


to a sacred song by Thomas Tallis. On that note, John Milsom questions the authorship of the song traditionally attributed to Tallis (chapter 5). Rather, he argues that the piece represents an oral/aural tradition of transmission that extends to the table's four rounds. One such round is quite a sophisticated work of polyphony, "an emblem of musical erudition and skill" (77). Each instrument and instance of notation receives its own dedicated chapter, though anyone wishing to understand the broader context of music in Elizabethan England will find much to digest here. Making distinctions between the precise nature of organological classification of bowed string instruments may be quite fascinating to people like Fleming and me, but as he writes, not so much "by those who portrayed them on the table" (134). The more substantial observation is the variety presented, as was expected in so many other allegoric portrayals of aurality. Moreover, as Karen Loomis writes about the harp (chapter 12), "a depiction need not be an accurate portrayal to convey meaning" (179).

The first two sections are primarily devoted to individual items across the table's three friezes. Milsom begins the third section by considering these objects in tandem and how they fit into a broader Elizabethan intellectual context. Christopher Marsh (chapter 15) shows how the image of the table and what it represented shifted between the late 1560s and the death of Bess of Hardwick in 1608. Claire Preston also details this in her discussion of botany (chapter 2). She argues that some of Hardwick New Hall was designed around the table, its owners hoping that it would become a site of a royal visit. Musical works, once created, go on to have lives of their own independent of their initial contexts. The same is revealed here of the Eglantine Table.

The three sections of *Music and Instruments of the Elizabethan Age* roughly mirror the table's three friezes, and the high-quality, color images in sixteen plates are not only very attractive but also serve as a useful reference for each author. Two appendices detail technical aspects of a major 1996 renovation and an inventory of Bess of Hardwick's other furnishings. Additionally, there are two fabulous internal appendices by Milsom and Matthew Spring (chapters 5 and 6), who transcribed the table's notation into modern staff notation. Finally, a glossary is a thoughtful supplement for a book that will certainly attract both scholars from multiple disciplines and a general readership interested in Tudor history. Music in early modern England did not exist solely in the aural sphere but occupied a central facet of allegory and thought. Because so much from the period was discarded, renovated, or torn down, the Eglantine Table offers a rare glimpse into the intellectual lives of Elizabethan subjects. It is a delight to see an entire book devoted to this one item from myriad viewpoints.

Jason Rosenholtz-Witt 
 Western Kentucky University
jason.rosenholtz-witt@wku.edu

LISA FORD. *The King's Peace: Law and Order in the British Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2021. Pp. 336. \$35.00 (cloth).
 doi: 10.1017/jbr.2023.104

In *The King's Peace: Law and Order in the British Empire*, Lisa Ford skillfully shows that for the British Empire, one of the essential legacies the American Revolution was "the waxing prerogative" (57) and the "vast constitutional license" of colonial peacekeeping (229–30). This kind of systematic activity continued to the mid-nineteenth century and gradually dissipated after that.

From a totally different angle, Ford more or less reaffirms scholar Eric Nelson's argument in *The Royalist Revolution: Monarchy and the American Founding* (2015) that many of the American founding generation tended to see themselves as rebels against the British Parliament but


not against the crown (some of them even urged George III to bypass Parliament and rule directly). Ford even proves that considering the British Empire as a whole, the real winner of the American Revolution was the monarch. The king became the British Empire's "legal Despot" (94–95). The American Revolution sent shockwaves through the United Kingdom, leading to an increase in the power of the crown and a "shift to autocracy" (18–19) in other parts of the British Empire. Ford argues that as a result of the American Revolution, a "legal divergence" gradually appeared between colonial law (the "periphery of empire") and metropolitan law (the "center of empire"), with the former starting to resemble the model of a "police state" (5–9), aimed at "coercive peacekeeping" (8). The colonial executive power had been buttressed and enhanced, while the colonial legislative bodies' power had been weakened. Ultimately, the British Empire needed to compensate itself after the unhappy loss of the American War of Independence. It did so by initiating a more severe crackdown on the issues of colonial rights and liberty. In fact, even in the British Isles, the habeas corpus had been suspended quite a while during the American and Napoleonic Wars. Taken together, as Ford shows, the legacy of "imperial peacekeeping" is not a trivial sideshow: rather, it helped to wedge the idea and system of "empire" into "the DNA of the modern international order" (22–23).

