

the Grand Dukes' ability to demonstrate their power and prestige by collecting, comprehending, and displaying the world to visitors.

The final section, "The Tail Wags the Dog," covers Tuscany's engagement with the Islamic world in North Africa, the Near East, and Persia. Here, Brege reconstructs an ambitious series of Tuscan attempts to achieve regime change or strategic alliances in the Muslim world. The crusading order of Santo Stefano notwithstanding, Tuscany engaged with Muslim powers in opportunistic and flexible ways in a shifting international diplomatic context. That these plans' ambitions were unrealized should not, Brege argues, prevent scholars from taking them seriously.

This work is detailed, precise, and well worth consideration on all points. Brege is an expert in navigating Medici-related archives from Florence to Goa. However, the Medici-centric nature of the evidence raises questions about the degree to which parts of reconstruction reflect Tuscan ambitions and aspirational self-presentation, as opposed to reality. As the book acknowledges, many of the projects and negotiations discussed ended in failure. For example, the last section aims to show how Tuscany sought to be "the tail that wagged imperial Spain into military adventures" (7). Yet in the central events of chapter 7, the rebellion of Ali Pasha of 1606–07, the Tuscan tail failed to wag the Iberian dog. The Grand Dukes' prestige gifts to Ali Pasha were ineffective at transforming Ottoman regional elites' disaffection into the breakup of the empire.

Brege argues that unrealized Tuscan hopes in these matters were "other facets of the possible." However, there may also be a viable interpretation of Tuscany's engagement with empire generally, in which the Grand Dukes' imperial political and economic projects were, in fact, a set of self-aggrandizing "chimeras," "illusions and unrealized hopes" (322). Yet even in this alternative reading, political failures only throw Tuscan intellectual and cultural achievements into higher relief by contrast. *Tuscany in the Age of Empire* is a thorough study whose political and diplomatic perspective is a useful complement to the more cultural, economic, and intellectual histories of emerging global modernity with which it is in dialogue.

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*Tudor Children.* Nicholas Orme.

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As a boy, I felt adults didn't understand children; I promised myself I would remember what it was like. For whatever reasons, Nicholas Orme, a prolific emeritus professor of history at Exeter University, has a strong interest in reconstructing childhood in past eras. He previously wrote a book titled *Medieval Children* and another about medieval

children's poetry. In this finely illustrated book about a previously neglected topic, his superb research is matched by his curiosity about all aspects of children's lives in the period, and by his consistent empathy for them ("The ground is closer when we are small" [63]). He brings the past to life in an engaging way, while also offering a thorough scholarly apparatus.

Continuity is one of Orme's themes: continuity with the pre-Tudor past, and even continuity into our own times. Tudors accepted medieval beliefs in the seven ages of man, including infancy, childhood, and adolescence. The church and legal authorities showed a special interest in youth, from puberty to adulthood. Table manners taught to children were similar to today's, and were valued as reflecting good breeding. However, if someone sneezed, children were taught to say "Christ help." Tudor children played "hot cockles"; Orme played it himself in the 1940s. Nursery rhymes were sung as certain games were played, as they still are today. That gives us a glimpse of oral transmission of culture over generations of children. Words set to music have a prolonged half-life. Children's games might reflect current events—in 1548, for example, some boys divided into old and new religion teams and fought it out. "It ended when one boy made a gun from an old candlestick, charged it with gunpowder and stone," and killed a calf (87).

As Orme freely admits, given the unrepresentative nature of archival evidence, this is mostly a book about Tudor children of the nobility and gentry—the Tudor 1 percent. One is forced to look for one's keys under the street lamp, as it were. It is important to bear this in mind while reading the book. For instance, one often learns about Tudor child-rearing books, when the vast majority of parents could not read. Orme does show compassion toward the Tudor poor and their children.

The teaching of Latin changed substantially, as it replaced medieval religious texts with the classics. "Studying these writers promised to provide new information and skills, and to reunite the countries of Europe into sharing a common standard of Latin" (138). According to Orme, "children's literature can be traced back in England to . . . the school dialogues of Ælfric of Eynsham and Ælfric Bata," from a millennium ago (189). Many Tudor stories appealed both to adults and to children. Just as into the present, "much adult literature is suitable for children, and works meant for children may also be read by adults" (189). One thinks of the fairy-tale qualities of Shakespeare's late romances, which can appeal to all ages. Shakespeare's plays illustrate many of Orme's observations, throughout the book. One thinks of Prospero when Orme notes that ending one's life as a hermit characterized many medieval tales, as well as the Tudor version of *Valentine and Orson*. The Reformation led to critiques of children's games and reading as fostering immoral thoughts and behavior. Even William Tyndale attacked the clergy for allowing children to read Robin Hood and other tales "so filthy as heart can think, to corrupt the minds of youth withal" (quoted on 186).

In his final chapter, "Reflections," Orme makes several cogent summary observations. Due to the limitations of extant evidence, "it is impossible to state concisely what

Tudor childhood was like” (227). It is increasingly acknowledged that early modern England made no sharp break from the medieval past, and Orme, a medievalist, underlines that the Tudor period “was far from being the new age so often assumed” (228). For example, “some of the most popular tales among adults and children were of medieval origin” (184). Parental authority, educational institutions, and religious obligations had significant continuity—despite the Reformation, numerous medieval religious practices survived. Orme concludes with a warning illustrated by a snowball fight among Tudor children: “We gain a narrower and poorer understanding of Tudor society if we do not include them” (230).

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*The Right of Sovereignty: Jean Bodin on the Sovereign State and the Law of Nations.* Daniel Lee.

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These past years have witnessed a reemergence in the interest in Jean Bodin’s (ca. 1530–96) political and legal thought with the recent publication of *De la Démonomanie des sorciers* (2016) and of *Les Six Livres de la République* (*Livre I*, 2013; *Livre II*, 2020; *Livre III*, 2022). Daniel Lee’s latest offering represents a major contribution in the renewal of our understanding of the influence of Bodin on the domain of international law.

Lee makes very clear that his study does not constitute an intellectual history of Bodin and is mainly concerned with the legal and political notion of sovereignty, as explored by the author of the *Six Livres de la République*. Lee advocates for the possibility of understanding of Bodin’s right of sovereignty independently from the context of the French Wars of Religion, which were impacting France during the publication of his works first in French in 1583, and then in their Latin translation in 1586. This ahistorical approach is especially appropriate for legal and political theorists, but it also offers a clear and highly didactic entry point for historically- or possibly literary-minded readers not as well versed in early modern legal and political thought. That said, Lee appears more at ease with the intricacies of Bodin’s Latin version of the *Six Livres de la République* than its vernacular original French text, sometimes leading to circumvolved considerations on sixteenth-century French. This does not constitute a matter for concern, as Lee understandably tends to put more emphasis on the Latin translation intended for an international scholarly readership than on the French vernacular text aiming at a wider readership composed mainly of French nobles. The subject of the discrepancies and variations between the French and the Latin translation would be a worthy topic for a lengthy study on its own, but way beyond Lee’s intent.