

*Francesco Benci's Quinque martyres. Introduction, translation and commentary.* By Paul Gwynne. (Jesuit Studies, 12; Jesuit Neo-Latin Library, 1.) Pp. xiv + 739 incl. frontispiece and 11 colour ills and 1 map. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2018. €148. 978 90 04 35660 3; 2214 3289

*JEH* (70) 2019; doi:10.1017/S0022046919000903

This is the first volume of a projected Jesuit Neo-Latin Library, which promises to open up the vast range of such works to English readers. The present text, a six-book Virgilian epic on the martyrdom of five Jesuits near Goa in 1583, certainly deserves to be better known, both as a record of early Jesuit missionary endeavour and as a poem in its own right. The author, Francesco Benci, was professor of rhetoric at the Roman College (now the Gregorian), and clearly intended not only to celebrate the martyrs' heroic sacrifice but also to inspire current students to emulate them. We are invited to read his poem, first published in 1591, as a counterpart to the martyr frescoes painted in the English College, Rome, in 1583. Indeed, it refers at least three times to the martyrdom of the English Jesuit Edmund Campion on 1 December 1581. The poem exhibits stylistic features associated with Jesuit art and architecture, such as the lavish descriptions of the funeral rites and entry into heaven. It tells how a group of five Jesuits, led by Rudolf Acquaviva, was ambushed on the way to evangelise the city of Cuncolim. The narrative of their deaths is suitably prolonged and embellished, with space for carefully composed prayers and intricate descriptions of injuries and death blows, presented in slow motion. A remarkable Virgilian element is Acquaviva's narration of his unsuccessful mission to the Mughal emperor Akbar, in which is embedded a lengthy exposition of the salvation story from Eden to the Ascension. This affords Benci the opportunity of rivalling other neo-Latin Christian epics such as Marco Girolamo Vida's *Christiad* (1535). The editor and translator, Paul Gwynne, has worked extensively in the field of neo-Latin poetry and devotes much of the introduction and commentary to Virgilian techniques and linguistic echoes. The somewhat literal prose translation has the merit of allowing the reader to turn to the Latin text with confidence and curiosity, to form an impression of the way a late sixteenth-century Jesuit professor commemorated a particularly violent and – to us – morally ambiguous clash of religious forces in early modern India. It is intriguing, from this point of view, to read of the imagined response of the Cuncolim elders, who saw the missionaries as wolves threatening their flock. Protestant divines and politicians in Elizabethan England felt much the same about Campion and his fellow Jesuit missionaries.

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND

VICTOR HOULISTON

*Theologia Cambrensis. Protestant religion and theology in Wales, I: 1588–1760. From Reformation to revival.* By D. Denzil Morgan. Pp. xiv + 441. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2018. £24.99 (paper). 978 1 78683 238 2

*JEH* (70) 2019; doi:10.1017/S0022046919000940

Denzil Morgan declares two main purposes in writing *Theologia Cambrensis*. First, he aims to shed light on little known Welsh-language texts and show how Welsh Protestants both thought about and conveyed Christian truths to their contemporaries. Second, through contemplation of the past, Morgan hopes to see 'creative

application' to the present in practical theology. His target audience is largely Welsh – the theologians, historians and literary scholars working on early modern Wales, for example – but the book actually has a much wider appeal. It would be invaluable for those who aim to move beyond an anglocentric approach to researching and teaching early modern religious history and theology. As Morgan himself highlights, this is the first work to concentrate explicitly on Welsh theology since 1900, when the Calvinistic Methodist scholar William Evans published *An outline of the history of Welsh theology*. This century-long *lacuna* has meant that early modern Welsh religious thought has been unfairly neglected or ignored. For many scholars this will, therefore, represent their first exposure to key Welsh texts and the trends in thought and worship revealed within.

