

assumption that any confessionalisation in fact took place. A second assertion is that examining the sermons and making the pastoral strategies visible reveals ‘how religious identities in pre-modern societies were configured’ (p. 146). Yet to determine these without documenting local initiatives – application of communal norms, values and notions of custom and novelty; spiritual assessments based on discourses derived from the peasant world, such as the agricultural one of *Bau und Besserung*; desires to improve a community’s status and relations within its parish – leads to an incomplete and misrepresentative picture. A third is Bock’s assumption that shrines, images and processions (pp. 241ff) played a role in forming a Catholic religious identity. Yet Bock leaves undiscussed where these were located locally. Near Bavaria in rural Fulda and parishes around Amöneburg in rural Upper Hesse, for example, communities conducted processions and located images along the framework forged by farming and settlement patterns. That is, their communal activity suggests less a confessionalised culture and more an appropriation of available Christian means to procure God’s blessing and protection on their agricultural and pastoral life. This point resonates with one relayed in Bock’s citation of an author named Neuville, who wrote in 1787 that a community felt good when a church had an appearance similar to a peasant hut and also had simple and humble altars, no melodious music and no glorious, magnificent ceremonies. The community’s ‘living faith’, wrote Neuville, ‘has no need for such help’ (p. 248). In village churches, then, at least, it would seem that a community’s own Christian moorings, anchored as they were to animating forces which rural-based developments had formed across centuries, held principal sway for those listening to the Capuchins’ sermons.

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William Whiston and the Apostolic constitutions. Completing the Reformation. By Paul R. Gilliam III. (*Studia Patristica* Supplement 11.) Pp x +185, Leuven: Peeters, 2023. €68. 978 90 429 4728 3; 978 90 429 4729 0
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William Whiston and Dr Samuel Clarke, both of whom were friends of Newton, are representatives of the impact of Lockean and Newtonian thought in eighteenth-century Trinitarian thought in England. Both Whiston and Clarke published works which questioned the doctrine of the Trinity and the *homoousios* theology of Athanasius and Nicaea, and both these scholars were regarded by their contemporaries as ‘Arian’. In this study Paul Gilliam subjects Whiston’s contribution to a very sympathetic in-depth analysis. Gilliam is thoroughly immersed in Whiston’s theological works, and the study follows a close reading of Whiston’s *Primitive Christianity reviv’d* (1711), and his tenacious defence of the authenticity of the *Apostolic constitutions*, noting Whiston’s arguments, his patristic sources and some notable responses to Whiston’s claims.

Gilliam notes the intellectual ability of Whiston, who was primarily a mathematician, and who was Newton’s successor to the Lucasian Chair of Mathematics at Cambridge. Whiston was indeed a polymath, and with Clarke they together

represent two brilliant minds of their time. Whiston was an excellent translator, and he published his own translation of the New Testament based on the Beza and Clermont manuscripts. Whiston's translation of the *Apostolic constitutions* remains the basis for the present-day English text. At what point Whiston abandoned the traditional Trinitarian belief is discussed by Gilliam – perhaps c.1707 – and in this he followed Newton, though Newton had managed to escape ordination, and he also kept private his own sub-Trinitarian thoughts (published after his death). Whiston's heterodoxy was revealed in an edition of Tate and Brady he prepared for use in a charity school, and in which Whiston provided new doxologies in place of the Tate and Brady Trinitarian doxologies. Whiston argued that the *Apostolic constitutions* were authentic, were to be dated before the fall of the Jerusalem Temple, and were also to be regarded as canonical literature along with the New Testament. He argued that the author of 2 Esdras was aware of the *Apostolic constitutions*, and he also found many citations of the documents in subsequent patristic writings. The response to Whiston included his dismissal from his Cambridge Chair, and several of his contemporaries published refutations of his arguments for the authenticity of the *Apostolic constitutions*. Whiston believed that the *Apostolic constitutions* should be used by all Churches, and if so followed, the result would be the end all the divisions of Christianity. He believed that its adoption would complete the sixteenth-century Reformation. Gilliam also shows that Whiston had an annoying tendency to publish correspondence without permission, and to claim more agreement for his position than was the case.

Gilliam gives a sympathetic treatment of Whiston, perhaps too sympathetic. Whiston was indeed a gifted thinker, but he trusted far too much in his own intellectual abilities. Gilliam notes that Whiston did hold a Trinitarian doctrine, and he denied being an 'Arian'. Even if Whiston did not espouse the teaching of Arius himself, he certainly embraced a form of semi-Arianism, and it should be recalled that Georg Wagner argued that Eunomius himself was the compiler of *Apostolic constitutions*. Gilliam observes that some of the liturgical material in *Apostolic constitutions* pre-dates Nicaea – which was precisely the intention of the compiler. What would be more significant is the pre-Nicene material that the compiler chose not to include. The fact remains – as Gilliam does acknowledge – that scholarship today sides with the responses to Whiston, seeing *Apostolic constitutions* as dating to around 380 from the environs of Antioch, and that Whiston was just plain wrong.

Whiston's convictions were such that (to reverse the idiom) he put his 'mouth where his money was' by publishing a liturgy based on *Apostolic constitutions* 8. It is unfortunate that Gilliam has chosen not to discuss the liturgical work, because, like his version of Tate and Brady, Whiston was trying to give practical application to his sincere beliefs. It would also have been helpful if Gilliam had given more biographical background to the opponents of Whiston, and he has also ignored other secondary sources on the subject, such as this reviewer's own essay on Grabe and Whiston. This lack of interaction with more contemporary literature makes this book heavy reading – one must have a love of Whiston and for his early eighteenth-century style of argument. Gilliam has, however, given a good account of Whiston's arguments, which will save readers from having to wade through Whiston's own multi-volume tedious prose.