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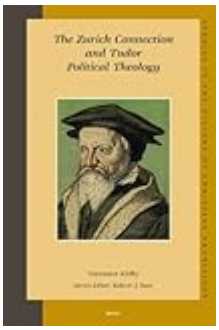

W. J. Torrance Kirby. *The Zurich Connection and Tudor Political Theology.* Leiden: Brill, 2007. xi + 283 pp. $129.00 (cloth), ISBN 978-90-04-15618-0.

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England and the Zurich School

The literal and figurative insularity of the English Reformation is no longer a working assumption in sixteenth-century studies, and increasingly scholars recognize that to understand the movement, it must be situated in the context of the wider European Reformation (or Reformations, depending on one's characterization of the era). In respect to the connection of the developments in England to those on the continent, there are two crucial phases of English reform. The first phase is the reign of Edward VI, when Reformation was unleashed on the land and when England became the refuge of many continental theologians during the dark days following the smashing defeat of the Schmalkaldic League by the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V and the beginning of a Catholic resurgence more broadly. As has been pointed out recently on more than one occasion, upon the accession of Edward VI in 1547, England became the beacon of hope for an increasingly beleaguered Protestantism, something of which Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, was quite aware. It was Cranmer's aim, in offering refuge to fellow Protestants, to establish a comprehensive standard for European reform and to achieve this by assembling theologians who could offer guidance and doctrinal leadership. The second phase comprises the early years of the reign of Elizabeth I, when Protestantism was restored after a period of Catholic reaction. The hope and expectation was not only that Elizabeth I, hailed as the English Deborah, would take the lead in returning England to the Protestant camp and proceed further down the path of reform, but also that, under her, England would again become a leader in the wider European Reformation. As was the case in Edward's reign, so, too, in Elizabeth's, foreign theologians came forward to offer advice on the direction the regime should take, even if they did not take up residence in the same numbers as under Edward.

A question of continued historiographical discussion is which pattern of continental reform was the more influential–Lutheran, Erasmian, or Reformed. And, if the latter, which sort of Reformed (since there were a number of varieties)? There were many foreign voices joining in the discussions, representing numerous nationalities as well as confessional commitments, and, in fact, not all participants in the conversation were physically present, and instead exercised their influence by means of correspondence. The volume under review, offered by W.

J. Torrance Kirby of McGill University, makes a strong case for the influence of Reformed theology, specifically the Zurich School. This influence took the form of both a direct personal presence and an epistolary influence: in the case of the former, the Italian Reformer Peter Martyr Vermigli; and in the case of the latter, the Zurich Antistes, Heinrich Bullinger (though Vermigli exercised an epistolary influence during the Elizabethan regime, having taken up residence in Zurich by that time). Indeed, Kirby advances the bold claim that these two Reformers can be regarded as "the chief architects of the reformation of the Church of England" in the reigns of Edward VI and Elizabeth I (p. 5). Kirby makes his case on the basis of a number of documents that he presents in this volume, along with closely argued studies of each reign that attempt to situate the documents into the context of his broader argument.

The central figure in this volume is Vermigli, who Kirby treats prominently in three of the five chapters (each with their attendant documents). Kirby, thus, contributes to the increased scholarly interest in the Florentine emigre theologian who served the Protestant cause in Strasbourg, Oxford, and Zurich. Kirby demonstrates, among other things, the direct personal influence Vermigli had on his host and patron, Cranmer, during his English sojourn. In chapter 3, in particular, the author makes the case that a sermon delivered by Cranmer on the occasion of the Rebellions of 1549 (which arose in Norfolk, Buckinghamshire, Oxforshire, Devon, and Cornwall) was in fact written by Vermigli, an indication of the direct personal influence Vermigli had on Cranmer and on the arguments advanced in support of the authority of the English Church, including the relationship of civil and ecclesiastical authority. More broadly, Kirby demonstrates the role that Vermigli's writings on political theology played in underpinning the particulars of an ecclesiastical structure in which the prince or, more generically, the civil magistrate was the unifying focus of civil and religious jurisdiction (a theory that fit quite nicely with the Elizabethan regime). This is true particularly in chapter 2 in respect to a *scholium* or topical digression found in Vermigli's commentary on the Old Testament book of Judges (1561), which also appeared in Vermigli's *Loci communes* (1576). Kirby also treats this theme in a panegyric offered to Elizabeth on her accession to the throne in 1558, which he analyzes in chapter 4.

Kirby also underscores the importance of Bullinger in the creation of the character of the English Church in these years, even though Bullinger exercised his role from Zurich by means of correspondence. What is striking is the degree to which the thought of Bullinger and that of Vermigli complemented each other, and this serves to support Kirby's argument for a "Zurich connection." As with Vermigli's Judges commentary, so, too, with Bullinger's sermon on the godly magistrate (the subject of chapter 1), there is an emphasis on the unifying role played by the ruler in respect to both the state and church, a concept that Kirby styles, somewhat startlingly, as a *hypostatic* union (a term one ordinarily encounters in discussions of the union of the divine and human natures of Jesus Christ). Bullinger is also the focus of the book's final chapter in which Kirby provides a discussion about the vestments controversy of Elizabeth's reign, analysis that sets the context for the last document Kirby furnishes, Bullinger's 1566 letter to Robert Horne, Edmund Grindal, and John Parkhurst, "Concerning thapparel of Ministers." Although Bullinger wrote the document, the discussion in the chapter it accompanies includes Vermigli, who shared an equally prominent role in the vestment controversies of Edward's reign as well as that of Elizabeth's. In addition to further illustrating the influence of the Zurich theologians on English thinking regarding the right of the magistrate to exercise authority over the church, the chapter also underlines again the close relationship of Vermigli with the Zurich School. Kirby's volume is rounded out with two appendices, one concerning the portrait of Vermigli that hangs in the National Portrait Gallery in London, and one that furnishes the text of the letter Vermigli wrote to Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset and Lord Protector during the first half of Edward VI's reign, a letter that is contemporaneous with the "A sermon concernynge the time of rebellion" that accompanies chapter 3 and that further indicates the high standing which Vermigli held in the circles of the powerful during Edward's reign.

This volume is a helpful study of an important subject, one that is in need of further analysis: the relationship of the Reformation in England to the Reformation on the continent, and, in particular, the knotted problem of how Reformed theology was received in both Edward's and Elizabeth's reigns. Especially valuable is the gathering together of important primary documents, some of which are freshly translated (though it might have been helpful for Kirby to have included some cross-referencing in the notes between his presentation of the texts and the analysis of their contexts in the chapters that the texts accompany). Since the volume is a collection of separate pieces originally produced for meetings of the Sixteenth Century Studies Conference, the argument is not quite

as tightly structured as one might have hoped. In particular, there is no clear conclusion that draws together all the findings of the separate chapters, and one is left without a clear sense of completeness in respect to the overarching thesis. The case Kirby makes in the volume is one that is strongly suggestive, but not quite conclusive. Hence, there is room for further work on the connections on which Kirby rightly and productively sheds light, and his volume provides an important starting point as well as contribution.

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