The Hymns of Martin Luther. Ed. Peter C. Reske

Reviewed by: Kenneth Udy
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Musicologist Peter C. Reske is the senior editor of music and worship at Concordia Publishing House, the publisher owned and operated by the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod. He edited the denomination’s current hymnal, the Lutheran Service Book, released in 2006. His most recent work is this useful collection of thirty-eight hymns and chants comprising all of the known hymn texts (translated into English) and melodies of Martin Luther (1483–1546), Reske compared all texts and tunes with the original sixteenth-century sources. English translations were selected from a variety of sources spanning from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. All stanzas (in one instance fifteen) of each hymn text are included.

The arrangements of the tunes were chosen to be singable and support congregational singing. Also included are five newly composed tune settings by Henry V. Gerike. These melodies from five hundred years ago have been successfully arranged to make sense to our modern ears while still respecting the sixteenth-century nuance. For example, instead of placing the melody in the tenor part, as was the practice in Luther’s time, the melodies have been placed in the soprano part as we are now accustomed to hearing. Notwithstanding, in a nod to the past, the setting of Luther’s most ubiquitous hymn, “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God,” keeps his engaging original rhythms intact, a stimulating change from the “ironed-out” isorhythmic version of the music found in most of today’s hymnals.

Each hymn includes a brief and insightful history of the text and tune as well as the first line of the German text and information on the origins of both the English translation and the musical setting. The hymns are carefully laid out to obviate any awkward page turns.

At the back of the volume are eight comprehensive indices as found in most modern hymnals, including topics, scripture references, texts, translations, composers, arrangers, tune names, and German first lines.

Even after five hundred years, Luther’s excellent poetry and memorable tunes remain relevant today. The English translations and practical musical settings found in The Hymns of Martin Luther create a useful resource for congregational singing. In addition, many of these pieces lend themselves to four-part SATB choral singing. Organists and music directors will also appreciate having this handy reference to add context to the myriad of compositions based on these tunes and texts written in the ensuing centuries.
Imprimeurs et libraires de la Renaissance. Le travail de la langue: Sprachpolitik der Drucker, Verleger und Buchhändler der Renaissance.
Ed. Elsa Kammerer and Jan-Dirk Müller.

Reviewed by: Toon Van Hal
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This affordable volume is the first book in the new series *De lingua et linguis* (On Language and Languages), published against the backdrop of a large-scale German-French research program, *Eurolab* (2010–13), examining several early modern “laboratories” that have contributed to the elaboration, unification, and standardization of European vernacular languages. The laboratories focused upon in the volume under review are sixteenth-century publishing houses and bookshops, but the volume opens with two general chapters, both of which are offered in French and German. These chapters also should be read as introductory chapters to the entire series. After two additional introductory chapters, which concentrate on the twenty-two case studies covered by the volume under review, the book contains three sections. The first section examines the often-pragmatic reasons that make early modern printers publish in foreign languages, most of whom are located in multilingual commercial centers or contact zones. Special attention is given to book markets fashioned for exiles and dissidents (e.g., in Tübingen and Leyden). A second section investigates to what extent printing houses contributed to the elaboration and standardization of vernacular languages, while the last section is devoted to outspoken and programmatic efforts of printers in ennobling vernacular languages or embracing multilingualism. All chapters are accompanied by preceding French and German summaries, whereas English abstracts are brought together at the end of the volume. The extensive and useful bibliography, covering more than sixty pages, not only makes a distinction between primary and secondary sources, but also further subdivides the secondary sources into three thematic sections (studies on early modern metalinguistic thought, on activities of printers and book sellers, and on other topics). Two *indices nominum* round off the volume, the first of which exclusively encompasses the names of printers, booksellers, and other agents active in the book industry.

The starting introductory chapter, “La question de la langue comme question des langues,” opens with a brief account of the well-known Italian *questione della lingua*. By referring to the emergence of this technical term, the authors (directed by Jean-Louis Fournel) show how thinking on language and languages became a prominent discussion topic and also obtained a new historical dimension. They also argue that the early Italian efforts of embellishing the native language stirred a feeling of inferiority throughout the rest of the Romance world, whose intellectuals and printers were thus challenged to take their own initiatives. This chapter is a fine synthesis of the current state of research, although one
would have welcomed a more intense engagement with the abundant secondary literature.

