

(S. 1–67). Sie erfüllt das Desiderat, in einem kompakten Artikel die wesentlichen Auskünfte über die reformierten Bekenntnisschriften zu erhalten. Faulenbach informiert über Textsammlungen (hilfreich auch die graphische Übersicht über die Edition der Texte in bisherigen Sammlungen), die Vorgeschichte der vorliegenden Edition und ihre Zielsetzung sowie über die Editionsrichtlinien – alle Unterabschnitte jeweils ergänzt mit Literaturhinweisen.

Wem dient eine derartig umfangreiche und historisch-philologisch exakte Dokumentation von Bekenntnistexten in ihrem originalen Wortlaut? Zunächst sicherlich denen, die sich in Lehre und Forschung mit den historischen Umständen und theologischen Perspektiven

reformierten Bekennens beschäftigen. Aus den akademischen Bibliotheken und Arbeitszimmern von an dem reformierten Protestantismus Interessierten werden der vorliegende Band und die (hoffentlich in nicht allzu großer zeitlicher Ferne) erscheinenden Folgebände nicht wegzudenken sein. Für diese weiteren Bände wäre es wünschenswert, wenn eine relative Angleichung in der Gestaltung und Ausführlichkeit der Einleitungen und des Sachapparats erzielt werden könnte. Summa: Wer sich wissenschaftlich mit den reformierten Bekenntnissen befasst, wird auf diese Edition verweisen und nach ihr die Texte belegen.

Matthias Freudenberg, Erlangen

Philip Benedict, **Christ's Churches purely Reformed: a Social History of Calvinism**, New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2002, XXVI, 670 S., ISBN 0-30008-812-4 (Hardcover), 0-30010-507-X (Paperback)

The appearance in paperback of Philip Benedict's monumental survey of Reformed Protestantism during its first century and a half of existence provides a useful occasion to review this splendid work. While admiring a majestically-conceived and impressively up-to-date work of synthesis, I have a quarrel with its sub-title, which one feels may have been imposed by an editor: Benedict's work is not primarily a social history, nor does it deal solely with that segment of Reformed Protestantism which has acquired the label Calvinism. The architecture of the book is in fact largely chronological: political and theological concerns are dealt with in masterly fashion, and sharp attention is paid to all areas of the Reformed world, New England in-

cluded. After all that, only Part IV might be called social history. On the matter of «Calvinism», as early as p. xxiii of his introduction, Benedict is sounding an appropriate note of caution: «use of the terms *Calvinist* and *Calvinism* will be confined to situations in which the ideas of modern interpreters who use these terms are being discussed ... The Reformed tradition broadly understood, not Calvinism in any of the narrower senses of the word, is this book's precise subject.» This is a healthy caveat, and all the more welcome from an historian whose own expertise has developed in relation to the history of French Protestantism, which of all varieties of Reformed religion beyond Geneva, has been most influenced by the great French exile. The word «Calvinism» began life, like so many religious labels, as an insult, and during the period covered by Benedict's book, it persisted more in the mouths of those abusing Reformed Protestants than among the Reformed themselves. There has never been any

Genevan-imposed uniformity among the Reformed family. Variety has been the watchword of the Churches which embraced the agenda of *Ecclesia reformata, quia semper reformanda*, and Benedict provides plenty of detailed accounts of this variety, usefully summarised at pp. 282–283 of his text.

It is true that at the beginning and end of the book, Benedict attempts to point readers to the twin elements of his subtitle by promising discussion of two favourite *topoi* associated with Calvinism: the sub-Weberian notion of the association between Calvinism and disciplined work, and the idea that Calvinism promoted democratic political institutions. The promise in the Introduction to discuss these matters is well fulfilled in the Conclusion to the whole work, which reminds us that «one goal of this book has been to explore the issues raised by the historical and sociological theories that accord the Reformed tradition a distinctive role in the making of the modern world.» Yet still one feels that this discussion is a subsidiary element in the totality of Benedict's enterprise.

