

might promise to be the most interesting, unfortunately breaks off after chapter 2. Despite its limitations, this volume offers a rich resource for the consideration of the relationship of philosophy and theol-

ogy in the later Reformation, and the editors are to be congratulated for making it available in English.

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Bullinger, Heinrich, Briefwechsel. Bd. 11: Briefe des Jahres 1541, bearb. von Rainer Henrich, Alexandra Kess und Christian Moser. Zürich: Theologischer Verlag 2005 (Heinrich Bullinger Werke, Abt. 2, Bd. 11), 385 S., ISBN 3-290-17339-9

In 1541 Heinrich Bullinger completed his first decade as Zurich's Antistes. The latest volume in the critical edition of Bullinger's correspondence presents the reformer not only as an active force in shaping ecclesiastical and educational policy at home but also as an engaged observer of ecclesio-political developments outside of Zurich.

Bullinger's correspondence from this year reveals a communication network centered in Switzerland and southern Germany but that extended to East Frisia and, through the mediation of the merchant Richard Hilles, into England. Basel and Constance continue to provide the bulk of Bullinger's correspondence: thirty of the 144 letters exchanged during this year are with the Baslers Oswald Myconius and Simon Grynaeus, and another twenty-five are to or from the Constance reformers Ambrosius Blarer and Konrad Zwick. Bullinger in turn passed on information to Johannes Comander and Johannes Travers in Graubünden, continued to correspond with Joachim Vadian in St. Gallen, and received occasional reports from Erasmus Ritter in Bern.

The exchange of news about the religious colloquies at Worms and Regensburg dominates the correspondence through

the first half of the year. In addition to second-hand accounts channeled through Basel and Constance, Bullinger also received direct reports from Regensburg, most notably from Rudolf Gwalther, who attended the colloquy in the train of the Landgraf of Hesse, as well as from the Hessian theologians who participated in the colloquy. As the editors point out, these letters provide a valuable supplement to the ongoing critical edition of documents related to the colloquies.

Closer to home, the prospect of Calvin's return to Geneva, as well as Farel's difficulties in Neuchâtel, bring the Francophone reformers back to Bullinger's attention, and readers can watch the spread of the plague and its devastating consequences via the letters sent to the Zurich Antistes. The letters of students sent to study in the Empire attest to Bullinger's leading role in determining Zurich's educational policies, and correspondence with Biel concerning the boys sent from that city to study in Zurich shed light on Bullinger's influence there as well.

In comparison with earlier years, theological topics take up a smaller share of Bullinger's correspondence. Most noteworthy are a lengthy letter dealing with Christology and the Lord's Supper, addressed to the Stuttgart jurist Nicolaus Müller/Maier and an equally detailed response to a treatise by Simon Grynaeus on the sacrament, both written at the end of July. Just as interesting is Vadian's translation and virtual commentary on three Frankish documents that Bullinger

had loaned him; the letter attests to Vadian's impressive philological skill and historical knowledge.

This volume is the first produced by a new editorial team, following the departure of Hans-Ulrich Bächtold and Kurt Jakob Rüetschi. Rainer Henrich's presence on the editorial team provides con-

tinuity despite the turnover, and if this volume is any indication, we can expect that future volumes will continue to maintain the same high editorial standards as those covering the first decade of Bullinger's Zurich ministry.

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Christine Christ-von Wedel, **Erasmus von Rotterdam: Anwalt eines neuzeitlichen Christentums**, Münster: LIT Verlag, 2003. 286 Seiten. ISBN 3-8258-6678-5

Christine Christ-von Wedel joins a chorus of scholars who over the last generation have published biographies or introductions to Erasmus. Hers is a fresh and clear voice, a welcome addition to the choir. An English translation would give that voice the wider resonance that it deserves in shaping a new generation of Erasmus scholars.

The book is an admirable introduction to Erasmus' theology. *Pace* Jacques Chomarat, Christ-von Wedel insists that Erasmus was a theologian. She makes it clear that he produced no theological system; yet he offered a «vision of God's revelation in history that points beyond history» (191). Whereas Rudolf Padberg, Léon-Ernest Halkin, and James Tracy, among others, have given us a Catholic Erasmus, Christ-von Wedel's Erasmus has a more Protestant orientation, although «he remained loyal to the Roman Church» (10).

Several features make this book intellectually stimulating. In placing Erasmus' ideas in the context of thinkers such as Aquinas, Raimundus Sabundus, Agrippa von Nettesheim, Vives, Johann Eck, Luther, Melancthon, Zwingli, Bullinger, and Calvin, it shows at which points his theology resembles the positions of

others or appears unique. Comparisons and contrasts with Luther and Zwingli abound. The crucial element in Erasmus' theology, that which sets him apart and makes him an «advocate of a modern Christianity,» is his «historical approach.» This *historischer Ansatz* is the controlling concept of a book, grounded in a thorough reading of Erasmus' works and conversant with the relevant scholarly literature, that analyzes Erasmus' thought in a methodical way.

The author begins by tracing the emergence of Erasmus' historical approach, for which his discovery and publication in 1505 of Valla's *Annotationes in Novum Testamentum* was the decisive point of departure. For Erasmus exegesis was the heart of theology. Not surprisingly, Christ-von Wedel argues that he turned theologians into historians (87) and highlights his «historical interpretation» (97–111). To her credit, she frequently draws on the *Paraphrases on the New Testament*, a source not used often enough for investigating Erasmian exegesis and theology. A substantial section on Erasmus' theology examines his view on attaining knowledge about God as well as his doctrine (*Lehre*) of creation, God, justification, the human will, and concept of faith. Given the usually careful and comprehensive analysis of theological themes, the terse statement—without much elaboration—that Erasmus rejected original sin comes as a tantalizing surprise (166). A discussion of Eras-