

discussed in considerable detail—here too the question arises whether these details could not have been abbreviated and placed in the footnotes. The conclusions of the study are nonetheless noteworthy because they contribute to the demythologization of Luther, and they will hopefully be given due attention by future Luther biographers, and be either included or disproved.

Both books discussed are in their own fashion original products of the Reformation anniversary. They demonstrate in different ways how important thinking about language and translations can be not just in Luther's time but also in the present day, in order to understand and interpret the life and writings of Martin Luther.

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*Ablasskampagnen des Spätmittelalters: Luthers Thesen von 1517 im Kontext.*  
Andreas Rehberg, ed.

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Within the large number of books published on behalf of the five hundredth anniversary of Luther's Reformation this volume certainly deserves attention. It contains thirty contributions to a conference held in June 2015 at the German Historical Institute in Rome in cooperation with Facoltà Valdese di Teologia. At over seven hundred pages and with a large variety of approaches and questions, it discusses the pivotal point of the Reformation critique half a millennium before: the question of indulgence practices in the sixteenth century. Prominent researchers from different disciplines and representatives of ecclesiastical institutions contribute to the general topic.

Andreas Rehberg's short introduction stresses the historiographical fact that the question of indulgences and the sacrament of penance also had its time almost one hundred years ago, and in recent years a rereading of sources and the major book of Nikolaus Paulus has provoked some new insights. Interestingly, ecclesiastical praxis is no longer the topic since the Roman Church has reformed a number of late medieval abuses and false interpretations. The year of mercy announced by Pope Francis in 2015/16, however, showed the ongoing vitality of these questions and provoked some repositioning by confessional theologians. For Rehberg and his coordinating partner from the Valdensian faculty, Lothar Vogel, this provided a good start to discuss all the questions connected to indulgence, penance, church, and ministry.

The collection of essays is divided into eight chapters and the above-mentioned introduction. The first chapter contains five articles describing indulgences in theological and historical context (actually, the German title uses the word "cultural studies"). Robert Swanson, Arnold Angenendt, and Philippe Cordez describe the sacrament of

penance in its setting from the eleventh to the sixteenth centuries, while the president of the commission for the unity of churches, Kurt Kardinal Koch, introduces the current theology and its explanation of indulgences. A remarkable essay by Roberto Rusconi sketches out the sermons held on behalf of indulgence campaigns in Italy. A second chapter contains four articles on the canonistic background and the action plans of the curia in Rome. Andreas Meyer and Ludwig Schmugge present a number of letters illustrating the curial understanding of indulgence. Thomas Izbicki and Diego Quaglioni look for related passages in the canon law and to a first debate of the *Thesaurus Ecclesiae*.

A third chapter, "The Agents of Indulgence Campaigns," describes orders and individuals assigned to duty by the Roman curia. Karl Borchard, Andreas Rehberg, and Robert Shaffern describe different congregations and religious orders while Daniel Le Blévec gives attention to the Rhone Valley as an exemplary region. Finally, Arnold Esch and Peter Wiegand trace the prominent leaders of the campaigns within the empire, such as Angelo De' Cialfi, Marinus de Gregeno, Raimund Peraudi, and Johann Tetzl. The fourth chapter continues to focus on specific regions, such as the diocese of Meissen (Enno Bünz), Bohemia (Jan Hrdina), and again Italy (Anna Exposito). These three articles parallel some results from the contributions from Le Blévec and Peter Wiegand without matching them completely.

The fifth chapter, with articles by Falk Eisermann, Hartmut Kühne, and Nine Miedema, focuses on the effects of indulgence media around 1500 and the invention of the printing press. These contributions make clear that the subject of indulgences neither fell from heaven nor was invented by Martin Luther. He is the center of the sixth chapter with five contributions: Pavel Soukup on Jan Hus, Berndt Hamm on particular coherences between late medieval and Reformation thinking, Volker Leppin on Luther's early theology of penance, Lothar Vogel on Luther's understanding of purgatory, and, finally, Wilhelm Ernst Winterhager on the indulgence campaigns between 1515 and 1519 in Central and Northern Europe—those that actually provoked Luther's initiative. While Leppin's presentation follows his earlier position on the specifics in Luther's understanding of penance relating to a particular tradition of late medieval theology, Hamm discusses a thesis later published in a longer book. This certainly will stimulate some interesting debates on the relation between late medieval and early modern reform theologies. The last two chapters can be treated together. Peter Walter and Elizabeth Tingle describe reactions to Luther's protest by Roman controversial theologians (*Kontroversialtheologen*) and in France. Walter especially discusses the question of whether curial theologians produced a weak, unconvincing response to Luther's critique. He also summarizes a roundtable talk on "Luther 1517 and Its Consequences" with interesting insights into contemporary ecumenical dialogues and debates.

Most of the articles deserve a more detailed and intense discussion than this review can provide. The book is a major contribution to the flood of publications celebrating the five hundredth anniversary of Luther's Ninety-Five Theses. The footnotes will give

readers a detailed overview of contemporary research, contradicting the impression that Reformation research can be given up since there is nothing new to expect. On the contrary—there is much more to find.

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*Beyond Indulgences: Luther's Reform of Late Medieval Piety, 1518–1520.*  
Anna Marie Johnson.

Early Modern Studies 21. Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2017. xii + 226 pp. \$50.

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Ever since Karl Holl (1866–1926), efforts have been made to describe Luther's early development, based on Luther's own late autobiographical account from 1545. Holl and others have argued for a “rupture pattern” identifying a specific “Reformation breakthrough” in Luther's thinking. While there are still some scholars following this narrative, many others now argue that there was no single turning point, but many steps of evolution in Luther's career on the way to Reformation.

Anna Marie Johnson shares this emerging conviction in her careful study of Luther's writings from 1518 to 1520. Actually, her report starts in 1516, but this is only to make clear the background of Luther's attack on indulgences in 1517. The exploration in a strict sense then starts after the Ninety-Five Theses. While most scholars now would argue for a polemical Luther who engaged his adversaries, Johnson presents a pastor still writing for the people and in this way seeking to reform traditional piety. There are not many scholars focusing on exactly these pastoral writings, so Johnson's approach places her at the front of recent research. This includes her reassessment of a pastoral Luther preoccupied with spirituality and piety, countering the “misconception that Luther was primarily concerned about theology and not Christian life” (4). Johnson shows that Luther's spiritual writings started before the controversy around the indulgences with his edition of the late medieval mystical treatise *Theologia deutsch* and his interpretation of the seven penitential psalms. Both underpin an understanding of the Ninety-Five Theses as a plea for intensified interior penance.

In a small but important correction of the standard narrative of Luther research, Johnson stresses that after the publication of the Ninety-Five Theses the number of his pastoral writings increased remarkably. Among these treatises, Johnson includes *Luther's Explanation of the Ten Commandments*, which she understands as a text focusing on biblical advice for Christian life instead of “other, nonbiblical categories that had become popular in the late Middle Ages” (67). For the Lenten sermon of 1518, she is able to depict Luther's reorientation of piety as a biblical one that focuses on human “sinfulness and need for grace” (90). Interestingly enough, Johnson shows that