The second chapter, coordinated by Jochen Hafner, is devoted to the processes underlying the designation of languages in the early modern period. Through the investigation of a wide range of sources (from official documents recording a state’s language policy over grammars and dictionaries to translations), the contemporary glottonyms for Italian, Spanish, French, German, and Dutch, the languages focused upon in the volume under review, are surveyed. But the attention given to glottonym is not restricted to this chapter. So, for instance, Mario Pozzi’s contribution shows how the Venetian printer Gabriele Giolito (1538–78) proved to be rather unconfident in how to refer to his native language. Hafner is entirely right in pointing out that in many historiographical works the often complex history of early modern name giving of languages is overlooked, which more than once led to erroneous and anachronistic interpretations.

In addition, the book has the important merit of paying special attention to the complex interplay between different languages and font types. So, for instance, Elsa Kammerer shows how Jean de Tournes ordered new fonts tailored to rendering Tuscan poetry. In his opinion, Kammerer argues, the beauty of language was an affair not restricted to the ears: its exquisiteness was also to be digested through the eyes. The complex interaction between font types and the vernacular languages takes center stage in Jean Balsamo’s contribution, which is the final introductory chapter. The author explains how different font types (including the Rotunda, Bastarda, Fraktur, Antiqua, and Italic) gained popularity in different countries. A better incorporation of the images of the various font types, offered at the end of the chapter without linking to the text itself, would have improved the text’s clarity.

Reasons of space prevent me from summarizing all case studies, the majority of which deal with understudied agents active in major or minor multilingual printing centers. Besides chapters devoted to the famous Estienne family and to the Wittenberg presses responsible for Luther’s Bible translations, the reader will be introduced to far-less-known printers, such as Martin Nutius in Antwerp, the Lyon-based Jean de Tournes and Guillaume Roville, as well as Bernhard Jobin and the Rihel family in Strasbourg. Several chapters cast some light on the downturn of significant regional languages such as Napolitano, Provençal, and Catalan by the end of the sixteenth century, or explain why some cities, such as Augsburg and Naples, turned out to be only minor centers when it comes to printing multilingual books, despite the political significance of these cities. Although all contributions to this volume have an interest in their own right (each case is clearly limited to one city, and this focus on local rootedness is certainly one of the book’s strengths), it is fair to say that the extent to which every chapter contributes to answering one of the three general research questions varies considerably. Whereas some authors convincingly succeed in demonstrating the printers’ agency, strategies, and incentives in standardizing and celebrating their native
language or in embracing linguistic diversity, these themes remain more implicit and indirect in some other chapters. The detailed and “hands-on” character of all case studies, several of which are enhanced with long tables and annexes, also implies that there is less room for discussions at a more general or methodological level. It is nevertheless somewhat surprising that, in a book with this topic, Elizabeth Eisenstein’s controversial work *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979) seems to be only referred to in the concluding bibliographical section.

From a formal perspective, there is little to complain about. Several cross-references throughout the volume reveal that this book is effectively more than a collection of loose contributions. Typographical errors are limited in number (the misspelling of Andrew Pettegree’s name in the bibliography is somehow emblematic of Eurolab’s emphasis on the continental scholarship) and, on some pages, something went wrong with the rendering of Ancient Greek, Hebrew, and early modern German, as well as with the resolution of some images included. The heavy volume is somehow overwhelming due to the many dense pages, its rather complex internal hierarchy, the presence of contributions in French, German, and in both languages, the rather unhelpful headers (they are indeed very generic), and the different bibliographical lists in combination with the sober name-date system adopted in the footnotes. But even if some readers find it difficult to immediately find their way, they will most likely not regret their promenade through this rich, multilingual “labyrinth,” in which there is much to discover.

Les Muses sacrées: Poésie et Théâtre de la Réforme entre France et Italie.
Ed. Véronique Ferrer and Rosanna Gorris Camos.

REVIEWED BY: Michael Wolfe
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The nineteen essays collected in this volume originated in a three-day conference held in 2013 at the Università degli Studi di Verona that brought together French and Italian specialists to explore the literary impacts of reformed movements during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The new vernacular poetic and dramaturgical forms growing out of Renaissance humanism underwent their own conversions during the Reformation to serve new sacred, as well as established, profane purposes. Theological disputes, sectarian conflicts, and heightened religious sensibilities and anxieties forged in turn new modes of writing governed by different kinds of aesthetic and thematic choices that evolved differently depending on the circumstances faced by reform-minded poets and playwrights. A highly variegated picture of invention, adaptation, and experimentation emerges from these essays, changes that in time profoundly transformed the literary landscapes of early modern France and Italy.