



1993

Review Essay: McIntosh, Marjorie Keniston. *A Community Transformed: The Manor and Liberty of Haverings, 1500-1620*

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Recommended Citation

Hackmann, Wm. Kent (1993) "Review Essay: McIntosh, Marjorie Keniston. *A Community Transformed: The Manor and Liberty of Haverings, 1500-1620*," *Quidditas*: Vol. 14 , Article 30.
Available at: <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/rmmra/vol14/iss1/30>

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Marshall's approach does provide an especially insightful way to examine the final works of Shakespeare's dramatic career because eschatology, by definition, attempts to connect the personal experience of death and last things to the universal concept of an ending. She is particularly helpful in chapters 2 and 3, which focus on the subjects of judgment and afterlife, and in chapters 4 and 5, which examine the destructive attitudes people develop toward time, the amorphous raw material which eschatology attempts to give shape and definition.

Insofar as readers are prepared to accept Adelman's premises, this book can be considered as a good illustration of psychoanalytic feminist criticism. It is rigorous in its readings and original in its efforts to reexamine traditional ideas and interpretations. She seeks to reconceptualize and reinterpret the female body in relation to the loss of idealized masculinity from a feminist perspective. But this book is also a frontal attack on Shakespeare himself, who is seen as sharing complicity with the dominant male characters' fantasies by rewarding them with power at the end of the plays through the resumption of the patriarchal order, even though Adelman implies that Shakespeare attempts to separate himself from the bearers of these impossible fantasies of escape. He is seen by Adelman as intolerably exploiting women, paying them back for their sexual wholeness as he imaginatively shares with the male characters their revulsion at the fully sexualized woman.

These oedipal readings are, in many instances, highly questionable (in Adelman's reading of *King Lear*, she says that 'Gloucester is transformed into a woman', and the 'punitive female power of the storm — the power of the dark and vicious place — is given a local habitation and a name' [p 112]). The evidence is selectively and flexibly utilized to suit the author's preconceived thematic intention to demonstrate that power has devastating consequences, both for masculine selfhood and for the female characters who oppose it. Adelman's psychologized account is likely to provoke strong responses, critical questions, and controversy by those who do not accept the doctrines of Sigmund Freud as the definitive way to interpret Shakespeare's plays as demonstrating the son's frustrated desires for their mothers' exclusive sexual attention and by those who do not think that all males think that all females are inescapably sexual.

Marshall's book, however, is well argued, interesting, and informative, one whose significance is confirmed by the clear patterns it draws between its central eschatological thesis and the dramatic romances that demonstrate Shakespeare's concern with last things. Marshall makes excellent use of the sources, grounding her claims on substantial documentation. Her study represents an insightful contribution to the scholarship on Shakespeare's concern with the prevailing ideas in his culture, and she provides a new depth of understanding to these last bittersweet plays.

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McIntosh, Marjorie Keniston. *A Community Transformed: The Manor and Liberty of Havering, 1500-1620*. Cambridge Studies in Population, Economy, and Society in Past Time. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1991. 489 pp. \$74.95.

The royal manor and Liberty of Havering-atte-Bower in Essex contained some 16,000 acres extending from marshes on the Thames north to Romford, fourteen miles east of London. In 1964 Marjorie Keniston McIntosh began working in extensive primary sources for a doctoral thesis on the manor's prominent Cooke family of Gidea Hall. In the early 1970s she turned to study the relationship between the crown and the manor. In *Autonomy and Community: The Royal Manor of Havering, 1200–1500* (Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1986) she traces the emergence of a local aristocracy, a commercial and individualistic society, and the process by which the tenants developed responsibility for local government. The vigorous, socially cohesive community actively resisted crown encroachments, especially in judicial matters.

In the volume under review, McIntosh continues her analysis in greater detail for the period of 1500–1620. Her point is that by 1620 the close-knit community had fallen apart. The decline of the manorial court charted the collapse of resistance to crown advances. In 1500 the court, as a major agency of community life, punished crimes and enforced community standards for personal behavior; in 1620 that historic role had vanished, and litigious residents took their cases to the Essex quarter sessions and the impersonal central courts in Westminster. Many factors, McIntosh suggests, promoted the change: Proximity to London facilitated an influx of new political, economic, and religious ideas and practices. Over time the gulf widened between town and country, rich and poor, educated and unlettered. Women found themselves squeezed out of economic activities and limited to their households. Political and social power subtly moved from a group of over one hundred families to a few privileged landlords.

The preceding summary cannot do justice to the content of six very long chapters, eight appendices, and fifty-three tables that detail the composition and dynamics of Havering's community structure. McIntosh compliments broad developments with vignettes of the manor's incidentally interesting persons (Beatrice Davis, the eleven-year-old servant who became an occupational casualty when she drowned in a watering trough in 1560 while on an errand for her master [p 99]) as well as major figures (Sir William Ayloffe, who complained in 1610 that he did not have a pew in the parish church appropriate for his station as head of one of the community's leading families [p 199]). Researchers will find these and similar details, as well as general themes, quite accessible through the table of contents and index, although persons unfamiliar with Havering should begin with the overview of the manor in the *Victoria County House of Essex* (1978). The infrequency of comparisons with other manors or larger questions of community identification and autonomy is a disappointment. On its own terms, however, *A Community Transformed* is a major contribution to manor and village history and should be in every major research library.

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Piccolomini, Manfredi. *The Brutus Revival: Parricide and Tyrannicide during the Renaissance*. Southern Illinois University Press, Carbondale 1991. xiv + 142 pp. \$24.95.