

Nails in the Wall



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During the Protestant Reformation, Martin Luther instituted new ideologies addressing gender, marriage, chastity, and religious life that threatened Catholic monasticism. Yet many living in cloistered religious communities, particularly women, refused to accept these new terms and were successful in their opposition to the new Protestant culture. Focusing primarily on a group of Dominican nuns in Strasbourg, Germany, Amy Leonard's *Nails in the Wall* outlines the century-long battle between these nuns and the Protestant city council. With savvy strategies that employed charm, wealth, and political and social connections, the nuns were able to sustain their Catholic practices. Leonard's in-depth archival research uncovers letters about and records of the nuns' struggle to maintain their religious beliefs and way of life in the face of Protestant reforms. She tells the story of how they worked privately to keep Catholicism alive - continuing to pray in Latin, smuggling in priests to celebrate Mass, and secretly professing scores of novices to ensure the continued survival of their convents. This fascinating and heartening study shows that, far from passively allowing the Protestants to dismantle their belief system, the women of the Strasbourg convents were active participants in the battle over their vocation and independence.

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评论

1. 修女院的强行隔绝也同时清除了女性在中世纪社会家庭中的从属角色，为她们营造出一个集体主体角色而能够主动参与城市经济与宗教活动中。2. 宗教改革解散修女院回归家庭，以女性回归世俗家庭角色为正道。3. 经历过15世纪 observant reform 的修女院，由于已重新争取到更多宗教权威、进行过可观的教育与书籍知识生产、与城市世俗权利方及贵族家庭的联系增加，在宗教改革的解散风波中更有力量与新教抗衡。两次改革中修女院、修士院、主教、城市贵族家族、市议会之间的较量很有趣。斯堡的多名我修女院数量、抄本生产和收藏。

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书评

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