

*Heresy and Mysticism in Sixteenth-Century Spain: The Alumbrados* is the first comprehensive historical survey in English of alumbradismo, a heresy which flourished in Spain during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. Alastair Hamilton traces the development of alumbradismo, from its initial clash with the Inquisition of Toledo in the 1520s, to the trials of the alumbrados in Llerena in the 1580s and those of Seville in the 1620s. He bases his study on the writings of various religious figures of the period, and in the case of the earliest alumbrados, who left behind no formal compilation of their beliefs, on letters written in their defense and statements made by witnesses at their trials.

Hamilton locates the origins of alumbradismo in heterodox movements of the Christian Middle Ages as well as in the late fifteenth-century Franciscan practice of recogimiento, the gathering up of the soul to God. In certain segments of the clergy and laity, and significantly among a high proportion of women, recogimiento led to a more radical form of prayer known as dejamiento, the abandoning of the soul to God. Though the distinction between recogimiento and dejamiento was never definitively established, the dejados claimed to be filled with a divine light (hence the designation alumbrado) and to achieve a passive union with God. Its practitioners not only advocated complete passivity, but considered themselves free from moral law. They were thus charged with antinomianism. The alumbrados of Llerena and Seville, moreover, allegedly engaged in mystical extravagance, imposture, and licentiousness.

Many alumbrados were of converso origin, and the earliest were denounced as Judaizers. Their beliefs, however, had virtually nothing in common with Judaism, and the Inquisition soon came to realize that it was confronted with a new heresy. Although the first cases coincided with the rise of Lutheranism, the inquisitors of the 1520s were still unapprised of the subtleties of Lutheran theology, and did not consider alumbradismo a manifestation of Protestantism. In reality the early alumbrados shared more in common with evangelical Catholics than with Protestants, and following the appearance of Lutheran communities in Valladolid and Seville in the 1550s, the differences between the two became apparent. In the course of the sixteenth century, alumbradismo was imputed to several leading religious figures, including Ignatius Loyola, Teresa of Avila, and John of the Cross. But by the last decades of the century, it was increasingly regarded as religious imposture. In fact no one ever chose to identify him or herself as an alumbrado/a, and the term was strictly one of accusation.

In the late seventeenth century the quietism of Miguel de Molinos (which shared tenets with alumbradismo) emerged as the primary heresy of the Catholic world, and
as Hamilton writes at the end of his book, "the essentially Spanish heresy of the 'poor little women and the ignorant' gradually faded away" (p. 128). Although it is not within the scope of this study, much more could be said about the role of women within alumbradismo, and how its interiorized spirituality provided a space outside of the male-dominated ecclesiastical hierarchy for both women and men. On the whole, Heresy and Mysticism in Sixteenth-Century Spain is a significant contribution to Spanish historiography, both for its elucidation of the beliefs of alumbrados and for its clarification of the interconnectedness of the various religious movements of the time.

In contrast to Heresy and Mysticism in Sixteenth-Century Spain, which for the most part remains focused on the dynamics of religion itself, the Phoenix and the Flame: Catalonia and the Counter Reformation assesses the repercussions of the Counter Reformation on Catalonia through a social history of a small, pre-industrial community, Mediona, and by extension the larger Mediterranean region of which it was a part. In the extraordinarily rich and provocative study, Henry Kamen raises fundamental questions regarding the relationship of the Catalan Church to popular religion and culture. He rejects the claim of Church writers of the period that the Counter Reformation was a continuation and reaffirmation of traditional religious practices, arguing instead that significant changes occurred in the liturgy as well as in the social and personal lives of the laity.

The Phoenix and the Flame fills a lacuna in Spanish historiography insofar as there exists no social history of Catalonia, nor even a general history of the Catalan Church. In reconstructing Counter-Reformation Catalan society, Kamen relies on archival documents, printed books of the period, and sources relating to traditional culture and folklore. He judiciously uses only those Castillian-language works read in Catalonia during the Counter Reformation, and approaches with caution studies in folklore based on modern observations of the customs of rural Catalonia. Among the myriad of subjects analyzed are religious festivals and songs, book trading and printing processes, developments in sermonology, the debate over the Catalan language, and the rise of the Jesuits.

According to Kamen, pre-Tridentine Catalan Catholicism was largely non-clerical and non-sacramental, tied to agrarian rituals and community needs. While religion in Catalonia remained grounded in the community throughout the early modern period, in post-Tridentine society the sacraments became the cornerstone of Catholic spirituality. As a result of the increased emphasis on penance and communion, the priests came to play a more integral role in the lives of the people. It was in matrimony, however, that the Counter Reformation had the greatest impact on Catalans and Spaniards.

During the medieval period most marriages occurred outside the Church, and though since the tenth century a religious ceremony had been obligatory, by the early sixteenth century the majority of marriages were still "clandestine." As a consequence of the Counter reformation, marriage ceased to be regarded as a natural or human contract, and became first and foremost a sacrament. The upshot, according to Kamen, is that an unchanging Catholic morality never existed. Despite the insistence of religious writers of the period, Catholic morality was in a process of continual
development. What is striking is that in articulating its ethical stance the Counter-Reformation Church, and ultimately the State, found it necessary to intrude in the most intimate aspects of private life.

In *The Phoenix and the Flame* Kamen exposes numerous historical misconceptions about early modern Catalonia and the Church. He demonstrates that the Inquisition was not a primary instrument of the Catalan Counter Reformation, and that throughout its 300-year history it intervened in only ten percent of the towns and villages of the region. Change, moreover, was slow, and even in the late seventeenth century areas in Catalonia and elsewhere in Spain were described as “Indies” requiring further Christianization. Based on the example of Catalonia, Kamen concludes that the Counter Reformation did not make Spain a militant nation bent on imposing orthodoxy on the rest of Europe nor a fortress closed to the outside world. This picture of the country is bound to raise considerable discussion and lead to further inquiry. Without doubt, *The Phoenix and the Flame* will come to be seen as a watershed in the historiography of the early modern period.

ROBERT RICHMOND ELLIS, *Occidental College*

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Félicitons tous d’abord les responsables de cette rencontre méditerranéenne: c’est en effet la première fois, à ma connaissance, que les deux termes de “logique” et de “littérature” étaient associés pour qu’ils favorisent les seiziémistes, invités à projeter un regard neuf sur certaines productions de la Renaissance. Le terme de logique ayant été pris par les uns au sens large (compr tenant la rhétorique et ses figures), par les autres en un sens plus étroit (la logique que nous appelons aujourd’hui formelle), on a pu étudier l’antithèse dans la *Délie* de Maurice Scève (Françoise Charpentier), l’origine du mot “maxime” (Francis Goyet), le lieu commun chez Melanchton (Kees Meerhoff) ou l’”art des opposés” chez Bovelles (Jean-Claude Margolin). Une notion, qui n’est pas d’ordre spécifiquement logique, comme l’*acedia*, “autour de laquelle” médite Yves Pouilloux, trouve son emploi dans une lecture assez neuve de Bovelles, et notamment de ses deux traités, le *De Sapiente* et le *De Nihilo*. L’*acedia*, selon Bovelles et toute une tradition chrétienne, est le pire des péchés par lequel l’homme succombe