

Book Reviews

Marjon Ames, *Margaret Fell, Letters, and the Making of Quakerism* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), pp. 196. ISBN 9781409466987, Hardback, £110.00.

This book, based on a PhD thesis, is addressed to an academic readership and will be of interest to scholars of early Quaker history, theology and print culture. In it, the author, Marjon Ames, argues that it was primarily Margaret Fell, using her social position, organisational abilities and control of the Quaker letter network, who made it possible for Quakers to survive as a movement and enabled George Fox to become its undisputed leader. She suggests that Fell's coordination of the letter network served to shape the public profile of Friends and, through careful censorship and editing, to determine how the history of the early movement was to be remembered. Ames claims that her work reveals the true extent of Fell's contribution, which has been neglected in previous scholarship. She uses a study of seventeenth-century Quaker letters as a window through which to view the early movement, tracing how it changed over time.

Chapter One provides an overview of the development of the Quaker movement during the Interregnum, paying particular attention to issues of authority and control. Chapter Two focuses on the significance of the Quaker letter network, established and coordinated by Margaret Fell, for the formation, development and coordination of the movement. Chapter Three seeks to re-examine the role and significance of Fell within the early Quaker movement in a way that goes beyond 'mother of Quakerism' and proto-feminist. Chapter Four argues that the apostolic epistles served as crucial models for early Friends, influencing the style and purpose of their letters. Particular attention is given to the example of the apostle Paul and to the use of the Bible in early Quaker letters. Chapter Five considers the development of a theology of suffering and the formation of a martyr identity among early Friends. It describes how active resistance to what Friends perceived to be the false ways of the world led to persecution that, in turn, served to validate for Quakers their status as the people of God. Finally, Chapter Six traces the progressive ordering of the Quaker movement during the Restoration period as it transformed itself from a radical sect to a settled denomination, including the

development of an official but selective history of Quaker origins that became received wisdom for centuries to come.

Unfortunately, there are substantial problems with this work. Firstly, Ames argues that her research breaks significant new ground in challenging the received history of early Friends, and Fell's role within it. However, she fails adequately to recognise the important contributions already made in this area by other scholars.¹ Secondly, the text is full of factual errors. Rosemary Moore has detailed many of these in her review of the book for the *Journal of the Friends Historical Society* (forthcoming). Two additional examples include: giving the date of Judge Fell's death as 1659 rather than 1658 (p. 83); and suggesting that Friends did not provide biblical justification for rejecting acts of social deference.² Perhaps as serious are the many errors of interpretation that reveal a limited understanding of early Quaker theology. Ames suggests that the use of the term 'Mother of Israel' as a moniker for Fell expanded the status of her ministry to include the whole Judeo-Christian tradition. However, this fails to account for the highly sectarian nature of the early Quaker movement, in which Friends regarded themselves collectively as the only true 'Israel' (p. 74). Ames incorrectly asserts that, when Fell wrote to other Quaker women directing them to 'look not out at other's words', she is warning them not to let false preachers lead them to question Fox's authority (p. 80). Among early Friends, this was a commonly used injunction that encouraged the faithful to attend to the inward Spirit of Christ, rather than to outward forms and human teachers. Similarly, Ames suggests that Fell's instruction to 'remain faithful and obedient' (p. 80) implied fidelity to Fox. It seems clear, however, that Fell is referring to obedience to Christ as inward teacher rather than to Fox, even if the distinction she made between the two was not always that clear. Ames wrongly claims that, in her 1654 letter to Jeffrey Elletson, Fell supports the Apostle Paul's apparent denial of women's right to speak in church (pp. 84–85). In fact, Fell condemns Elletson's misunderstanding of Paul's message and uses the example of two women from the book of Revelation (the 'woman clothed in the Sun' and 'the whore') to represent the difference between those who are in Christ and those who are not, implying that only regenerated women should speak. This is consistent with the position Fell outlined some years later in *Women's Speaking Justified* (1666). Finally, Ames argues that Quakers felt they had formed a new

1 See, for example, Richard Bailey, *New Light on George Fox: the making and unmaking of a God* (San Francisco, CA: Edwin Mellen Press, 1992); Catie Gill, *Women in the Quaker Community: a literary study of seventeenth-century political identities, 1650–1700* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); Larry H. Ingle, *First Among Friends: George Fox and the creation of Quakerism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); and Bonnelyn, Y. Kunze, *Margaret Fell and the Rise of Quakerism* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1994).

2 See, for example, James Nayler, and Licia Kuenning (eds), *The Works of James Nayler*, Volume 1 (Glenside, PA: Quaker Heritage Press, 2003), *Saul's Errand to Damascus*, p. 21. Nayler uses Acts 10:34 and James 2:9 to justify the practice.

covenant with God (p. 100). However, their writings indicate that they believed they had rediscovered the experience of the eternal new covenant known in the apostolic church.³

In view of these flaws, Ames' book should be approached with caution. This is unfortunate, since it does contain useful material about Margaret Fell, the development of the early Quaker movement and the significance of its letter network. The author's PhD supervisors and examiners, along with her publisher, must bear some responsibility for failing to identify and rectify the large number of errors prior to publication.

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Pink Dandelion, 'The layered theoscape of Philadelphia: the Quaker experiment as a religious Crucible', in Eric Nelson and Jonathan Wright (eds), *Layered Landscapes: Early Modern Religious Space Across Faiths and Cultures* (London: Routledge, 2017), pp. xiii + 239. ISBN 9781472459510. Hardback, £105.00.

Recent years have seen developing scholarship in the history of religious localities where complex cultural imbrications reflect physical archaeological layers. This attentively edited volume extends Alexandra Walsham's seminal British survey¹ and, in a fascinating, diverse read, shows the extensiveness of such phenomena in the early modern era. My review focuses on Pink Dandelion's chapter on the Quaker American colony of Philadelphia (pp. 150–65), but by considering the whole volume – 12 chapters bracketed by an Introduction and Epilogue – readers can set it in broader global and religious contexts that highlight its distinctiveness.

