

Pfarrer, Bildungsstand der Bevölkerung, weltliche Verwaltung; auch historische Ortsnamenkunde, Geographie und Soziologie können von den Visitationsakten profitieren.

Erfahrungsgemäß liegen in den oft wenig beachteten, weil schlecht aufgearbeiteten und mühsam zu benutzenden Visitationsakten in der Schweiz ganz ähnliche Schätze brach, wie sie nun für Hessen aufgearbeitet sind.

Heinzpeter Stucki, Langnau a. A.

Jean-François Gilmont

Jean Crespin

Un éditeur réformé du XVI^e siècle, Genève, Droz, 1981 (Travaux d'Humanisme et Renaissance 186), 289 S., 17 Abb., Ln., sFr. 72.–.

Jean Crespin is best remembered as the compiler of the *Livre des martyrs*, the martyrology of the French Reformation. But he was also one of the four most important editors in Geneva in the mid-sixteenth century (active 1550–1572), in a period of rapid evolution from the polemical and evangelizing activities of the early years to the establishment, in the 1560s, of a structured, institutionalized French Reformed Church.

Dr Gilmont, who began his research career with a dissertation on *Les Martyrologues protestants du XVI^e siècle*, has set out to investigate what may be learned from a detailed study of Crespin's production. Many of the standard sources available to the historian are scanty in the case of Crespin (no personal records survive; in contrast to some contemporary publishers like Johannes Oporinus, only 13 of Crespin's letters are known, now available in an excellent edition by Dr Gilmont in *Lias VI* (1979), pp. 3–37); this has led the author to pay particular attention to the books themselves edited and printed by Crespin, as a rich but muchneglected source of information. The result is a magisterial study of Crespin himself in his historical context; it is also a major contribution to the techniques of 'material bibliography' as a research method.

First as regards Crespin as a major publisher and printer of the Genevan Reformation. Crespin arrived in Geneva in 1548, began printing in 1550, and rapidly established himself as a leading figure in the field. While he never equalled the Estienne family in the production of erudite texts, his publications ranged widely from editions of the Bible and of Genevan theologians, to several editions on behalf of the refugee communities in Geneva (he printed in Italian, Spanish and English), from Church history to grammar manuals and relatively cheap editions of the Greek classics. The range of these productions is a mark of Crespin's success in identifying profitable markets (he was a rich man at his death, in a period of serious recession in the book trade); and they lead Dr Gilmont to explore many aspects of Crespin's historical context. Particularly note-

worthy are the chapters on the Genevan book industry (the best succinct account known to me) and on the Frankfurt book fairs, where Crespin was the most prominent Genevan bookseller, indicating his particular speciality in developing contacts with the German market.

Apart from the analysis of the titles and authors printed by Crespin, this book shows other lessons which can be derived from bibliographical studies. To take just one example: the later years of Crespin's printing activities are marked by a gradual increase in the number of large-format books he produced, with a corresponding reduction in the more portable octavo format. This change corresponds, the author points out, to the development of an 'established' Church:

désormais l'ère du colportage missionnaire des opuscules réformés est close. Le manuel facile à cacher sous le manteau fait place à l'in-folio. Le réformé à nourrir par l'imprimé n'est plus un banni qui se cache, mais le membre d'une Eglise établie. (p. 239)

Or again: it comes as a surprise to learn that Calvin's exegetical works were regularly reprinted (a sure sign of a demand for them), while some of his polemical, supposedly more popular texts (e.g. the *Brevis Responsio ad diluendas nebulonis calumnias* of 1557, or the *Response à un certain Holandois* of 1562) sold so badly that copies were still in store in 1670.

The conclusions reached in this study are based on a detailed bibliographical examination of the texts printed by Crespin. This work, an integral part of Dr Gilmont's original doctoral thesis, has appeared separately (*Bibliographie des éditions de Jean Crespin, 1550–1572*, 2 vols., Verviers, Gason, 1981). It is a pity that the two facets of the work – the detailed analysis and the resulting general view – could not have appeared in the same publication, since each cross-refers to the other. The bibliography is a model of meticulous scholarly method, with full bibliographical details of each publication (Vol. I), and the reproduction in facsimile of all Crespin's title pages (Vol. II). Dr Gilmont's list identifies 257 Crespin editions, including 30 items not previously known; he has also identified a number of pirate editions previously attributed to Crespin but actually printed elsewhere. A short-title list of the bibliography is given in the study under review, together with reproductions of Crespin's emblems, borders, and ornamented capitals. Taken together, this study of Crespin is a model of how a bibliographical monograph should be done, and of conclusions which can be reached from such a study.

It is also, finally, an important contribution to the techniques of bibliographical research. Most notable among a number of points made is perhaps the technique developed by Dr Gilmont for evaluating the activity of a printing house not by the number of titles produced (a title may represent a pamphlet involving a couple of days' work, or a three-volume folio taking six months to print), but by a calculation of the number of sheets printed (cf. also his pionee-

ring article on the organization of a sixteenth-century printing press, 'Printers by the rules', *The Library*, Sixth Series, Vol. 2 No. 2 (June 1980), pp. 129–155). Thus what appears (from the count of titles produced) to be a steady decrease in Crespin's production more probably represents at least a steadily maintained production, in terms of sheets, throughout his career. Dr Gilmont advances his analysis with all due caution: the argument must posit some hypotheses, in particular on the number of copies produced in an average edition, which may vary considerably; but his basic argument is entirely valid, and deserves much further discussion. It will be interesting to compare the figures he provides for Crespin with similar data from other documented printing houses.

'Le flou n'est pas admissible dans la doctrine bibliographique', Dr Gilmont once wrote. In this study he has shown the benefits to be derived from painstaking attention to precise detail, when combined with a wealth of learning in the fields of theology, history, technology, economics... The information provided by a study of the books published by Crespin, constantly confronted with data from other sources, sheds much new light on Crespin himself, on his relations both in Geneva and on the international scene, and on the period in which he lived. Dr Gilmont is to be congratulated on a most significant contribution both to Reformation studies, and to the techniques of bibliographical analysis as an aid to historical understanding.

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Rudolf Gwalthers «Nabal»

Ein Zürcher Drama aus dem 16. Jahrhundert, hg. und übersetzt von *Sandro Giovanoli*, Bonn, Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann, 1979 (Studien zur Germanistik, Anglistik und Komparatistik, hg. von *Armin Arnold* und *Alois M. Haas* 83), 347 S., kart., sFr. 60.10

Sandro Giovanoli

Form und Funktion des Schuldramas im 16. Jahrhundert

Eine Untersuchung zu Rudolf Gwalthers «Nabal» (1549), Bonn, Bouvier, 1980 (ebenda 101), 141 S., kart., sFr. 32.60

Zürichs Reformatoren schätzten und förderten aus pädagogischen Gründen das Theaterspiel von Schülern und Burgern, während es nach Johann Jakob Breitingers «Bedenken von Spielen», 1624, verpönt war und sich die Biographen des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts gezwungen sahen, Bullingers und Gwalthers je einziges Theaterstück als verzeihliche Jugendsünde hinzustellen oder sie mit langen Exkursen über das Spiel in der frühchristlichen Kirche zu rechtfertigen. Bullinger schuf während seiner Kappeler Jahre mit seiner «Lucretia» [HBBibl I 39f.] das herausragendste und mehrfach gewürdigte sowie 1890 (HBBibl I 41) und 1973 (HBBibl II 1926) neu herausgegebene politische Ideendrama. Gwalther