Ken MacMillan

Sovereignty and Possession in the English New World:

The Legal Foundations of Empire, 1576–1640

Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. Pp. xiii, [1], 235

Ken MacMillan argues that the English were heavily invested in arguments derived from Roman law as they began to claim territory in the New World. Examining the period from Frobisher's first voyage until the English Civil War, he thus interrogates English expansionism using the categories of sovereignty and legal pluralism. According to MacMillan, English common law could not be exported outside English borders and remained silent on the problem of the acquisition of new territories. Similarly, Europe as a whole was involved in negotiations over the division of newfound lands, and could not rely on any one nation's vernacular law. As a result, Roman law and its derivatives—particularly the Justinianic insistence on both mental and physical possession—became increasingly important to any claims about imperial sovereignty. This situation, then, created an overtly imperial colonial framework since the structure of power necessitated that the colonial patent holder interacted directly with the English crown acting in its absolute capacity. This book is persuasive and carefully argued, mustering an impressive range of source material. That said, it is also densely packed with legal distinctions, and the most accessible and engaging chapter is that dealing with maps.

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Songes et songeurs (XIII^e-XVIII^e siècles)

Nathalie Dauvois et Jean-Philippe Grosseperin (éd.). Les Collections de la République des Lettres, Presses de L'Université Laval, Québec, 2003, 253 p.

Après les études pionnières consacrées au songe médiéval (*I sogni nel Medioevo*, ed. del Ateneo, 1983), renaissant (*Le Songe à la Renaissance*, in *Réforme Humanisme et Renaissance*, 1990) et classique (*Rêver au XVII^e siècle*, in *Revue des Sciences humaines*, 1988), ce volume d'études rassemblées et introduites par Nathalie Dauvois et Jean-Philippe Grosseperin se propose de rouvrir le dossier pour ces trois périodes en abordant le « songe » dans sa double acception d'expérience historiquement conditionnée par des cadres théoriques et culturels, et de forme mettant en jeu l'histoire des représentations littéraires. Pour autant, il ne s'agit pas de déterminer systématiquement en quoi des théories explicatives du songe rendraient compte