Shared and contested landscapes are introduced by Megan Armstrong's study, which shows how written history and architectural restoration underpinned the Franciscan Order's legitimising and sustaining of the Custody of Jerusalem in uncertain times. A. Katy Harris's study of the Christianisation of Muslim Granada emphasises the importance of shared and personal memory, resonating with Rachel Greenblatt's demonstration of the conception of Prague's Jewish town as a synagogue-focused sacred community. Ute Hüskén minutely tracks how the layering of ritual and memorialisation created tensions between Hindu communities in South India's Kāñcīpuram. Competing visions are examined in Gabriella Ramos' chapter on colonial Cuzco, where the Spanish attempt to expunge the Inca past met with mixed success. The contested and fluid nature

³ See, for example, Margaret Fell's 1660 tract *A True Testimony from the People of God (who by the world are called Quakers)* in T. H. S. Wallace (ed.), *A Sincere and Constant Love: an introduction to the work of Margaret Fell* (Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 1992), p. 26.

¹ A. Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape: religion, identity, and memory in early modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

of sacred sites is traced through pictorial representations of Edo by Barbara R. Ambros.

The impact of political events upon sacred landscapes is seen in Hasan Çolak's discussion of the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople, where legal rulings facilitated coexistence, and Colin Mitchell considers the permeability of political borders at the locus of Islamic piety, Herat. Ingrid Rowland shows territorial marking through architecture in Borromini's reinvention of Rome's San Giovanni in Laterano, and cultural appropriation by the Bourbon monarchy is examined by Eric Nelson through ancient Parisian churches, especially the Jesuit Church of St Louis.

William G. Naphy addresses the attempt to create a Calvinist idealised setting for worship in Geneva, and is in dialogue with the collection's most distinctive topic: Pink Dandelion's analysis of Quaker Philadelphia from the 1680s to the 1750s. Contrasting with the other subjects, William Penn's Philadelphia was conceived *ab ovo*, attempting to realise a utopian vision on American soil. This is an important contribution: urban historians tracing Philadelphia's early years lack Dandelion's theological grasp, which highlights the tensions inherent in early Friends' negotiation with the world.² Meanwhile, Quaker studies benefit from this fine-grained analysis of Penn's unique 'Holy Experiment' and the spiritual challenges of recreating Eden. Refreshingly, Dandelion highlights Penn's atypical social and educational background that shaped a pragmatism different from Fox's 'eschatological and covenantal vision' (p. 152). Penn's acquisition – from a grateful King Charles II – of 45,000 square miles of the terrain that now bears his name transformed him into a great landowner and afforded a rare opportunity to manifest 'in civic terms' (p. 152) abstract theology. For 70 years Philadelphia stress-tested the cognitive dissonance characteristic of early modern Quaker thought and praxis.

The grid plan and squares of the capital of the colony were laid out between the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers by the Surveyor-General of Pennsylvania, the Irish Quaker Thomas Holme (1624–1695). In the suburban Liberties around the city, the first purchasers were encouraged to locate houses in the centre of large plots, 'so there may be ground on each side for gardens, or orchards, or fields, that it may be a green country town which will never be burnt and always be wholesome' (p. 153). The marked contrast between the rectilinear city and country estates in the hinterland was emblematic of the project, for it was shot through with contradictions ultimately leading to failure.

Drawing on the space theories of Michel de Certeau and Henri Lefebvre, Dandelion describes Philadelphia as a *theospace*, framing 'spiritual experience in eschatological and prelapsarian terms' (p. 151). This 'God-accompanied space' (p. 151) is characterised as an optimistic lived place of representation shaped by

² See, for example, G. E. Thomas, *The Buildings of Pennsylvania: Philadelphia and Eastern Pennsylvania* (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2010).

praxis. And it is here that Dandelion might further explore how inward faith was given outward expression; how lived experience of the numinous realised that *theospace*. Phenomenology assuredly offers access to Quaker building, the plainness of which resists formalist description. Embodied practice of collaboration, financial transparency and ‘right ordered’ construction,³ allied to an abstract aesthetics of ‘plainness and perspicuity’,⁴ invested building with morality while facilitating silent waiting to hear God’s voice. This chapter might benefit from discussion of this distinctively Quakerly praxis, but detail is difficult in a short piece, and this should not detract from its overall freshness.

Rather than assuming that the Philadelphia project was a *tabula rasa*, Dandelion usefully focuses on the difficulties of transplanting English values to America. The contrast between Quakers’ English experience, as an oppressed and reactionary minority, with their American role as hegemonic polity, is deftly highlighted. America tested Friends’ ideals of moral control in social, economic and political spheres to destruction. Penn’s legal and political actions to bring into being the *theospace* were compromised by his role as Proprietor, concentrating the tension between self-denying ordinances and mercantile, pragmatic self-interest. Pennsylvania, idealised as a type of Eden, was effected through social prohibitions; infractions were punished and rehabilitation actively practised. Light regulation compromised infrastructure, while unplanned urban growth meant that the flourishing city diluted the Quaker utopia. Dandelion stresses Philadelphia’s egalitarian disposition to leadership contrasted with Bostonian hierarchical authoritarianism. However, Philadelphia’s essentially mercantile urban character led to unequal income distribution and power concentrated in a small elite. When military protection of the colony became necessary, Philadelphian Quakers – ignoring English co-religionists – voted monies for the colony’s defence. That tension between spiritual purity and political pragmatism triggered gradual withdrawal from government in the 1750s. Dandelion concludes that, although theological optimism based on direct communion with God led to an assumption of self-regulation, it was recognised as unsustainable when policing competing self-interests: ‘Anti-authoritarianism had been beset by individualism’, as he succinctly describes it, and ‘when Quaker paternalism became divided the unifying logic of the “experiment” was broken’ (pp. 158–59).

In 1671, prompted by the Quaker Thomas Ellwood, John Milton composed *Paradise Regained*. The poet chose Christ’s rejection of worldly temptations to illustrate his moral: to achieve Eden, eschew all the world has to offer. Pink Dandelion reveals how Penn’s ‘Holy Experiment’ demonstrated those difficulties

3 A.-M., Akehurst, ‘The York Retreat, “a Vernacular of Equality”’, in Guillery, P. (ed.), *Built from Below: British architecture and the vernacular* (London: Routledge, 2010), p. 93.