Geographically, Ford focuses on five key areas—Massachusetts, Quebec, Jamaica, Bengal, and New South Wales—each the focus of a chapter. Within this list, Quebec, Bengal, and New South Wales are of special importance because the constitutional settlements (as brand-new experiments) in those places "marked the advent of a new kind of empire" (4–5). In chapter 1, Ford makes a careful examination of prerevolutionary social disturbance and political disorder in Massachusetts. The British Empire's reaction was dramatic: "no colony established after 1770 constrained the crown's prerogative to keep the peace as it had been constrained in colonial Massachusetts" (56–57). In chapter 2, Ford interprets the 1774 Quebec Act as a crown colony model, which in essence is "an autocratic governor with an appointed council" (220–21). After 1791, both Upper and Lower Canada had its own elected assembly. Nevertheless, all legislation was still "subject first to review by an appointed upper house and then to gubernatorial veto" (98–99). In chapter 3, Ford focuses on Jamaica: "no peace was more fragile than Jamaica's" (136), and martial law was called in Jamaica every other year after 1760, even though sometimes the crises were not real but imagined. In this chapter, Ford also shows that various antislavery thinkers nonetheless thought that liberated slaves were far less fit for self-government than were their previous white owners. In chapter 4, Ford documents the Bengal situation, where a paid police force was instituted and invested by the colonial government: "torture, bribery, spying, and arbitrary imprisonment" (170–71) were acknowledged and openly tolerated, even though torture and bribery were not formally authorized. In chapter 5, Ford recounts the colonial practices in New South Wales, where military men were transferred into the mounted police, where any white person could be detained unless they could successfully prove they had not been convicted. Peculiarly, the colonial government candidly admitted that the brutal methods it adopted to keep the so-called king's peace were indeed "grossly unconstitutional" (215–16). Although Ford examines issues of race and religion, but the main focus is on legal and political history. Ford's arguments are innovative, straightforward, and clear-cut, and her methodology comprehensive methodology.

Ford could have explored further the domestic politics in the United Kingdom, particularly the parliamentary clash between the Tory and the Whig parties. Between 1783 and 1830, there was a long period of Tory dominance and Whig exclusion from power (with the brief exception of 1806–1807). This largely coincides with the period that Ford covers, from 1764 to 1836 (3). Ford mentions that after 1773, with few exceptions, "new colonies in the British Empire, slave and free, were ruled directly by autocratic governors-in-council, excising the power of the British crown" (3–4), she carefully documents "the enormous changes in the king's peace made possible by the shift to crown rule after 1773" (216). In fact, 1773 was

within the years of the Tory administration led by Lord North (1770–1782). Ford's argues that "Parliament emboldened the crown" (9), but what if, when led by different political parties, Parliament might behave quite differently regarding the Parliament–Crown relationship?

Overall, *The King's Peace* is a very insightful and convincing book. Ford contributes quite a lot to current scholarship through her skill in collecting, processing, and organizing source material. It is highly recommended for scholars and students interested in the history of British Empire, and more broadly, the functioning of the complicated system of colonialism.

Haimo Li 

Fudan University

li_haimo@fudan.edu.cn

DOUGLAS HAMILTON and JOHN McALEER, eds. *Islands and the British Empire in the Age of Sail*. Oxford History of the British Empire Companion Series. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021. Pp. 240. \$85.00 (cloth).
doi: 10.1017/jbr.2023.78

Over the past fifteen years, Oxford's Companion Series to the history of the British Empire has added a wealth of themes to the study of British imperial history. *Islands and the British Empire in the Age of Sail*, edited by Douglas Hamilton and John McAleer, extends the series. In the context of the series, this collection takes a fresh approach, and the novel perspectives of the contributors are highlighted fittingly in the introduction. Yet, given that the history of islands has been a topical theme in historical and literary studies since at least the early 2000s, the volume may also seem like a late addition to an already established field. On closer inspection, however, the timing may well be a particular advantage. By drawing on both experts in island studies and naval historians of Britain and the British Empire, Hamilton and McAleer offer essays that both summarize existing research in the field and add new geographical and thematic layers hitherto little explored from this particular perspective. The result is a book of admirable coherence and geographical range, covering, if not every island ever to have been in the domain of the British Empire, at least most corners of its vast geographical extension expressly during the age of sail—roughly, from the end of the sixteenth to the mid-nineteenth century. Within this predominantly maritime focus, most topics are approached from a naval perspective and many themes involve naval logistics and strategies. Focusing solely on the age of sail is a prudent self-limitation with a view to the coherence of the volume. Hamilton and McAleer organize the chapters geographically rather than thematically or chronologically, and extending the coverage to the age of steam would doubtlessly have ruptured the narrative at too many points. However, lest anyone miss the forward look toward the steamship entirely, the volume ends with an afterword written by Huw Bowen, sketching the ways in which technological change affected the British Empire's relationship to islands over the course of the nineteenth century.

In their introduction, Hamilton and McAleer situate the contributions in imperial history and island studies, recapitulating the wealth of literature in both areas and merging the two into a set of questions and themes explored in subsequent chapters. In taking up the established trope of islands' ambiguous nature, Hamilton and McAleer establish two central themes for the book, positioning islands as geostrategic nodal points in the British Empire and sites of conflict over empire. Their main argument is that islands, despite their often-marginal location and small size, are key to the enterprise of empire and thus key to the historian's understanding of how these spaces contributed to the "establishment, extension, and maintenance" (4) of empire in the age of sail. Because the focus is almost exclusively British, other imperial