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### Book Review: Following Zwingli: Applying the Past in Reformation Zurich

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*Following Zwingli: Applying the Past in Reformation Zurich*. Edited by Luca Baschera, Bruce Gordan, and Christian Moser. (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2014). 300 pp. hardcover. ISBN 9780754667964.

In studying the Reformation, it is often the case that emphasis is placed on the roles of Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Ulrich Zwingli. Of the three, Zwingli's name may be the least recognized even though he played a major role in the Reformation, especially in Zurich. Moreover there is a dearth of scholarship detailing the years following the death of Zwingli and scant research on the influence of Zwingli on fellow humanist reformers. *Following Zwingli* is a well-researched monograph edited by Baschera, Gordan, and Moser that seeks to remedy this void, provide enriching insight into the years following the death of Zwingli, and explore how the generation that followed Zwingli's death reshaped Zurichers into new, reformed Christians.

*Following Zwingli* is thorough in examining Zurich's new approaches in theology, philosophy, biblical interpretation, and pedagogy. However the editors have a complex and arduous task in presenting a detailed yet concise work. The argument of the work, albeit complex, is "that the distinctive nature of the reformation in Zurich [can] only [be] understood when one is able to explain the interaction" of various facets including biblical interpretation, church traditions, and political forces (39). *Following Zwingli* asserts that Zwingli led Zurich on the path of what will become Protestantism, but the first two generations of the reformation solidified Zwingli's ideas and revamped the old Christian church into something new. Because they continued the momentum started by Zwingli, Zurich became one of Europe's major Protestant cities.

Chapter one, which outlines the intent and challenges of the work, succeeds in placing Zwingli in the role of not only a charismatic, religious revolutionary, but also a leader who paved the way for Zurich reformers. The remaining chapters treat "the theological, historical, and pedagogical" thoughts of key figures such as Heinrich Bullinger, Rudolf Gwalther, Otto Werdmüller, and Konrad Pellikan (10). Furthermore the monograph explores how Zurich reformers worked to connect faith and understanding to the ancient church.

Key leaders clarified the early church's understanding of ethics and theology, with the Zurich church developing an argument for the superiority of supernatural gifts "such as faith and righteousness" over natural attributes like "the intellect and the will" (215). As a result, Zurich intellectuals concluded that philosophy was inferior to theology.

What will fascinate the reader are the many factors that contributed to Zurich becoming one of Europe's major Protestant cities. Every chapter emphasizes that key leaders played a role in transforming the people of Zurich into a new Christian community that embraced and exemplified new modes of thinking. The contributors of the monograph convey that changes were not immediate but rather gradual, even building on or modifying the teachings of Zwingli. This gradual change was supported from the top down by prominent figures in the clergy, council, and academy. To ensure the success of this new Christian community, all members of society were engaged and the new Christian idea was promoted through education, practice, and discipline. In reinforcing reformation ideals, leaders used biblical text to shape social and family life, and in the process defined the behavior of men, women, and children.

Likewise, religious contemporaries used new biblical interpretations to dictate moral improvement. In reforming the church and the local population, it was essential to redefine early church traditions and beliefs, such as challenging the traditional understanding and role of the Virgin Mary. Bullinger reiterated the argument established by Zwingli that placed Mary in the role of virgin mother of Christ but not as a religious mediator. In addition to the Virgin Mary, other biblical characters were portrayed as the ideal symbols of virtue for both men and women. The piety, loyalty, and obedience of women like Ruth were specific models for female behavior in church and society.

The strength of the monograph is its use of various resources, ranging from notable secondary sources to firsthand accounts like sermons and original manuscripts. Reformation history is complex and broad; however, the work excels in treating localized occurrences within the context of a broader event.

A shortcoming in this otherwise exceptionally researched work is found in the complexity of the subject and specificity of some  
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chapters. Certain chapters lend themselves to the exclusivity of experts while others are accessible to non-specialists. Nevertheless with that said, the work is a welcome addition to the study of sixteenth-century Zurich and a useful tool for teachers of Reformation history.

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