Foxe is often lauded by modern critics as the liberator of Askew’s *Examinations* for the simple fact of having reproduced them in the *Acts and Monuments* without Bale’s elucidation. In the quest for that rare commodity, the early modern, female voice, critics have tended both to read the first-person texts claimed as Askew’s against Bale’s elucidation of them in the early editions of the *Examinations* and to find in Foxe’s treatment of them a more liberated, less encumbered, female voice. In a recent article on Foxe’s editing of the *Examinations* for the *Acts and Monuments*, however, Thomas Freeman and Sarah Wall take issue with this sort of approach to the *Examinations*, arguing that far from providing a medium for Askew’s unencumbered self-expression, Foxe actively framed and modelled the *Examinations* such that he, as much as Bale before him, must be considered not as the presenter of her voice, but as a collaborator in the actual production of her testimony. Drawing attention to Foxe’s textual interventions into, and his aesthetic choices for shaping, the body of the *Examinations*, Freeman and Wall identify some of the material ways in which he ‘imprints his influence, his beliefs, and his politics all over Askew’s narrative’. In this they challenge the idea that Askew, as primary author, can be read against the intervention (or its lack) of either of her first two, male editors: as no autographed manuscript of any part of the *Examinations* survives, Askew can, as a discrete authorial voice, be contrasted neither to Bale nor to Foxe.

It is possible, however, to contrast Foxe’s *Examinations of Anne Askew* to Bale’s *Examinations of Anne Askew*. For example, as Freeman and Wall note, Foxe, unlike Bale, divides the *Examinations* text into paragraphs for the purpose of dramatic effect; Bale’s section divisions in the first editions occur only to allow for the insertion of his own commentary, and
while in the 1550 edition (Foxe’s base text), which omits Bale’s elucidation, the text is divided into only eleven paragraphs, Foxe divides it into 29 paragraphs in the first edition of the *Acts and Monuments* (1563), and 66 in the second (1570). In addition, Foxe occasionally adds words or phrases to the Bale text to improve its rhythm, creating alliterative dyads similar to those characterizing, and Freeman and Wall suggest modelled upon, the 1549 English Prayer Book. Apart from these stylistic changes, however, Foxe also makes some more striking alterations in his reproduction of the *Examinations*, particularly in the sections dealing with Askew’s recantation, her torture and her execution. Drawing on the testimony of living witnesses, he elaborates on the descriptions of her torture and death, enhancing the spectacular value of both as well as the passionate fortitude of the martyr. He also both acknowledges the dangerous implications of Askew’s reported recantation and attempts to mitigate them, by printing the copy of the version still extant in Bonner’s register, and challenging its veracity.

Freeman and Wall have given a valuable account of Foxe’s methodology in reframing and enhancing the story of Askew’s imprisonment and death. As they argue, particularly beginning in the second edition of the *Acts and Monuments*, Foxe makes of her story a watershed moment in the history of the English church, a ‘keystone’ for a number of related themes: the determination of evil counsellors to block reform; the responsibility of the monarch nevertheless to carry it out; and the consequences for the nation of his or her failure to do so. Foxe’s emphasis on these themes is contextualized by his dissatisfaction, growing during the 1560s and never abated, with Queen Elizabeth’s religious policy, a frustration which he felt in common with a number of his fellow reformers, especially those with whom he had shared religious exile during Mary’s reign. He compares Elizabeth unfavourably to Askew, making his female martyr not just a religious icon, but a ‘politically charged figure’ as well.

While Freeman and Wall argue that Foxe intended for Askew, like his other martyrs, to serve as a ‘model to exhort readers to godliness in their daily lives’ (while Bale’s Askew is a model to exhort them to constancy in the face of persecution), they also suggest that he ‘very likely ... thought that in some respect, Askew was not an appropriate model for the godly to imitate’. They come to this surprising conclusion based on the fact that while in the 1559 Latin forerunner to the English *Acts and Monuments*, the *Rerum in Ecclesia Gestarum*, Foxe offers an introduction to the *Examinations* declaring that martyrs should be imitated by Christians in their daily lives and that no martyr has ever been more