Edward Muir. *Ritual in Early Modern Europe*. New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Pp. xii, 291.

This is an ambitious, entertaining, and well-written, but nevertheless somewhat puzzling book. The author seeks to illustrate and analyze the process by which what were seen as powerful invocations of the divine in the Middle Ages were transformed into “mere” or “empty” ritual by the end of the eighteenth century. Rather than an original investigation of archival sources, it is a survey of the literature on ritual theory, and of published primary and secondary sources. (This is, indeed, in keeping with the stated mission of the series, *New Approaches to European History*, of which this book is a part.)

The book is divided into four parts. Part One, entitled, “The Ritual Moment,” is largely expository and deals with rituals marking the individual’s passage from one social state to another, and with those marking the passage of time. Chapter One, “The Rites of Passage,” is largely an application of Van Gennep’s tripartite schema of rituals — separation (preliminary), transition (liminary), and incorporation (postliminary) — to the rituals which demarcated the stages of life in early modern Europe: birth and baptism, marriage, and death. It ends with the observation that Luther’s protest against the enormous ritual superstructure which surrounded death “opened the way for a systematic re-examination of the role of ritual” (p. 52). The next chapter does much the same for the rituals which marked the passing of the year and the seasons, and examines the role of ritual in the passing of time at four different levels: the liturgical year and seasons of the Church, the week, the day, and the hour.

Part Two, entitled “Rituals of the Body,” adopts as a guiding metaphor the conflict between Carnival and Lent, as illustrated in Brueghel’s painting and expounded by Peter Burke in *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*. Rituals of the lower body, emphasizing appetites and abandon, are presented largely through the lens of Carnival and the carnivalesque, but also take in charivari and rites of violence, including witch-trials and the punishment of the accused. In the early modern period, secular and religious elites sought to tame these rituals of licence through the inculcation of manners and reform of popular culture, and in general by subordinating the lower body to the upper. This subordination, this repression of emotions and appetites, “occurred primarily through a debate about ritual. The rituals associated with the human body and its physical capacities to eat, make love, and fight linked self-control with social control, creating a new world in which personal comportment of men and women internalized the external coercive authorities of reformed religion and absolutist states” (p. 144).

Part Three, “Ritual and Representation,” explores the process by which elites came to empty ritual of its powerful capacity of presenting — presenting the body of Christ or the community, for example. Ritual was now analyzed for its efficacy and became a means of re-presenting or re-creating, rather than presenting or

creating. This process took shape primarily in the Reformation debate about the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist and was driven by the humanist and Protestant critique of the crypto-materialism of late medieval religious ritual. Despite their attacks on Catholic ritual, Protestants nevertheless had to invent or adapt rituals of their own; thus, much of Protestant anti-ritual activity itself took on ritualized forms, as for example in iconoclasm. Catholic and Orthodox churches also participated in this reformation of ritual, though in more ambiguous ways.

Chapter Seven, "Government as a Ritual Process," examines the evolution of political ritual through the lens of the transition from presentation to representation. Here, the inherent ambiguity in ritual is most evident. Political rituals, whether they embody civic solidarity or royal power, strive both to display and to create the desired effect. That is, in displaying the harmony of the community or the power of the king, these rituals also seek to bring it about. They "both imagined what might be and displayed what really was" (p. 262). Throughout the early modern period, what happened in the realm of religious ritual was also evident in the political realm: rituals such as coronations or royal funerals no longer created royal power or ensured its continuity as much as they re-presented something which had already happened.

The Epilogue restates the major theme of the book: that by the eighteenth century, ritual had been emptied of much of its powerful emotive content; that is, it had become "mere" ritual "as a consequence of the ritual disputes of the early modern period" (p. 270). We are thus left with an ambiguous modern attitude towards ritual: we cannot live without it, yet the constant need to unravel its meaning is self-nullifying. Ritual has obviously not been abolished, but rather displaced into rituals celebrating patriotism, spectator sports, and even celebrity itself: "The modern muddle about ritual is a legacy of the ritual revolution of the sixteenth century, which shifted attention from the emotive power of rituals to questions about their meaning. The modern attitude perpetuates a misunderstanding that ritual must be interpreted, its hidden meanings ferreted out, when what rituals do is not so much mean as emote" (p. 274).