4 A.-M. Akehurst, “‘Inward Light’: taking architecture seriously with the Early Religious Society of Friends”, in Barnwell, P. (ed.), *Places of Worship in Britain and Ireland, 1689–1840*, Rewley House Studies in the Historic Environment (Donington: Shaun Tyas, forthcoming, 2018).

of being *in* the world but not *of* it. This essay offers thought for modern designers and politicians too, highlighting that Utopia – as its etymology suggests – means ‘nowhere’.

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John M. Chenoweth, *Simplicity, Equality, and Slavery: An Archaeology of Quakerism in the British Virgin Islands, 1740–1780*, Florida Museum of Natural History: Ripley P. Bullen Series (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2017), pp. xvi + 244. ISBN 9781683400110. Hardback, \$74.95.

Conducting research into the global Quaker community is a given these days, and many studies have provided fascinating insights into the historical legacy left behind by those intrepid souls who settled in far-flung outposts. The recent work of John M. Chenoweth, an anthropologist and historical archaeologist at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, certainly adds to this rich history. His work traces the heritage of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) in the British Virgin Islands (BVI) from c.1740 onwards, and is centred on an exploration of their adherence to the Quaker belief system founded on simplicity, equality and pacifism. But, as he records, those Friends who settled in the BVI, and the Caribbean more generally, were living in slave society and most were slave-owners themselves. The study is thereby an attempt to provide some context concerning the ways in which these eighteenth-century Quakers daily sought to navigate the complexities of their religious beliefs and the code of behaviour to which they subscribed alongside the economics of the BVI, their position in society and their relationships with plantation owners and those who were enslaved. Given the incongruities involved this was not an easy task, but Chenoweth provides a close analysis of this vibrant community and the communal bonds that brought them together, and provides an insight into the difficulties they faced, both physically and spiritually.

In this very readable study – well illustrated with an array of useful maps, site images and historical sketches – Chenoweth explores the history of the BVI, particularly the Quakers on Tortola, in eight chapters. The initial chapters provide the remit of the book and the wider archaeological and historical context of the BVI, the problems of tracing the archaeology of such a small community and the decision that was taken to concentrate on one location (the Lettsom site on the Vanterpool estate on the island of Little Jost van Dyke). Naturally, where the very limited evidence allows, Chenoweth has made every effort to cross-reference his research, but he is prepared to offer speculative assessments. He acknowledges that ‘the remote and relatively unwelcoming location has helped preserve remains of this occupation better than most eighteenth-century sites in the rapidly modernizing Caribbean’ (p. 41). Central to his argument is that the

plantation owners were certainly not as wealthy as others of this social standing elsewhere in the Caribbean, and that there were very significant pressures on the fledgling, and ultimately transitory, Quaker community. As a small religious body of 84 members in c.1740, they often were on the fringes of society, while their interactions with non-Quakers on Tortola and elsewhere would have been difficult to reconcile while slavery existed.

In order to understand and comment on 'the actual practice of Caribbean Quakerism as lived, and to add the voices of those of "little note"' (p. 54), Chenoweth conducted three archaeological excavations between 2008 and 2010 to supplement the paucity of written evidence. The intention was to uncover the daily lives of enslaved people, as well as that of the Lettsom family, and to reveal how the Quaker community operated in this remote area. The excavations and surveys of the Lettsoms' home, meeting house and burial ground provided approximately 10,000 artefacts and thereby tangible evidence of the Quakers' general patterns of consumption (ceramic, glass, pipestems, buttons, pins, etc.), in direct contrast to the material circumstances of enslaved people. The Quaker adherence to plainness and simplicity is often discussed by historians, but Chenoweth further challenges the preconception that all Friends strictly followed this pattern of behaviour. He explains how the concept of simplicity 'modified performance of status on the plantation, and how simplicity was itself modified in the process'. Moreover, demonstrable wealth was well-suited to BVI Quakerism, while 'the desire for wealth ... came to be part of the cause for the initial success of the meeting' (p. 69). Chapter 6 contains significant assessments of the patterns of consumption by the Friends, including the consumption of alcohol by the Lettsoms and the enslaved population.

Equally absorbing was evidence concerning armaments, as discussed in Chapter 5, particularly the 'Quaker Guns' (pp. 115–21), which casts a shadow on the Friends' adherence to non-violence in the BVI. What is more revealing is that the gun emplacements faced inland, thereby indicating that 'an internal rather than external threat was most feared' (p. 117). As Chenoweth rightly points out, it is certainly possible to see Quaker beliefs being modified, perhaps completely revised, 'through [the] encounter with Caribbean slavery' (p. 122). This is further developed in Chapter 7, where he explains the nature of slavery, the role of Friends in this and the overlapping identities that emerge. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the sections 'Performing Inequality: Whiteness and Safety' and 'Walking in Two Worlds: Public and Private Quakerisms' (pp. 160–61 and 164–66). Undoubtedly his findings are provocative. I found the assessments in this and the concluding chapter, which reviewed the changing attitudes of the meeting and its ultimate decline, both sharp and thought-provoking. Ultimately, the significance of these archaeological finds and their interpretation allows for a deeper understanding of Quakerism and the noticeable failure completely to adhere to the rigours of the belief system of the Friends. Readers will find this a fascinating study that augments the complex narrative of Quakerism in the

Caribbean, especially in terms of the way that meetings had to adapt to changing social and economic circumstances, particularly the pernicious use of slavery in this region.

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Marcus Rediker, *The Fearless Benjamin Lay: The Quaker Dwarf Who Became the First Revolutionary Abolitionist* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2017), pp. 212. ISBN 9780807035924. Hardback, \$26.95.

Gary B. Nash, *Warner Mifflin: Unflinching Quaker Abolitionist* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), pp. x + 342. ISBN 9780812249491. Hardback, £28.99.

