

Steven J. Reid. *Humanism and Calvinism: Andrew Melville and the Universities of Scotland, 1560–1625*.

St. Andrews Studies in Reformation History. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2011. xiv + 328 pp. \$124.95. ISBN: 978–1–4094–0005–9.

The present volume is an ambitious attempt to chronicle Andrew Melville's role in the reform of Scotland's universities after the Reformation and to examine how the universities subsequently developed during the reign of James VI (267). It is astounding, in light of Melville's intellectual distinction and academic

influence, that he has received such little scholarly attention. Although there is some evidence that this trend is beginning to change, much more work remains to be done. (Cf. Ernest R. Holloway III, *Andrew Melville and Humanism in Renaissance Scotland 1545–1622*, 2011). In the author's zeal to create a new narrative based upon previously unexamined archival sources, he has largely neglected two of the most crucial historical documents of the period, James Melville's and David Calderwood's respective narrative histories. When he does utilize James Melville's history, it is selectively employed to support his "new" account while at other times, when its testimony does not comport with his narrative arc, aspersions are cast on its reliability and the source is viewed with suspicion (2, 81).

While the work is useful in shedding light on the history of university politics at St. Andrews, it provides relatively little new insight into her sister universities at Glasgow and Old Aberdeen. Despite the largely derivative nature of the biographical material, the real value of the work is located in its account of university reform at St. Andrews. If this is its greatest strength, then its greatest weakness is its inadequate situating of Melville within the wider intellectual context of the Northern European Renaissance. This is a particularly indicting flaw given the use of the term *humanism* in the title. The book's institutional focus prevents a more thorough contextualization of Melville within the wider intellectual milieu of European humanism, and although efforts have been made to remedy this problem, they are inadequate.

In spite of the book's stated intention to chronicle "Melville's personal role" in university reform (3), there is no mention of Melville's daily practice of table talk, which, according to James Melville, he effectively utilized at Glasgow and probably continued at St. Andrews. It is astounding that what may have been the most personally dynamic and pedagogically compelling feature of Melville's educational program has been ignored. Despite claims to evaluate the content of Melville's program of university reform as it developed on the Continent, the book entirely omits a number of humanists who formed relationships with Melville and contributed to his intellectual development. For example, there is no mention of François Hotman, Lambert Daneau, Paulus Melissus, Henri Estienne, and Guillaume de Salluste du Bartas, and only incidental references to François Baudoin, Louis Duret, Pascal Duhamel, and Arthur Johnston (61, 234). Furthermore, the author does not recognize the formative and influential role that Andrew's eldest brother Richard played during Melville's youth (50). Surprisingly, there is no mention of the poetry of the beloved Renaissance bard Palingenius within the home of Richard Melville. While the work is not a proper intellectual biography, it does purport to situate Melville within the wider cultural milieu of European humanism and, as such, should at least explore his relationship with these individuals and their corresponding intellectual impact.

In analyzing Melville's commentary on Romans, the author goes well beyond what his own cursory analysis will support when he denies "any instances of truly original theological thought" (183) and categorically declares that the work "fails to provide deep insight into Melville's own theology" (184). In light of the absence of

a detailed exegetical and historical examination, these assertions are both premature and unjustified. Until a complete translation and careful exegesis of Melville's text, in light of its patristic and medieval antecedents as well as its sixteenth-century parallels, has been completed, such statements cannot be evaluated and should not be accepted.

Editorially, as there is confusion regarding the year Melville and Arbuthnot planned the reform of the universities of Glasgow and Aberdeen, stating in one place that it was 1574 (31) and in another that it was 1575 (96), the work would have benefitted from a more thorough proofreading. Stylistically, the book is hindered by an excessive use of block quotations disrupting the natural flow of the narrative. Perhaps some of the more ponderous translations would fit more appropriately in an appendix. Lastly, the book would be enhanced by moderating its tone at certain points and refraining from unwarranted negative editorializing, for example, at p. 67, replacing "sharply rebuked" with "denied." Such interpretive restraint would foster a greater sense of objective and dispassionate analysis while not detracting from the author's larger point.

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