Despite its intriguing observations and wide scope, this book remains somewhat puzzling for two principal reasons. First, and most importantly, throughout most of the book, the author seems torn between describing the ritual life of early modern Europe and exploring the transformation of ritual. Granted, one cannot analyze a transition without some reference to the thing being transformed, but very often, the major themes of the book are lost in descriptive detail. A clearer focus on the transformation of ritual would have been desirable. Secondly, and less importantly, the scholarly apparatus of references is frustrating, to say the least. Each chapter ends with a bibliography, with works especially useful for those new to the field clearly marked. But the footnoting system seems haphazard and is likely to frustrate anyone trying to explore these issues further. Direct quotations from primary sources are usually footnoted, but those from secondary sources only

occasionally. Thus, even though one may have a bibliographical entry for a particular quotation or observation, one is often left completely at sea in trying to track down its precise source. *Ritual in Early Modern Europe* is a useful, comprehensive, and entertaining introduction to the subject; however, its lack of focus and lapses into description for its own sake will frustrate students, and its haphazard footnoting will frustrate scholars and specialists.

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Maurice Scève. *The Entry of Henri II into Lyon: September 1548*. A Facsimile with an Introduction by Richard Cooper. Tempe, AZ, Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1997. Pp. vi, 326.

On ne peut qu'applaudir à la publication d'édition de textes anciens. La relation de l'entrée royale au XVI^e siècle, siècle par excellence de ce genre de cérémonie rituelle, reste une oeuvre collective relatant un spectacle total auquel collaborent tous les citadins: bourgeois et ecclésiastiques, artisans et notables, ainsi que les confréries locales et étrangères et les enfants. Cette édition de Richard Cooper est essentielle pour la compréhension de la société et pour l'histoire des mentalités, car les relations d'entrée royale dépassent l'inscription de l'événement ou la simple chronique. Dans le cas de celle d'Henri II à Lyon en 1548, elle parle de la société lyonnaise, de sa composition et de sa hiérarchisation, des pratiques culturelles dans l'espace de la ville en fête, nuée et barriolée d'antiquités romaines et ornée d'allégories mythologiques. Cet ouvrage est d'autant plus intéressant et précieux qu'il est précédé d'une introduction détaillée et complète.

La présentation de Cooper renferme une analyse très fine de l'entrée de Maurice Scève, humaniste lyonnais, mais aussi une contextualisation de cette relation et une inscription dans l'évolution et la continuité de ce genre de spectacle. Et pour un critique du XX^e siècle, cette partie est des plus utiles. L'introduction substantielle de Cooper établit un lien avec les entrées précédentes (sources de celles-ci) et avec le voyage d'Henri II dans les provinces françaises. Une bibliographie minutieusement élaborée accompagne cette édition. L'introduction de Cooper suit une logique incontestable: les entrées du roi et de la reine à Lyon, l'itinéraire royal, les préparatifs de l'entrée qui mettent en valeur les artisans locaux, la parade du dimanche, la colonie italienne, l'archevêché, l'architecture et l'iconologie, les inscriptions, les pièces et les divertissements.

Outre l'introduction de quelque cent cinquante pages, la bibliographie et l'iconographie de Lyon, on trouve les fac-similés précieux pour les chercheurs:

1) *La Magnificence de la superbe et triumpante entrée de la noble et antique cité de Lyon faicte au Treschrestien Roy de France Henry deuxiesme de ce nom, et à la Royne Catherine son Espouse, le xxiii de Septembre M.D.XLVIII* (texte de Maurice Scève).