Biography is an important way for historians to explore the development of antislavery reform in American Quakerism. This approach has several compelling features. First, scholars are able to make a thorough examination of the subject's writings, networks and influences. Second, biography can reveal development in a subject's thinking. Marcus Rediker's biography of Benjamin Lay (1682–1759) and Gary Nash's biography of Warner Mifflin (1745–1798) are significant contributions to this body of research and add important detail to historical understandings of Quakerism in the long eighteenth century. Since biography as a genre is essential to the author's exploration of their subjects, this review identifies those pieces of the respective biographies that clarify and animate Lay and Mifflin. This review first addresses Rediker's book and then Nash's, and then attempts to assess their contributions to Quaker antislavery research.

The antislavery radical Benjamin Lay has been maligned as eccentric and his advocacy declared to be futile by mid-twentieth century historians. His unconventional behaviour has contributed to his status as one of the least understood figures of eighteenth-century Quakerism. Markus Rediker's 2017 biography, *The Fearless Benjamin Lay: the Quaker dwarf who became the first revolutionary abolitionist*, takes a much-needed serious look at Lay. Rediker argues that, far from being irrelevant to the development of Quaker antislavery thought, he was prominent in nurturing the undercurrent of antislavery sentiment that was welling up in Pennsylvania during Lay's years as an active abolitionist agitator. As Rediker puts it, as a result of Lay's agitation in the 1730s 'the [antislavery] movement from below broke through to enable Quaker abolition from above' in the 1750s (p. 134).

Rediker helps scholars understand Lay's radicalism by identifying and contextualising the ideas that shaped him. These ideas include seventeenth-century Quaker radicalism, the biblical book of Revelation and an antinomian tradition

that mandated obedience to God's will over human laws. These radical traditions motivated Lay's 'guerilla theatre' performances wherein he embodied forms of antislavery resistance, such as the time Lay did not immediately return home the wandering child of a slave owner to illustrate what enslaved Africans feel when their children are sold away (p. 6). Rediker contends that, as a result of Lay's personal and public influence, he successfully provided a younger generation of Quakers with the historical and theoretical foundation for antislavery protest and coached them on their way.

Rediker successfully argues for considering Lay anew – as a rational, if radical, voice in the Quaker tradition. Noting that Lay was aggressive and often shocking, Rediker argues that he was a 'holy terror to those who did not agree with him', 'disruptive', 'stubborn', 'self-righteous', 'intolerant' and 'certain that he was right'. Much of this was part of Lay's confrontational personality, the egregiousness of the sins he confronted and the antinomian tradition he embodied (p. 9). Rediker is persuasive that Lay understood himself to be in the mould of the Hebrew prophets, commissioned by God to critique imperial greed and sin. Rediker's book helpfully situates the more abrasive aspects of Lay's life in the context of the radical theology he believed was of God.

Rediker demonstrates that the biblical book of Revelation was central to Lay's interpretation of current events and read its messages into the sins of his Quaker community. He likened slave owning and greedy Quaker ministers and colonial leaders to the evil red dragon from Revelation 12, and believed that these false ministers were Satan's progeny, sent to devour the true church. In his self-understood role of a prophet announcing God's condemnations upon his peers, Rediker argues, Lay felt his prophetic vocation affirmed and his own importance validated (p. 91).

As Rediker notes, Lay successfully intensified the theological crisis among Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Quakers by decrying their accommodation of slavery. For Lay, no compromise with slavery was possible. Moreover, slavery was not only a spiritual sin, it was a crime. Slave traders were murderers and Quakers who owned slaves were guilty of a double crime, one against the enslaved and one against the Quaker community (p. 84).

The second treatment of an abolitionist Quaker is Gary Nash's biography of Warner Mifflin. While Lay is well known among scholars of Quaker antislavery, but most often dismissed as a curiosity, Mifflin is frequently overlooked in the pantheon of Quaker abolitionists. Nash's book is a long-awaited contribution to histories of Quaker antislavery at the end of the eighteenth century, bringing this pivotal figure back to prominence in the era of the Revolution and New Republic. To situate Mifflin's importance, Nash describes him as a bridge between the first wave of abolitionists before the American Revolution and the wave of emancipators in the 1830s.

Mifflin self-consciously sought to fill the void left after Anthony Benezet's death in 1784, which is surprising because earlier in life he had owned a large

number of slaves. An illness in 1774 caused him to envision a 'hellish afterlife' if he did not satisfy the wrath of God by emancipating his slaves (p. 43). Nash argues that Mifflin described this vision in different ways, but in each case it was a turning point.

From that point on, Mifflin became a vocal critic of slavery and, within a decade, a leader among colonial Quaker abolitionists. He travelled among Quakers extensively with his antislavery message and, as Nash notes, often to the detriment of his own health and his family's well-being. Additionally, during and after the American Revolution Mifflin actively lobbied congress, George Washington and any political figures to whom he could gain access. Nash suggests that, while Mifflin's political manoeuvring and lobbying did not garner him universal support among his Quaker peers, and, indeed, he was never recognised as a Quaker minister, he was one of the most effective abolitionists and recognisable Quakers of his day.

Nash successfully utilises the best of the biographical genre to demonstrate Mifflin's originality among his peers. Mifflin also pushed antislavery further than most by arguing that emancipated slaves be paid for their time in service. While other Quaker abolitionists had argued for reparations, Mifflin was the first to suggest it as official Quaker policy and to unilaterally pay his large number of former slaves. Although the proposal of making reparations a Quaker policy was rejected, on an individual basis many Quakers did follow Mifflin's lead and made restitution to their former slaves.

While Mifflin's public antislavery efforts can be seen from historical records, Nash notes that his spiritual life is a mystery. Mifflin was a devout Quaker who reflected on the Bible and held it dear, but he did not claim to be a Hebrew prophet, as Lay did. 'Rather, he abased himself before the omnipresent God and hoped he was worthy of a place in Celestial Heaven' (p. 6). Mifflin was driven by his fear of God's wrath if he hesitated in his antislavery agenda.

