The volume is based on meticulous research in the primary and secondary sources. Its ten appendices offer transcriptions of primary sources. Given the author’s thirty years of research on the subject, he might have better sustained his hypothesis by providing analytical appendices. The reviewer realizes that the evidence prevents absolute comparisons, but relative ones would have done much in highlighting Bull’s conclusions. He might have compared, for example, Royalist and Parliamentarian expenditure and acquisition of artillery. Or he could have examined total artillery held by the two sides in December 1642, July 1644 and June 1645 in fortifications, warships and armies. Turning to combat Bull could examine the fate of sieges (with tables on the numbers of those abandoned due to insufficient artillery or munitions, those decided by escalade, those terminated by breaching the wall, etc.). The lavish illustrations fail to support the appropriate text due to the publisher’s decision to place them at the end of the book.

For anyone analyzing English state finances or studying local communities during the war, this book is essential, since it rightly places expensive artillery pieces and their associated fortifications at the forefront. It will also serve as required reading for early modern industrial and military historians.


This volume challenges the tendency to view early modern religious practice in terms of a neat dichotomy between state-promulgated orthodoxy and small pockets of fervent, ideologically coherent resistance. The editors draw on a wide range of contributions from various fields, and the eclectic range of topics aptly reflects the diversity of faiths which underpin the book. By exploring the “ecumenicity of everyday life” (33), the contributors demonstrate how confessional boundaries in this period were more fluid than previously thought, and that even the most deeply held beliefs and prejudices could be unseated by daily exigencies.
In “Emblems of Coexistence in a Confessional World,” Wayne Te Brake discusses churches built by dissenters, the chapter enlivened by a generous selection of photographs of extant houses of worship. As dissenters were “required to construct their places of worship in ways that made them ‘invisible’ to the public, though hardly secret” (75), these churches provide a valuable concrete reminder of the nature of theological pluralism in this period. Te Brake convincingly demonstrates that early modern practice was conflicted rather than conformist, and that rulers and subjects were persistently, if tacitly, renegotiating the acceptability of religious beliefs.

Keith P. Luria’s “The Power of Conscience? Conversion and Confessional Boundary Building in Early-Modern France” expands on the connection between religious and political fidelity, and in particular the tension between Catholic and Protestant conceptions of conscience. Since conscience signified the relationship between man and God, it was a powerful and potentially subversive force. It was held that one must follow wherever conscience led, even into an unorthodox denomination. While Catholics emphasised the inherent potential for heresy and political contumacy, Protestants believed that not to follow conscience “would be a sin” (116). In light of this, Luria urges us to reassess ostensibly tolerationist legislation such as the Edict of Nantes; the Edict did not provide true freedom of conscience, but only a choice between the established Catholic and Protestant churches. Yet the dichotomy the Edict sought to impose was undermined by the very conditions of its practical implementation, for, as this volume persuasively demonstrates, bipartisan loyalties were destabilised by the demands of practicality.

The crisis of bipartisanism deepens in Alexandra Walsham’s chapter, “In Sickness and in Health: Medicine and Inter-Confessional Relations in Post-Reformation England.” Walsham takes the pragmatic aspects of religious practice to their most fundamental level, examining the extent to which denominational factors influenced decisions relating to medical conditions and their cures. This chapter shows how religious differences were commonly overcome in times of great urgency, and “how flexible consciences could be when physical and psychological affliction became unbearable” (174). Protestants and Catholics were willing to treat and be treated by one another,
and it was not uncommon for people to convert after being healed by a member of the opposite denomination. Nevertheless, Walsham is careful to remind us that both denominations remained aware of their differences; Catholics and Protestants visited the same salubrious springs, but believed that they worked either “through the intercession of their saintly patron or as a result of providence working in concert with natural causes” (176).

Three chapters are devoted to the topic of mixed denomination marriages, and this comprehensive triptych is the strongest section of the volume. Dagmar Friest begins by challenging the perception of mixed marriages as “perfect proof of people’s indifference towards their religious convictions” (203), and his contribution shows how mixed marriages tended to reinforce differences rather than elide them. In the next chapter, Benjamin J. Kaplan marshals a wealth of statistics to demonstrate that, although conversions did occasionally occur in mixed marriages, the majority of these marriages were founded on accommodating denominational coexistence. Bertrand Forclaz concludes this section by noting that even in the marriages in which conversion did occur, the apostate spouse often reverted to their original religion after the death of their partner. An interesting parallel is drawn between such marriages and the crypto-Catholicism common in public officials due to Catholic disqualification from office. Forclaz reveals that although mixed marriages were widely accepted in the early seventeenth century, they were treated with increasing hostility as the century progressed. This conclusion presents an intriguing challenge to the common perception of the early modern period as an inexorable march towards toleration.

However, the resounding success of the section on mixed marriages highlights the difficulties faced by contributors in the rest of the volume. As religious history is such a vast and complex discipline, it is difficult to do justice to a topic in a short chapter. While this volume offers a number of tantalising glimpses into fascinating subjects, its overall effectiveness could perhaps have been bolstered had the essayists addressed fewer topics in greater depth.

One subject which certainly deserved more attention is the interplay between religion and nationalism. C. Scott Dixon asserts that the creation of shared identity “is the question at the heart of
this book” (24), and that “one particularly powerful aspect of early modern identity was the nascent idea of nationalism” (12). It seems strange, then, that one of the editors would recognise the connection between religious and national identity, and then go on to neglect this topic in the volume itself. Dixon even suggests that “ideas of national identity worked to undermine tolerance and pluralism” (13), and this could have provided a valuable starting point from which to consider if the diminution of religious orthodoxy presented a challenge to the coherency of national identity.

These are relatively minor flaws, however, in an otherwise engaging collection. This volume provides a compelling overview of early modern religious pluralism, reminding us that “coexistence was the rule, rather than the exception, in the Reformation and post-Reformation eras” (76).


This volume of eleven essays stems from a conference held to mark the 350th anniversary of the publication of William Dugdale’s Antiquities of Warwickshire. A prolific historian and antiquary, Dugdale was a herald by profession, rising to the position of Garter King of Arms in 1677. When compared to his erudition, his formal education was comparably modest: he attended a grammar school in Coventry, but did not proceed to University. His genesis as an historian grew from an interest in his home county, and developed as the result of his making the acquaintance of an increasingly prominent group of antiquaries, lawyers, and national figures like Henry Spelman, under whose auspices Dugdale embarked on his heraldic career. Based in London, he made full use of the archives of the Tower of London, and libraries such as that of Sir Robert Cotton.

During the civil wars, Dugdale was firmly on the royalist side, and managed to pursue his interests. By the 1650s his first published works began to appear: a history of English monasteries; the Antiqui-