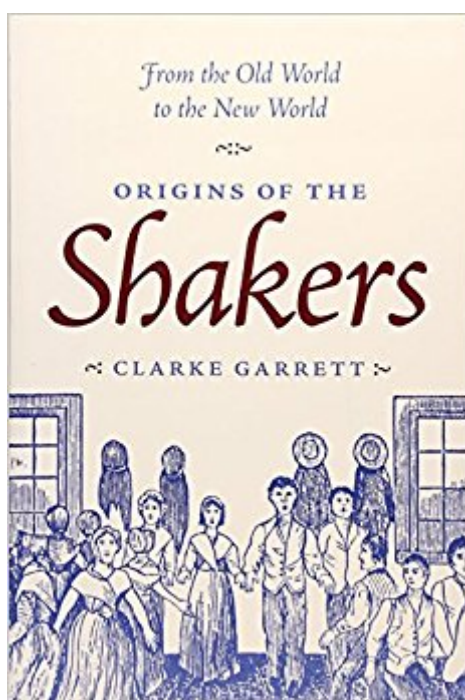


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Spirit Possession And Popular Religion: From The Old World To The New World: Origins Of The Shakers



Synopsis

Pietists, Methodists, and sectarian groups such as the Shakers all shared the conviction that God touched the individual directly and visibly; manifestations of spirit possession, accompanied by prophecy, visions, and ecstatic seizures, became outward signs of an inner expedience, a kind of sacred theater as believers acted out their possession before others. Clarke Garrett follows this "sacred theater" back to the Camisards of southeastern France, an ecstatic Protestant group whose doomed rebellion against Louis XIV led to their dispersal among Huguenot exiles. Then, Garrett writes, "in a form that the Huguenots themselves would probably not have recognized, a dozen English ecstasies, who in their native Manchester had been known as Shakers, brought Huguenot spirit possession to America in 1774." The Shakers emerge as the culmination of the century's religious quest, preserving the immediacy of spirit possession while making it the basis for the formation of an ideal Christian community. Originally published as *Spirit Possession and Popular Religion: From the Camisards to the Shakers*

Book Information

Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: Johns Hopkins University Press (March 13, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0801859239

ISBN-13: 978-0801859236

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.7 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

Best Sellers Rank: #3,031,459 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #85 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Christian Denominations & Sects > Protestantism > Shaker](#) #3261 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Churches & Church Leadership > Church Institutions & Organizations](#) #16809 in [Books > History > World > Religious > Christianity](#)

Customer Reviews

"Clearly written and richly detailed, Garrett's work is an excellent study of such dramatic spiritual performances, what he pictures as the sacred theater of popular religion." (Journal of American Culture) "The description is outstanding. Nowhere else can one find such a succinct and eminently readable account that places Shakerism in its broadest context. Garrett makes character and personality come alive throughout the book, from the Prophets' strange gyrations to Mother Ann

Lee's drinking problem." (Journal of American History)"[Unravels] the subtle links among such apparently divergent manifestations of popular religion as that of the Camisards and French Prophets of the seventeenth century, German pietism, the early Methodists in England, the revivals of the Great Awakening, the Amana community, and the Shakers... Garrett's study deserves the attention of all who would understand the history and nature of ecstatic experience and its continuing presence in Western religion." (Church History)"Shaker buffs will not find this study very comforting, but serious students of Shakerism and historians interested in other communal societies stand in Garrett's debt for his excellent contribution to the field, for his determination to address a range of important but difficult interpretive issues, and for his willingness to employ a critical approach to texts too long handled uncritically." (American Historical Review)"A carefully researched, methodologically sophisticated, and lucidly written work." (Catholic Historical Review)"The most successful study yet written of transatlantic spiritual enthusiasm in the century of the Enlightenment." (Jon Butler, Yale University)

Clarke Garrett is Charles A. Dana Professor of History Emeritus at Dickinson College. He is the author of *Respectable Folly: Millenarians and the French Revolution*.

Excellent coverage of the subject matter to the point it was too long and read rather slowly.

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