Mifflin is perhaps the most outstanding Quaker abolitionist of these later stages of the eighteenth century. Nash calls Mifflin in the 1780s a 'one-man abolitionist society', travelling to state legislatures to lobby for changes to laws that made abolition difficult (p. 132). One measure of Mifflin's success as an abolitionist was the difference in composition of African American inhabitants in Mifflin's home county in Delaware and the composition of other Delaware counties. In Mifflin's Kent County more than half of the population's African Americans were free as of the 1790 census. In nearby New Castle and Sussex counties, where proslavery sentiment was dominant, 80 per cent and 85 per cent, respectively, were enslaved (p. 53).

In this summary and exposition of Rediker's and Nash's books I have attempted to highlight some of the most important elements of the lives they explore. Both Rediker and Nash are breaking new ground in their studies of Lay and Mifflin. In so doing, they expand the cast of characters usually associated with Quaker antislavery reform.

Both books are important in that they help scholars come to grips with the complexity of eighteenth-century Quaker antislavery. Lay and Mifflin are argued to be crucial to the spread and development of Quaker antislavery reform in their eras. For example, Rediker notes that Lay was an innovator of boycott as a means of protest, and Nash contends that Mifflin presaged later Free Produce movements by using his consumer choices in a way that coincided with his ethical concerns. While both abolitionists were similar in this regard, they are remarkably different in many others. Lay voiced God's judgment on his fellow Quakers, while Mifflin was more likely to include himself under God's judgment. Lay viewed himself as a prophetic figure, all the more emboldened by the resistance he faced among Quakers. By contrast, Mifflin was affable and charismatic and used his personal charm to gain access to the most powerful people in America.

These differences demonstrate that there was no single form of eighteenth-century abolitionism. While the likes of John Woolman and Anthony Benezet are most often upheld as exemplars, the diversity of antislavery voices complicates the historical narrative. And it is here that Rediker and Nash could have drawn out the differences between their subjects and other Quaker abolitionists. Rediker claims that Lay anticipated Woolman in every important way and that the differences between Lay and Woolman were minimal (p. 138). This view works against one of the most important implications of Rediker's book: that Quaker abolitionism was as diverse as the characters that pursued it. Woolman's vision for colonial America was very different from Lay's, even if both were abolitionists. Articulating this difference illumines both men. Likewise, Nash's depiction of Mifflin aptly describes him as an often solitary figure, in no small part owing to his remote location away from Quaker power centres. However, distinguishing Mifflin among the social and theological changes in Quakerism in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, and the multiple strands of legitimate Quaker identity in the era, would aid readers in understanding where Mifflin fits in the broader Quaker milieu of his day.

Additionally, both Rediker and Nash describe how the physical appearances of their subjects may have played a role in their reception. Rediker notes that Lay was a hunchback and a dwarf, and may have suffered rejection because of these factors. By contrast, Nash says that Mifflin was almost seven feet tall, standing above the crowd wherever he went. These are the types of detail that become important to a biography, because appearance has an impact on reception and, to some degree, on an individual's perspective in understanding what is happening around them physically and socially. For both men, their stature was described by their contemporaries as noteworthy and shaped the way they were treated. To some extent, the physical details of one's appearance become an important part of the way one fashions one's comportment.

Both Rediker's *The Fearless Benjamin Lay* and Nash's *Warner Mifflin* are accessible and enjoyable to read. Both authors add to our understanding of how Quaker tradition could be interpreted and what theological legacies of

Quakerism could be revitalised for antislavery purposes. Moreover, in tracing the biographies of each activist, eighteenth-century patterns of relationship among Quakers, and influence beyond them, come into view. One cannot understand Quaker antislavery in the early eighteenth century without a study of Lay and his influence. Likewise, one cannot fully appreciate Quaker abolitionism and the turn toward political engagement in the Revolutionary and Early Republic eras without considering Mifflin. Not only do Rediker and Nash give these two abolitionists new attention, through the eyes of Lay and Mifflin the authors help scholars understand how Quaker discipline functioned, how church authority was asserted and challenged and how Quakers struggled to interpret their faith in a changing cultural and political environment.

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Lionel Laborie, *Enlightening Enthusiasm: Prophecy and Religious Experience in Early Eighteenth-Century England* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), pp. ix + 338. ISBN 9780719089886. Hardback, £80.

Enlightening Enthusiasm offers a new perspective on the early eighteenth century by focussing on enthusiasm, a term often applied to early Quakers and, as Lionel Laborie reminds the reader, a term that was the early eighteenth century's 'smear-word par excellence' (p. 4). The book explores the nature and significance of enthusiasm through related issues, including social norms, millenarianism, ecumenism, censorship, toleration and mental illness. Laborie states that enthusiasm, as an externalised form of the religious experience, was 'by essence meant to be seen, heard and shared' (p. 122), and it 'epitomised the Reformation gone out of ecclesiastical control' (p. 3).

This book is centred on the activities of the French Prophets at the turn of the eighteenth century. Historically speaking, this was a relatively short-lived and, thus, often overlooked movement that complements early Quaker history, as the Prophets did not believe that baptism was necessary for salvation and also rejected the Calvinist doctrine of predestination (pp. 88–89). The Prophets attempted miracles and engaged in ecstatic behaviour (like the earliest Quakers), prophesied, embarked on missions abroad, were meticulous record keepers, fully embraced the printing press and engaged in pamphleteering. However, the Prophets were numerically insignificant in comparison to Quakers; the Prophets counted 665 members in the lifetime of the movement (1706–c.1746), compared with the 40,000–50,000 Quakers by 1720 (pp. 66–67). Their numbers certainly demonstrate why the movement could be overlooked by eighteenth-century Quaker historians.

This is an important book for early Quaker historians as Laborie frequently highlights the activities and enthusiastic behaviours of early Quakers (and other

groups) as a way to compare and contrast with the activities and behaviours of the Prophets. Their similarities were quite clear to their opponents at the time and it is worth noting that a tract originally targeting Quakers in 1680 was later reprinted to attack the Prophets in 1709 (p. 207). For many, this book will serve as an introduction to the French Prophets and their activities. The French Prophets were founded by Durand Fage, Jean Cavalier and Elie Marion – Calvinist rebels from the last French War of Religion (1702–1710). Following their arrival in London in 1706, the French Prophets drew the attention of the most distinguished minds of the time, including William Penn, who attended one of their assemblies in 1708 (p. 46). The French Prophets had a ‘denominationally diverse appeal’ and persuaded Quakers to become members, as well as Anglicans, Presbyterians, Baptists, Quietists and Catholics, among others (pp. 83–84).

