

Holland Mission, a cooperative effort between the clergy and the laity to restore the fortunes of the Roman Church. His analysis broadens our understanding of religion both in Netherlands and more generally across early modern Europe in two significant ways. First, his examination of Dutch Catholicism is an important case study of how a minority faith was able to survive and even grow on society's margins in a repressive environment. Parker effectively critiques a simplistic but celebrated view of an open and tolerant Dutch society that has frequently informed our understanding of this region in the seventeenth century. He argues that religious coexistence in the United Provinces developed in a context of both conflict and concord. Second, Parker illustrates how Catholic reform in Netherlands occurred without the support of either the state or an officially recognized church. Instead, it was the product of a unique form of collaboration between an active clergy and a committed laity. Parker describes how elite families helped create a new infrastructure to support the clergy and care for the poor after the secularization of church property. Women, in particular, played an especially critical role as the Catholic Church worked to reestablish itself in Dutch culture.

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After Enlightenment: Hamann as Post-Secular Visionary. By John R. Betz. Illuminations: Theory and Religion. Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009. xv + 355 pp. \$99.95 cloth.

In *After Enlightenment*, John R. Betz undertakes two projects: first, he has produced the best and fullest survey of the life and writings of Johann Georg Hamann in a generation, helpfully including many passages from Hamann's letters and publications and commenting intelligently on the style, theology, philosophy, and (to a lesser extent) historical context of Hamann's notoriously obscure oeuvre; second, he has written an intellectual history covering Hamann's relation to the major figures of his time as well as his subsequent influence on and reception by philosophers and theologians down to our own day. This history, Betz believes, points the way to an alternative to the failed enterprises of both modernity and postmodernity, as Hamann has already "anticipated" thinkers like Barth (288), Buber (158), Derrida (175, 227), Hegel (75, 258), Nietzsche (191, 313), Heidegger (175, 227,

327), Kierkegaard (59, 86, 95, 282, 288), Saussure (145, 332), and Wittgenstein (313).

The book is organized into five parts, divided by chronological periods of Hamann's career. A chapter surveying the "Life and Writings" of the period begins each part and is usually followed by two further chapters investigating individual texts more closely. The introduction to the book gives a brief history of Hamann research and an overview of the argument; the conclusion considers Hamann in relation to a postmodern "triumvirate" of Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Derrida.

Betz quotes from Hamann generously, including much material that has never before appeared in English. Moreover, he is an excellent translator, and in a number of instances his version is superior to previously published translations or offers a valuable alternative to them. For example, Betz translates from the *Aesthetica in Nuce* that God "may speak through creatures—through circumstances—or through blood and fire and billows of smoke, wherein the language of the sanctuary consists" (132). For "die Sprache des Heiligtums," previously translators offered "the sacramental language" (Crick) or "the language of holiness" (Dickson; Haynes). Though Betz is not explicit about it, his rendering of the phrase makes it clear that Hamann had specifically in mind the early Rabbinical phrase for Hebrew, *leshon haqodesh*, "the language of the Temple," "the holy language." The tact and sensitivity of his English versions are nearly constant.

Excellent, too, is Betz's description of Hamann's metacriticism as "a kind of *merciful* deconstruction, which leaves his interlocutors room to think freely . . . [F]or Hamann, the art of metacriticism consists precisely in kenotically disappearing behind one's communications in order to allow one's interlocutors to appropriate all the more freely what has been said." He quotes Hamann appositely: "The *lectio* of a true critic consists merely in dissolving the text of his other brothers into its elements, without violently or uncharitably interfering with his ability to consent" (305). Despite the anachronism of "deconstruction" (which Betz elsewhere uses to render "auseinandersetzen" [156]), this is a good account of one of the two poles of Hamann's writing, its "metacritical-deconstructive" aspect (312). The resulting style is one of great difficulty, compression, and obliquity, which demands and receives from Betz much "patient exegesis" (204), though inevitably, with a writer so elusive, Betz is occasionally impatient in his paraphrases—above all when he replaces Hamann's own words with a vocabulary of nihilism that is alien to him (though prominent in Jacobi, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Heidegger). The other pole, the "positive-constructive" (312) aspect of Hamann's style, is one of Lutheran piety and devotion. I do not agree with Betz that Hamann's theological commitments can be philosophically elaborated as a theory of embodied and acculturated reason, but disagreement

is normal with Hamann; there is no critical consensus on the positive content, if any, of his philosophy.

I have graver reservations about Betz's second project, his intellectual history of modernity and postmodernity, damaged, it seems to me, by relying on an old demonology of the Enlightenment and by a superficial engagement with thinkers besides Hamann. Historians are reluctant to refer to "*the Enlightenment*," much less to an "Enlightenment project" in order not to perpetuate a polemical historiography which projects a fantasy Enlightenment onto the past in order to make some intervention in the present. As James Schmidt has shown ("What Enlightenment Project?" *Political Theory* 28:6 [December 2000]: 734–57), these projections commonly take the form of deriving a convenient, recent outrage (examples in Betz's case include nuclear physics [152], the Holocaust [202], and abortion [267]) from some suitably abstract idea, such as instrumental reason, rights-based autonomous individualism, or secularism, which the Enlightenment is said to have conceived. The problems with such accounts are that eighteenth-century German thinkers subscribed to a far more diverse and inconsistent set of views than can be represented by simple generalizations such as "the *Aufklärer*" (142, 143, 189, 229) or "secularism" (7, 17, 75). Kant, Lessing, and Mendelssohn are complex figures whose views are easy to mistake. The reason why Hamann's parodies of their work are so powerful and effective is that they are offered as parodies, in parodic and metacritical style. Concepts do not themselves possess historical agency, as Hamann knew and was eager to correct in Jacobi, who gave us "nihilism" in the first place. The depictions by Jacobi and Hegel of a fatally self-destructive Enlightenment still influence our views of the period, as do the even more relentless, insidious, and nihilistic versions offered by Nietzsche, Heidegger, Horkheimer and Adorno, Derrida, and others, but they are hazardous guides to Hamann.

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Heart Religion in the British Enlightenment: Gender and Emotion in Early Methodism. By Phyllis Mack. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. xii + 328 pp. \$99.00 cloth.

Rutgers historian Phyllis Mack has effectively trained her attention—for the second time—on a group of early modern British women previously under-appreciated by secular scholars. In this much anticipated sequel to her