

growth in papal authority in determining who the saints were. Along the way he takes Jean LecLerc's study of Bernard of Clairvaux to task for his failure to take full cognisance of the historical context of the writings analyzed. Subsequent chapters deal with the church's treatment of heretics and their beliefs in that critical period from the eleventh to the twelfth centuries C.E., Peter Abelard, Francis of Assisi and the Franciscans, the anti-Jewish sentiment of the medieval church and society, and religious life in the Low Countries (ca. 1050–1384 C.E.). The whole is appended by a review essay addressing *reason* in the Middle Ages.

This English translation of the second Dutch edition includes some new and revised material, and is a welcome addition to the field. Bredero writes with a sure grasp of a wide variety of resources: legends, primary texts, and documents internal to various movements. As is obvious from the outline given above, the prism through which he views the era tends to be that of the monastic order. Yet one of the strongest chapters is his long excursus on the place of Jews within the period. Possessed of a legal status that was "unique and unfavourable" (274), Jews were isolated religiously and socially. The precariousness introduced by such status is manifested by the numerous instances of abuse and persecution which chroniclers of the time record. But, asks Bredero, does this anti-Jewishness stem from within the church or within society? Often an overlooked query, Bredero does not deny the culpability of the ecclesial community, "but does the guilt rest on the church as it manifested itself as a spiritual institution through the centuries, or mainly on the church in its concrete efforts to adapt itself to the medieval society in which it had to function?" (277). The balance of the chapter tries to establish the basis upon which such a distinction can be made.

Few will be in complete agreement with Bredero's assessments of other scholars of the era, such as G.I. Langmuir and Jean LecLercq, but he demonstrates an uncanny ability to provoke/evoke new questions, even as one is reacting negatively to one of his questions. Barbara Tuchman once described the Middle Ages as "a distant mirror." Bredero's contribution will allow us to see some things more clearly, while raising awareness of other elements which are yet distant and cloudy; surely, the mark of fine scholarship.

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*Peter Martyr Vermigli: Early Writings.* Trans. Mariano Di Gangi and Joseph C. McLelland. Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies, volume XXX. Kirksville, MO: Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1994. ISBN 0-940474-32-8. Pp. x+242.

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The long-awaited first volume in the Peter Martyr Library appeared just in time for Christmas 1994. It is a beautifully designed, hardcover edition which sets high standards for the volumes to come within the next ten years or so. Joseph McLelland and John Patrick Donnelly deserve high praise for having masterminded the project—a task they would not have been able to achieve without the

generous support of Northeast Missouri State University, the Thomas Jefferson University Press and the Sixteenth Century Journal.

One of the best features of this first volume is the happy co-operation of three Peter Martyr scholars: McLelland, who translated Martyr's "Theses for Debate" from the years 1543-45; Di Gangi, the translator of Martyr's "Exposition of the Apostles' Creed" and of his "Schism and the True Church"; and Philip McNair, who wrote a brief biography of Peter Martyr Vermigli. Taken together this co-operative undertaking gives scholars and students alike a readable English text of three of Martyr's early works and the best available contemporary expertise on his life and times.

The volume begins with Martyr's first publication after the inner turmoil from which he seems to have emerged in the late summer of 1542 when, at the height of his powers as a churchman and scholar, he took leave of his native city, declaring himself "free from hypocrisy by the grace of Christ." Within fourteen months of his departure from Italy Peter Martyr published, in Italian, "A Plain Exposition of the Twelve Articles of the Apostles' Creed."

During the ensuing five years at Strasbourg he lectured on several books of the Old Testament and engaged in the reform activities undertaken in that city by Bucer, Capito, and Zell, in co-operation with the City Council. "Theses for Debate: Propositions from Genesis" (1543), "Propositions from Exodus" (1545) and "Propositions from Leviticus" (1547), are some of the fruits of his labors during those years.

The final tract selected by the editors for this first volume in the Peter Martyr Library is the scholium "Of Schism" from Martyr's commentary on 2 Kings. Although chronologically it belongs to his Zurich years and comes from 1562, the section fits well within the scope of the present volume. The excerpt is an apologia for "true religion" which is based on Scripture and is informed by sound patristic authors. Throughout its pages Martyr upholds the marks of the church which are true preaching of the word of God, the right administration of the two sacraments instituted by Christ, and Christian discipline.

The picture which emerges from reading Peter Martyr's "Early Writings on Creed, Scripture and Church" is that of an erudite scholar, who occupied a respected place among reformers of the early modern period and well deserves to be read alongside their writings. As an added bonus the discerning reader may catch a glimpse of the interplay between this Italian humanist scholar and the Northern context in which he came to live and work.

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***Interpretation and Bible: Essays on Truth in Literature.*** By Sean McEvenue. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1994. ISBN 0-8146-5036-8. Pp. 187.

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McEvenue is cordial, yet firm: interpretation includes more than the "objective" tasks of "literary" criticism, which we all have come to appreciate and trust—at