The book is comprised of six chapters: ‘The origins of the French Prophets’, ‘From the *Désert* to the New Jerusalem’, ‘The final reformation’, ‘Going public’, ‘Enthusiasm, blasphemy and toleration’ and ‘Medicalising enthusiasm’. The Appendix contains a detailed chronological profile of the French Prophets, which is helpful to Quaker scholars, as former Quakers are easily identified, paving the way for further studies.

The book examines the origins of the French Prophets in southern France, beginning with the revocation of the Edict of Nantes¹ and the subsequent Huguenot exodus, which introduces the reader to Fage, Cavalier and Marion. Laborie succinctly summarises the story of the French Prophets as ‘essentially one of transition and adaptation, from the mountains of the *Désert* to the streets of London, from an oral tradition to a flourishing print industry, from the French peasantry to the British gentry, from French to English’ (p. 43).

Laborie states that the French Prophets capitalised on English Quaker heritage and their arrival reminded Quakers of their ecstatic, convulsive origins (p. 87). In many ways, the divine manifestations and enthusiasm of the Prophets, as Laborie states, ‘out-quaked the Quakers’ (p. 95). Their assemblies were criticised for blurring the lines between prophesies presented on stage and staged inspirations (p. 124), and Laborie goes into further detail about their enthusiastic behaviour, which included medical miracles and ‘deviant’ sexual behaviours.

Their highly publicised attempted resurrection of member Thomas Emes in 1708, which echoes a resurrection attempt by Quaker Susanna Pierson in Worcester in 1656, made the French Prophets a laughing stock. It should be noted that Quakers sought to distance themselves from the French Prophets and their miracles (p. 105), as they distanced themselves from Pierson. Laborie concludes that the French Prophets’ enthusiasm bridged a gap between early Quakerism and the charismatic Methodism of John Wesley (p. 107). However, assumptions are made that can be questioned, notably that Quakers in this period ‘valued singing and music as a superior religious experience’ (p. 100). This is

1 The Edict of Nantes had granted religious toleration to French Protestants in 1598.

a minor issue and a possible misinterpretation of what Quakers sanctioned in the late seventeenth century that by no means detracts from the overall study. Laborie's research sets an intimidating precedent for future studies based on the wide-ranging, geographically diverse original source materials. Manuscript collections from Great Britain (including Friends House Library), France, Germany and Switzerland containing letters, wills, royal edicts, memoirs and diaries are complemented by original newspapers, tracts and pamphlets. This is an impressively researched study and Laborie's use of definitive and cutting-edge secondary studies highlights his awareness of the subject; he is not afraid to challenge the work of his predecessors. The author's interdisciplinary approach complements the 'multifaceted nature of this intellectual golden age' (p. 2). That this is a book intended for a scholarly, academic audience does not detract from its overall readability, but there is a fair amount of assumed knowledge that may be unfamiliar to many readers.

Enlightening Enthusiasm offers an important contribution to early eighteenth-century English history and is of importance to those researching Quakerism, particularly ecstatic behaviour in the 1700s. By comparing and contrasting the enthusiasm of the French Prophets with other religious dissenters, movements and sects, Laborie has shaped an engaging full study on enthusiasm and places the French Prophets in their rightful place in early modern English history.

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Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters: the Crisis and Conscience of Nonconformity* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2015), pp. xviii + 493. ISBN 9780199698. Hardback £85.00.

This is the magnificent concluding volume of Watts' three-tier work, which began with *The Dissenters: from the Reformation to the French Revolution* (1978) and was followed by *The Expansion of Evangelical Nonconformity* (1995). Watts did not live to see this third volume through the press. Volume II, although a very large book, covers a much shorter time-span than the first: roughly from the end of the eighteenth century to about 1860. The impact of Darwinism and of the new biblical criticism, highlighted in the infamous *Essays and Reviews* of 1860, is reserved for the third volume, which covers roughly the second half of the nineteenth century. The whole work deals only with 'Dissent' in England and Wales, thus omitting some aspects of the interplay among religious forces in the British Isles as a whole.

Volume III is divided into three parts: 'The Crisis of Dissent', 'The Liberalization of Dissent' and 'The Conscience of Dissent'. The first part begins, unexpectedly for this reader, with the impact of the Romantic Movement on nineteenth-century nonconformity: appreciation of Wordsworth and Coleridge helped to foster a religious sensibility in which feeling and love of nature tempered

the severity of the religion inherited from Puritans and rationalists. (David Bebbington also notes the impact of romanticism on nineteenth-century religion, though he states that nonconformists tended to remain more faithful than Anglicans to Enlightenment rationality.)¹ This tendency towards a less austere concept of divinity accompanied a trend, noted by many historians, away from an emphasis on atonement – whereby the wrath of God against sin is appeased by His Son’s sacrificial death – to a grateful recognition of the power of the incarnation to demonstrate God’s love and evoke reciprocal love. The movement, vividly illustrated by Watts from the writings of Dissenters, developed alongside and in reaction to a swelling tide of doubt and disbelief among thinking people, occasioned as much by moral revulsion against the idea of God represented in the earlier scenario as by the intellectual challenges of evolutionary science and new, historical approaches to the Bible.

Watts shows how Dissenters in particular, in the person of leaders such as the Congregationalist R. W. Dale and the Baptist John Clifford, rose to both intellectual and moral challenges, bringing about the ‘liberalisation’ of Dissent. There was spirited opposition from conservatives such as the die-hard Charles Haddon Spurgeon. Watts presents tellingly the vigour with which Spurgeon and his allies resisted any tendency to mitigate the horror of hell-fire, either as to its infinite duration or its intensity. According to Watts, ‘Of all the heresies that Spurgeon believed to be infecting and poisoning the churches throughout his ministry, none aroused his anger more than those that cast doubt on the eternity of future punishments’ (p. 62). Even Dale was concerned lest the churches lose the appeal to fear that was so strong a weapon in the evangelist’s armoury.

