

Robert M. Kingdon. *Reforming Geneva: Discipline, Faith and Anger in Calvin's Geneva*.

With the assistance of Thomas A. Lambert. Cahiers d'Humanisme et Renaissance 103. Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2012. xvi + 154 pp. \$43.20. ISBN: 978-2-600-01584-4.

Shortly before his death in December 2010, Robert M. Kingdon completed a collection of essays summarizing his views on the Genevan consistory and the course of the Reformation in the city that Calvin dominated for nearly twenty-five years. Thomas A. Lambert, one of his former graduate students and an acknowledged specialist on the Reformation at Geneva, assisted in this extremely beneficial undertaking. Over the course of the previous two decades, Kingdon led a team of scholars in the careful transcription, editing, and publication of the manuscript registers of the Consistory of Geneva. Six volumes have appeared thus far and the project will continue through the publication of another four, encompassing in all the years 1542 through 1555. This rich documentary reservoir forms the foundation for the present anthology. Kingdon had originally given the essays as the Levy Stone lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary in 1999. To be sure, he and Lambert have revised the materials considerably since their initial presentation. The results are both instructive and encouraging.

Kingdon introduces the subject with an overview of the consistory, at once a morals court and a compulsory counseling service. He also outlines the publication project, giving special attention to the importance of the consistory proceedings and the research possibilities that they offer. He then proceeds to argue for the critical role of ecclesiastical discipline, for whose enforcement the consistory was famous. Kingdon maintains that discipline stood alongside the pure preaching of the Word and the proper administration of the sacraments as one of the marks of a true church. The heart of the discussion follows in a series of four chapters detailing an array of reforms encompassing worship, religious education, marriage and family, and emotions. In each instance, Kingdon contends that these transformative efforts were nothing less than revolutionary. Indeed, the Reformation as a revolution has been at the core of Kingdon's interpretation of the sixteenth-century Genevan

religious changes since the publication of his doctoral dissertation in 1956. It is no surprise that the notion permeates the chapters of the present volume.

The various innovative developments that Kingdon explicates can, in his view, be discerned through a close reading of the consistory records. Thus, the new Reformed liturgy meant a revolution in worship. People prayed collectively in the vernacular and listened attentively to sermons, which were also in the vernacular. Private prayer in Latin while attending a Latin Mass to which the faithful paid minimal attention was no longer possible. Along similar lines, the remodeling of religious instruction meant a move from the household where parents taught children the essential prayers to the public space of the church with systematic catechetical training. Marriage too emerged from the private sphere and entered the communal realm. What had been primarily an arrangement negotiated among families during the later Middle Ages came increasingly under ecclesiastical scrutiny and state regulation. Perhaps the freshest of Kingdon's insights into the consistory's reform of society come in the chapter devoted, in his words, to the reform of fury and rage. The pacification of an admittedly raucous society, the advance of complex rituals of reconciliation, the redirection of anger toward constructive criticism of idolatry as practiced by Catholic adversaries, and more generally the promotion of the need for individuals to control their emotions were, according to Kingdon, trends that can be readily discerned in the consistory's proceedings.

Those who have followed Kingdon's publications over the past several decades or who are familiar with the recent secondary literature surrounding consistorial studies will not find a great deal in the present volume that is new or original. On the other hand, it is a succinct and highly readable account of Kingdon's findings for the Genevan consistory. Its value as a precise summary of his research efforts over the past twenty years ought not to be underestimated. He stresses the absolute necessity of going beyond purely theological considerations for a proper appreciation of the Reformation, and while not all will be convinced, Kingdon makes a strong case for the central importance of the consistory records as a source for the investigation of pastoral endeavors. Few, however, would deny that foremost among his scholarly accomplishments is to have revolutionized the field of Reformation studies.

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