Altars in The Rape of the Lock: Global Commerce and Catholic Implications
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This essay examines the altars in Alexander Pope's The Rape of the Lock, as well as its accompaniment A Key to the Lock, and sheds light on the salient link between the influx of foreign commodities and Catholic proselytizing movements by the Society of Jesus. The essay argues that the added altar in Belinda's boudoir in the 1714 version emphasizes Catholic presence, so as to connect the poem to larger Catholic contributions in Europe, of which Protestant England was no exception. Parallel to the nascent consumerist culture, fascination with the Orient was a hallmark feature of eighteenth-century England. Exotic products as well as imitations abound, and the history of trade of oriental items reveals that it was intricately intertwined with Jesuit missionary activities. The mock-epic poem was composed during a period in which Pope aspired toward constructing a public image as a member of the upper echelons of English society. The essay suggests that, in depicting Belinda's soirée at Hampton Court, Pope projects his own anxieties about entering mainstream Protestant society while keeping intact an overt Catholic identity.
taken up into the heavens and immortalized as a constellation. Alexander Pope. 18th-century English Literature. Pope's transformations are numerous, striking, and loaded with moral implications. The great battles of epic become bouts of gambling and flirtatious tiffs. The great, if capricious, Greek and Roman gods are converted into a relatively undifferentiated army of basically ineffectual sprites. The verse form of The Rape of the Lock is the heroic couplet; Pope still reigns as the uncontested master of the form. The heroic couplet consists of rhymed pairs of iambic pentameter lines (lines of ten syllables each, alternating stressed and unstressed syllables). The best study guide to The Rape of the Lock on the planet, from the creators of SparkNotes. Get the summaries, analysis, and quotes you need. Pope felt the full effects of anti-Catholic sentiment during his early life, as the Test Acts (a series of laws designed to inhibit the prosperity of Catholic families at the time) prevented his family from living within 10 miles of London and prevented him from attending a university. Instead, Pope was largely self-taught, teaching himself French, Italian, Latin, and Greek, and even reading Homer at an early age. The Rape of the Lock is a mock-heroic narrative poem written by Alexander Pope. One of the most commonly cited examples of high burlesque, it was first published anonymously in Lintot's Miscellaneous Poems and Translations (May 1712) in two cantos (334 lines); a revised edition "Written by Mr. Pope" followed in March 1714 as a five-canto version (794 lines) accompanied by six engravings. Pope boasted that this sold more than three thousand copies in its first four days. The final form of the poem 1714 edition of The Rape of the Lock, with illustrations and epistle to Arabella Fermor. The first version of the poem was dashed off in a fortnight and published in 1712. It was then expanded and republished, with this prefatory letter, in 1714. View images from this item (21). Sylphs buzz around Belinda, while her lock of hair is transformed into a shooting star. The satyr crouching in the foreground represents Pope's satirical aims.