Liberalisation brought about a newly constituted ‘conscience’ among nonconformists, manifested in intense engagement in politics, so that they became, in politician William Gladstone’s words, ‘the backbone of British Liberalism’, in humanitarian causes, in the peace movement and in campaigns against drunkenness and other vice. The attack on ‘vice’ had its ugly side when Dissenters such as the journalist W. T. Stead, a Congregationalist, led the fight against ‘impurity’ in men holding public office, thus contributing largely to the fall of the Irish Home Rule campaigner the adulterous Charles Stewart Parnell. The cultivated intelligentsia often represented Dissenters as limited and boorish: poet and critic Matthew Arnold famously pilloried the ‘philistinism’ of those who preferred the ‘dissidence of Dissent’ to the ‘sweetness and light’ of culture; but Watts is no friend to Arnold’s view.

Watts does not dwell on distinctions between the Dissenting denominations. Quakers appear occasionally as philanthropists or politicians (especially John Bright), but there is no explanation of their ‘peculiarities’ in theology and practice, although some changes in their manner of worship and discipline are noted.

1 D. W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: a history from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), p. 104.

They are seen (rightly) as sharing in the general trend among nonconformists towards liberalism and social and political engagement. The overwhelming emphasis is on the large denominations: the various branches of Methodists, the Congregationalists and Baptists, with some attention to the Unitarians and the Salvation Army. Fringe sects, such as the Brethren, are scarcely mentioned. Theology as such hardly features: there is, for instance, no explanation of the various ideas of the saving efficacy of the Cross, nor of the role of visible sacraments. Individual religious experience likewise receives scant mention. ('Conversion' does not figure in the index.)

One cannot complain of such omissions in a book that is so comprehensive and detailed in its coverage of so many aspects of its subject. Arguments are amply illustrated by quotation and by charts and tables, especially relating to the demography of Dissent. The reader is dazzled by the amplitude of the research on which the book is based. My main regret is the lack of a bibliography, although the index is good. There is scrupulous attention to facts and figures. At the same time, Watts' style is engaging, even at times amusing. This reviewer was gripped.

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Kathleen A. Heininge, *Reflections: Virginia Woolf and her Quaker Aunt, Caroline Stephen* (New York: Peter Lang, 2016), pp. viii and 186. ISBN 9781433133299. Hardback, \$81.95.

Caroline Emelia Stephen was undoubtedly a major influence on the writing, spirituality and feminism of her niece Virginia Woolf. As well as spending memorable family holidays together at St Ives in 1888 and 1889, Woolf was a regular visitor to Stephen's home at The Porch in Cambridge from 1898 to 1909. Stephen cared for Woolf as she recovered from a breakdown after the death of her father, Leslie Stephen, nurturing Woolf as a writer by encouraging her to memorialise him for Fredric Maitland's biography. As sisters and daughters of influential middle-class men, Woolf and Stephen shared an endeavour to free themselves from patriarchal constraints. Jane Marcus first noted the significance of their relationship in her essay 'The Niece of a Nun' in 1983,¹ so it is surprising that it has not been examined at length until now. This nine-chaptered book-length study therefore fills a long-felt gap in the scholarship.

Reflections also offers insights into Virginia Woolf's engagement with Quaker beliefs and values. Heininge (of George Fox University, Oregon), argues that, while Woolf was decidedly not a Quaker, she nonetheless had 'a certain affinity

1 J. Marcus, 'The Niece of a Nun: Virginia Woolf, Caroline Stephen, and the cloistered imagination', in Marcus, J., *Virginia Woolf: a feminist slant* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), pp. 7–36.

with many of the qualities of Quaker belief, and her mysticism is in line with what Quakers profess, a profession with which she was familiar through her aunt' (p. 2). Heininge thereby contributes to debates about Woolf and religion, helpfully questioning the critical tendency to label Woolf as atheist by demonstrating that rejection of the Church of England does not mean rejection of a notion of the Divine.

The book first compares the views of Stephen and Woolf on a range of social, cultural and religious themes that were significant for them both. Starting with patriarchy, Heininge examines Stephen's biographical sketches of her Evangelical father Sir James Stephen and her debates with her agnostic brothers, Fitzjames and Leslie. She challenges Marcus's accusation that Stephen was a pillar in patriarchy by noting that she was progressive for her time and that Woolf continued her work.

The next two chapters explore theological questions about faith, God and the nature of evil. Heininge compares their conceptions of God to argue that 'losing faith in revealed religion is not quite the same as a disbelief in God' (p. 34) and that both achieved a faith that 'left plenty of room for doubt' (p. 46). Heininge examines Woolf's marginal notes on Stephen's *Quaker Strongholds* to show that her interest in mysticism owes much to her aunt. Turning to the concept of evil, Heininge argues that, although Woolf was influenced by her parents' view that bereavement was an evil that could not be reconciled with a loving God, she was closer to Stephen's view that evil exists in the 'trappings of patriarchy: war, poverty, oppression' (p. 59).

Three chapters explore aspects of women's social roles. Chapter 5, on Service, reveals parallels between Stephen's *The Service of the Poor* (1871) and 'Mistress and Servant' (1879) and works by Woolf's mother, Julia Stephen: *Notes from Sick Rooms* (1883), 'Domestic Arrangements of the Ordinary English Home' and 'The Servant Question' (both 1893). Heininge draws attention to Woolf's philanthropy, noting that she shared a paternalism with her mother and aunt and that all three experienced 'relational issues' with their servants (p. 98). Chapter 6 considers education, the franchise and marriage, including a detailed discussion of how Woolf deals with these through her depiction of her young female protagonist in *The Voyage Out* (1915). In Chapter 8, on clothes, Heininge argues that Stephen's 'concern for sumptuary laws as they both adhere and detract from moral obligations find their corollary in Virginia's own anxiety about the function of clothing' (p. 155).