Benedict begins with a crisp survey of the Church on the eve of Luther's Reformation, and then of Luther's impact, before his introduction of Zwingli and Zürich. He makes well the point that the seeds of division were sown even before there was much contact between Wittenberg and Zürich, in Andreas Karlstadt's impulse to push forward in Wittenberg the logic of what Luther had started, in such basic theological questions as the danger of images in places of worship, or the relationship of divine presence to the eucharist. Since Luther immediately failed to find common ground with Karlstadt, it proved equally impossible for him to do so with the reformers of the far-away Swiss city when he found that they were saying similar things to his

university colleague. This was all the more regrettable because both Luther and Zwingli were making a radical return to the pessimistic anthropology of Paul in the Epistle to the Romans, as interpreted and extended by Augustine of Hippo. Benedict rejects the idea that just because Zwingli was a fervent admirer of Erasmus, he must have gone through a stage of embracing Erasmus's views on human free will: instead, he sees Zwingli as making a discovery of Augustine's vision of God's majesty and the centrality of grace independently of Luther, and previous to the indulgence furor of 1517. Few Reformed theologians were to turn sympathetically to Erasmus's championing of free will, the exception being that independent-minded Erasmian Jan Łaski.

In his account of the early confrontations between Lutheran and Zwinglian versions of the Reformation, Benedict makes the point that the Zwinglians, with their more comprehensive vision of social reform allied to their theological revolution, already generally had wider popular appeal in the 1520s. He sees this characteristic as fundamental to the greater ability of the Reformed tradition in later decades and centuries to leap cultural boundaries in Europe and beyond. Nevertheless, he rightly points out that Zwingli's writings, products of a truncated career and rarely more approachable than one would expect from a philosophically-minded humanist author, were never best-sellers. By contrast, Zwingli's successor Bullinger was one of the sixteenth-century's most successful communicators, both through his *Decades* and because of his sensible little book on marriage, which had the advantage of forming the perfect wedding gift in serious-minded households throughout Protestant Europe. Calvin, of course, would go on to a still greater share of the

Protestant book market, with a notable expansion into the English and German spheres from the 1560s, in step with the spread of Reformed-style Reformation there. Yet Benedict also draws our attention to forgotten stars of Reformed publishing, like the Welsh bishop Lewis Bayly, whose devotional work *The Practice of Piety* reached out in translation as far as Hungarian, Czech, Polish, Romansch, Swedish, and a native American language in New England. All this is a reminder of the extraordinary international dimension of the Reformed movement, that phenomenon so stimulated by the refugees who witnessed to their faith by their enforced wandering across Europe – as the Antwerp preacher Isbrand Balck put it at a moment of catastrophic dispersal in 1567, those reborn in Christ were like birds that fly over all the world.

Naturally, one of the chief emphases of the book is on discipline and its fundamental importance in the Reformed tradition. Benedict devotes much space to the disagreements between Zürich and Geneva about the proper form of discipline. These clashes generally resulted in a victory for the Genevan Consistory, that embodiment of Calvin's application of his characteristic *distinctio sed non separatio* principle to the relationship between Church and civil commonwealth – even though Benedict shows that an Erastian or Zürich-style *chorgericht* could be as active in promoting social discipline as any consistory-full of pastors and elders. Perhaps if he wished to justify his claim for his book as a «social history», his generous treatment of discipline would be his best justification, for Reformed theologians came to see discipline as the key to the right ordering of society. Seldom was this more forcefully-expressed than in an editor's introduction of 1556 to that highly-influential

description of a well-ordered Church, Jan Łaski's *Forma ac ratio*: «If the order set forth in this book were well observed among those who call themselves Christians ... the world would not feel the wrath of God» – there then followed a detailed vision of a well-regulated society which many would have found mouthwatering amid the chaos of mid-century Europe, though it will not be altogether to the taste of most modern Europeans. Even an Italian Jesuit who visited Geneva in 1580 had to admit that during his trip he heard no blasphemy or indecent language at all (clearly an unusually subtle device of Satan, he thought).