The book is divided into five main chronological chapters, beginning with the translation of the Bible into Welsh and ending with the Methodist Revival. The final two chapters examine (respectively) Anglican piety from 1689 and Nonconformist spirituality in the same period. Happily, given their length (chapter one is seventy-four pages long), these are subdivided further into sensible sections. The structure is, for the most part, very successful. It enables the reader to trace patterns in Welsh theology and church government over the centuries, and it would be difficult to imagine a successful thematic approach that would allow for Morgan's narrative to unravel in this way. That said, either thematic chapter conclusions or an expanded book conclusion would have been able to further develop Morgan's insights into the principal directions and influences on Welsh theology. Morgan has an engaging prose style, providing learned and interesting expositions of Welsh theological works. A particular strength of the book is its contextualisation of the works. When discussing a translated work, attention is paid to the context and authorship of the original. This is then developed in conversation with the Welsh context, and Morgan provides lucid explanations of the importance and influence of his chosen translators and texts. The comparative analysis that forms one of the threads of the book is revealing – particularly in relation to the pace of the Reformation in England and Wales. Morgan demonstrates that in terms of instruction in the Protestant faith the need for, and slow pace of, Welsh translations of key texts (for example the Book of Homilies) meant that they took fifty years longer to arrive. He also shows, however, that the project to evangelise Wales was taken seriously by the English government. Unlike the Irish Church, there was consistent government support for translations of the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer, and the Welsh were portrayed as potential allies rather than religious barbarians.

When discussing the civil wars and interregnum Morgan avoids the previously prevailing tendency to neglect conformist Church of England authors completely in favour of radical Protestant tracts. He constructs a convincing image of a softer, less confrontational Welsh Calvinism which held sway until the rise of radicals such as William Wroth, Walter Cradock and Walter Erbury. He accurately describes the loyalty of the majority of Welshmen to the Prayer Book and episcopal Church of England, hard won since the sixteenth century, and in the section on 1642–60 discusses episcopal and Prayer Book divinity as well as the passionate preaching and popular appeal of the radical interregnum preachers. Morgan perhaps over-emphasises the continuing impact of such firebrands after their fall, but his

descriptions of the impassioned preaching and effervescent writing style of the Welsh radicals is a joy to read. Similarly, in his examination of the Restoration Church and the concomitant situation of the Nonconformists and post-1688 Anglican piety, Morgan is even-handed, an approach that is much more successful in revealing the actions and reactions of the various groupings in the period. He explores the similarities and common ground between Anglicans and dissenters as well as their manifold differences. In a discussion of a period in Welsh history that has, in the past, tended to reveal the personal affiliations and prejudices of writers across the Christian spectrum, the degree of balance is particularly good to see.

Morgan does follow the long-established historiographical trend of blaming poor administration, ecclesiastical government and a conservative society for the slow pace of religious change in sixteenth-century Wales. A failure to enthuse the population with the Protestant message, or indeed an enthusiasm instead for the Catholic faith, is perhaps dismissed with too little engagement. The continuity of a visually rich ecclesiastical built environment, as revealed in the work of Madeleine Gray and Lloyd Bowen, is not explored in great detail. On the other hand, within such a chronologically broad survey text it is difficult to paint other than in broad brush strokes. Within the context of an ambitious project, these are small quibbles. Throughout *Theologia Cambrensis* Morgan engages the reader with properly contextualised but also theologically learned explanations of the theology and history of Welsh Protestant religion in the period 1588 to 1760. This is an extremely valuable contribution not only to Welsh history, but also to history and theology in a wider British context. I hope that its audience, like some of the religious currents discussed within the book, spreads far beyond the borders of Wales.

UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND

SARAH WARD CLAVIER

*Pedro de Ribadeneyra's 'Ecclesiastical history of the schism of the kingdom of England'. A Spanish Jesuit's history of the English Reformation.* Edited and translated by Spencer J. Weinreich. (Jesuit Studies, 8.) Pp. xxvi+839 incl. 21 figs. Leiden–Boston: Brill, 2017. €220. 978 90 04 32395 7; 2214 3289  
*JEH* (70) 2019; doi:10.1017/S0022046919000496

A failure to understand (or much care) what their European neighbours think about them is arguably a besetting characteristic of the English. In historiographical terms, the question of how the English Reformation was regarded and portrayed in the rest of Europe still represents an underdeveloped corner of the field of study. There is good reason, then, to welcome this critical edition and translation of the *Historia ecclesiastica del scisma del reyno de Inglaterra* (1588–93) by the Spanish Jesuit, Pedro de Ribadeneyra. The work was something of a best-seller in Spain, appearing in new editions through the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. It influenced other histories and was the inspiration for Calderón's 1627 play *La cisma de Inglaterra*. Ribadeneyra's account (based on, but expanding and rewriting Nicholas Sander's *De origine ac progressu schismatis anglicani*) spanned events from the marriage of Catherine of Aragon and Prince Arthur at the start of the sixteenth century to the persecution of missionary