Chapters 7 and 9 focus on Woolf's engagement with Quaker spirituality. Heininge shows how both writers saw the potential of silence, particularly in the Quaker Meeting, which provided an alternative to the verbosity of an Anglican service. Heininge considers the importance of light for both writers, examining their use of the lighthouse image to conclude that the 'intermittent light has served to unite Virginia and Caroline in seeing it as a kind of divinity' (p. 170).

While the book provides a wealth of material on Woolf and Stephen's views, more could have been made of this by setting it in context: first by exploring the significance of the fact that Stephen was still writing during Woolf's formative years as a writer, and second by considering wider developments within Quakerism in the early twentieth century, particularly given Stephen's importance in revitalising the movement. Heininge also makes the assumption that Woolf's views on key topics are marked by 'anxieties': Stephen gives service as a carer, Woolf receives it a patient; Stephen honours chastity, Woolf has insecurities about sexual relationships; Stephen critiques sumptuary rules, Woolf has anxieties about dress and appearance. To address this, it would have helped to pay more attention to *Three Guineas* (1938), the essay in which Woolf rigorously critiques organised religion and its role in patriarchy. Heininge is rather dismissive of this text as 'a feminist, pacifist screed', a 'flawed' piece with 'simplistic' conclusions (p. 74), in which Woolf 'was merely giving voice to her "unruly thoughts"' (p. 119). A closer reading of the essay would have shown that Woolf celebrates chastity not as an imposition by patriarchal society but as a state of mind by which women can free themselves from unreal expectations and loyalties, and that Woolf makes a shrewd analysis of liturgical vestments as symbols of patriarchal power. It would also have been helpful to recognise the extent of Woolf's social and political engagement, as evidenced by much recent scholarship.

In her late memoir, 'A Sketch of the Past' (1939), Woolf notes that it is impossible to examine her influences: 'I see myself as a fish in a stream; deflected; held in place; but cannot describe the stream.' Heininge's book does much to flesh out the Stephen family background, but the particularity of Woolf's approach slips from view at times. Heininge describes the stream in detail, but occasionally we lose sight of the fish.

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Nicholas A. Sims (ed.), *Explorations in Ethics and International Relations: Essays in Honour of Sydney D. Bailey* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), pp. xi + 210. ISBN 0709923007. Hardback, £100.00.

Thirty-five years ago Nicholas Sims edited 11 essays in honour of Sydney Bailey, *Explorations in Ethics and International Relations*, published by Croom Helm. The collection also included Sims' introduction and a foreword by Bishop Hermann Kunst. Routledge have now brought it back into print as the ninth volume in its *Library Editions: international relations* series. It is a good decision and there are at least three reasons why it will be welcomed by many Friends as well as the wider academic community in international relations, ethics and political science.

One, obviously for this journal, is that Bailey, as Paul Oestreicher said after his

death in 1995, embodied 'Compassion with a war-torn world, combined with a brilliant and highly disciplined intellect' and was 'the most eminent Quaker of recent decades working in the field of international relations'.¹

Most of the contributions that Sims brought together in this volume followed the wider theme of the book on ethical elements of international relations, but as well as his own thoughtful introduction he included Grigor McClelland's essay on Sydney Bailey's work in Quaker perspective and Michael Rose on his ecumenical work, especially his work with the then British Council of Churches and the Christian Approaches to Defence and Disarmament group.

McClelland delightfully recounts Bailey's early embrace of pacifism, years before he became a Quaker, pointing to Bailey's own description of the effect of a sermon by an Anglican preacher at his school telling the pupils that they 'were then only little Christians, but one day we would become big Christians and could join the army and so preserve and even extend the British Empire' (p. 192). In later years Sydney came to see many objections to pacifism, finding it 'unsatisfactory in almost every respect', but when asked why he remained a Quaker and a pacifist he said 'I must reply that it is because I find the alternative even more unsatisfactory' (p. 193).

Bailey's early work, with wife Ruth in the Quaker United Nations Office in New York, was formative in much later work with diplomats in many parts of the world, and much of this would include informal cross-conflict engagements that contributed to wider thinking on what is commonly called Track Two diplomacy. This gives us the second reason for welcoming the book but does also link, once again, to Quakers through the long-term support that the Baileys received from Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust.

As well as Sydney Bailey's specific work as author of key books on the United Nations, it was his ability and willingness to share his experience, without seeking the substantial credit that was due to him, which marked him out. In one sense, this particular element had substantial significance because of one of the difficult lessons that has to be learnt about engaging in processes of mediation. People 'in the middle' often serve that process best if they not only maintain a low personal profile but also pursue their work with no expectation of success.

The harsh reality, though, is that such work needs funding and many of the present-day non-governmental organisations working purposefully in this field have no option but to point to successes if they are to secure further funding. The dilemma is that this very pursuit of 'success' can all too easily run counter to the need for persistent low-profile engagement, which may take years to achieve results.

Finally there is the relevance of this book to the world 35 years later and more than 20 years after Sydney Bailey's death. Nicholas Sims brought these

1 P. Oestreicher, 'Obituary: Sydney Bailey', *The Independent*, 30 November 1995, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/obituary-sydney-bailey-1584332.html>, accessed 09/12/17.

essays together just as Ronald Reagan began his first term in the United States, Thatcherism was evolving in Britain, and the Cold War was entering a particularly dangerous phase. Within a decade, though, the Cold War itself had come to an end and there did genuinely seem to be a prospect of a less tense and possibly more peaceful world order.

One might even have said that Sydney Bailey's work and example had ceased to have so much relevance, but the history of the post-9/11 era surely suggests otherwise. This is why Nicholas Sims's editorial task so many years ago remains entirely pertinent today. The volume's essays on the ethics of security and risk, aspects of human rights, reflections on forms of international collaboration and many more theological themes are all hugely relevant. Indeed, in the era of Trump, Putin, deep global inequalities and climate disruption it is surely the case that we need the United Nations to rise to the occasion, a change that can come about only with the work of many successors to Sydney and Ruth Bailey.

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