

Junghans, Helmar. *Martin Luther: Exploring His Life and Times, 1483-1546*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998. CD-ROM, \$39.00.

Martin Luther, the great reformer and Bible translator, has arrived in the multimedia environment of the late twentieth century. Using the latest computer technology of digitized hypertext, the author of this CD-ROM on Martin Luther seeks to present the life and times of Martin Luther within the interactive medium of the computer. In this environment the reader is not simply a passive actor but an active participant in the CD-ROM environment. The reader therefore needs some amount of computer savvy to navigate and interact in this world of Luther. This review is as much about the medium as it is about its contents.

To start the program, simply insert the CD and immediately there begins playing a musical piece that is intended to transport you back to Luther's world. The CD is organized around eight major subject headings based on the chronology of Luther's life. Each chapter is organized around a major activity, event, or series of events in Luther's life. Within each chapter themes that describe events, activities, or issues of the late medieval period. These themes include Toys, Travels in Luther's Time, Purgatory, Printing Press, Angel, Reader, Alchemy, and Life and Death. These themes provide useful historical information within the context of Luther's world.

There are eight revolving icons that transverse the chapter headings representing various subject headings: Biography, Legacy, Picture, Music, Text, Chronology, Glossary, and Places. By clicking on any of these icons one gains access to that category. Once inside there are four letters that connect to other parts of the documents. C takes you to text information, F takes you to the video clips on the life of Luther, T takes you to the Themes where you can explore any number of subjects related to the eight themes mentioned previously, E returns you to the home page.

The eight chapters on the life of Luther can be seen on a video clips or be read from a text script. These eight chapters provide a basic biography of Luther, but without any thoughtful analysis. There is no new discovery here but simply a straightforward presentation of Luther's life. Perhaps the most useful aspect of the CD is the ability to access much of his writings and some of the things others have written about him. Using any of the revolving icons can get you access to the whole range of textual information available on the CD.

The eight themes mentioned earlier provide a window on Luther's world. We are introduced to the religion, culture, philosophy, and other important elements of late medieval life. *One of the most important themes is the one on Purgatory. There are eight major subjects within this theme, namely: Earth, Limbo, First Judgment, Heaven, Purgatory, Last Judgment, and Hell. These subjects provide us a view on the Church's teachings on the Afterlife, Judgment, Death, Hell, and Heaven.*

A major strength of this CD is the vast amount of information available to the reader. The vastness and scope of the sources is encyclopedic. Second, the organization of the information makes it somewhat user-friendly. Finally, the combination of text, video, music and pictures provides a total sensory experience that enables the reader to have a broader understanding of Luther's world than would have been possible by simply reading a book.

There are also some weaknesses. The first is that the reader needs some computer savvy to maximize the benefits available on the CD. Second, a more thoughtful biography would have been helpful. Third, a separate icon that dealt only with the writings of Luther would have made access to his works much easier.

Overall the CD is a great research tool for scholars of Luther. What it lacks in thoughtful analysis it compensates for, by giving an extensive array of information set within the context of Luther's world.

Andrews University

TREVOR O'REGGIO

Kienzle, Beverly Maynze, and Pamela J. Walker, eds. *Women Preachers and Prophets through Two Millennia of Christianity*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998. 395 pp. Hardcover, \$50.00.

Women Preachers and Prophets is a wonderful compendium of research into the ways in which women have carved out a place for themselves to speak for God. Making use of materials as diverse as ancient catacomb paintings, court records, and contemporary fiction, the authors provide a richly footnoted yet highly readable account of women who were active in the ministry of the church across the centuries.

The book is divided into four sections. Part One represents the period of Early Christianity with investigations of *The Gospel of Mary*, of ancient artistic representations of women in prayer and prophecy (the *orans*), and of Maria Magdalene as *Apostolorum Apostola*. Part Two provides information about the preaching and prophetic activities of women in the Middle Ages through the avenues of sermons, religious instruction, and songs; through the support of the Waldensian and the Cathar churches; and through the example of a specific woman—Rose of Viterbo. The sixteenth through eighteenth centuries are the subject of Part Three, which looks at women's contributions through the eyes of John Foxe and explores the activities of Ursuline, Moravian, and Quaker women. The final section, Part Four, provides glimpses into the lives of three women of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—Maria W. Stewart, Catherine Booth, and Mother Leaf Anderson—and describes women's preaching and prophecy connected to the British Suffrage movement.

The extensive coverage of Mary Magdalene, discussed in two articles from different vantage points, is particularly valuable in highlighting the early support for women in active roles in the church. The varied nature of the articles, which provide glimpses of the lives of specific women, of the patterns of women's contributions in different Christian groups, and of some of the ways and purposes that women found to communicate their convictions, gives a particular depth to the work. Clearly it has never been easy for a woman to speak her mind about her beliefs, but neither have women ever stood by and allowed themselves to be easily silenced.

Unfortunately, those searching for a strongly multicultural study of women's voices in the church will be disappointed by this book. While celebrating the diversity of genders in the voice of the church, this book limits itself to looking strictly at the history of church women in Western developed countries. The two articles on the African Americans Marian W. Stewart and Mother Leaf Anderson