Rightly, we hear much in this book about the German «Second Reformation», state-building and confessionalisation. Benedict suggests interestingly that state-building was commonly the result, not the corollary, of confessionalisation: concentration of power in the hands of the ruler was stimulated by the sheer strength of the opposition to Reformed innovations, opposition which provoked reactive measures as the only way to achieve what the prince wanted. Benedict also suggests (p. 207) that the widespread German resistance to liturgical change in the Second Reformation does not, as is often asserted, represent deep-rooted traditionalist attachment to those rituals, but rather testifies to the efficiency of Lutheran propaganda. Although there must be some truth in this, the conclusion does seem at odds with the extraordinary degree of popular resistance to Reformed liturgical innovations over several decades which is observable all over the Empire, and which Benedict himself describes. I do not hear the arguments of professional theologians in a cry from the crowd in Berlin which greeted the unfortunate Elector Johann Sigismund of Brandenburg during his

efforts to defend his Reformed preachers against popular hatred: «You damn black Calvinist, you have stolen our pictures and destroyed our crucifixes; now we will get even with you and your Calvinist priests!» (p. 224). Hussites felt the same way as the Empire's Lutherans when their new Reformed King Friedrich started the destruction of sacred images in Prague in 1619–1620, and their anger was one of the handicaps which divided and rapidly laid low the enterprise of ridding Bohemia of the Habsburgs. One of the oddities of this book is that amid many able discussions of politics and war, there is no sustained account of the build-up to and outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, beyond a few lateral references in other contexts. The Elector Palatine Friedrich V's acceptance of the Bohemian throne was arguably the most ambitious political project of Reformed Protestantism during Benedict's chosen period, and it was also probably the most disastrous in its consequences, bringing down with it the fortunes of all Protestantism in central Europe. Similarly, one would have expected some consideration of the Elector Friedrich's place in the bizarre Rosicrucian affair, that literary *cause célèbre* which provides such a fascinating sidelight on the intellectual preoccupations and apocalyptic optimism of Reformed elites on the eve of their greatest crisis. The omission is all the more noticeable because Benedict quotes (p. 219) that stormy petrel of the Bohemian adventure Abraham Scultetus, as he ruefully reflected on the follies of having expected a Golden Age to emerge around 1600 from the political progress of the Reformed (I was intrigued in another context to find the English ecclesiastical statesman Richard Baxter quoting in his own autobiography that same pas-

sage of Scultetus: an eloquent tribute to the international nature of the Reformed cause). Indeed, in general we might hear more about the Last Days in this survey: although the Camisard «French Prophets» and the Scottish Covenanters get their due, one misses that ground-bass of excitement about the Last Days and the struggle with Antichrist which provided so much of the conviction and urgency of Reformed faith in its first century and a half, for instance in the ruinous foreign military adventuring of Prince György II. Rákóczi of Transylvania in the 1650s. Altogether, Benedict's Reformed Protestants tend to be rather reasonable people, not too prone outside the excitements of the «Wonderyears» in the 1560s to indulge in extravagance of thought or behaviour: perhaps a little too like the later French *Haute Société Protestante* to be entirely representative of two centuries of intense Reformed encounters with the sacred.

Benedict's book is nevertheless all the better for being the work of an avowed «total outsider, an agnostic, nonpracticing Jew raised in a secular household» (p. xxv). When he writes, there is no note of denominational self-congratulation or of smooth transition over embarrassing or incongruous aspects of the subject. This ability to take the broad view is helped by his impressive command of the secondary literature, not only in English, but in French, German and Dutch. And one cannot resist the occasional shafts of dry wit, as at p. 488: «That people's proclivity to drink and dance might survive sustained endeavors to eliminate them should hardly have surprised adherents of a faith that so emphasized humankind's ineradicable sinfulness».

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