. Paula Findlen’s essay presents Athanasius Kircher, professor of mathematics at the Roman College in the late seventeenth century, and shows his important influence over and contributions to the Roman College Museum. Martha Baldwin’s essay examines the role of the patron in the printing of Jesuit works on science in the seventeenth century. Baldwin explains that the patronage system had been largely dismantled by the late seventeenth century, and Jesuits had to explore other avenues for support in research and publishing.

In “Tradition and Scientific Change in Early Modern Spain: The Role of the Jesuits,” Victor Navarro explains that “Spain was increasingly distanced from the scientific activity” so prevalent elsewhere in Europe, mostly due to “a confluence of political, social,
economic, and ideological factors” (331). Nevertheless, Navarro shows that the Spanish activity was not only extensive but also vitally important to both the advancement of scientific ideas and the Society. G. H. W. Vanpaemel examines the scientific life in the Flandro-Belgian province in the Spanish Netherlands, “one of the most prosperous provinces of the Society” (391). The volume concludes with Brendan Dooley’s contribution on the *Storia Letteraria D’Italia* and what he terms “the Rehabilitation of Jesuit Science” in post-1750 Europe.

Overall, this is a volume well worth reading if one is an historian, a philosopher of science, or a student of the Society of Jesus. However, the non-scientist should know that the mathematics and the science in the volume might be difficult for someone unfamiliar with the scientific controversies of the period. Each essay has been meticulously researched (as evidenced by the pages of endnotes that follow), and the contributors display their extensive knowledge of the period, the discipline, and the history of the Jesuits in this important volume.


Heather Dubrow, one of the essayists in this volume, remarks in passing that it is perhaps time we “rewrite one of the most common new historicist generalizations about early modern England” (156): if the period’s crises of representation were once regularly traced to the theater, they might now more correctly and profitably be traced instead to changes in the domestic realm. Although the essays in this volume do not always live up to this rather grand, but appropriate mandate, they do make a substantial contribution to recent criticism on the importance of various aspects of domestic life. More important, they do not only focus on the details of daily life necessarily central to individual writers’ projects but collectively argue for broader, structural readings of the