

Scott Eaton's examination of John Stearne's *Confirmation and Discovery of Witchcraft* (1648), the first full-scale study of Stearne and his ideas on demonology and witchcraft, expands on the implications of a single work. In his thorough examination of the circumstances surrounding the writing of *A Confirmation*, Eaton elevates Stearne from an obscure assistant to Matthew Hopkins, long regarded as England's only witch finder, to England's premier witch hunter and a central figure in the East Anglican witch hunts, England's largest, which resulted in 240 suspects, half of whom were executed.

Easton further positions *A Confirmation*, largely neglected by Stearne's contemporaries and subsequent scholarship, as an important work in the history of English demonology, reflecting both oral and print culture. Easton's claim for the importance of *A Confirmation* rests primarily on Stearne's emphasis on familiar spirits and his insistence on eyewitness observations of the witch's mark. Eaton paints Stearne as an empiricist, whose work reflected the influence of the Scientific Revolution, and *A Confirmation* as a "scientific text" (133). Belief in animal familiar spirits—that is, demonic spirits in the shape of animals that lived intimately with the witch and carried out malefic magic on their behalf in return for sucking the witch's blood—was a distinctive element in English witch beliefs. Easton acknowledges that Stearne's ideas on familiars were not entirely new but argues that Stearne's emphasis on their centrality as tangible evidence of the intimate relationship between witch and demon, and of their ability to furnish empirical, physical proof of guilt, was innovative. Equally, Easton emphasizes that Stearne understood witch hunting as a tool to expel subversive demonic forces in communities beset by civil war.

Each of these volumes illuminates both the diversity and commonalities of early modern demonology and witch hunting, exploring previously unexamined interactions between individuals, texts, and witch prosecutions, and placing these within a broad cultural and historiographical context. Both are invaluable additions to the literature. Sadly, the dynamics of the intersection of beliefs, political, and personal agendas and the prosecution of marginalized groups as explored in these two books seem all too familiar today.

Elsbeth Whitney, *University of Nevada, Las Vegas*
doi:10.1017/rqx.2023.444

Village Infernos and Witches' Advocates: Witch-Hunting in Navarre, 1608–1614.
Lu Ann Homza.

Iberian Encounter and Exchange, 475–1755 5. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2022. xii + 248 pp. \$99.95.

Lu Ann Homza's *Village Infernos and Witches' Advocates: Witch-Hunting in Navarre, 1608–1614* transports readers to the early seventeenth century into the midst of one

of the largest European witch hunts. Homza examines the extensive legal records left by the Spanish Inquisitors to provide a multifaceted and multicausal portrait of the accusations that gripped this region of Basque-speaking Spain. Her work brings updated methodologies and perspectives to bear on this important history, acknowledging that any complete picture must take seriously the dynamics of religious beliefs as well as the shifting power dynamics between institutional authorities and actors on the ground. Homza is well suited to explore these factors based on her expertise in the study of the Spanish Inquisition and its cultural development.

Homza divides her study into five chapters. Each one highlights different elements that defined the Navarre witch hunts. Sometimes these elements mirror similar trends in other parts of Europe, but often they defy conventional wisdom about witch trials. Her first chapter, "Trauma," relates the suffering of accused and accusers alike as revealed in the legal documents spawned by the trials. Homza traces skillfully the disconnect that often developed between the central offices of the Spanish Inquisition and their operatives on the ground. Miscommunication and hysteria at the ground level produced tragic consequences for those accused of witchcraft.

Chapter 2, "Spiritual and Social Combat," highlights the religious beliefs and social fears that drove witchcraft accusations. Homza maintains an openness to taking religious and intellectual motivations at face value while still adopting a skeptical stance toward the idea that any of the alleged diabolical manifestations were real. Many people really believed that diabolism was tearing their world apart and acted accordingly. Homza relates chilling anecdotes that show how much the trials were driven by the active participation of children. Children were encouraged by adults and their own existential fears to accuse people of witchcraft in startling numbers.

Chapter 3, "Legal Decisions, Legal Errors," and chapter 4, "Collaborations, Obedience, Resistance," delve into the developing legal process with a particular focus on the work of Alonso de Salazar Frías to influence the other two judges to adopt a more critical view of the accusations. Homza weaves a deft tale of the legal drama dividing the three-judge panel with Salazar, the youngest of the three, working to show the contradictions in the accusations and insisting on higher standards of evidence. Even as the judges disputed, adults acted on the allegations brought forward by children to produce violence and intimidation.

Chapter 5 highlights the "Transgressions and Solutions" revealed as the judges went public with their disagreements. Salazar began to carry the debate as he issued dispensations of grace for some of the accused and authored a 1613 report exposing the errors of the investigations. His suggestions for reform were adopted by the Supreme in 1614, leading to higher standards of evidence for witchcraft accusations. Salazar's work led to a major decline in witchcraft executions and prosecutions in Spain. Homza emphasizes Salazar's contribution and places it in the larger context of the developing reaction against witch-hunt excesses in the seventeenth century. She also notes his contradictions and inconsistencies. Salazar emerges in Homza's account as a man of his times, who

could rise impressively above superstition and incompetence on the one hand, while still sometimes proving “ultimately incapable of reimagining his office or abandoning the presuppositions he inherited” (190).

Lu Ann Homza tells a gripping story in *Village Infernos and Witches' Advocates*. She reinterprets this crucial event for new generations of scholars. Her research applies innovative areas of inquiry that bring new voices to the fore. Homza's willingness to take religious beliefs seriously frees scholars to hear the historical actors on their own terms. The study benefits from her deep understanding of early modern legal processes and the inner workings of the Spanish Inquisition. The interplay of official and popular forces comes through in vivid clarity throughout the text. Anyone interested in witch trials, the Spanish Inquisition, and the development of religious toleration in early modern Europe should read Homza's excellent contribution.

Scott Culpepper, *Dordt University*
doi:10.1017/rqx.2023.442

Forged in the Shadow of Mars: Chivalry and Violence in Late Medieval Florence.
Peter W. Sposato.

Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2022. xiv + 232 pp. \$49.95.

Peter Sposato's book focuses on the complex of chivalry, honor, and violence, analyzed by reference to biographies, archival records, and literature from thirteenth- to fifteenth-century Florence. The subtitle intentionally evokes *Chivalry and Violence in Medieval Europe* (1999) by Richard Kaeuper, Sposato's doctoral supervisor, and Samuel Claussen's *Chivalry and Violence in Late Medieval Castile* (2020), both of whose influence Sposato acknowledges.

Chapter 1 deals with “Chivalry and Honor Violence,” projecting personal and familial honor, transported by contemporary literature; chapter 2 elaborates on “Chivalry and Social Violence,” collective or class-identificatory honor, illustrated by archival case reports; chapter 3 discusses Brunetto Latini's *Il tesoretto* as a case study in chivalric reform—an intellectual's reeducation program to curb the fighter's antisocial aggression without diminishing his effectiveness—and chapter 4 lists out the chivalric elite participating in Florence's wars in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The epilogue describes the life of Buonaccorso Pitti (1354–1432), reconstructed knight on the Latini template, though his commercial wealth had to subsidize his military misadventures.

Sposato joins in the Kaeupernican view of the chivalric elite engaging in ideologically driven performative violence also off the battlefield, in contrast to the (Maurice) Keensian conception of chivalry as peaceable in a civilian context, with chivalric violence limited to battle. The book thus seeks to show the self-defined chivalric elite