

heresy trial in the 1890s, in which the seminary asserted its stand on academic freedom and broke the formal relationship it had voluntarily (rather than legally) sustained to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church between 1870 and 1894. That move did much to set the liberalizing direction of Union in the twentieth century. While the treatment of Briggs is helpful, it does not particularly add any new information to a field which has already been adequately covered in previous works. Other topics of special interest in Handy's volume are his treatment of the consistent but growing positions of Union in the field of civil rights and ecumenism.

*A History of Union* could have been a stronger book. In many ways it seems to be a history directed at the institution's alumni. Largely based on secondary sources, at times it is anecdotal. A great deal of space is devoted to biographical sketches of its presidents and leading professors. Some sections, in fact, are a kind of who's who on the faculty, a problem that gets worse in later chapters as programs and personnel proliferate. One would have hoped for a volume treating more of the substantial issues in the school's controversial and path-breaking history.

In spite of the book's weaknesses, it is still a valuable contribution to the fields of American religious and educational history. It performs a valuable service in bringing together an overview of the entire history of Union that emphasizes biographical sketches of its major personalities and traces several emphases in its institutional development. Of particular interest, undoubtedly not a purpose in the mind of its author, is its consistent tracing of the gradual step-by-step decisions that led Union from being an institution serving a conservative evangelical constituency to its becoming a school pushing at the frontiers of a worldwide ecumenism that encompasses the non-Christian faiths. The mentality and processes underlying such a transformation are informative to both those who would like to encourage and those who would like to avoid such a drift.

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GEORGE R. KNIGHT

Kittelson, James M. *Luther the Reformer: The Story of the Man and His Career*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1986. 334 pp. \$24.95/\$8.95.

Lewis W. Spitz (in an "advertising comment") has referred to Kittelson's *Luther the Reformer* as "the best complete biography of Martin Luther, the man and the reformer, available to the English reading world. It is historically solid, factually authentic, psychologically sensitive, personally perceptive, socially aware, and, above all, theologically knowledgeable and persuasive" (p. 1). With the assessment of the first sentence in this quotation the present reviewer quite readily concurs, but the wide

range of praise given in the second sentence tends to overrate Kittelson's accomplishments.

To his credit, the author seeks in this volume to overcome the chronological, theological, and other imbalances evident too frequently in Luther biographies. He treats Luther's *entire* career, generally in an even-handed way; and he also endeavors to portray the Reformer holistically by giving due recognition both to the various components in Luther's personality and to the interaction of the personal and public aspects of Luther's career. Especially has Kittelson served us well by including adequate attention to the so-called "later Luther," a facet of the Reformer's life and experience generally bypassed or traversed altogether too lightly by previous biographers.

The volume is addressed basically to a popular audience and thus largely omits issues of scholarly debate. One can wonder, however, if at least the end-note references should not have incorporated some information concerning various of the more significant and crucial questions relevant to any biographical portrayal of Luther. In a few instances, I even found myself unsure of Kittelson's own assessments with respect to controversial issues.

In addition to presenting a fascinating and eminently readable biography, Kittelson has made several further noteworthy contributions in this volume: (1) numerous woodcuts and other pictorial representations illumine the text throughout; (2) a chronological table (pp. 21-28) gives a helpful, succinct overview of the Reformer's career, plus dates for various other significant events of the time; (3) the "Introductory Bibliography" (pp. 313-326) is arranged topically and is strikingly rich; and (4) there are several good indexes and two maps at the end of the volume (pp. 327-334).

It is obvious that Kittelson writes as a knowledgeable expert on his subject, and he does so with great fluency. Indeed, throughout his book he never fails to arouse considerable human interest. But his flair for picturesque language also seems at times to override the more important consideration of complete accuracy (unintentionally so, of course), without giving the reader adequate warning that this is the case, and his floridity occasionally takes him beyond documentable data. As just one example, is it proper to characterize Luther's transfer from Erfurt to Wittenberg in 1511 as "exile" (p. 22; cf. pp. 62, 79) and dramatically portray it as such (pp. 62, 63)?

Aside from a few minor details with which I might take issue in the chronological table, there are inadvertent misstatements of fact that are more significant. Three will here be noted. On pp. 103 and 105 Kittelson indicates that proceeds from the indulgence being sold by Tetzel (i.e., the indulgence raising the critical controversy with Luther) were to "help build the Sistine Chapel." In the same general context (on pp. 104, 108) Kittelson also, however, correctly refers to "St. Peter's," seemingly unaware that his references are to *two different* places. By the beginning of the

sixteenth century the ancient St. Peter's Basilica had fallen into disrepair, whereas the Sistine Chapel was a recent structure. (Michelangelo did mural and ceiling painting at the Sistine; but this was both before and after the time of the indulgence sales in question, at which time he was in Florence, not Rome.)

A second puzzling statement is that "Tetzel was in a town across the river from Wittenberg" (p. 106). The river must, of course, be the Elbe, on which Wittenberg is situated. The difficulty is that crossing this river from Wittenberg, which (looking downstream) is on its right bank, or north side at this particular place, simply takes a person farther into Saxony, where the sale of indulgences by Tetzel was prohibited. Jüterbog, some 25 or 30 kilometers to the northeast of Wittenberg, was probably the nearest locale where Tetzel's salesmen functioned.

Finally, Kittelson's portrayal of Staupitz's relationship to the German Augustinian Observantines is flawed (pp. 57-58). Contrary to the impression given, Staupitz was *already* their head in Germany at the time of Luther's trip to Rome. Also, there were some twenty-nine Observantine houses in the German Congregation, not "nine" (perhaps an uncorrected typesetter's mistake?).

The flaws, however, should not be considered as outweighing the usefulness and merits of a book filled with as much important factual information as is Kittelson's *Luther the Reformer*.

This volume will undoubtedly be especially helpful for its targeted audience, lay persons desiring a fairly comprehensive and eminently readable presentation of the career and activities of the pioneer Protestant Reformer.

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Malherbe, Abraham. *Paul and the Thessalonians*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987. 120 pp. Paperback, \$8.95.

A current trend in American education is toward inter-disciplinary studies. A part of that trend, Abraham Malherbe's book is a fascinating attempt to bridge the gap between NT scholarship and the discipline of pastoral care. As Malherbe unpacks Paul's motives and techniques in addressing the first-century church at Thessalonica, the reader gains insight into the foundation, care, and feeding of religious communities.

Malherbe's stated purpose is "to illuminate [Paul's] practice by comparing it to that of his contemporaries who were engaged in a similar, if not identical, enterprise" (p. 108). Thus, the book focuses more on Paul's "practice" in caring for the churches he had founded than it does on his theology. A careful study of such "pop philosophers" of first-century Greece as Dio Chrysostom and Musonius Rufus leads Malherbe to conclude that 1 Thessalonians is a fairly typical piece of first-century Greek